

ONE HUNDRED ONE NORTH CARSON STREET
CARSON CITY, NEVADA 89701
OFFICE: (775) 684-5670
FAX NO.: (775) 684-5683



555 EAST WASHINGTON AVENUE, SUITE 5100
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89101
OFFICE: (702) 486-2500
FAX NO.: (702) 486-2505

Office of the Governor

JIM GIBBONS
GOVERNOR

May 28, 2010

The Honorable Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

The State of Nevada is pleased to submit its Phase II application for the Race to the Top grant program; Nevada's Promise: Excellence, Rigor, and Equity. This grant will greatly aid Nevada in transforming our education system and structuring our economic recovery.

As a state, we are committed to ensuring every student graduates, every classroom has an effective teacher, and every school is led by an effective principal. We have used fresh resolve and innovative ideas to craft a plan that will create both success for our children and growth for our economy. This is a dramatic shift for Nevada. This application acknowledges that Nevada must reform to be competitive and reinvent both education and our economy. It has been uncomfortable to think outside the box, but as government, educators and industry we have joined together to achieve consensus on a blueprint for Nevada's future. We have 100 percent of all school districts committed to implementing our education reform plan. We will reach our goals.

Education in Nevada has been challenged by rapid growth and plentiful jobs without the need for strong educational foundation. To attract new business and give our children new opportunities, Nevada will systematically reform education and develop our economy around industries which require post-secondary and college-level education, thus ensuring long-term economic viability. This unique time offers Nevadans the chance to come together for our children and create a system that is effective and outcome driven.

Honorable Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
May 28, 2010
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Nevada is on its way to becoming the renewable energy and recycling capital of the west. Particularly important to our economic diversification and development plan is an emphasis on STEM in K-12 education, and an educated, skilled and trained workforce in renewable and green technologies.

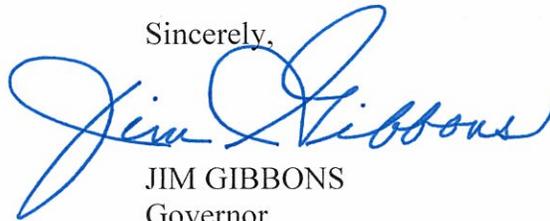
Our Race to the Top proposal includes strategies that demonstrate our commitment to reform initiatives by:

- Improving data systems to link every teacher with student data for instructional change and measures of student growth;
- Adopting the Common Core Standards, increasing the rigor in assessments and adding statewide benchmark assessments;
- Establishing teacher and principal evaluations for analyzing teacher and principal effectiveness;
- Strengthening our STEM and Early Childhood programs; and
- Clearly demonstrating our commitment to sustain our educational reform.

Nevada is at a crossroads, and the path we embark on through education reform is a path to economic stability and prosperity. Education is the intellectual infrastructure of Nevada's future.

Thank you for your consideration of Nevada's Race to the Top grant application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jim Gibbons". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "G".

JIM GIBBONS
Governor



NEVADA'S PROMISE

excellence,
rigor, and
equity

STATE OF NEVADA

Race
to
the Top

CFDA Number: 84.395A

**APPLICATION FOR
PHASE 2 FUNDING**

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

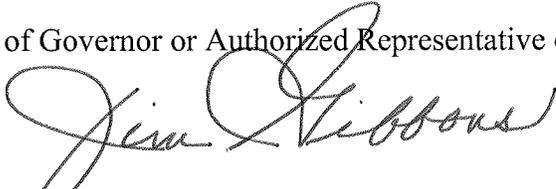
Legal Name of Applicant (Office of the Governor): State of Nevada	Applicant's Mailing Address: State Capitol 101 N. Carson St. Carson City, Nevada 89701
Employer Identification Number: NDE: 88600022	Organizational DUNS: NDE: 809887722
State Race to the Top Contact Name: (Single point of contact for communication) Dr. Keith Rheault	Contact Position and Office: Superintendent of Public Instruction Nevada Department of Education
Contact Telephone: 775-687-9217	Contact E-mail Address: krheault@doe.nv.gov

Required Applicant Signatures:

To the best of my knowledge and belief, all of the information and data in this application are true and correct.

I further certify that I have read the application, am fully committed to it, and will support its implementation:

Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name): **Governor Jim Gibbons** Telephone: **775-684-5670**

Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor:  Date: **5.27.10**

Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): **Dr. Keith Rheault** Telephone: **775-687-9217**

Signature of the Chief State School Officer:  Date: **5/24/2010**

President of the State Board of Education (Printed Name): **Mr. Christopher Wallace** Telephone: **702-586-1742**

Signature of the President of the State Board of Education:  Date: **5/21/2010**

State Attorney General Certification

I certify that the State's description of, and statements and conclusions concerning, State law, statute, and regulation in its application are complete, accurate, and constitute a reasonable interpretation of State law, statute, and regulation.

(See especially Eligibility Requirement (b), Selection Criteria (B)(1), (D)(1), (E)(1), (F)(2), (F)(3).)

I certify that the State does not have any legal, statutory, or regulatory barriers at the State level to linking data on student achievement (as defined in this notice) or student growth (as defined in this notice) to teachers and principals for the purpose of teacher and principal evaluation.

State Attorney General or Authorized Representative (Printed Name):

Telephone:

Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto

775-684-1100

By Senior Deputy Attorney General, Ed Irvin

Signature of the State Attorney General or Authorized Representative:

Date: 5/24/10

 for
Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto

80– Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments, including the procurement provisions; 34 CFR Part 81– General Education Provisions Act–Enforcement; 34 CFR Part 82– New Restrictions on Lobbying; 34 CFR Part 84–Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance); 34 CFR Part 85–Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement).

SIGNATURE BLOCK FOR CERTIFYING OFFICIAL

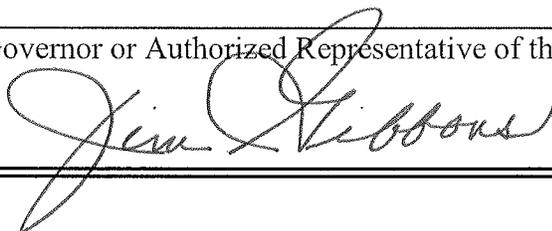
Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name):	
Governor Jim Gibbons	
Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor:	Date:
	5.27.2010

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Glossary

A²RL	Accelerated Alternative Route to Licensure
ADAPT	Alignment, Data, Achievement, Professional Development, Targeted Outcomes
Alternative Routes to Certification	<p>Pathways to certification that are authorized under Nevada’s laws or regulations, which allow the establishment and operation of teacher and administrator preparation programs in Nevada, and that have the following characteristics (in addition to standard features such as demonstration of subject-matter mastery, high-quality instruction in pedagogy and in addressing the needs of all students in the classroom including English Language Learners¹ and student with disabilities):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• can be provided by various types of qualified providers, including both institutions of higher education and other independent providers operating from institutions of higher education;• are selective in accepting candidates;• provide supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support such as effective mentoring and coaching;• significantly limit the amount of coursework required or have options to test out of courses; and• upon completion, award the same level of certification that traditional preparation programs award upon completion.
America COMPETES Act (2010) Elements	<p>(As specified in section 6401(e)(2)(D) of that Act):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) a unique statewide student identifier that does not permit a student to be individually identified by users of the system;(2) student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information;(3) student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out, or complete P–16 education programs;(4) the capacity to communicate with higher education data systems;(5) a state data audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability;(6) yearly test records of individual students with respect to assessments under section 1111(b) of the Elementary Secondary Education Act, Title I (ESEA) (20 U.S.C. 6311(b));

¹The term English Language Learner, as used in this notice, is synonymous with the term “limited English proficient,” as defined in section 9101 of the ESEA.

- (7) information on students not tested by grade and subject;
- (8) a teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students;
- (9) student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned;
- (10) student-level college readiness test scores;
- (11) information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from secondary school to postsecondary education, including whether students enroll in remedial coursework; and
- (12) other information determined necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education.

APA	Augenblick, Palaich & Associates, Inc. – a privately-owned company with extensive experience analyzing public education systems and policies.
APAC	Assessment, Program Accountability and Curriculum – the NDE office responsible for standards revision; development, administration, analysis, and reporting of assessments; and school and district accountability.
ARC	Nevada Annual Report of Accountability (also known as Nevada Annual Report Card)
ARL	Alternative Route to Licensure
ARRA	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009
AYP	Adequate Yearly Progress
Bighorn	Web-based interface into the System of Accountability Information in Nevada (SAIN) for administrative reporting.
Blue Ribbon Task Force	The Education Reform Blue Ribbon Task Force was formed in March 2010 to guide and oversee Nevada’s Race to the Top application and to facilitate public and private discussion and consensus for overall reform of public education for Nevada’s children. The task force is composed of educators, legislators, and business leaders from around the state including the Chancellor of Higher Education, the State Superintendent of Education, the Chairperson of Nevada’s PTA, and the Chairperson of the Nevada State Education Association.
CCSD	Clark County School District

CCSS	Common Core State Standards
CCSSO	Council of Chief State School Officers
College Enrollment	The enrollment of students who graduate from high school, consistent with 34 CFR 200.19(b)(1), and who enroll in an institution of higher education (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act, P.L. 105-244, 20 U.S.C. 1001) within 16 months of graduation.
Common Set of K-12 Standards	A set of content standards that define what students must know and be able to do and that are substantially identical across all states in a consortium. A state may supplement the common standards with additional standards, provided that the additional standards do not exceed 15% of the state's total standards for that content area.
COMPASS	Comprehensive Oversight for Managing Performance to Achieve Student Success
CRT	Criterion-Referenced Test
CTE	Career, Technical, and Adult Education – a Nevada department designed to provide leadership and resources to enable all learners to gain knowledge and skills needed to achieve career and employment goals, meet civic duties, and accomplish educational objectives.
EDFacts	Education Facts – a U.S. Department of Education initiative to provide data analysis and reporting tools to permit users to access, analyze, and report on education data for over 100 data groups.
Educator	Refers to both teacher and principal, or any person performing tasks required in the process of educating.
Effective Principal	A principal whose students, overall and for each subgroup, achieve acceptable rates (e.g., at least one grade level in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in this notice). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that principal effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in this notice). Supplemental measures may include, for example, high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates, as well as evidence of providing supportive teaching and learning conditions, strong instructional leadership, and positive family and community engagement.
Effective Teacher	A teacher whose students achieve acceptable rates (e.g., at least one grade level in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in this notice). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures,

provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in this notice). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple observation-based assessments of teacher performance.

ELA	English Language Arts
ELL	English Language Learners – synonymous with the term limited English proficient, as defined in section 9101 of the ESEA.
E-MALL	Electronic Media Access to Leverage Learning – the portal being developed to assist Nevada teachers and principals with professional development resources.
ePAGE	Nevada’s electronic grant management system, which manages grant payments and reporting requirements.
ESEA	Elementary Secondary Education Act of 1965
FERPA	Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974
Formative Assessment	Assessment questions, tools, and processes that are embedded in instruction, and are used by teachers and students to provide timely feedback for purposes of adjusting instruction to improve learning.
Graduation Rate	The four-year or extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, as defined by 34 CFR 200.19(b)(1). The current measure used for the graduation rates in Nevada is an estimated longitudinal rate. This method measures the percentage of students who graduate from high school in a given year. The calculation method is as follows: The number of standard, advanced, and adult diplomas, divided by the number of standard, advanced, adult, and adjusted diplomas, plus the number of certificates of attendance, plus the number of dropouts from graduating class since entering ninth grade. This school year Nevada will be computing a graduation rate using the cohort model as well.
Highly-Effective Principal	A principal whose students, overall and for each subgroup, achieve high rates (e.g., one and one-half grade levels in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in this notice). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that principal effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in this notice). Supplemental measures may include, for example, high school graduation rates; college enrollment rates; evidence of providing supportive teaching and learning conditions, strong instructional leadership, and positive family and community engagement; or evidence of attracting, developing, and retaining high numbers of effective

teachers.

Highly-Effective Teacher

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

High-Minority School

A school attended by 50% or more minority students.

High-Need LEA

An LEA –

- that serves no fewer than 10,000 children from families with incomes below the poverty line; or
- for which no less than 20% of the children served are from families with incomes below the poverty line.

High-Need Students

Students at risk of educational failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, such as students who:

- are living in poverty;
- attend high-minority schools;
- are far below grade level;
- have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma;
- are at risk of not graduating with a diploma on time;
- are homeless;
- are in foster care;
- have been incarcerated;
- have disabilities; or
- are English Language Learners.

High-Performing Charter School

A charter school that has been in operation for at least three consecutive years and has demonstrated overall success, including

- substantial progress in improving student achievement, and
- the management and leadership necessary to overcome initial start-up problems and establish a thriving, financially-viable charter school.

High-Poverty School

Consistent with section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii) of the ESEA, a school in the highest quartile of schools in Nevada with respect to poverty level, using a measure of poverty determined by Nevada.

High-Quality Assessment	An assessment designed to measure a student’s knowledge, understanding of, and ability to apply critical concepts through the use of a variety of item types and formats (e.g., open-ended responses, performance-based tasks). Such assessments should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable measurement of student achievement and student growth; • be of high technical quality; • incorporate technology; • include the assessment of students with disabilities and English Language Learners; and • to the extent feasible, use universal design principles in development and administration.
HSPE	High School Proficiency Exam
IDP	Individualized Development Plan
iMART	The system for output reports accessed by stakeholders and users of SAIN.
Increased Learning Time	Using a longer school day, week, or year schedule to significantly increase the total number of school hours to include additional time for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • instruction in core academic subjects including English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography; • instruction in other subjects and enrichment activities that contribute to a well-rounded education including, for example, physical education, service learning, and experiential and work-based learning opportunities that are provided by partnering with other organizations; and • teachers to collaborate, plan, and engage in professional development within and across grades and subjects.²

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

Innovative, Autonomous Public Schools Open enrollment public schools that, in return for increased accountability for student achievement, have the flexibility and authority to define their instructional models and associated curriculum; select and replace staff; implement new structures and formats for the school day or year; and control their budgets.

Instructional Improvement Systems Technology-based tools and other strategies that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with meaningful support and actionable data to systemically manage continuous instructional improvement, including such activities as:

- instructional planning;
- gathering information (e.g., through formative assessments, interim assessments, summative assessments, and looking at student work and other student data);
- analyzing information with the support of rapid-time reporting;
- using this information to inform decisions on appropriate next instructional steps; and
- evaluating the effectiveness of the actions taken.

Such systems promote collaborative problem-solving and action planning; they may also integrate instructional data with student-level data such as attendance, discipline, grades, credit accumulation, and student survey results to provide early warning indicators of a student's risk of educational failure.

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

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

LEA Local Education Agencies (each Nevada school district is an LEA)

Low-Minority School A school attended by less than 50% minority students.

Low-Poverty School	Consistent with section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii) of the ESEA, a school in the lowest quartile of schools in Nevada with respect to poverty level, using a measure of poverty determined by Nevada.
MALDEF	Mexican/American Legal Defense Education Fund
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding – a covenant between the State of Nevada and the LEAs outlining the expectations between the parties to participate in the improvement of the educational system of Nevada.
MPE	Managed Performance/Empowerment
NAA	Nevada Alternate Assessment – the state assessment of alternate achievement standards.
NAC	Nevada Administrative Code
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress
NCCAT-S	Nevada Comprehensive Curriculum Audit Tool for Schools
NCES	National Center for Education Statistics
NCLB	No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
NDE	Nevada Department of Education (Pre-K-12)
NERA	Nevada Educational Reform Act of 1997
Nevada’s Promise	Every class will be led by an effective teacher, every school will be led by an effective principal, and every student will graduate.
NGMA	Nevada Growth Model for Achievement
NPEP	Nevada Proficiency Examination Program
NRC	Nevada Annual Report Card (also known as ARC)
NRS	Nevada Revised Statutes
NSBE	Nevada State Board of Education
NSEA	Nevada State Education Association

NSHE	Nevada System of Higher Education (post-secondary)
ODS	Operational Data Store – a database designed for the uploading of all district level data.
Participating LEAs	LEAs that choose to work with Nevada to implement all or significant portions of Nevada’s Race to the Top plan, as specified in each LEA’s agreement with Nevada. Each participating LEA that receives funding under Title I, Part A will receive a share of the 50% of Nevada’s grant award that Nevada must subgrant to LEAs, based on the LEA’s relative share of Title I, Part A allocations in the most recent year, in accordance with section 14006(c) of the ARRA. Any participating LEA that does not receive funding under Title I, Part A (as well as one that does) may receive funding from Nevada’s other 50% of the grant award, in accordance with Nevada’s plan.
Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools	<p>As determined by Nevada:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that (a) is among the lowest-achieving 5% of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring or the lowest-achieving five Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in Nevada, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60% over a number of years; and • any secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that (a) is among the lowest-achieving 5% of secondary schools or the lowest-achieving five secondary schools in Nevada that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60% over a number of years. <p>To identify the lowest-achieving schools, Nevada will take into account both:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the academic achievement of the “all students” group in a school in terms of proficiency on Nevada’s assessments under section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA in reading/language arts and mathematics combined; and • the school’s lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in the “all students” group.
PIRC	Parent Information Resource Center – the Nevada State Parent Information & Resource Center at the Education Alliance of Washoe County is a federally funded program through the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation & Improvement. PIRCs help implement

successful and effective parental involvement policies, programs, and activities that lead to improvements in student academic achievement and that strengthen partnerships among parents, teachers, principals, administrators, and other school personnel in meeting the education needs of children.

PRAXIS	A system to evaluate general academic skills prior to entry into teacher education programs, and measure subject-specific knowledge and teaching skills.
Rapid-Time	In reference to reporting and availability of locally-collected school- and LEA-level data, data are available quickly enough to inform current lessons, instruction, and related supports.
Pre-K	Pre-Kindergarten
RPDP	Regional Professional Development Programs – formed in 1999 by the Nevada Legislature to offer professional development to teachers and administrators, focusing on deepening content knowledge, effective use of best educational practices, and increasing student achievement.
RTTT	Race to the Top
SAGE	Student Achievement Gap Elimination – a uniform system of school improvement analysis and planning has been in place since 2003.
SAIN	System of Accountability Information in Nevada – the data system designed to provide teachers and principals with accountability reporting, instructional change in the classroom, and data to measure teacher and principal effectiveness evaluations.
SASI	Schools Administrative Student Information – a computer program developed by Pearson School Systems to provide access to student demographics, schedules, discipline, grades and achievement history.
SB	Senate Bill
SGP	Student Growth Percentile
SLDS	Statewide Longitudinal Data System
SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium	A multiple state consortium formed to develop high learning achievement and successes in the educational community.

STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
STIP	Nevada’s State Improvement Plan (NRS 385.34691) – the legislative plan for the State Board to improve achievement of pupils.
Student Achievement	<p>Student Achievement is defined as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) for tested grades and subjects: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) a student’s score on Nevada’s assessments under the ESEA; and, as appropriate, b) other measures of student learning, such as those described in paragraph (2) of this definition, provided they are rigorous and comparable across classrooms. 2) for non-tested grades and subjects: alternative measures of student learning and performance such as student scores on pre-tests and end-of-course tests; student performance on English language proficiency assessments; and other measures of student achievement that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.
Student Growth	The change in student achievement for an individual student between two or more points in time. Nevada may also include other measures that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.
Tenure	Post-probationary employment.
TFA	Teach For America – the national corps of outstanding recent college graduates of all academic majors and career interests who commit two years to teach in urban and rural public schools and become leaders in the effort to expand educational opportunity.
Total Revenues Available	<p>The total revenues available are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • projected or actual total state revenues for education and other purposes for the relevant year; or • projected or actual total state appropriations for education and other purposes for the relevant year.
TQTF	Teaching Quality Task Force – representatives from the state, institutions of higher education, school districts, and RPDPs collaborating to align the systems of pre-service, licensure, and professional development for re-licensure.
WCSD	Washoe County School District

Section A: State Success Factors (125 points)

A(1): Articulating State's Education Reform Agenda and LEAs' Participation (65 points)

The extent to which—

(i) The State has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda that clearly articulates its goals for implementing reforms in the four education areas described in the ARRA and improving student outcomes statewide, establishes a clear and credible path to achieving these goals, and is consistent with the specific reform plans that the State has proposed throughout its application; (5 points)

*(ii) The participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) are strongly committed to the State's plans and to effective implementation of reform in the four education areas, as evidenced by Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) (as set forth in Appendix D)³ or other binding agreements between the State and its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) that include—
(45 points)*

Terms and conditions that reflect strong commitment by the participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) to the State's plans;

Scope-of-work descriptions that require participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) to implement all or significant portions of the State's Race to the Top plans; and

Signatures from as many as possible of the LEA superintendent (or equivalent), the president of the local school board (or equivalent, if applicable), and the local teachers' union leader (if applicable) (one signature of which must be from an authorized LEA representative) demonstrating the extent of leadership support within participating LEAs (as defined in this notice); and

³ See Appendix D for more on participating LEA MOUs and for a model MOU.

(iii) The LEAs that are participating in the State’s Race to the Top plans (including considerations of the numbers and percentages of participating LEAs, schools, K-12 students, and students in poverty) will translate into broad statewide impact, allowing the State to reach its ambitious yet achievable goals, overall and by student subgroup, for—(15 points)

Increasing student achievement in (at a minimum) reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and the assessments required under the ESEA;

Decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and the assessments required under the ESEA;

Increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice); and

Increasing college enrollment (as defined in this notice) and increasing the number of students who complete at least a year’s worth of college credit that is applicable to a degree within two years of enrollment in an institution of higher education.

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

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

- *An example of the State’s standard Participating LEA MOU, and description of variations used, if any.*
- *The completed summary table indicating which specific portions of the State’s plan each LEA is committed to implementing, and relevant summary statistics (see Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(b), below).*
- *The completed summary table indicating which LEA leadership signatures have been obtained (see Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(c), below).*

Evidence for (A)(1)(iii):

- *The completed summary table indicating the numbers and percentages of participating LEAs, schools, K-12 students, and students in poverty (see Summary Table for (A)(1)(iii), below).*

- *Tables and graphs that show the State's goals, overall and by subgroup, requested in the criterion, together with the supporting narrative. In addition, describe what the goals would look like were the State not to receive an award under this program.*

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

- *The completed detailed table, by LEA, that includes the information requested in the criterion (see Detailed Table for (A)(1), below).*

Recommended maximum response length: Ten pages (excluding tables)

A(1): Articulating the State's Education Reform Agenda and LEAs' Participation

A(1)(i): The State's Comprehensive and Coherent Reform Agenda

Nevada is a vital natural resource to our Nation. With 84.5% of the state's land owned by the federal government, Nevada makes critical contributions to national defense, energy, infrastructure, and public land management. All of these activities depend upon and produce technological advancements well beyond our size, and they yield knowledge well beyond our borders—all creating a competitive economic edge for the nation.

America owes much to Nevada's rich tradition of wholehearted patriotism. Nevada became the 36th state in 1864, under President Lincoln, when the state's political forces allied to help save the Union. Our official state motto is "All for our Country," while our nickname is the "Battle Born State."

Once again Nevada has come together for the common good – this time to transform its education system. Nevada has been hit extremely hard, not only in the nation's latest economic recession, but in what no one can deny has become an education recession: Our students rank last in the nation in higher education attendance and last in high school graduation rates. Nevada's unemployment rate is the second worst in the nation. The staples of our economy—gaming, tourism, and construction—are no longer sufficient to provide for our children's future. The time to act is now.

Race to the Top will solidify our shared resolve for constructive transformation and will build upon the following educational strengths:

- Despite a recent population boom and economic bust, we have made steady gains in both national and state-level tests and in reducing achievement gaps. Nevada was one of four states and the District of Columbia to show gains in both fourth- and eighth-grade mathematics in 2009 as reported in the Nation's Report Card. In fact, Nevada's students increased their NAEP math scores from 2003 to 2009, and reading scores from 2003 to 2007, at a rate greater than the national average.
- We have the authority to intervene in persistently low-performing schools and have developed a well-defined implementation plan and differentiated statewide support system for successful turnaround.

- We have 100% participation from LEAs, a productive partnership with statewide teacher and administrator associations, and bipartisan support from political and industry leaders.
- We have a unique commitment to professional development to support adoption and implementation of standards with a statewide, state-funded infrastructure providing training and technical assistance to school districts.
- We have the critical elements (policies, data and statewide buy-in) to have teacher and principal evaluations that will be based, in part, on student achievement data, with 33% to be based on summative growth data and 17% on local measures of student growth.
- We were the only state that met the rigorous federal criteria based on the superior performance of Nevada Reading First Schools from 2005-2008, and subsequently, have been recently awarded \$3.8 million through a Reading First Targeted Assistance Grant.
- We have established a friendly and supportive environment to foster charter school creation and operation, with a structure that enables both state- and district-level sponsorship.

One of Nevada’s biggest strengths is that the state school structure—consisting of 17 county school districts (i.e., only one school district in each county)—enables Nevada to implement and sustain reform unlike many other states. Every district is truly diverse. Clark County School District—encompassing the city of Las Vegas—is the fifth largest school district in the country; while only miles away, Esmeralda County School District is one of the smallest, with only 68 students.

The key to reforming the system is Nevada’s relatively small number of districts. Our educational, political, and industrial leadership can and have quickly rallied together to develop an overarching goal for educational reform governed by three core principles:

1. Every class will be taught by an effective teacher.
2. Every school will be led by an effective principal.
3. Every student will graduate.

These goals are essential to Nevada’s future, and we have an unwavering, uncompromising commitment to them. This shared vision has resulted in an agenda that we are calling *Nevada’s*

Promise: Excellence, Rigor, and Equity—a program that will increase student achievement for every child in Nevada.

Nevadans know that it's time for change. The business community has joined with the political community to help the education community. We all agree it's time to reverse our trends and close achievement gaps by challenging professionals, parents and students. It is time to embrace the objectives of STEM so that more emerging industries view Nevada as an attractive place to locate their businesses. A better educated Nevada will be a more prosperous Nevada.

Nevada has a new vision: The renewable/green energy capital of the West. With thousands of miles of open space, Nevada has been aggressively pursuing and developing geothermal, solar and wind energy generation. Even during the economic downturn we have seen growth in this area. We have nearly 20 major solar generation facilities in development in southern Nevada, and are developing two major geothermal facilities in northern Nevada. In addition, the Nevada State Energy Office is using \$8 million in federal stimulus funds to retrofit more than 100 government buildings statewide for energy efficiency.

Nevada is targeting manufacturers and research and development firms in the renewable energy arena to relocate to Nevada. We have created over 1,000 new jobs with two new wind turbine manufacturers from China and Brazil locating their first U.S.-based operations in Nevada, and a major California firm constructing a \$20 million solar power cell plant to serve our growing solar industry.

In order to develop a new green energy economy, we must create and maintain an educated, well-prepared workforce to sustain it. That's why Nevada is committed to renewing our pre-K-12 and post-secondary education, and aligning efforts with economic development and industry. Education must be coordinated with this economic expansion to provide the skilled, trained, and educated workforce necessary for these new high-tech industries. A new emphasis on STEM at the pre-K-12 level will play an important role in transitioning college-bound students in math, science, and technology for engineering, research, and development in these new industries.

Expanded career and technical education will provide necessary skill sets for logistics and transportation jobs.

Nevada is at a crossroads. Education is the key to our future recovery and economic growth. The issues confronting the state are so significant that the leaders of the political, educational, and business communities are united – to change the outcomes for every student. Student will graduate; they will be prepared for success in college or in highly-skilled careers. **Nevada will no longer accept 51st place for a student’s chance of success** (Quality Counts 2010, Education Research Center) (See Appendix A(1)(i)-1) – and start demonstrating a commitment to true reform.

In 2009, personal income fell more rapidly in Nevada than in any other state. Nevada’s unemployment rate of 13.5%, second only to Michigan, has strained state and county resources. Extremely rapid student growth in Clark County that once translated into a new school every month has stopped. At one time as many as 3,000 people moved into Clark County every month; that trend has now reversed and enrollment in schools is declining.

The relationship between Nevada’s economic recovery and education cannot be overstated. Education is the key to change Nevada and unlock the doors of opportunity for every student. Our pioneer spirit has an inspired vision to come together and systemically transform education. Although we have had successes, there has been no singular focus of purpose to change the current status. Now is the time to build on those successful programs and best practices that have been in place to ensure that over 436,000 Nevada students reach their maximum potential.

In 2014, Nevada will celebrate 150 years of statehood—this is also the year for complete implementation of *Nevada’s Promise*. It is appropriate that Nevada set a course to transform education. The quality of the educators who are leading our schools and instructing our students has a direct impact on the success of reaching the overarching goal by providing a rigorous and relevant standards-based curriculum and instruction (McREL, 2003) (see Appendix A(1)(i)-2). That is why Nevada will invest in the recruitment, development, evaluation, and compensation of the most qualified talent in education – because there is quite simply no more critical component

in education reform than human capital. Nevada will support this talent base with highly capable data systems, rigorous standards and assessments, and focused professional development with achieve measurable results by 2014.

Wishing is not the same as achieving. In order to achieve these results, we have to face the truth. Nevada's diverse student population faces challenges of mobility, poverty, and English language acquisition. Nevada is 16 points below the national average in student achievement (Quality Counts 2010, Education Research Center) (see Appendix A(1)(i)-1). However, we are resolute in changing this path. We will achieve the following education goals:

- Nevada's pre-K-12 education system will produce outstanding graduates with demonstrated mastery in reading, writing, mathematics, and science.
- Nevada's students who speak a language other than English at home will be prepared to compete in English-speaking workplaces.
- Nevada's graduates will know that they can compete for careers, which will benefit Nevada and the Nation.

Nevada will also achieve five specifically-targeted objectives of *Nevada's Promise* by 2014 (data based on 2009 results):

- Increase the graduation rate to 85% using the longitudinal cohort model;
- Reduce the achievement gap by 50% for African American-white and Hispanic-white on NAEP;
- Increase graduates enrolling in post-secondary institutions both in-state or out-of-state by 50%;
- Increase student achievement percentage of students proficient or advanced on the NAEP 4th-grade mathematics (from 32% to 50%) and 8th-grade mathematics (from 25% to 50%);
- Increase student achievement percentage of students proficient or advanced on the NAEP 4th-grade reading (from 24% to 50%) and 8th-grade reading (from 22% to 50%).

Nevada's Promise is a commitment to reaching these five targeted objectives. It is based on a continuous improvement cycle designed to leverage multiple opportunities, including the

Statewide Longitudinal Data System grant, the School Improvement Grants, and Race to the Top. These systemic elements guide the reform agenda in Nevada, which builds upon Nevada’s existing foundation of ADAPT: the **Alignment** of systems, the use of **Data** to inform instruction that will result in optimal student **Achievement** supported through **Professional Development** to reach **Targeted** outcomes. ADAPT was formed through the input of stakeholders and guides Nevada’s State Improvement Plan. To achieve the five target objectives, the following four strategies emerge from ADAPT and are described in Table A(1)(i)-1.

Table A(1)(i)-1: Nevada’s Four Strategies For Education Reform

Strategy 1	Improve student performance through collaboration with key stakeholders such as parents, teachers, principals, employee associations, district administrators, state officials, community leaders, and legislators.
Strategy 2	Improve classroom instruction on rigorous and relevant content, including an emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).
Strategy 3	Improve classroom instruction and student performance using data at all levels—student, classroom, school, district, state—to support the improvement planning process, evaluate the effectiveness of planned programs, and drive instructional decisions focused on increased student achievement.
Strategy 4	Improve achievement through the best practices that have been proven effective in Nevada

These strategies guide *Nevada’s Promise* and are supported by the following resources and programs:

Strategy 1

Improve student performance through collaboration with key stakeholders such as parents, teachers, principals, employees associations, district administrators, state officials, community leaders, and legislators.

Key Sections in the Race to the Top Application Supporting this Strategy

- Section A: Nevada’s Success Factors

A comprehensive collaboration of key stakeholders has been involved in the creation of *Nevada’s Promise*. Educational, political, and industry leaders from Nevada are committed to successfully implementing *Nevada’s Promise* to facilitate Strategy 1:

The Education Reform Blue Ribbon Task Force: As evidence of his commitment to *Nevada's Promise*, Governor Jim Gibbons signed an Executive Order establishing the Education Reform Blue Ribbon Task Force in March 2010 (see Appendix A(1)(i)-3). The 28 members of the Blue Ribbon Task Force are appointed representatives that include elected officials, business, community, political, and education leaders from across the state. In addition to providing guidance and leadership in the preparation of *Nevada's Promise*, the Blue Ribbon Task Force will continue to work for education reform in the state.

The Nevada State Legislature: The Legislative Committee on Education regularly requests testimony and updates on progress related to the development of Nevada education reform. The Legislature demonstrated its support for comprehensive education reform with responsive action during a special session that eliminated the one statutory barrier that prevented Nevada from competing for Race to the Top funds. During the 2010 Special Legislative Session, Senate Bill 2 amended NRS 386.650 to require student achievement data as part of teacher and principal evaluations (see Appendix A(1)(i)-4).

Additionally, Nevada has existing statutes that compel an aligned improvement planning process for schools, districts, and the state. The Nevada Department of Education (NDE) has the authority to intervene in designated schools, including turnaround of lowest performing schools. Each year the Nevada State Board of Education reviews and revises the Nevada State Improvement Plan (STIP) pursuant to Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 385.34691 (see Appendix A(1)(i)-5). The 2009 Nevada State Improvement Plan underscores the need for reforming the fundamentals of curriculum, instruction and assessment as the demand for 21st century skills has grown.

Strategy 2

Improve classroom instruction on rigorous and relevant content including an emphasis on STEM.

Key Sections in the Race to the Top Application Supporting this Strategy

- Section B: Standard and Assessments
- Section D: Great Teachers and Leaders
- Competitive Preference Priority 2

Improving classroom instruction on rigorous and relevant content requires clear standards as well as outstanding teachers and principals to guide implementation and monitoring of student learning. Rigor and relevance is particularly important to increase the number of students seeking STEM degrees and skilled careers. The following highlights are the major efforts in *Nevada's Promise* to facilitate Strategy 2:

Adoption of Common Core State Standards: The Academic Standards Council has approved the adoption of Common Core State Standards as drafted with approval by the Nevada State Board of Education in June 2010 (see Appendix A(1)(i)-6). While the adoption of the Common Core State Standards in mathematics will support STEM education, the Nevada Science Standards will also incorporate enhanced technology and engineering principles in its 2011 revision. The national framework and science education standards will be released in 2011 and will serve as the basis for the revision of the Nevada science content standards. Nevada will gauge all student achievement by these content guidelines.

The Teaching Quality Task Force: During the mid-2000s, Nevada engaged in reforming teacher and leader preparation and accountability systems through the creation of the Teaching Quality Task Force (TQTF). The TQTF made recommendations that proposed reform in pre-service preparation, licensure, and ongoing professional development for teachers, including alternate routes to licensure.

Professional development drives data use and practice: Nevada will provide extensive professional development to educators and parents to help students master the standards and graduate. Just as students will be held to rigorous standards, so too will teachers and principals; this will result in highly-skilled academic teams devoted to increasing student achievement. By refining the Nevada systems of teacher and principal preparation, and enhancing the systems of

professional development, educators will acquire and be rewarded for having the skills, knowledge, and ability to impact student achievement in a timely manner.

Nevada STEM Coalition: Gathering Genius, Inc. (G² Inc.), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose mission is to improve STEM education in Nevada, raised \$1.1 million and successfully hosted the “Intel International Science and Engineering Fair” in Nevada in May 2009. The advisory board of G² Inc. met with a group of 30 stakeholders in April 2010 to discuss the establishment of a Nevada STEM Coalition that will assemble STEM leaders, generate support, and work to effect important and long-term improvements in STEM, P-20 education, and job training for Nevada. Seven committees were established that reflect the anticipated goals of the proposed Nevada STEM Coalition and include the following:

1. P-20 curriculum and flexibility, teacher preparation, and engaging students early
2. Workforce and industry—with an emphasis on renewable technologies
3. Government Policy and Advocacy
4. Professional Development for P-20 educators
5. Technology and scientific advancement and innovation
6. Public relations and communications
7. Steering Committee

These seven subcommittees will work to prepare for a statewide summit to be held before the next legislative session. The committees will conduct research and prepare recommendations for statewide collaboration and improvement that will be presented at the statewide summit. The newly formed STEM coalition will work to help Nevada improve the way students study science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, and increase the number of students who pursue degrees in STEM. The business, education, and STEM communities will work together to achieve this goal.

Strategy 3

Improve classroom instruction and student performance using data at all levels—student, classroom, school, district, state—to support the improvement planning process, evaluate the effectiveness of planned programs, and drive instructional decisions focused on increased student achievement.

Key Sections in the Race to the Top Application Supporting this Strategy

- Section C: Data Systems to Support Instruction

Data collection and analysis are critical for improving instruction and guiding increased student achievement. *Nevada’s Promise* builds upon existing data systems to provide an enhanced capability that is focused on improved planning, evaluation, and decision-making to facilitate Strategy 3:

Teacher data systems to inform instruction through a balanced assessment system: This plan capitalizes on a state longitudinal data system, which supports the capacity to drive decision-making at the student, parent, teacher, principal, school, district, and state level. A P-20 system that focuses on the ability to track student progress and link student data to teacher and principal effectiveness is the key to improving student achievement. Nevada will leverage the data system to ensure that we are making decisions including employment decisions—equitably.

Improved data systems: The System of Accountability in Nevada (SAIN) downloads data from all 17 school districts’ systems nightly, and reports student achievement to each district. These data serve three purposes:

1. Accountability reporting;
2. Instructional change in the classroom; and
3. Data to measure teacher and principal effectiveness through evaluations.

The proposed Race to the Top enhancements will:

- Include a seamless longitudinal P-20 system that will connect all teachers to discrete student-level data for formative, interim/benchmark, and summative assessments;
- Create Electronic Media Access to Leverage Learning (E-MALL) (or procure and partner with a provider for specified services), which will include professional development resources, and
- Include pre-service and ongoing training on using data to foster decision-making that improves instruction.

With the State Longitudinal Data System grant, Nevada will expand access to student growth results and provide training for all Nevada educators and making results available to stakeholders.

Strategy 4

Improve achievement through best practices that have been proven effective in Nevada

Key Sections in the Race to the Top Application Supporting this Strategy

- Section E: Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools
- Section F: Other

Increasing student achievement requires the use of research-based best practices. Nevada has turned to best practices to improve classroom instruction, and through Race to the Top funding, will expand its programs and resources to facilitate Strategy 4:

Strategy for Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools: Nevada has developed a well-defined plan for addressing the issue of low achieving schools. Nevada has created a differentiated statewide system of support, with school support services based on data-driven needs. This strategy includes the administration of the Nevada Comprehensive Curriculum Audit Tool for Schools (NCCAT-S), a statewide needs-assessment tool that describes the characteristics of high-performing schools in curriculum and instruction, assessment and accountability, and leadership. The results of the NCCAT-S will be used to determine the types of focused technical assistance and support that a school will need, and guide the district in its development of the school’s restructuring or turnaround plan.

Principals of successful turnaround schools agreed that the following elements are essential when working to implement change (Center for Education Policy, April 2010):

- Create a positive school climate and develop trusting relationships;
- Integrate data-based decision making;
- Target interventions for struggling students;
- Celebrate early, small successes;
- Implement teacher-led professional development collaboration; and
- Continue state and federal assistance, including needs assessments and audits.

These elements have been embraced in some Nevada schools. For example, a principal of a successful turnaround school in Clark County implemented these elements of change. As a result, proficiency test scores in mathematics increased from 44% to 80% and from 54% to 92% in reading. This momentous achievement occurred at a time when Clark County was experiencing unprecedented double-digit growth, and the number of Hispanic students at the turnaround school increased from 30% to 60%. Implementing research-based methods for school turnaround will increase student achievement.

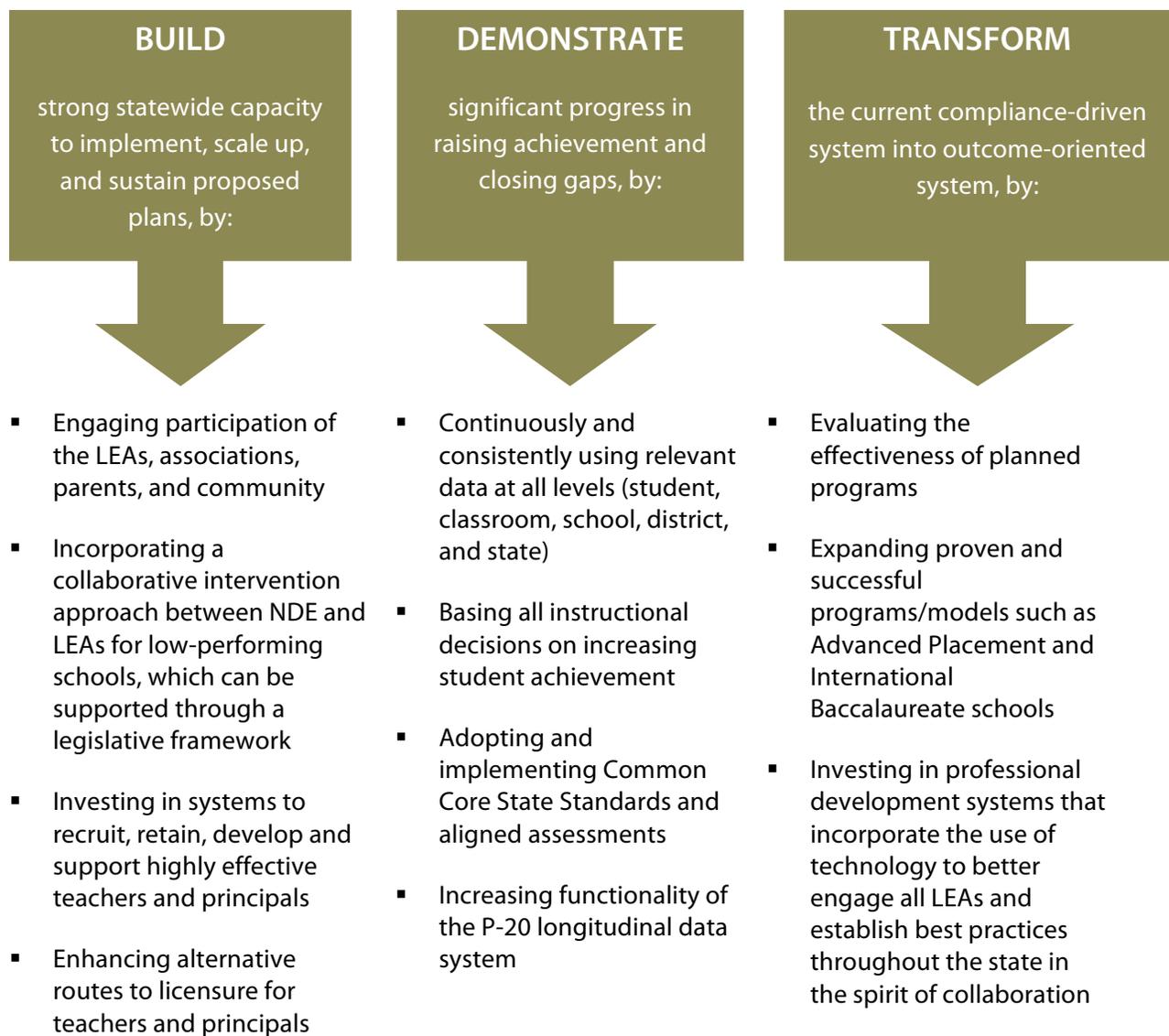
Another example is the will and drive demonstrated by Washoe County School District to design and implement a turnaround model for Nevada. Working in collaboration with the Nevada Department of Education, Washoe County has created a turnaround program that includes expanded early learning, instructional coaching, extended student learning time, and job-embedded professional development, which will be supported in part through the School Improvement Grants (SIG) program.

Early Childhood Outcomes: *Nevada's Promise* will promote school readiness for Nevada's pre-kindergarten students by providing high-quality early education while supporting parent involvement. The Nevada Pre-K Longitudinal Study clearly demonstrates that students participating in Pre-K programs develop school readiness skills, which has closed the gap

between English Language Learners and high-need students with their average peers (see Appendix A(1)(i)-7). *Nevada's Promise* supports the view that it is never too early to promote college and career preparedness for our students.

How Reform Will Work

To implement the four strategies for education reform, Nevada will strengthen, scale up, and sustain a greater capacity for successful implementation. Significant progress will be measured by closing the achievement gap. Nevada's education system will transform from a compliance-driven system to an outcome-oriented system.



Why Reform Will Work

More than 200 stakeholders throughout Nevada provided input into *Nevada's Promise*, and are committed to achieving its overarching goal. These stakeholders represented the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), Nevada's 17 school districts, local school boards, parents, the Regional Professional Development Programs, higher education, Nevada State Education Association, state charter schools, the State Board of Education, elected officials, local business and community organizations, and public foundations. Many of these stakeholders gathered for a series of work meetings with a focus on:

- Collecting and analyzing data to gain a better understanding of the current education processes used in Nevada to determine what is working, and what is not;
- Researching innovative and best-practices found in research and other states;
- Performing a needs assessment using gap analyses data; and
- Developing progressive strategies that comprise a comprehensive reform agenda.

Educational opportunity is now a moral imperative and a quality of life issue for Nevadans. Current student outcomes are not acceptable. Since the emergence of the current tourist-based economy 50 years ago, Nevada has prospered without much attention to the changing nature of educational systems in the rest of the Nation and the world. While Nevada's primary industries have been gaming, tourism, and most recently construction, college readiness has not been a high priority for the student population. ***For the future of Nevada, this will change.*** We are confronting the need to strengthen, and in fact overhaul, Nevada's education system as the first step in transforming the economy of the state to one that is a magnet for technology-based industries to complement an existing tourist-centered economy. Nevada needs a highly-skilled workforce for high-technology federal installations, as well as innovative businesses who want to relocate to a state where education is a top priority.

Nevada is unmatched in its creative spirit, fierce independence, and determination to succeed. During the economic downturn of The Great Depression, Nevadans united with the ingenuity,

creativity, and determination to produce a miracle of modern architecture and engineering: the Hoover Dam. Today, confronted with equally challenging economic times, Nevadans must bring those same traits to educational reform.

This effort will be driven by innovation. The time is now for Nevada to seize the opportunity to transform. More than 436,000 students are depending on Nevada leaders to establish new attitudes and expectations. The work begins today.

A(1)(ii): Commitment of Participating LEAs

A(1)(ii)(a): Terms And Conditions That Reflect Strong Commitment To Nevada's Promise

The MOU signed by the State and participating LEAs stipulates that LEAs will:

1. Be supportive and participate in 100% of the activities detailed in the scope-of-work developed by the State (see Appendix A(1)(ii)-1).
2. Participate in all relevant meetings, communities of practice, or other events that are sponsored by the State or *Nevada's Promise*.
3. Participate in evaluation activities of the grant performed by the State or *Nevada's Promise*.
4. Be responsive to the State or *Nevada's Promise* requests for data including, but not limited to, project status, project implementation, project outcomes, and any barriers anticipated or encountered.

Participating LEAs are committed to implementing Nevada's comprehensive Race to the Top education reform agenda, sharing best practices statewide, allowing for periodic progress monitoring of goals, and cooperating with the state and the Nevada Education Reform Office. School District hereby agrees to participate in implementing the State Plan in each of the areas identified below.

A(1)(ii)(b): Scope of Work Description

The LEAs' commitment to *Nevada's Promise* is significant given the extensive reform described in this proposal. All LEAs have agreed to implement the entire scope of work presented by the State. Critical elements of *Nevada's Promise* are described in the scope of work and also required by state law:

1. Procedures and requirements for *Nevada's Promise* linking student achievement to teacher evaluation for effectiveness are discussed in Section D.
2. Procedures and requirements for turning around persistently lowest-achieving schools are discussed in Section E(1) of this document.

Table A(1)(ii)(b): Elements of State Reform Plans

Elements of State Reform Plans	Number of LEAs Participating (#)	Percentage of Total Participating LEAs (%)
B. STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	17	100%
C. DATA SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT INSTRUCTION		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction:		
(i) Use of local instructional improvement systems	17	100%
(ii) Professional development on use of data	17	100%
(iii) Availability and accessibility of data to researchers	16	94%
D. GREAT TEACHERS AND LEADERS		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance:		
(i) Measure student growth	17	100%
(ii) Design and implement evaluation systems	17	100%
(iii) Conduct annual evaluations	17	100%
(iv)(a) Use evaluations to inform professional development	17	100%
(iv)(b) Use evaluations to inform compensation, promotion and retention	16	94%
(iv)(c) Use evaluations to inform tenure and/or full certification	16	94%
(iv)(d) Use evaluations to inform removal	17	100%
(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals:		
(i) High-poverty and/or high-minority schools	17	100%
(ii) Hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	17	100%
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals:		
(i) Quality professional development	17	100%
(ii) Measure effectiveness of professional development	17	100%
E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	17	100%

A(1)(ii)(c): Signatures from as many as possible of the LEA superintendent, the president of the local school board, and the local teacher’s union leader (if applicable) (one signature of which must be from an authorized LEA representative) demonstrating the extent of leadership support within LEAs; and:

Nevada’s Promise will be implemented with 100% support from the State’s leaders in education. All superintendents, school board presidents, teachers’ association leaders, and charter school leaders in the signed the MOU and agreed to participate in the scope-of-work, resulting in a unanimous commitment to statewide reform. This will allow Nevada to successfully implement the agenda of *Nevada’s Promise*.

As part of *Nevada’s Promise*, state leaders agree that nothing in the Memorandum of Understanding shall be construed to alter or otherwise affect the rights, remedies, and procedures afforded school or school district employees under federal, state, or local laws (including applicable regulations or court orders) or under the terms of collective bargaining agreements, memoranda of understanding, or other agreements between such employers and their employees. By way of the signatures below, the LEAs and the local collective bargaining representatives agree to confer in good faith over matters within the scope of the MOU.

Table A(1)(ii)(c)-1: Signatures Acquired from Participating LEAs

SIGNATURES ACQUIRED FROM PARTICIPATING LEAS:			
Number of Participating LEAs with all applicable signatures			
	Number of Signatures Obtained (#)	Number of Signatures Applicable (#)	Percentage (%) (Obtained / Applicable)
LEA Superintendent (or equivalent)	17	17	100%
President of Local School Board (or equivalent, if applicable)	17	17	100%
Local Teachers’ Union Leader (if applicable)	15*	17	88%

***This represents 97% of Nevada’s teaching force. (Churchill County and Lyon County Associations’ signatures were yes/conditional.)**

A(1)(iii): Statewide Impact of Participating LEAs

Participation by the LEAs in *Nevada’s Promise* will translate into broad statewide impact, allowing Nevada to reach its overall goals.

Table for A(1)(iii)-1: Participating LEAs

	Participating LEAs (#)	Statewide (#)	Percentage of Total Statewide (%) (Participating LEAs / Statewide)
LEAs	17	17	100%
Schools	608	608	100%
K-12 Students	430,427*	430,427*	100%
Students in poverty	179,713	179,713	100%

***Total Student Enrollment for School Year 2009-2010 is 436,368 (with 5,941 State Charter School Enrollment).**

Nevada’s LEA participation in this endeavor presents an extraordinary opportunity to develop, implement, and sustain proposed reform goals that are representative of our diverse population and geographical makeup. Because of the small number of school districts in the state, Nevada is better poised than most to accomplish the exciting tasks ahead.

Nevada’s ability to conduct business on a more personal level with school administrators in each district provides an edge that typically not found in most other states. With support from Race to the Top, Nevada is setting objectives that are ambitious, comprehensive, and designed to achieve maximum gains for P-20 students, teachers, and leaders. *Nevada’s Promise* addresses the need for a system that will place an emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

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

The completed detailed table, by LEA, that includes the information requested in the criterion

Detailed Table for A(1)

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

Participating LEAs	LEA DEMOGRAPHICS			SIGNATURES ON MOUS			MOU TERMS	PRELIMINARY SCOPE OF WORK – PARTICIPATION IN EACH APPLICABLE PLAN CRITERION																	
	# of Schools *	# of K-12 Students *	# of K-12 Students in Poverty **	LEA Supt. (or equivalent)	President of local school board (if applicable)	President of Local Teachers Union (if applicable)	Uses Standard Terms & Conditions?	(B)(3)	(C)(3)(i)	(C)(3)(ii)	(C)(3)(iii)	(D)(2)(i)	(D)(2)(ii)	(D)(2)(iii)	(D)(2)(iv)(a)	(D)(2)(iv)(b)	(D)(2)(iv)(c)	(D)(2)(iv)(d)	(D)(3)(i)	(D)(3)(ii)	(D)(5)(i)	(D)(5)(ii)	(E)(2)		
Name of LEA here				Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Yes/ No	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	
Carson City	14	7834	3262	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Churchill County	9	4206	1803	Y	Y	Y/C	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y/C	Y/C	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Clark County	335	313,558	136,318	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Douglas	15	6517	1881	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Elko County	32	9474	3096	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Esmeralda County	3	69	47	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Eureka County	3	260	33	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Humboldt County	15	3406	1208	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Lander County	5	1140	221	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Lincoln County	9	1005	362	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y/C	Y	Y	Y/C	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Detailed Table for A(1)

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

Participating LEAs	LEA DEMOGRAPHICS			SIGNATURES ON MOUS			MOU TERMS	PRELIMINARY SCOPE OF WORK – PARTICIPATION IN EACH APPLICABLE PLAN CRITERION																
	# of Schools *	# of K-12 Students *	# of K-12 Students in Poverty **	LEA Supt. (or equivalent)	President of local school board (if applicable)	President of Local Teachers Union (if applicable)	Uses Standard Terms & Conditions?	(B)(3)	(C)(3)(i)	(C)(3)(ii)	(C)(3)(iii)	(D)(2)(i)	(D)(2)(ii)	(D)(2)(iii)	(D)(2)(iv)(a)	(D)(2)(iv)(b)	(D)(2)(iv)(c)	(D)(2)(iv)(d)	(D)(3)(i)	(D)(3)(ii)	(D)(5)(i)	(D)(5)(ii)	(E)(2)	
Name of LEA here				Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Yes/ No	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	Y/ N/ NA	
Lyon County	18	8768	3336	Y	Y	Y/C	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mineral County	5	571	294	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Nye County	26	6167	3303	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Pershing County	4	719	417	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Storey County	4	447	29	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Washoe County	103	64,844	23,602	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
White Pine	8	1442	501	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
TOTALS	608	430,427	179,713																					

*Nevada Department of Education Research Bulletin - 2/10

**Free and Reduced Lunch Count - 2009-2010

A(2): Building Strong Statewide Capacity To Implement, Scale Up And Sustain Proposed Plans (30 points)

The extent to which the State has a high-quality overall plan to—

(i) Ensure that it has the capacity required to implement its proposed plans by— (20 points)

- (a) Providing strong leadership and dedicated teams to implement the statewide education reform plans the State has proposed;*
- (b) Supporting participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) in successfully implementing the education reform plans the State has proposed, through such activities as identifying promising practices, evaluating these practices' effectiveness, ceasing ineffective practices, widely disseminating and replicating the effective practices statewide, holding participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) accountable for progress and performance, and intervening where necessary;*
- (c) Providing effective and efficient operations and processes for implementing its Race to the Top grant in such areas as grant administration and oversight, budget reporting and monitoring, performance measure tracking and reporting, and fund disbursement;*
- (d) The funds for this grant, as described in the State's budget and accompanying budget narrative, to accomplish the State's plans and meet its targets, including where feasible, by coordinating, reallocating, or repurposing education funds from other Federal, State, and local sources so that they align with the State's Race to the Top goals; and*
- (e) Using the fiscal, political, and human capital resources of the State to continue, after the period of funding has ended, those reforms funded under the grant for which there is evidence of success; and*

(ii) Use support from a broad group of stakeholders to better implement its plans, as evidenced by the strength of the statements or actions of support from— (10 points)

- (a) The State's teachers and principals, which include the State's teachers' unions or statewide teacher associations; and*
- (b) Other critical stakeholders, such as the State's legislative leadership; charter school authorizers and State charter school membership associations (if applicable); other State and local leaders (e.g., business, community, civil rights, and education association leaders); Tribal schools; parent, student, and community organizations (e.g., parent-teacher associations, nonprofit organizations, local education foundations, and community-based organizations); and institutions of higher education.*

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

Evidence for (A)(2)(i)(d):

- *The State's budget, as completed in Section VIII of the application. The narrative that accompanies and explains the budget and how it connects to the State's plan, as completed in Section VIII of the application.*

Evidence for (A)(2)(ii):

- *A summary in the narrative of the statements or actions and inclusion of key statements or actions in the Appendix.*

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

A(2): Building Statewide Capacity To Implement, Scale Up And Sustain Nevada's Promise

A(2)(i): Ensuring State Capacity Required To Implement Proposed Plans

The necessary commitments to collaboratively plan, implement, monitor, evaluate, and sustain *Nevada's Promise* are in place. Some infrastructure already exists, but must be expanded to support this comprehensive reform agenda. Guiding this work is a progressive theory of action—Managed Performance/Empowerment (MPE)³, which has led to success in educational systems across the country. Managed instruction and earned autonomy are the guiding principles of MPE, which requires:

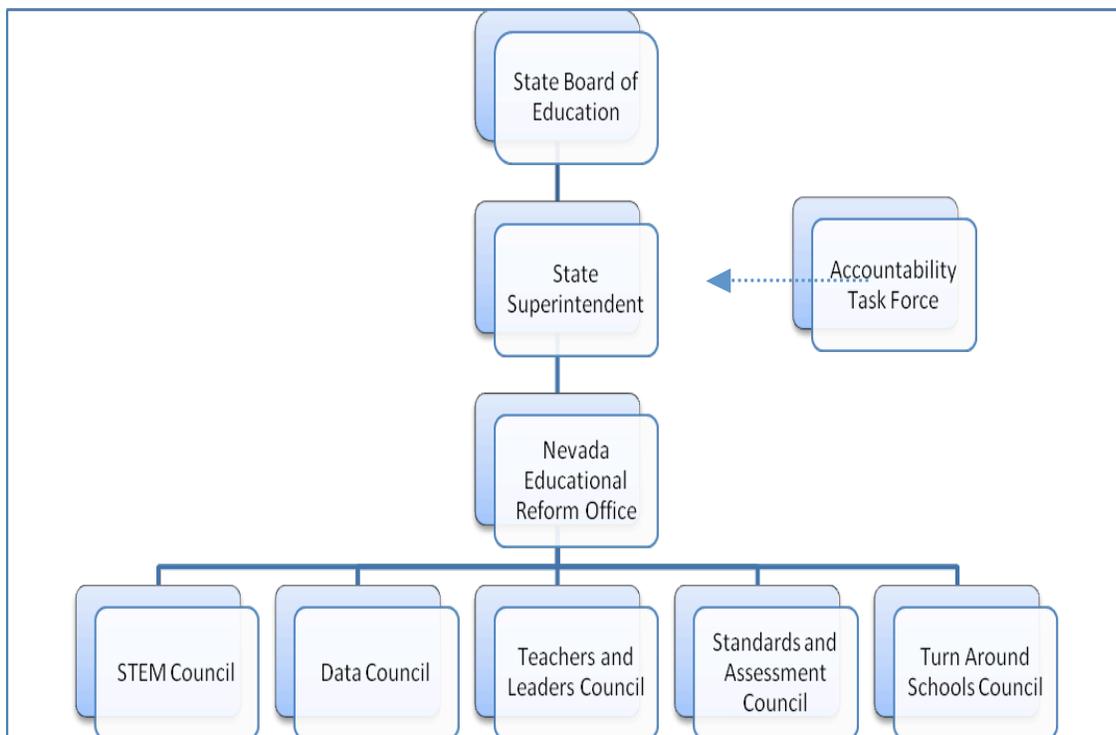
- Tightly aligned standards, curriculum, instruction, intervention, assessment, and professional development;
- Selection and hiring of high-quality staff;
- Effective and equitable resource allocation based on the needs of students;
- Supportive state, district, and school structures;
- Parent/community engagement;
- Transparent accountability and communication, including holding staff responsible for meeting clear, concrete performance expectations;
- Reliance upon effective data and monitoring systems to track accountability;
- Empowerment-orientation, in which increasing levels of autonomy are granted based on increased performance; and
- Establishment of clear, rigorous goals for students, teachers, principals, schools, districts, higher education, and the state.

Operating with the principles of MPE at the forefront, Nevada will sustain a tightly aligned instructional system, balancing school and district autonomy with comprehensive State and local accountability systems.

A(2)(i)(a): Providing Strong Leadership And Dedicated Teams To Implement Nevada’s Promise

The Nevada Department of Education (NDE) will provide primary leadership for *Nevada’s Promise*, with strong support from the Blue Ribbon Task Force until January 1, 2011, and the Accountability Task Force after January 1, 2011. Figure A(2)(i)-1 shows an organizational chart describing how *Nevada’s Promise* will be achieved, along with the associated leadership responsibilities of each entity:

Figure A(2)(i)-1: Nevada’s Promise Implementation Infrastructure



Nevada’s Promise Accountability Task Force will serve as the accountability agent for the reform agenda. The Accountability Task Force will be a continuation of the Nevada Governor’s Education Reform Blue Ribbon Task Force, which was established on March 15, 2010. The Accountability Task Force will serve as the external monitor of educational reform and will report to the public on the progress of the state’s reform efforts. Having key legislators and other policymakers on the Accountability Task Force will assist in ensuring that communication remains constant to help leverage ongoing support. With Race to the Top funding, a newly-

created Nevada Education Reform Office will supervise and manage all activities associated with *Nevada's Promise*.

The Nevada Education Reform Office will be established to guide the implementation and evaluation of *Nevada's Promise*. This office will be located in the Las Vegas office of the NDE. Staffing will include the Project Director and Project Manager, as well as content area experts, reform initiative leaders, a webmaster, information technology staff, and grants management and administrative support staff. The Director will report directly to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, who in turn is under the direct supervision of the State Board of Education. Further descriptions of these positions are provided in the key staff members' roles and responsibilities in Appendix A(2)(i)-1. The following five councils will support the work of the Nevada Education Reform Office (see Figure A(2)(i)-1):

1. Standards and Assessments Council
2. Data Council
3. Teachers and Leaders Council
4. Turn Around Schools Council
5. STEM Council

Councils will be chaired by members of the Nevada Education Reform Office. Urban and rural districts will be represented on each council, along with representatives from the Regional Professional Development Programs, higher education, teacher and administrator associations, state charter schools, and others as appropriate. The five councils will develop guidelines and policy recommendations to include:

- Development and implementation of interim and formative assessment systems;
- Governance issues that impact data access and use;
- Development and rollout of the teacher and principal evaluation system as linked to student achievement and growth data;

- Development of guidelines for using data to drive professional development to enhance teacher and leader effectiveness; and
- Turning around Nevada’s high-needs schools through a model of prioritized and clustered support.

The following NDE offices will serve a substantial support role in the reform agenda:

- *Assessment, Program Accountability, and Curriculum*—an existing office with 30 people dedicated to implementing a statewide balanced assessment system, providing oversight for accountability initiatives, and rollout and implementation of standards and curriculum design.
- *Charter School Office*—an existing office at the NDE, providing leadership to the existing 10 state-sponsored charter schools in Nevada, 18 district-sponsored charter schools and future charter schools.
- *Special Education, Elementary and Secondary Education, and School Improvement Programs*—an existing team of 30 people charged with leadership in ensuring that students from diverse backgrounds, based on race, disability, poverty, second language, and other factors have robust opportunities for success in P-12 classrooms, including addressing the needs of schools in improvement.
- *Teacher Licensure*—an existing office which includes responsibilities for teacher and principal licensure and re-licensure, and who staff the Professional Standards Commission, the entity responsible for developing and adopting state regulations regarding educator licensing.
- *Information Technology Office*—an existing office that focuses on information technology, data collection and analysis.
- *Career, Technical, and Adult Education Office*—an existing office that promotes the transition from high school to post-secondary education by developing programs of study.

Table A(2)(i)-1: Activities Timeline For Building Statewide Capacity

Objectives For A(2):	Build strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up and sustain proposed plans				
Primary Strategy:	Create and sustain the necessary infrastructure to lead and implement Nevada’s Promise				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Seek approval for Work Program from Interim Finance Committee (Nevada legislative subcommittee)	Oct				NDE
Establish the <i>Nevada’s Promise</i> Office; oversee Race to the Top	Oct-Dec	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE
Charter the Accountability Task Force; oversee accountability for Race to the Top	Oct-Dec	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Governor’s Office

District Leadership

Cross-district partnerships that are already in place will be leveraged to further support this collaborative project structure. The partnerships provide regular and immediate access to LEA decision-makers in a manner that supports smooth communication and flow of information.

Nevada’s Promise capitalizes on the state’s intimate structure of small school districts and state-sponsored charter schools who are supportive of collaborative planning and problem-solving.

Such collaboration routinely occurs through:

- The Nevada Association of School Superintendents, which includes the 17 school district superintendents in Nevada who meet monthly with the NDE Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent, as well as internal networking via telephone and email between meetings.
- District directors and charter school liaisons of Title I, special education, curriculum, and testing who meet through video-conferencing at least four times per year, and similarly engage in ongoing dialogue via technology.

Nevada’s Promise leadership staff will be added in the Clark County School District (CCSD), which represents 73% of Nevada’s student population, and in the Washoe County School District (WCSD), which serves an additional 15% of Nevada students. A coordinating staff position will

also be allocated to a newly formed Rural Coalition, a group that will provide additional support and leadership for Nevada's fifteen rural school districts.

Funds will also be allocated from the State portion of the budget for one staff person for each of the 17 school districts to serve as the district implementation leader for Nevada's Promise, and for one person to serve in this role to represent the 10 State-sponsored charter schools in Nevada. (See Appendix A(2)(i)-2 for full budget narrative.)

This infrastructure for project leadership will build upon some of the central systems already in place to support the agenda. These include: Nevada State Education Association, Nevada P-20 Council, Nevada Public Education Foundation, Nevada Association of School Administrators, Nevada PTA, and many others.

A(2)(i)(b): Supporting Participating Leas In Successfully Implementing Nevada's Promise

The Nevada Education Reform Office will provide leadership and management for the implementation of all project activities, as shown in Figure A(1)(i)-1, and will be informed by data on implementation and progress. Embedded evaluation efforts that aggregate summative data, and also focus substantially on progress monitoring and interim data collection and analysis will provide feedback on what is working and what is not. The Nevada Education Reform Office will provide oversight for project deliverables and timelines.

The Managed Performance/Empowerment model (MPE), the theory of action driving *Nevada's Promise*, relies upon clear goals and solid accountability. The reform initiative leaders in the Nevada Education Reform Office will comprise the Managed Performance/Empowerment (MPE) Team. This team will use data to conduct process analysis and institute appropriate interventions when needed, thereby supporting continuous process improvement as the project evolves. The MPE Team will also coordinate and monitor team and individual skills and capacity-building for staff in the Nevada Education Reform Office, the district reform office and its five Councils.

One of the MPE Team's first tasks will be assisting participating LEAs to refine their scopes of work to ensure 100% alignment with project goals and desired outcomes. The LEAs and other partners will have a role in determining the most efficient reporting mechanisms to track progress. This is expected to include submission of internal quarterly progress reports as well as annual reports to the State Board of Education, Accountability Task Force, and State Legislature.

Predictive trajectories will be built into quarterly reports to facilitate timely mid-course corrections and completion of deliverables so that *Nevada's Promise* meets the overarching goal: Every student will graduate, every class will be taught by an effective teacher, and every school will be led by an effective principal. In anticipation of the impact that this reform will have on current culture within NDE and its primary partners, the MPE Team will provide training and technical assistance to help staff lead and facilitate systems change. This component of support will be designed to cultivate and sustain an outcome-driven culture and workforce.

To support the statewide adoption and scale up of proven best practices, Nevada will adapt an existing networking function to serve as the annual Nevada Reform Education Summit on Effective Practices. This existing conference attracts approximately 500 educators per year and is already a popular venue for highlighting successful schools. In addition, best practices will be promoted electronically via E-MALL (Electronic Media Access to Leverage Learning), which will be purchased and/or built and implemented with this funding. Finally, financial incentives are built into the budget that will encourage district partners to adopt and sustain best practices that have proven successful. These incentives will be balanced with direct intervention support for school districts that are not performing to the standards set in the scope of work. Data will be used to leverage interventions and will be made available to the public to promote transparency and accountability.

A(2)(i)(c): Providing Effective And Efficient Operations And Processes For Implementing Nevada’s Promise

Nevada regularly administers grants in accordance with federal and state mandates, and has the support necessary for tightly managed grant duties. Nevada formulates allocations and awards sub-grants under established procedures per each funding agency’s requirements. These allocations will be prepared by the budget office in collaboration with the Nevada Education Reform Office Director. Nevada uses an electronic grant management system called ePAGE in which partners electronically submit and manage grant payments and reporting requirements (see Appendix A(2)(i)-3). Sub awards are typically valid for a 12-month period, with a 90-day reconciliation period at the end of the fiscal year.

Nevada has a clearly defined process for executing expenditures and drawing funds for all project personnel. As funds are expended by the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) and the sub-recipients, the checks are issued by the Nevada Controller’s Office and sent out by the Nevada Treasurer’s Office. The NDE draws funds in accordance with the U.S. Treasury–State Agreement with the Nevada Controller’s Office for federal draw funding techniques. The agreement states that the NDE will draw funds based upon the Average Clearance–Program Specific and the Actual Clearance–ZBA–ACH funding techniques subject to the Cash Management Improvement Act. The NDE draws accrue on a weekly basis, averaging approximately \$4 million per draw.

Once disbursed, the NDE is positioned to provide fiscal supervision and guidance to LEAs regarding grant expenditures. The web-based Management Performance system, as well as other subsidiary systems, includes budgeting functions that require LEAs to track state and federal funding. NDE reviews and approves grant sub-awards to ensure the grant meets the award requirements. The web-based ePAGE system, the Nevada State Controller’s Office Integrated Financial System (Advantage), the federal draw ASAP and GAPS systems, and other subsidiary systems are used to monitor state and federal grant awards. This allows NDE management to provide technical assistance on programming, performance measures, and compliance issues, which also allows for the processing, monitoring, and review of expenditures, encumbrances, and balances. This process has internal controls on grant expiration dates and prevents LEAs

from over-spending or spending grant award money beyond the grant expiration date while analyzing the LEA's budgeted revenues and expenditures.

These coordinated systems allow the NDE to monitor the LEA's expenditures. Accordingly, the Race to the Top expenditures will be monitored by NDE program and finance managers and subject to review by outside and state auditors. The Race to the Top funding will be administered under the ARRA CFDA 84.395 discretionary grant.

A(2)(i)(d): Using the funds for this grant, as described in the State’s budget and accompanying budget narrative, to accomplish the State’s plans and meet its targets, including where feasible, by coordinating, reallocating, or repurposing education funds from other Federal, State, and local sources so that they align with the State’s Race to the Top goals

The State of Nevada is committed to coordinating, reallocating, and repurposing education funds from other federal, state, and local sources so that they align with the overarching goal of *Nevada’s Promise*. The budget narrative (see Appendix G(1)-1), details how the funds from the Race to the Top initiative will be used to support *Nevada’s Promise*.

Budget Part I: Summary Budget Table Evidence for Selection Criterion A(2)(i)(d)

BUDGET CATEGORIES	PROJECT YEAR 1	PROJECT YEAR 2	PROJECT YEAR 3	PROJECT YEAR 4	TOTAL
1. Personnel	1,287,829	1,702,158	2,055,345	2,288,896	7,334,228
2. Fringe Benefits	334,178	467,377	561,220	614,574	1,977,349
3. Travel	119,000	147,107	248,712	449,400	964,219
4. Equipment	0	402,958	0	0	402,958
5. Supplies	120,000	215,144	147,924	130,000	613,068
6. Contractual	3,426,078	5,532,100	6,292,100	5,937,100	21,187,378
7. Training Stipends	0	0	0	0	0
8. Other	8,234,670	12,419,322	12,173,057	12,659,008	45,486,057
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	13,521,755	20,886,166	21,478,358	22,078,978	77,965,257
10. Indirect Costs*	449,548	682,806	762,044	840,345	2,734,743
11. Funding for Involved LEAs	0	0	0	0	0
12. Supplemental Funding for Participating LEAs	1,700,000	1,700,000	1,700,000	1,700,000	6,800,000
13. Total Costs (lines 9-12)	15,671,303	23,268,972	23,940,402	24,619,323	87,500,000
14. Funding Subgranted to Participating LEAs (50% of Total Grant)	21,875,000	21,875,000	21,875,000	21,875,000	87,500,000
15. Total Budget (lines 13-14)	37,546,303	45,143,972	45,815,402	46,494,323	175,000,000

All applicants must provide a break-down by the applicable budget categories shown in lines 1-15.

Columns (a) through (d): For each project year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all project years.

*If you plan to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to lines 11-12.

The state is already investing in the four reform strategies and will continue to do so. These investments include the following programs and processes:

A(2)(i)(e): Funding for Continuous Improvement

For the 2008-2009 school year, 323 schools statewide were eligible for Title I funding but only 156 (48.3%) were funded. Additionally, during this academic year, the NDE received \$2.7 million in Title I 1003(g) competitive funding, which was awarded to districts with Title I served schools identified as needing improvement. The funding provided revenue for these districts to address the needs of the schools that did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

In August 2007, the NDE was awarded a competitive State Personnel Development Grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, which brought \$3.4 million to the state over five years, to improve instruction for special education students through the delivery of high-quality, job-embedded professional development. These existing funding sources are completely aligned with the reform strategies guiding this proposal.

The Blue Ribbon Task Force will continue to collaborate with stakeholders and legislators after the implementation of *Nevada's Promise*. The Blue Ribbon Task Force will provide guidance and work with the State to procure ongoing funding to ensure systemic change. The Blue Ribbon Task Force will transition to the Accountability Task Force in January 2011. Furthermore, the Regional Professional Development Programs represent a current investment in all four reform strategies.

A(2)(ii): Support from a broad group of Stakeholders

Nevada's citizens are enduring a major economic crisis. Leadership from the political, educational, and business communities realize that educational reform is an essential component for Nevada's renewal. In the past, Nevada's leadership has not always shared a common sense of direction; however, *Nevada's Promise* is an ambitious proposal, and only through a shared vision will this plan succeed. Nevada will put the most effective teachers in every classroom, have the most effective principals leading every school, and expect every student to graduate. This is the

overarching goal of *Nevada's Promise*, which will be achieved through an alliance of every stakeholder committed to economic development that requires a well-educated workforce. Nevada's alliance represents commitments and support from a broad array of engaged stakeholders in the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

A(2)(ii)(a): The State's Teachers And Principals, Which Include The State's Teachers Unions Or Statewide Teacher Associations

Nevada's teachers and principals reflect its diversity. Between the major urban areas of Washoe County (Reno-Sparks-Tahoe) in the North and Clark County (Las Vegas-Henderson) in the South, lies some of the most sparsely populated regions in the country. It is noteworthy that the teachers' and administrators' associations have collaborated in developing this proposal and encouraged the LEAs to actively participate in this endeavor. The Nevada State Education Association, which represents educators throughout this vast area, as well as the two largest local education associations in Nevada, the Clark and Washoe County Education Associations, strongly support *Nevada's Promise*. These associations are committed to having great teachers for every student, great leaders for every school, and students who graduate. Letters of support from educator associations, as well as teachers, and principals, are included in Appendix (A)(2)(ii)-1.

A(2)(ii)(b): Other critical stakeholders, such as the State’s legislative leadership; charter school authorizers and State charter school membership associations (if applicable); other State and local leaders (e.g. business, community, civil rights, and education association leaders); Tribal schools; parent, student, and community organizations (e.g. parent-teacher associations, nonprofit organizations, local education foundations, and community-based organizations and institutions of higher education

Nevada’s political landscape also reflects its diverse demographic landscape. Governor Jim Gibbons is a product of Nevada’s education systems. As Governor, he has empowered parents and educators to transform their schools into places of learning and growth for each and every child. Governor Gibbons has been a primary leader in the development of *Nevada’s Promise*. Likewise, Senator Harry Reid, one of Nevada’s U.S. Senators and the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, believes that children represent the most important investment in the future of Nevada and the Nation and is fully supportive of *Nevada’s Promise*. Senator Reid and Governor Gibbons, as well as other prominent state political leaders, have endorsed *Nevada’s Promise* with bipartisan letters of support showing an enduring commitment to the plan.

Nevada is world famous for its gaming industry, which has often spearheaded technological knowledge and innovation. Such innovation requires a well-educated local workforce that can only be achieved through education reform. Elaine Wynn, the Director of Wynn Resorts, is recognized as a leader who has improved education through numerous leadership roles at the local and national levels. As co-chair of the Governor’s Blue Ribbon Task Force, Ms. Wynn is providing leadership for *Nevada’s Promise*. Nevada also has a robust manufacturing base that requires superior education, and accordingly, the Nevada Manufactures Association is a committed partner in *Nevada’s Promise*. Letters of support from Wynn Resorts, the Nevada Manufacturing Organization, and many other Nevada companies are also included in Appendix (A)(2)(ii)-1.

State political leadership has had a long history of supporting education reform in Nevada. This leadership participated in the recent special session to tie student achievement to teacher performance. Many have served in leadership roles in the Legislative Committee on Education, the Blue Ribbon Task Force, and the special committee on restructuring governance in the State.

Include are letters of support from Assemblywoman Debbie Smith, State Senator Steven Horsford, and State Senator William Raggio, to name a few.

Nevada's higher education community has been instrumental in developing *Nevada's Promise*. Daniel Klaich, Chancellor of the Nevada System of Higher Education, is the other co-chair of the Blue Ribbon Task Force. As co-chair, Mr. Klaich is leading Nevada's post-secondary institutions in becoming a dynamic partner for education. Joining higher education in supporting *Nevada's Promise* are the Nevada Parent Teacher Association, the Nevada Association of School Administrators and the Nevada Association of School Boards, as well as several civil rights, community-based, and other non-profit organizations. Letters of support from these organizations represent a broad base and grassroots effort behind sustained educational reform in Nevada.

A(3): Demonstrating Significant Progress In Raising Achievement And Closing Gaps (30 points)

The extent to which the State has demonstrated its ability to—

- (i) *Make progress over the past several years in each of the four education reform areas, and used its ARRA and other Federal and State funding to pursue such reforms; (5 points)*
- (ii) *Improve student outcomes overall and by student subgroup since at least 2003, and explain the connections between the data and the actions that have contributed to — (25 points)*

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

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

Evidence for A(3)(ii):

- *NAEP and ESEA results since at least 2003. Include in the Appendix all the data requested in the criterion as a resource for peer reviewers for each year in which a test was given or data was collected. Note that this data will be used for reference only and can be in raw format. In the narrative, provide the analysis of this data and any tables or graphs that best support the narrative.*

Recommended maximum response length: Six pages

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

A(3)(i): Demonstrated Progress in Reform Areas

Since the Nevada Educational Reform Act (NERA) of 1997, Nevada has been committed in earnest to engaging in educational reform to improve student performance. The passage of that statute ushered in a new era of standards-based instruction, assessment, and accountability. In 1999, NERA was amended to ensure that teachers received the professional development needed to sustain student mastery of content standards through the creation of Regional Professional Development Programs. These Regional Professional Development Programs have come to serve as the systemic backbone for providing training and technical assistance on content standards and instruction, as well as statewide administrative professional development.

As originally crafted, NERA outlined the first school and district improvement requirements to target reform for underperforming schools. The Act has evolved over time in response to emerging research and defines the accountability, support, and consequence structure for schools that have failed to reach desired outcomes. In 1997, a sister piece of legislation (NRS 386.650 — see Appendix A(1)(i)-5) created the State’s automated System of Accountability Information for Nevada (SAIN), a comprehensive data system that has grown exponentially over the past 15 years.

In response to these efforts, Nevada has made modest gains in student achievement as demonstrated in both the NAEP and State Criterion-Referenced Test (CRT) results . The state has also made some progress in reducing achievement gaps (see Appendix A (3)(i)-3). The trajectory for achievement is moving in the right direction, but needs to substantially ramp up to meet more aggressive and necessary targets.

Within the historical and policy context described above, Nevada has made strides in the following areas of reform:

Standards and Assessments. Nevada’s system for implementing standards and assessment has a long history beginning in the late 1970s with the establishment of the High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE), based on the Nevada Course of Study. Since then, much has changed with regard

to standards-based instruction and aligned assessment. In 2009, the Legislature's passage of statutes requiring the development of a growth model approach to measure student achievement mandated implementation no later than January 2011. (See Appendix A(3)(i)-4 for Adoption Growth Model for Schools; NRS 385.3594.)

Prior to the Common Core State Standards adoption, Nevada was in the process of reforming statewide standards to increase the level of rigor students are expected to demonstrate. Based on Norman Webb's Depth of Knowledge Model (2002) (see Appendix A(3)(i)-5), state educators are working to increase the cognitive complexity assessed in Nevada's summative instruments. State funds support this work, which is reflective of Nevada's commitment to implementing the standards and assessment system. Historically, Nevada has contributed roughly half of the funds that pay for federally and state-mandated testing and support, with federal funds covering the remaining half.

Nevada currently assesses students through the Nevada Proficiency Examination Program (NPEP) with CRTs at grades 3-8, science and writing at grades 5 and 8, the High School Proficiency Exam in grades 10 and 11; and by participating in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Nevada also has an alternate assessment for students with significant disabilities. In addition to these summative assessments, most Nevada school districts also support systems of formative and interim assessments to guide instructional decision making. Student graduation with a standard or advanced diploma is based upon completion of a specific number of credits in core and elective courses, as well as passage of proficiency exams in reading, writing, science, and mathematics.

Data Systems to Support Instruction. In 1997, the Nevada Legislature passed NRS 386.650 (see Appendix A(1)(i)-5), creating the State's automated System of Accountability Information for Nevada (SAIN). Through a combination of federal and state support, the system now meets 11 of the 12 components of the America COMPETES Act. Nevada contributes approximately \$350,000 annually to the support and ongoing enhancement of SAIN, including funding the majority of staff members responsible for working on the system. Nevada was awarded nearly \$6 million in 2007 to continue the development of this longitudinal data system. The NDE

recently partnered with the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation and the Nevada System of Higher Education to apply for \$9 million over three years from the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Recovery Act Grants.

Great Teachers and Leaders. Nevada engaged in reforming teacher and leader preparation and accountability systems in the mid-2000s, through the creation of the Teaching Quality Task Force (TQTF). The TQTF asserted recommendations that proposed reform in pre-service preparation, licensure, and ongoing professional development. While the “will” existed to adopt Teacher and Principal Standards and institute a system of teacher and administrator development and maintenance, the “way” did not, due to prohibitive start-up costs. The Race to the Top funds will provide the needed resources to develop this system, which can then be maintained with existing resources.

There has also been a desire to improve Nevada’s capacity to recruit and retain great teachers and leaders. For the last five years, Nevada has had a state-level agreement with teachers, in which they can use an online application system. Legislation has also been passed to support pay-for-performance and to entice teachers to work at high-needs schools by offering retirement credits and salary bonuses for teaching at schools with high percentages of students living in poverty, NRS 385.34691 (see Appendix A(3)(i)-6). The 2007 Legislature created a grant fund for incentives for licensed education personnel designed to attract and retain key personnel teaching in high-need schools. The first year, 1,251 teachers each received \$3,500 in financial incentives allocated for teachers serving high-needs students. Under a parallel initiative, which provided a 1/5th retirement credit to entice teachers to work in high-needs schools, 5,029 teachers received incentives. Both programs totaled \$22,622,603 in state funding.

In 2005 and continued in 2007, the Nevada State Legislature funded \$92 million to support school reform targeted at “Innovation and the Prevention of Remediation.” Many school districts seized this opportunity to provide mentoring for new and existing teachers and to support instructional coaches to help teachers better understand content and provide effective instruction through sound methodology.

Federal ARRA funds have also been used to extend the Nevada's professional development outreach efforts. An example is the Pathway Project, supported by \$4.2 million of ARRA funding, with the goal of increasing student achievement by providing engaging and motivating classroom experiences driven by technology integration. Key elements of the project include strategic initiatives of professional development, building infrastructure, integrating technology-related classroom activities to support 21st century learning, and enhancing collaboration among Nevada's teachers.

Turning Around Lowest-Achieving Schools. Nevada's school and district improvement laws align with the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Senate Bill 389, enacted by the Nevada Legislature (see Appendix A(3)(i)-7) in 2009, made substantive changes to the system of support for Nevada schools identified as needing improvement. The statute calls for the development of a differentiated system of support and consequences, with a School Support Team identified as one option for the NDE to support schools identified as in need of improvement in year four and beyond. Since 2003, state and federal funds have supported the assignment of a School Support Team to every school deemed in need of improvement at year three or greater, paying for school reform leaders to directly intervene in those schools. Nevada has also set aside state funds to support school and district improvement through teacher mentoring, coaching, formative and interim assessment development and use, and funds for making data available to teachers and principals for instructional decision-making.

Nevada's economy was devastated when the housing bubble burst in 2008. Stimulus funding under ARRA was timely for Nevada, and was essential for keeping teachers in classrooms and providing access to instructional support for students. Nevada also used these funds to meet the needs of the most challenged schools. More than 60 schools were converted to Title I schools with these funds, and across the ARRA funding streams (e.g., special education, Title I) Nevada school districts saved or created almost 1,000 jobs directly linked to student instruction.

A(3)(ii): Improve Student Outcomes And Data-Driven Decision Making

A(3)(ii)(a): Increasing Student Achievement In Reading/Language Arts And Mathematics

Nevada has made steady improvements in raising student achievement for all students. In a recent article by The Education Trust, “Gauging the Gaps: A Deeper Look at Student Achievement” (2010) (see Appendix A(3)(ii)-1), Nevada was one of eight states and the District of Columbia cited as leaders in making significant improvement across groups. Nevada was also one of only four states and the District of Columbia to show gains in both fourth- and eighth-grade mathematics in 2009 as reported in the *Nation’s Report Card* (see Appendix (A(3)(ii)-2). The story of student achievement on the NAEP mathematics and reading assessments is one of significant growth over time, but still short of the national average. In fact, Nevada’s fourth- and eighth-grade students increased their NAEP mathematics scores from 2003 to 2009, and reading scores from 2003 to 2007, at a rate greater than the national average. Unfortunately, Nevada students still performed lower than the national average (see Appendix A(3)(ii)-3, NAEP assessments).

Nevada has experienced similar improvements in student achievement on the Nevada Criterion Referenced Test (CRT) and the High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE) (see Appendix A(3)(ii)-4 and Appendix A(3)(ii)-5). These tests are provided to all students in grades 3-8 and 10-12 in mathematics, reading and language arts, and for grades 5, 8, and 10-12 in science. Each grade has shown significant improvement on the CRT math and reading tests between 2003 and 2009. Similar results for HSPE results are indicated.

A(3)(ii)(b): Decreasing Achievement Gaps Between Subgroups In Reading/Language Arts And Mathematics

Nevada’s sustained efforts to improve student achievement has gained traction, and growth is evident in the student data. However, some achievement gaps persist, thereby reinforcing the need for more consequences and effective educational reforms as outlined in the agenda for *Nevada’s Promise*. On the NAEP reading assessment, an increase of 4th-grade scores over time occurred for all subgroups, which is positive, but did not serve to eliminate the achievement gap. The eighth-grade NAEP reading scores show a considerable narrowing of the African American/White gap, which is now more narrow than the national average.

On the NAEP mathematics assessment the fourth-grade gap between high-poverty and low-poverty students narrowed considerably from 2003-2009, while the African American/White gap widened. The eighth-grade NAEP mathematics assessment results indicate that over time the high-poverty/low-poverty gap is considerably more narrow. (See Appendix A(3)(ii)-6).

Results from Nevada's assessments provide evidence of differential achievement by subgroups with considerable gains in closing some gaps while other gaps persist. The Hispanic/White achievement gap narrowed from 2004-2009 in reading for all grades, and the African American/White achievement gap has remained steady with slight narrowing for all grades over the same period of time. Mathematics results tell a different story; the Hispanic/White and African American/White Mathematics achievement gaps all narrowed between 2003-2009 (see Appendix A(3)(ii)-7).

A(3)(ii)(c): Increasing High School Graduation Rates

In addition to a focus on student achievement, Nevada is also committed to increasing the number of students graduating from high school. The measure used for the graduation rates in Nevada is an estimated longitudinal rate. The method measures the percentage of students who graduate from high school in a given year. The calculation method is as follows: The number of standard, advanced, and adult diplomas, divided by the number of standard, advanced, adult, and adjusted diplomas, plus the number of certificates of attendance, plus the number of dropouts from the graduating class since entering ninth grade. This school year, Nevada will be computing a graduation rate using the cohort model as well. Overall graduation rates have increased by two percentage points from 2003 to 2008. As shown in Figure A(3)(ii)-1, the African American/White graduation gap narrowed by two percentage points and the Hispanic/White graduation rate gap narrowed by 2.3 percentage points from the 2004 to 2008.

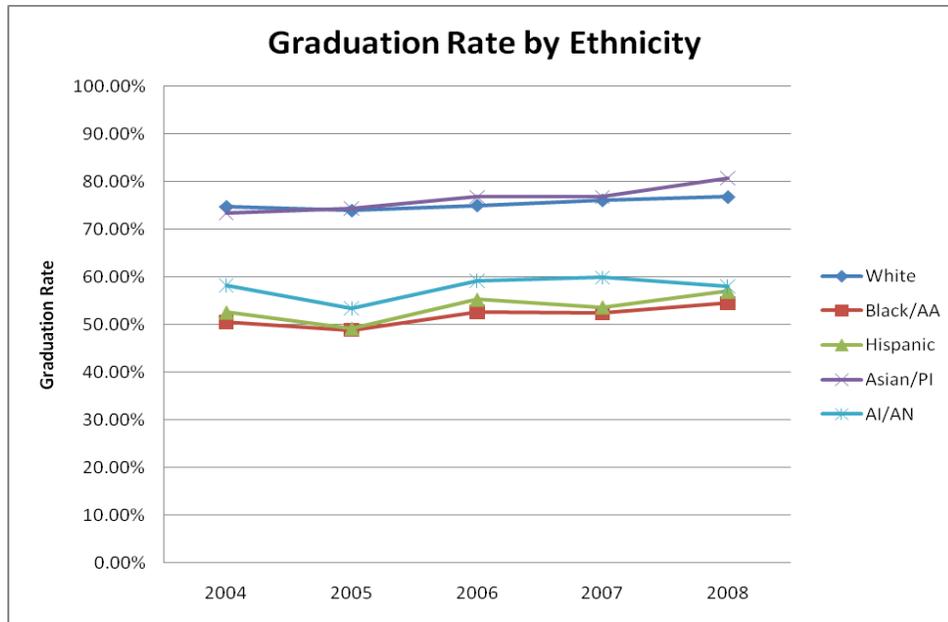


Figure A(3)(ii)-1. Graduation Rate by Ethnicity, 2004-2008

Additional graphs showing Nevada’s progress in raising scores and closing the achievement gaps on NAEP by ethnicity and race, students eligible for free and reduced lunch, and students with disabilities can be found in Appendix A(3)(ii)-8.

Reform-Based Connections to Student Results

Nevada’s modest gains can be attributed to the very systems that will be enhanced and expanded through the Race to the Top funding. First, Nevada will be focusing on rigorous content standards and supporting professional development to ensure that teachers understand the content standards and have the necessary skills to teach to student mastery. Significant population growth between 2000-2005 challenged the system’s ability to address student performance due to the critical need for teachers and schools to house the burgeoning student population.

In addition to a focus on content, there has also been a push to increase capacity to deliver instruction effectively, especially for Nevada’s increasing population of diverse learners. Since 2005, the percentage of students in Nevada with Limited English Proficiency has increased from 15.5% to 18%. Several districts have embraced the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol

which has resulted in expanding teachers' capacity to appropriately differentiate instruction for limited-English proficiency students. The Instructional Consultation Teams model (Rosenfield & Gravois, 1996) (see Appendix A(3)(ii)-9) has been helpful in assisting students with disabilities to master content standards. Efficacy data show that goal attainment is high in the 12 school districts that are implementing this model of shoulder-to-shoulder peer coaching.

Strides have also been made in targeting improvement for secondary students. Career, Technical and Adult Education (CTE) courses are aligned with content standards and legislative reform initiatives, which have mandated academic learning plans for students in small learning communities in high schools, and accountability to track eighth-grade students for drop out purposes. There are also gateway coursework requirements and rewards for students to pursue higher education in Nevada through the Millennium scholarship, a visionary state-funded program that has, thus far, helped 19,072 Nevada graduates attend Nevada colleges and universities (see Appendix A(3)(ii)-10 and Appendix A(3)(ii)-11). Students have also had assistance in accessing higher education opportunities through programs that support students taking advanced placement courses and pay for students to take college entrance exams.

Support to schools has increased over the past decade under a comprehensive statewide system that focuses on developing and implementing school improvement plans based on student needs and student outcomes. Every school in Nevada must meet the same levels of achievement under the state's accountability laws. There has been an expectation of an aligned system of improvement for student achievement, and state and federal funds have been attached to the implementation of such plans. A uniform system of school improvement analysis and planning has been in place since 2003, under the auspices of the Nevada Student Achievement Gap Elimination program (SAGE) (see Appendix A(3)(ii)-12).

Making data available for analysis, improvement planning and evaluation of the success of strategies is an essential consideration in this work, and has been addressed through the state's automated System of Accountability Information for Nevada (SAIN). State level subsystems, such as the Nevada Report Card, support access to accountability reporting attached to the state

assessment, as do district-level systems that make interim assessment data available through technology-based tools.

The passage of state legislation that authorizes alternative governance structures such as Empowerment Schools (see Appendix F(2)(v)-1) indicates Nevada's desire for innovation. Seventeen of these schools are operating in the Clark County School District, and are being considered by other districts for adoption. The state has also encouraged the capacity for charter schools to make a difference for students, with a structure that enables district-sponsored charter schools as well as State Board of Education-sponsored charter schools (see Section F(3)).

A state-funded early childhood program sponsors the education of preschool students in 10 school districts, and the Reading First initiative was of value to 30 schools in the period from 2004 to 2010 (see Appendix A(3)(ii)-13). Nevada conducted a pre-kindergarten longitudinal study showing that students participating in early childhood education outperform student who do not participate. Second and fourth grade students who participated in early childhood education had statistically significant higher scores in both reading and mathematics than students who did not. These results support a wider body of educational research on the long-term cognitive benefits of early childhood education.

Nevada's strategies for education reform provide a framework for achieving our five targeted objectives, and ultimately, to reach our overarching goal: every class will be taught by an effective teacher, every school will be led by an effective principal, and every student will graduate. Section B of this proposal outlines Nevada's approach to create a balanced assessment system that will generate the formative, benchmark, and summative information needed to improve instruction. Section C describes the data systems that will get the best information to students, parents, teachers and principals so they make the right decisions to increase student achievement. Section D proposes a Management Performance and empowerment system that incentivizes and holds responsible every teacher and principal to high expectations of practice and performance. Section E identifies how low-performing schools will receive the attention needed to turn around. All of these efforts require appreciable data collection and ongoing evaluation to ensure we achieve *Nevada's Promise*.

If today is a pivotal time in Nevada, then tomorrow is essential for our future prosperity. Transforming education means transforming Nevada. More than 145 letters of support and endorsements from all 17 school districts and 95% of the teachers in Nevada demonstrate the committed will and drive of business leaders, educators, elected officials, community members, and parents to change the outcomes for our students. Nevadans have united like never before to work on the Race to the Top proposal because it presents an opportunity to spur the transformation of every sector of our education system. To change takes the drive and energy that has been harnessed by this process, but it also requires a promise: A promise to our students that they will graduate; a promise to our teachers and principals that they will excel, and a promise to one another that the legacy we leave will live forever in our most precious renewable energy – our children. If Nevada is not a recipient of Race to the Top funding, this unprecedented momentum will be dampened, but our Battle Born spirit will persevere.

Section B: Standards And Assessments (70 Points)

B(1): Developing And Adopting Common Standards (40 points)

The extent to which the State has demonstrated its commitment to adopting a common set of high-quality standards, evidenced by (as set forth in Appendix B)—

(i) The State’s participation in a consortium of States that— (20 points)

(a) Is working toward jointly developing and adopting a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) that are supported by evidence that they are internationally benchmarked and build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation; and

(b) Includes a significant number of States; and

(ii) — (20 points)

(b) For Phase 2 applications, the State’s adoption of a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) by August 2, 2010, or, at a minimum, by a later date in 2010 specified by the State in a high-quality plan toward which the State has made significant progress, and its commitment to implementing the standards thereafter in a well-planned way.⁴

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

Evidence for B(1)(i):

- *A copy of the Memorandum of Agreement, executed by the State, showing that it is part of a standards consortium.*

⁴Phase 2 applicants addressing selection criterion (B)(1)(ii) may amend their June 1, 2010 application submission through August 2, 2010 by submitting evidence of adopting common standards after June 1, 2010.

- *A copy of the final standards or, if the standards are not yet final, a copy of the draft standards and anticipated date for completing the standards.*
- *Documentation that the standards are or will be internationally benchmarked and that, when well-implemented, will help to ensure that students are prepared for college and careers.*
- *The number of States participating in the standards consortium and the list of these States.*

Evidence for B(1)(ii):

For Phase 1 applicants:

- *A description of the legal process in the State for adopting standards, and the State's plan, current progress, and timeframe for adoption.*

For Phase 2 applicants:

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

Recommended maximum response length: Two page

**(B) Standards and Assessments
State Reform Conditions Criteria**

NEVADA'S STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATION REFORM	STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT: PLANNED ACTIVITIES
<p>Improve student performance through collaboration with key stakeholders such as parents, teachers, principals, employee associations, district administrators, state officials, community leaders, and legislators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a statewide professional development plan for the roll-out, training, and support of instruction for the Common Core State Standards ▪ Develop college readiness expectations for mathematics and ELA with the Nevada System of Higher Education
<p>Improve classroom instruction on rigorous and relevant content, including an emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adopt the Common Core State Standards ▪ Participate in the review and proposed development of the national science education standards framework ▪ Promote a transition from high school to post-secondary education around the Programs of Study
<p>Improve classroom instruction and student performance using data at all levels—student, classroom, school, district, state—to support the improvement planning process, evaluate the effectiveness of planned programs, and drive instructional decisions focused on increased student achievement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium to develop common summative assessments in ELA and mathematics ▪ Incorporate longitudinal data in reading and mathematics to implement the Nevada Growth Model for Achievement ▪ Produce an aligned system of statewide interim measures ▪ Implement Early Reading Interventions using data from Reading First schools
<p>Improve achievement through the best practices that have been proven effective in Nevada</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop the Nevada Curricular Frameworks that are aligned to the Common Core State Standards ▪ Develop a statewide pre-service teacher course of study that is aligned with the CCSS ▪ Use technology and advanced items to assess complex thinking, with a focus on STEM ▪ Develop targeted technical assistance for all high-needs schools and districts ▪ Provide professional development to empower teachers and principals to make data-based instructional decisions ▪ Conduct statewide professional development on Common Core State Standards using E-MALL

B(1): Developing And Adopting Common Core State Standards

B(1)(i): Participation In A Consortium To Adopt Common Core State Standards

Nevada has historically had a strong commitment to uniform academic standards. In the late 1990s standards were created in English language arts, math, science, social studies and other non-core subjects. Subsequent periodic reviews included updating, revising, and establishing Pre-kindergarten standards. Furthermore, Nevada's adoption of a Managed Performance/Empowerment Theory of Action has necessitated the need for standards that are tightly aligned with curriculum and instruction.

In Spring 2009, Governor Jim Gibbons and Dr. Keith Rheault, Nevada Superintendent of Public Instruction, signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) (see Appendix B(1)(i)-1) with the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors' Association that committed Nevada's support to the development of K-12 internationally benchmarked, Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics.

While the adoption of the Common Core State Standards in mathematics will support STEM education, the Nevada Science Standards will also incorporate enhanced technology and engineering principles in its 2011 revision. In support of this revision process, Nevada will participate in the review and development of the proposed national science standards framework in the summer of 2010. The national framework and science education standards will be released in the spring and fall of 2011 and serve as the basis for the revision of the Nevada science content standards.

B(1)(ii): Progress Toward Adoption of Common Core State Standards

Prompted by discussions during the 2009 Legislative session, the NDE and NSHE formed the College Readiness Task Force. This task force was charged with drafting regulatory language to establish a definition of "college readiness" and to create college readiness standards for Nevada. The proposed language states that a "course of study successfully completed in a four-year high school program is regarded as a strong indication that a high school student is ready to participate successfully as a full-time freshman student at a post-secondary institution." This course of study includes the completion of two years of the same foreign language or

demonstrated proficiency to speak at least two languages, along with completion of those courses required for a Nevada advanced high school diploma as defined in NAC 389.663 (see Appendix B(1)(i)-2). A workshop for the introduction of the NAC proposed language was held at the March 19, 2010 meeting of the Nevada State Board of Education, and adoption of this language occurred at the May 14, 2010 State Board meeting.

As further evidence of stakeholder commitment to the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, the NDE staff, higher education faculty, and district educators provided feedback to the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors' Association on drafts of the Common Core State Standards in July, October, and December of 2009, as well as in January and February of 2010. In March, the NDE met with educators from school districts, Regional Professional Development Programs (RPDPs), Nevada State Education Association (NSEA), and the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) to assess the relative match between the Common Core State Standards and the existing Nevada Content Standards in ELA and mathematics. Table B(1)-1 details the timeline and activities by which Nevada will adopt the Common Core State Standards, prior to August 2, 2010. Nevada's adoption process, which includes approval by the Council on Academic Standards and adoption by the Nevada State Board of Education (NSBE), is defined in NRS 389.520 (see Appendix B(1)(i)-3).

Table B(1)(ii)-1. Adoption of Common Core State Standards Timeline

DATE	ACTION TO ENSURE ADOPTION OF COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS BY AUGUST 2, 2010
March 30-31, 2010	NDE facilitated a meeting for educators from across the state to determine the degree to which the Common Core State Standards and the current Nevada content Standards in ELA and mathematics match.
April 6, 2010	The Common Core State Standards were introduced to the Council for Academic Standards.
May 4, 2010	The Council for Academic Standards approved the draft of the Common Core State Standards.
May 14, 2010	The Nevada State Board of Education held a workshop to discuss adoption of the draft Common Core State Standards.
June 17-18, 2010	The State Board of Education will review the Common Core State Standards.
August 2, 2010	The State Board of Education will adopt the Common Core State Standards.

Table B(1)(ii)-1: Activities Timeline For Adopting Approved Common Core State Standards

Objectives for B(1):	Develop and adopt Common Core State Standards				
Primary Strategy:	Create and sustain the necessary infrastructure to lead and implement Nevada’s Promise				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Adopt Common Core State Standards	Aug				NDE; Council for Academic Standards; NSBE
Participate in development of national science standards framework	Aug-Jun				NDE
Upon release of the national framework and science education standards, revise and adopt college and career-ready Nevada science content standards that incorporate STEM principles		Oct			NDE; LEAs; NSHE

B(2): Developing And Implementing Common, High-Quality Assessments (10 points)

The extent to which the State has demonstrated its commitment to improving the quality of its assessments, evidenced by (as set forth in Appendix B) the State’s participation in a consortium of States that—

- (i) Is working toward jointly developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice) aligned with the consortium’s common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice); and*
- (ii) Includes a significant number of States.*

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

Evidence for B(2):

- *A copy of the Memorandum of Agreement, executed by the State, showing that it is part of a consortium that intends to develop high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice) aligned with the consortium’s common set of K-12 standards; or documentation that the State’s consortium has applied, or intends to apply, for a grant through the separate Race to the Top Assessment Program (to be described in a subsequent notice); or other evidence of the State’s plan to develop and adopt common, high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice).*
- *The number of States participating in the assessment consortium and the list of these States.*

Recommended maximum response length: One page

B(2)(i): Participation In A Consortium To Develop High-Quality Assessments

Dr. Keith Rheault, Nevada’s Superintendent of Public Instruction, signed the Document of Commitment to participate in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) on

April 15, 2010 (see Appendix B(2)(i)-1). This Consortium of states is developing a high-quality balanced assessment system including summative, benchmark/interim, and formative assessments. The NDE staff from the Assessment, Program Accountability, and Assessment office has already begun working with SBAC including serving in leadership roles or work team activities. The Consortium's priorities for a new generation assessment system are rooted in a desire for the valid, reliable, and fair assessment of both a deep disciplinary understanding of content as well as the higher-order thinking skills increasingly demanded by a knowledge-based economy. These priorities are also grounded in a belief that assessment must support ongoing improvements in instruction and learning, and must be useful for all members of the educational community including: students, parents, teachers, school administrators, members of the public, and policymakers.

The Consortium supports three primary design principles:

1. Teacher engagement and professional development,
2. Computer-delivered adaptive testing, and
3. Performance assessment.

The Consortium recognizes the need for an aligned system of formative, interim/benchmark, and summative assessments that supports high-quality learning, the demands of accountability, and innovative assessment while reorganizing the need for fiscally sustainability. Based on engagement with the Consortium to date, Nevada has confidence that the efforts of the SMARTER Balanced Consortium will be organized to accomplish these goals.

B(2)(ii): The Consortium Includes A Significant Number Of States

The SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium was formed from a merger of three consortia in January 2010 in response to the Race to the Top competition. As of May 18, 2010, the SMARTER Balanced Consortium consists of a total of 45 states (see Appendix B(2)(ii)-1).

Table B(2)(ii)-1. Activities Timeline For Participation In SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium

Objectives for B(2):	Develop and implement common, high-quality assessments				
Primary Strategy:	Join and participate in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Participation in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium, including serving in leadership roles on work teams	Apr	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; SBAC

B(3): Supporting The Transition To Enhanced Standards And High-Quality Assessments (20 points)

The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan for supporting a statewide transition to and implementation of internationally benchmarked K-12 standards that build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation, and high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice) tied to these standards. State or LEA activities might, for example, include: developing a rollout plan for the standards together with all of their supporting components; in cooperation with the State’s institutions of higher education, aligning high school exit criteria and college entrance requirements with the new standards and assessments; developing or acquiring, disseminating, and implementing high-quality instructional materials and assessments (including, for example, formative and interim assessments (both as defined in this notice)); developing or acquiring and delivering high-quality professional development to support the transition to new standards and assessments; and engaging in other strategies that translate the standards and information from assessments into classroom practice for all students, including high-need students (as defined in this notice).

The State shall provide its plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria

elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

B(3): Transitioning To Enhanced Standards And High-Quality Assessments

A high-quality system of standards and assessment is fundamental to the success of Nevada's statewide reform agenda. The primary focus of *Nevada's Promise* is student achievement. To assure that targets are met, the Nevada Education Reform Office, in partnership with the NDE office of Assessment, Program Accountability, and Curriculum, will guide Nevada's transition to Common Core State Standards and measure student growth in achievement, as aligned to high-quality assessments. With the implementation of the Managed Performance/Empowerment Theory of Action, a strong relationship between clear and coherent standards and well-written assessments insures a coordinated instructional system.

The High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE) in writing, reading and mathematics has been a graduation requirement since 1980. An additional science exam was recently added beginning with students graduating in the spring of 2010. Since the inception of the HSPE, Nevada has increased the rigor of these exams. (See Appendix B(3)-1 for sample questions.) Furthermore, in accordance with expectations under NCLB, Nevada also administers Criterion-Referenced Tests (CRTs) in grades 3-8 in reading and mathematics, and writing and science in grades 5 and 8 (see Appendix B(3)-2).

Nevada has recently incorporated increased cognitive complexity into all state assessments, based on Norman Webb's Alignment Model (2002) (see Appendix A(3)(i)-5). The Nevada Alternate Assessment (NAA) in grades 3-8 and 11 has also recently undergone a major overhaul to ensure that students with the most significant cognitive impairments participate in a standards-based assessment in order to judge their academic progress. A professional development plan is being developed in the 2010-2011 school year to ensure that special education staff are knowledgeable and trained in the instruction of the Nevada standards, particularly for those students who participate in the alternate assessment, described in more detail in section [(D)(3)].

The NDE will use longitudinal student assessment data in reading and mathematics to implement the Nevada Growth Model for Achievement (see Appendix B(3)-3) at the elementary and middle school levels, and pursue its expansion to high school during the 2010-2011 school year, described in more detail in D(2)(i). This model uses data from four consecutive school years to measure growth by establishing percentiles to reflect how students compare to their peers. Summative assessments, including K-2 literacy and mathematics assessments, and possible high school end-of-course exams, will be used in the expansion of the Nevada Growth Model for Achievement for all students in grades K-12 and will be fully implemented in the 2013-2014 school year.

In collaboration with the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium, Nevada will work with member states to build common summative assessments in ELA and mathematics that are aligned to the Common Core State Standards. By the 2014-2015 school year, the Consortium will begin providing operational assessments that are aligned to the Common Core State Standards. A planning meeting is set to be held in June 2010 to determine specific directions for the enhancement of Nevada’s summative assessment that will be aligned to the Common Core State Standards by the 2012-2013 school year. The NDE Table B(3)-1 outlines activities related to the development of the *Nevada’s Promise* and implementation of a high-quality balanced assessment system.

Table B(3)-1. Activities Timeline For The Development And Implementation Of A High-Quality Assessment System Aligned To Common Core State Standards

Objectives for B(3):	Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments				
Primary Strategy:	Build and sustain a high-quality, balanced assessment system aligned to Common Core State Standards (CCSS)				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Implement the Nevada Growth Model for Achievement (NGMA) in grades 4-8	Jan	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; LEAs
Expand NGMA for use in high school	Feb	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE;

Objectives for B(3):	Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments				
Primary Strategy:	Build and sustain a high-quality, balanced assessment system aligned to Common Core State Standards (CCSS)				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
					LEAs
Evaluate development or acquisition of summative assessments in K-2 and End of Course in high school	Jan-Mar				NDE; Standards & Assessment Council
Begin development or acquisition of summative assessments in K-2 and End of Course in core subjects in high school as appropriate and field test		Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun		NDE; LEAs
Implement K-2 and End of Course assessments in core subjects				Sept	NDE; LEAs
Develop and field test 3-8 assessments in ELA and math aligned to the CCSS	Oct-Jun	Jul-May			NDE; LEAs
Implement 3-8 assessments in ELA and math aligned to the CCSS			Apr	Apr	NDE; LEAs
Evaluate existing K-12 interim assessments in Nevada and make recommendations for revision to current systems	Nov-Feb				NDE; LEAs; Standards and Assessment Council
Implement recommended changes in support of an aligned system of interim assessments		Jan-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; LEAs
Create criteria for the development of a common formative assessment system to support teachers, students, and families	Jan-Jun				NDE; LEAs; Standards & Assessment Council

Interim/Benchmark Assessments

Unlike classroom-based formative assessments, interim/benchmark assessments will be aggregated and reported at the school and district level. Interim/benchmark assessments provide

teachers a valid and reliable way to predict difficulties, diagnose strengths and weaknesses, set instructional goals, and monitor learning. Currently, 15 of the 17 Nevada LEAs have interim/benchmark assessment systems in place. Although many LEAs contract with the same interim assessment vendor, the interim systems are unique to each districts' specifications.

To develop a more comprehensive and aligned system of interim assessments in Nevada, the Nevada Education Reform Office will provide oversight on an evaluation of the existing interim/benchmark systems across all LEAs and state-sponsored charter schools during the 2010-2011 school year. As a result of this evaluation, the Standards and Assessment Council will make recommendations for changes that will produce an aligned system of interim measures across Nevada by the completion of the 2012-2013 school year. Nevada's membership in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium will provide opportunities for the development and acquisition of additional resources to support this effort.

Formative Assessments

Classroom based formative assessments are a critical component of a balanced assessment system designed to inform educators about students' thinking as they perform tasks, justify solutions, and assess understanding of a concept prior to advancing. Using data collected through formative assessments, educators can gauge, sequence, and differentiate instruction.

By 2013-2014, statewide interim and formative tools will be available to all Nevada schools to support instruction of, and measure student growth in, CCSS. Work will continue toward pre-course and post-course common statewide assessments for other subjects such as science, social studies, and computer technology. Effective implementation of these systems helps teachers and students understand the specific and measurable targets for learning and also address existing gaps in learning.

Implementation and support for a balanced assessment system is built into the *Nevada's Promise* agenda. In order to ensure student progress toward college and career readiness as well as placement of highly effective teachers and leaders in every school, Nevada will provide teachers and leaders with aggregated student progress data. This data will enable educators to track and

make necessary adjustments regarding assessment and professional development systems. With the support of the SMARTER Balanced Consortium, the NDE will also investigate new ways to measure student achievement in all content areas, with particular focus on STEM. This work includes using technology and advanced items to assess complex thinking at the formative, interim/benchmark and summative levels.

The Turn-Around Schools Council, as supported by the Nevada Education Reform Office, will also develop targeted technical assistance for all high-needs schools and districts. This will support mastery of standards, enhancing the statewide system of school support (see Section E). Accordingly, as determined by the Nevada Comprehensive Curriculum Audit Tool (NCCAT), a targeted assistance team will be matched to the needs of each school or district.

One perceived deficiency in educator knowledge is the lack of consistent understanding of a balanced assessment system, including the formative assessment process and the ability to interpret and evaluate data to inform instructional decisions. *Nevada's Promise* will ensure that such professional development will empower educators to make informed decisions regarding student instruction.

Professional Development

Per the Managed Performance/Empowerment Theory of Action, an essential element in the successful implementation of the Common Core State Standards and a high-quality, balanced assessment system is research-based and job-embedded professional development for teachers and school leaders. By December 2010, the Teachers and Leaders Council and the Nevada Education Reform Office will perform an analysis of the existing professional development systems to create a clearly articulated statewide system of professional development. The Standards and Assessment Council and the Teachers and Leaders Council will collaborate to develop a statewide professional development plan for the roll-out, training, and support for instruction of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) work. Activities aligned to the CCSS under this plan will include statewide standards-based Individualized Development Plans, and the creation and implementation of statewide Aspiring Leaders Academy, and summer institutes for teachers. With the aid of the Regional Professional Development Programs, 8,000 teachers

and principals will be trained each year on Common Core State Standards in accordance with activities described in this application.

As one of Nevada’s primary professional development partners, the Regional Professional Development Programs will create and implement training opportunities for teachers and administrators that recommend instructional strategies and resources to support the CCSS. This training will include specific strategies for standards-based instruction of special populations, such as students with disabilities and English Language Learners. In addition, the NDE will track individual educators in all professional development activities to study the impact of training on student achievement.

In conjunction with the NDE teacher licensure office, the Teachers and Leaders Council will develop a statewide course of study for Pre-Service Teacher Instruction to ensure alignment to the CCSS and assessments. (This course of study will align with the development of teacher and principal standards described in Section D(4) and D(5).) In coordination with the Nevada Commission on Professional Standards in Education, knowledge of CCSS and the components of a balanced assessment system will be embedded in the teaching and principal standards and will be reinforced through the licensure system.

Table B(3)-2. Activities Timeline For The Development And Implementation Of A High-Quality Professional Development

Objectives for B(3):	Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments				
Primary Strategy:	Develop and deliver high-quality professional development focused on alignment of instruction and common core				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Evaluate existing systems of professional development	Oct-Nov				NDE; RPDP; Teachers and Leaders Council
Develop a statewide professional development plan to include roll-	Dec-May				NDE; RPDP;

Objectives for B(3):	Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments				
Primary Strategy:	Develop and deliver high-quality professional development focused on alignment of instruction and common core				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
out of the CCSS, STEM instruction, balanced assessment systems, use of data to inform instruction, and standards-based instruction for special-needs populations for implementation by the RPDPs and LEAs					Teachers and Leaders Council; Standards and Assessment Council
Implement professional development system for all LEAs and state-sponsored charter schools, including Principals' Academy and Summer Institutes for Teachers		Jul	Jul	Jul	RPDP; LEAs
Design features and necessary technology for implementation of E-MALL		Jul-Jun			NDE
Implement and provide training on E-MALL			Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; RPDP; NSHE
Develop Nevada Curricular Frameworks in Math and ELA	Jan-Jun				NDE; RPDP; Standards and Assessment Council
As part of E-MALL, develop and maintain digital library materials (state recommended scope and sequence, model lesson plans, curriculum frameworks, instructional materials, syllabi) for access by Nevada stakeholders	Jan-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; RPDP; NSHE; Standards and Assessment Council; Teachers and Leaders Council
As part of E-MALL, develop and maintain digital toolkits for access by Nevada stakeholders (teachers, administrators, university instructors, PD providers, students, and parents)	Jan-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; NSHE

Objectives for B(3):	Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments				
Primary Strategy:	Develop and deliver high-quality professional development focused on alignment of instruction and common core				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Develop Nevada Curricular Frameworks in Science and Social Studies			Jan – Jun		NDE; RPDP; Standards and Assessment Council
Develop and implement pre-service and recertification courses at IHES aligned to the CCSS		Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; NSHE; RPDP; Standards and Assessment Council
Expand PBS course offerings and provide access to all Nevada students free of charge by working in partnership with PBS stations throughout the state		Aug	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; PBS Stations

Resources to Support Common Core State Standards

To provide a cohesive system of instruction across Nevada school districts, the Nevada Education Reform Office, with support from the Standards and Assessment Council, will develop the Nevada Curricular Frameworks aligned to the CCSS for use by classroom teachers. These frameworks will ensure that students who transfer across schools and districts will not be disadvantaged by missing or repeating critical instructional units. The Curricular Frameworks will serve as a guide and can be adapted to reflect district curriculum aligned to CCSS.

Following the revision of science standards in 2011, the Nevada Curricular Frameworks will be developed in science and social studies with a goal of implementation by 2013. Exploration into non-core areas will continue during this timeframe. Additionally, common templates will aid the tracking of student progress in the mastery of the CCSS for each grade in ELA and mathematics. The Curricular Frameworks will also support the teacher and principal evaluation system as described in more detail in Section D(2).

Nevada will draw on the experience and innovation of its most effective P-20 teachers to design the Curricular Frameworks and classroom assessments that serve as a foundation for a unified Pre-K-12 instructional resource system. Statewide professional development trainings will be conducted through technology, workshops, video/teleconferences, summer academies and through the creation of Electronic Media Access to Leverage Learning (E-MALL), a web-based portal of instructional resources. The NDE will also utilize funding obtained under this application to award grants to LEAs and NSHE for the production of a variety of STEM and standards-based curriculum units, curriculum-embedded performance tasks, and professional development materials to meet the needs of Nevada's diverse population of students (including students with disabilities and English Language Learners).

These professional development materials will be required to meet pre-determined quality criteria as evaluated by the Teachers and Leaders Council. Additionally, standards-based, online resources will be accessible to provide support to students and their families. Currently, mathematics and science standards-based resources are available from NDE in CD form upon request.

Funding from Race to the Top will ensure that these and other resources are enhanced and made publicly available in an online format. Additional resources to be available on E-MALL will include:

- Formative assessment tools in STEM subjects, English Language/Arts, mathematics and selected Career, Technical, and Adult Education (CTE) areas;
- Performance tasks that integrate assessment of content knowledge and skills aligned to all standards and skills critical to the success of students in college and the workplace; and
- Common digital tools and a library of online resources aligned to the CCSS.

For many years, KLVX/Vegas PBS has provided distance education courses to students throughout Nevada through a \$440,000 grant provided by the Nevada State Legislature. KLVX produces video courses in a number of subjects and sends each school district a set of DVDs that schools districts may use to expand and enhance students' educational opportunities. Districts

may offer these courses to students through the Clark County School District (CCSD) by contracting with CCSD's Virtual High School. By the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year, these opportunities will be expanded to offer these and additional courses (including the foreign language courses needed to meet the expectations of the new Nevada college readiness standards) online to all Nevada students free of charge by working in partnership with public television stations throughout the state.

Early Childhood Literacy

In 2009, the NDE was awarded a \$3.57 million Reading First Targeted Assistance Grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Nevada was the only state in the nation to increase student reading proficiency in its Reading First schools from 2005-2008. This included overall improvement in the percentages of students achieving proficiency in first, second, and third grades and improved performance from each targeted subgroup in third grade. To achieve this growth, Nevada Reading First schools used valid and reliable screening and progress monitoring assessments. Schools implemented proven successful comprehensive reading interventions. Using lessons learned from Reading First schools, Nevada will implement Early Reading Interventions in selected schools by January 2012.

Accordingly, at the beginning of each year, Nevada schools will implement a quick, valid, and reliable screening assessment for students in kindergarten through third grade. Assessment data will be used at the classroom, grade, and school level to determine which students are performing below grade level and are in need of standards-based and diagnostic assessments to determine what supplemental instruction is needed for them to progress to grade level expectations.

Table B(3)-3: Activities Timeline For The Implementation Of Early Reading Interventions

Objectives for B(3):	Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments				
Primary Strategy:	Implement Early Reading Interventions in selected schools				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Create plan for development and implementation of schools to participate in the Early Reading Intervention	Oct-Jun				NDE; RPDP; LEAs; NSHE
Select schools for participation and begin training of teachers on intervention strategies	Jan-Mar				NDE; LEAs
Develop or acquire reading screening tool for grades K-3	Jan-Jun				NDE; LEAs
Implement Early Reading Screening and Interventions in selected schools		Jan-May			NDE; LEAs
Expand Early Reading Intervention program in schools as resources allow			Sept-May		NDE; LEAs

College and Career Readiness

The Nevada Education Reform Office, working with the Standards and Assessment Council with representatives from the Nevada System of Higher Education, will continue to develop college readiness expectations for mathematics and ELA. The NDE will complete common course numbering and course descriptions to align instruction to the Common Core State Standard.

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, and Nevada’s application for the Act funds, support the development and implementation of programs of study as a fundamental structure for career and technical education in every school district and school. The establishment of a secondary to post-secondary education transitional program through sequenced and articulated CTE courses is a key strategy in the plan for *Career and Technical Education Skills for Employment and Lifelong Learning*.

To start the development and implementation process, the NDE sponsored two statewide “Program of Study Workshops” during the 2009-2010 school year. The CTE staff will identify strategies for students successfully transitioning from high school to post-secondary education through coordination and analysis of shared data. These will be highlighted and expanded as part of the Nevada Education Reform agenda.

The CTE office at NDE will promote the transition from high school to post-secondary education by fully developing Nevada’s CTE system around programs of study. Programs of study require that:

- All CTE courses be sequenced;
- Course sequences lead directly to post-secondary education through program articulation agreements that allow high school students to earn up to 21 college credits prior to high school graduation;
- Academic requirements are clearly delineated; and
- Established exit points at the postsecondary levels are made clear to students while they are in high school, (i.e. industry certifications, other post-secondary credentials, and degrees).

A statewide goal is for every eligible CTE program at the secondary level to have approved articulation agreements with one or more community colleges.

Section C: Data Systems To Support Instruction (47 Points)

State Reform Conditions Criteria

C(1): Fully Implementing A Statewide Longitudinal Data System (24 points – 2 points per America COMPETES element)

The extent to which the State has a statewide longitudinal data system that includes all of the America COMPETES Act elements (as defined in this notice).

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

Evidence:

- *Documentation for each of the America COMPETES Act elements (as defined in this notice) that is included in the State's statewide longitudinal data system.*

Recommended maximum response length: Two pages

C: Data Systems to Support Instruction

NEVADA'S STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATION REFORM	DATA SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT INSTRUCTION: PLANNED ACTIVITIES
<p>Improve student performance through collaboration with key stakeholders such as parents, teachers, principals, employee associations, district administrators, state officials, community leaders, and legislators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand access to the statewide longitudinal data system to include parents and public stakeholders via E-MALL
<p>Improve classroom instruction on rigorous and relevant content, including an emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop STEM curriculum units that will be made available electronically through E-MALL ▪ Create a common digital library of online resources that are aligned to the Common Core State Standards available through E-MALL
<p>Improve classroom instruction and student performance using data at all levels—student, classroom, school, district, state—to support the improvement planning process, evaluate the effectiveness of planned programs, and drive instructional decisions focused on increased student achievement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhance and expand the statewide longitudinal data system to include student achievement growth data, indicators of teacher and principal effectiveness, and links to teacher preparation programs from post-secondary institutions ▪ Develop and use the COMPASS system to monitor teacher and principal effectiveness
<p>Improve achievement through the best practices that have been proven effective in Nevada</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct statewide professional development using the newly developed E-MALL with a focus on building on-line tools for peer-to-peer collaboration ▪ Develop and use the COMPASS system to create individualized development plans for principals and teachers ▪ Monitor the effectiveness of professional development through the COMPASS system

C(1): Fully Implementing A Statewide Longitudinal Data System

Nevada has made tremendous strides in the development of a statewide longitudinal data system as prescribed by the Managed Performance/Empowerment Theory of Action. The System of Accountability Information in Nevada (SAIN) is a third generation, flexible, non-proprietary longitudinal data system for Pre-K-12, developed by the Nevada Department of Education (NDE). Created in 2005, per Nevada Revised Statute 386.650 (see Appendix A(1)(i)-5), the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) now complies with 11 of the 12 elements prescribed in America COMPETES Act (see Table C(1)(i)-1).

Table C(1)(i)-1. SLDS Compliance With America COMPETES Act

AMERICA COMPETES ACT ELEMENTS	NEVADA STATUS
1. A unique statewide student identifier that does not permit a student to be individually identified by users of the system	Yes
2. Student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information	Yes
3. Student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out, or complete pre-K through postsecondary education programs	Yes
4. The capacity to communicate with higher education data systems	Yes
5. An audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability	Yes
6. Yearly State assessment records of individual students	Yes
7. Information on students not tested, by grade and subject	Yes
8. A teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students	Yes
9. Student-level transcript information, including on courses completed and grades earned	Yes
10. Student-level college readiness test scores	No
11. Information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from secondary school to postsecondary education, including whether students enroll in remedial coursework	Yes
12. Other information determined necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education	Yes

Currently, there are two windows into SAIN that allow access to end-users. The first, Bighorn, represents a web-based system of role-based differentiated access to ensure security of private information and compliance with federal and state mandates, such as FERPA. Bighorn is available to key district administrative personnel, such as school improvement officials from each district and charter school. Since Bighorn is an “open architecture” system, these individuals have the capability to create customized data sets and reports which can be disaggregated by a wide array of data elements such as school, ethnicity, special education, Title I status, etc.

The second window into SAIN is the Nevada Accountability Report Card (ARC). ARC is also a web-based system that is publicly available to anyone with access to the Internet, and provides

interfaces to allow stakeholders to analyze data to inform decision-making (see Appendix C(1)(i)-2), Nevada Report Card). These interfaces include, but are not limited to: enrollment, fiscal records, class size, student transient rates, graduation rates, highly-qualified teachers, and AYP results. Data can also be used to make longitudinal comparisons across years, schools, and districts.

Nevada's SLDS will support *Nevada's Promise* by improving instructional systems and giving teachers and principals accurate, timely, and meaningful student achievement data, while simultaneously holding them accountable through public reporting of key data elements. This plan incorporates increased efficiency in accountability reporting, strengthening data use for instructional change, and providing data to measure student and teacher growth and performance. SAIN makes it possible for Nevada to know how every student, every classroom, every school, and every LEA is performing. Race to the Top funds will enhance and expand Nevada's SLDS system to include student achievement growth data, indicators of teacher and school effectiveness, and links to teacher preparation programs from post-secondary institutions.

Differentiated role-based access will provide pertinent data to all stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, administrators, researchers, post-secondary institutions, and the general public. By focusing on improving student achievement and measuring teacher effectiveness, the expansion of SAIN will ensure that the system exceeds the America COMPETES Act by expanding systemic capacity to allow for automated and more frequent exchanges of information. Currently, Nevada has been able to achieve 8 of 10 Essential Elements of the Data Quality Campaign. By 2013, all elements will be met.

Under the P-20 SLDS grant, the Nevada System of Higher Education will facilitate data exchange between the NDE, the Nevada Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation, and higher education campuses. Students will be tracked from elementary and secondary education through postsecondary education and/or the workforce. The data linkage will enable Nevada to expand the American COMPETES Act elements 3, 11, and 12 for research and reporting purposes, including access by school district, postsecondary, and the Department

of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation, according to FERPA guidelines governing access to guidelines.

Nevada Data Systems

Data systems currently in use in Nevada include:

- **District Student Information Systems:** District level student database for all student data and tracking
- **System of Accountability in Nevada (SAIN):** Statewide longitudinal data system for Pre-K-12
- **Teacher Licensure Database:** Teacher certification and license tracking system data integrated into SAIN
- **eSAIN Monitor:** Data Quality Monitoring System
- **iMart/ODS:** Data Dashboards/Upload system

Each of these systems is described in further detail below.

Nevada District Student Information Systems: There are currently three different student information systems used across Nevada’s school districts and charter schools: SASI, PowerSchool, and Infinite Campus. These systems serve the local districts for student attendance, discipline, course scheduling, grades, test scores, demographics, and college readiness scores.

System of Accountability In Nevada (SAIN) for Pre-K-12: Based on nightly district uploads, SAIN assigns a unique student identifier with all student demographic information to allow for longitudinal data on each student, and to support seamless accountability reporting. Through course assignments and rosters, SAIN provides daily enrollment data by course and classroom (i.e., students are assigned to courses, and those courses are linked to individual teachers). Other linked data sets include additional student data, such as free and reduced lunch and special education.

Secure servers located in each of Nevada's 17 districts and every state-sponsored charter school in Nevada feed 155 distinct student, school, teacher, and district-based data elements into SAIN via a nightly upload. Data elements include a wide range of information, including but not limited to: student name, school, ethnicity, discipline events, attendance, grades, current and completed coursework; school name, courses offered, AYP data, and Title I status; and teacher assignment, salary, highly qualified status. The system uses business intelligence techniques to validate daily uploads from each district and charter school to SAIN by checking field definitions and properties against all data uploads. Invalid data elements such as alpha characters placed within numeric fields, empty fields, etc. prompt the system to generate customized email to end-users in each district and/or charter school to ensure an accurate exchange of information.

Current data exchange with the Nevada System of Higher Education is accomplished manually through physical exchange of a compact disc. The student records on the compact disc are then matched to the Nevada System of Higher Education data warehouse for reporting and research purposes. Currently, there is no direct communication between the NDE and the Nevada System of Higher Education.

Teacher Licensure Database: Data from the Teacher Licensure Database, which is the statewide educator database system, is pulled into the SAIN system.

eSAIN Monitor: eSAIN Monitor provides continuous quality data checks on the data coming into the SAIN system and provides exception reports that are provided to the LEA for data cleansing.

iMart/ODS: iMart is the system for output reports accessed by stakeholders and users of SAIN. ODS is the Operational Data Store for the uploading of all district level data.

The integration of weekly uploaded data with higher education, paired with the teachers ability to access all student data, will allow for tracking all students within the Nevada educational system. Data elements, including remedial course, enrollment will allow for high school teachers, curriculum directors, school administrators, and districts to identify curriculum and

coursework modification necessary to ensure more students graduate prepared for college and ready for careers.

C(2): Accessing And Using State Data (5 Points)

The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan to ensure that data from the State's statewide longitudinal data system are accessible to, and used to inform and engage, as appropriate, key stakeholders (e.g., parents, students, teachers, principals, LEA leaders, community members, unions, researchers, and policymakers); and that the data support decision-makers in the continuous improvement of efforts in such areas as policy, instruction, operations, management, resource allocation, and overall effectiveness.⁵

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

Recommended maximum response length: Two pages

⁵ Successful applicants that receive Race to the Top grant awards will need to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including 34 CFR Part 99, as well as State and local requirements regarding privacy.

C(2): Accessing And Using State Data

Nevada understands that without student level performance data, teachers cannot effectively understand the unique needs of their students and, therefore, the instructional response. Nevada views the use of data as a collaborative and enriching activity for principals and teachers, as well as a means to hold all educators accountable for their students' achievement. Nevada will expand the number of users of the dashboard reports by including teachers, parents, and community. This will be accomplished by:

- Building on the work of stakeholder groups for the development of an enhanced SAIN;
- Development (or procurement and partnership with a provider of specified services) of COMPASS for expanded data collection for teacher effectiveness measures and access for teachers of formative and interim assessment data; and
- Increasing training opportunities by making video modules available through E-MALL, providing differentiated access to data through E-MALL, and public access to data through ARC.

Targeted outcomes are to:

1. Increase the number of dashboard users from 200 to 20,700 by 2013-2014;
2. Increase the annual portal visits by teachers, campus leaders, administrators, parents and community from 1,000 to 35,000 by 2013-2014; and
3. Increase feedback comments to 3,500 yearly by 2013-2014.

Table C(2)-1: Timeline for improving access to SAIN

Objective for C(2):	Accessing and Using State Data				
Primary Strategy:	Improve access to SAIN				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Build SAIN enhancements to develop and maintain E-MALL, including integration of existing resources into E-MALL		Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; Data Council
Develop and maintain interfaces for growth data	Oct-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; Data Council

Objective for C(2):	Accessing and Using State Data				
Primary Strategy:	Improve access to SAIN				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Develop and maintain interfaces for evaluation system		Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; Data Council; Teachers and Leaders Council
Develop and maintain interfaces for COMPASS		Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; Data Council; Teachers and Leaders Council
Develop and maintain interfaces for teachers and principals		Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; Teachers and Leaders Council
Expand assessment loading into SAIN to include results of interim assessments		Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; LEAs; Standards and Assessment Council
Expand Accountability Report Card		Jan-Jun	Jul-Jun		NDE
Expand teacher licensure data system			Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE

Nevada’s plans include the expansion of Bighorn and ARC systems to capture and report additional data elements necessary to successfully carry out *Nevada’s Promise*. This plan includes a focus on using student achievement data to drive decisions in regard to teacher pay, promotion, dismissal, teacher and school effectiveness, and the quality of teacher preparation programs. The expansion efforts taking place within Bighorn are referred to as Electronic Media Access to Leverage Learning (E-MALL) and Comprehensive Oversight for Managing Performance to Achieve Student Success (COMPASS). Three objectives will be achieved through E-MALL and COMPASS:

1. Provide principals and district leaders with accurate daily data regarding teacher effectiveness;

2. Give teachers and principals access to E-MALL for instructional resources aligned to all standards; and
3. Provide access to integrated higher education data that will allow districts and higher education officials to evaluate the quality of teacher preparation programs.

E-MALL will be a continuously updated online environment, accessible to all stakeholders. With Race to the Top funding, the Nevada Department of Education will develop a variety of STEM and standards-based curriculum units, curriculum-embedded performance tasks, and professional development materials. E-MALL will be aligned with the Regional Professional Development Programs web sites, which contain content-related professional development videos, lessons, and classroom-ready resources. E-MALL will also include a common digital library of online resources aligned to the Common Core State Standards. In developing E-MALL, Nevada will use open platform technology. By using open-source technology, Nevada can reduce costs in the development of E-MALL. Nevada will use innovative designers and engineers to develop E-MALL and work in concert with all aspects of the reform agenda.

COMPASS will be a new web-based system to link student achievement to teacher and principal performance. COMPASS will be a tool for monitoring teacher and principal effectiveness to support student achievement improvement efforts. Furthermore, access to reports and data through COMPASS will enable districts to understand and manage instructional quality. COMPASS will be integrated with E-MALL and will be used for critical decisions in evaluating teachers and principals as well as guiding and monitoring professional development.

Although the name will remain, ARC will also be expanded to provide users with the capability to view more meaningful data aggregates, such as effective schools with the availability of the additional data elements emphasizing academic growth. Figure C(2)-1 shows the proposed data stream for SLDS (see Appendix C(2)-1).

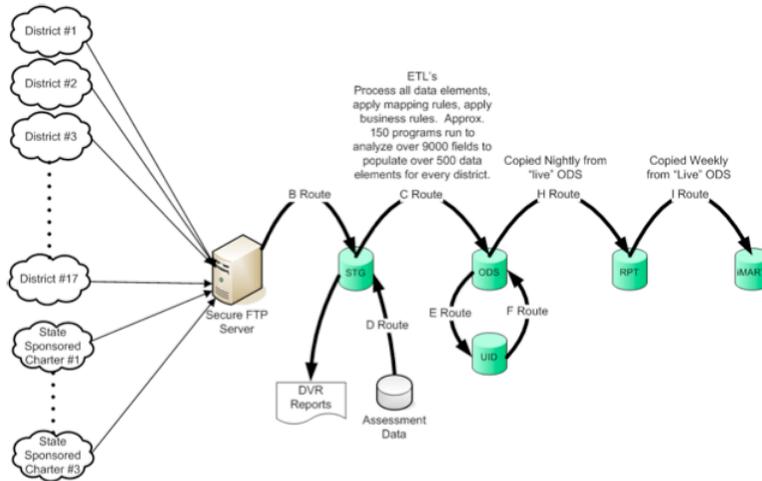


Figure C(2)-1. Nevada SLDS System Integration Model

The NDE Data Collaborative—which focuses on data governance, assessment, policy, integration of data from career and technology education, nutrition, special education, and other programs—meets regularly to sustain a direct line of communication between programmers, educators, students, and parents. The Data Collaborative receives and reviews feedback and comments within SAIN to memorialize user comments and suggestions. In addition to these strategic working groups, training sessions on the use of the system are held with the districts twice weekly.

The Data Council and technical assistance will work with the Data Collaborative and Nevada Department of Education staff, including representatives from higher education, and the Nevada Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation, to meet quarterly to provide oversight, ensure system security, accessibility, system enhancements, and reporting improvements. The Data Council, under the leadership of the Reform Office, will provide training and technical support to staff for implementation, using specialists to enhance, implement, and support the revised longitudinal data system.

All schools in Nevada are ready for these enhancements, each with the bandwidth (T1 or more) necessary to support the enhanced SAIN, E-MALL, and COMPASS systems. Table C(2)-2 identifies the performance measures to be used over the next four years.

Table C(2)-2. Measurable Performance Benchmarks For SLDS Enhancements And Expansion

Performance Measures	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
# of unique dashboard users*	200	200	5,000	12,500	20,700
# of portal visits	1,000	1,000	10,000	25,000	50,000
# of feedback/comments	100	100	1,000	2,500	5,000

*Based on statewide total of 27,631 licensed, instructional support, administrative, and school service positions as of 2009-2010.

C(3): Using Data To Improve Instruction (18 Points)

The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan to—

(i) Increase the acquisition, adoption, and use of local instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice) that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with the information and resources they need to inform and improve their instructional practices, decision-making, and overall effectiveness;

(ii) Support participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) and schools that are using instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice) in providing effective professional development to teachers, principals and administrators on how to use these systems and the resulting data to support continuous instructional improvement; and

(iii) Make the data from instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice), together with statewide longitudinal data system data, available and accessible to researchers so that they have detailed information with which to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, and approaches for educating different types of students (e.g., students with disabilities, English language learners, students whose achievement is well below or above grade level).

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

Recommended maximum response length: Five pages

C(3): Using Data To Improve Instruction

C(3)(i): Plan To Provide Teachers And Leaders Information And Resources

Nevada’s plan to increase the use of data for instructional decisions is based on three strategic actions:

- Assignment of a unique user account and password for every teacher and principal in Nevada (see C(3)(i));
- Professional development for all teachers and principals on accessing SAIN and using data in the classroom (see C(3)(ii)); and
- Create LDS access for research to identify best practices and program evaluation for post-secondary early warning systems to reduce remediation (see C(3)(iii)).

Professional development will support increase use of the system, accessing data for instructional change, and best practice use of data for collaborative vertical and horizontal teams. The addition of COMPASS and EMALL for increased teacher, principal, parent, and community use will further move Nevada to a data driven environment by providing data dashboards and reports that are easily accessible.

The Data Council, described in section (A)(2), led by the Nevada Education Reform Office, will provide support for the implementation and expansion of SAIN, COMPASS, and EMALL.

Table C(3)-1. Timeline For Enhancing SAIN Capabilities To Support Teacher And Principals

Objective for C(3):	Use data to improve instruction				
Primary Strategy:	Enhance SAIN capability to support teachers and principals in accessing data to improve instruction				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Build interface to support implementation of Individualized Development Plans for teachers and principals		Jul-Jan	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; Teachers and Leaders Council
Incorporate Clark County School District Instructional Data		Jul-Jun			NDE;

Objective for C(3):	Use data to improve instruction				
Primary Strategy:	Enhance SAIN capability to support teachers and principals in accessing data to improve instruction				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Management System into E-MALL					CCSD; Data Council
Add flags into SAIN for identification participation in statewide programs of instructional support	Jan-Jun				NDE; Data Council

C(3)(ii): Plan To Support Participating LEA's

Professional Development

Professional development on data use and practice is delivered by the Regional Professional Development Program (RPDP) to rural districts throughout Nevada. These include analysis of student achievement data and using a collaborative peer-to-peer model with teachers and administrators to drive instructional change. In larger school districts, professional development is conducted at each school and assistance is provided by RPDP upon request for low-performing schools.

The NDE will include a professional development series through E-MALL that will be available for all teachers in the State; E-MALL will be operational by 2011-2012. The Nevada Education Reform Office will develop a model framework for E-MALL to coordinate expanded access to relevant data needed to drive improvements. Information on E-MALL will include resources, data for research and evaluation, and a reporting portfolio that exceeds the current portfolio with standardized and customized reports. Key indicators and early warning data to identify students who are on and off track will be available, based on psychometrically sound evaluation models developed through contractual agreements with external experts in predictive modeling. Research and evaluation requests for data are currently addressed through established data request protocols.

Formative Assessment Data

The Instructional Data Management System, currently being used in Clark County, will be incorporated into E-MALL to provide teachers and administrators with a “one-stop-shop” for access to formative and interim assessment data. The availability of interim assessment data allows teachers to gain insight into the prior knowledge of students. The Instructional Data Management System will be incorporated into E-MALL in the 2011-2012 school year and fully operational in 2012-2013.

Statewide adoption of E-MALL as an instructional management system will engage educators to review non-identifiable assessment results and to discuss best practices for assisting students to master new standards. This will be part of the E-MALL online collaborative interface for educators.

E-MALL will also provide access for parents and students to monitor their own progress, which will be encouraged at the district level to develop self-regulatory skills and determine where additional assistance may be needed in consultation with teachers.

Graduation Data

Progress of high school achievement will also be enhanced by using E-MALL to monitor assessments in mathematics, English, science, and social studies, as these tests are developed and released in cooperation with the SMARTER Balanced Consortium. A set of standardized assessments captured by E-MALL will allow NDE leaders and district leaders to view student progress being made in assessed content areas. The addition of the IDMS formative assessment system added to E-MALL will ensure fidelity in comparisons and evaluative judgments across districts, schools, classrooms, and sub-population groups.

C(3)(iii): Plan To Make Data Accessible

With SAIN, data for researchers and administrative staff are available based on established protocols. A copy of the data request is provided in Appendix (C(3)(iii)-1). Expansion of the system will provide all teachers, principals, and professional development providers with

relevant and timely student achievement growth data. These data will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, programs, and approaches for educating different students. To expand the ability for evaluation, E-MALL will allow users to extract student achievement data based on social demographic profile as well as by instructional program.

Bighorn allows users to filter and sort student data by special populations such as ethnicity, gender, special education, English language learners, and students in poverty. The Data Council will work with NDE and the Nevada Education Reform Office to build additional fields to flag students who participate in other statewide programs, such as tutoring, reading intervention, magnet, or career and technical education. The NDE has already ensured that both Bighorn and E-MALL contain the necessary capacity to add additional fields as needed. Additional data elements will allow stakeholders and researchers to create equivalent comparison groups through statistical methods such as stratification or matching. This allows for the creation of comparison schools via statistical clustering methods. It will also ensure capacity that appropriate comparisons are made when evaluating the effectiveness of instructional innovations and professional development offered to teachers and principals.

Two examples of data used for research and evaluation purposes are:

1. *Internal Research Study: Nevada Early Childhood Education (ECE) Longitudinal Study:* At the request of the program evaluator, the Nevada Early Childhood Longitudinal Study is an evaluation of two groups of children;
 - a. Children who participated in the Nevada ECE program in 2003-2004 who are now in grade 4 in 2008-2009 as well as their classmates, and
 - b. the 2008-2009 school year.

The study, which included all demographic information on students in the above categories was used to track student outcomes. The data from the study has helped to identify the influence of early intervention programs on students' longitudinal outcomes and guide state policy.

2. *External Research Study: Great Schools for Comparative Data on the Criterion Referenced Test and the High School Proficiency Exam*

This study is an external comparison for state data from multiple states to show the results from state administered exams.

Section D: Great Teachers And Leaders (138 Points)

State Reform Conditions Criteria

D(1): Providing High-Quality Pathways For Aspiring Teachers And Principals (21 Points)

The extent to which the State has—

- (i) Legal, statutory, or regulatory provisions that allow alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) for teachers and principals, particularly routes that allow for providers in addition to institutions of higher education;*
- (ii) Alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) that are in use; and*
- (iii) A process for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage and for preparing teachers and principals to fill these areas of shortage.*

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

Evidence for (D)(1)(i), regarding alternative routes to certification for both teachers and principals:

- *A description of the State's applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents, including information on the elements of the State's alternative routes (as described in the alternative route to certification definition in this notice).*

Evidence for (D)(1)(ii), regarding alternative routes to certification for both teachers and principals:

- *A list of the alternative certification programs operating in the State under the State's alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice), and for each:*
 - *The elements of the program (as described in the alternative routes to certification definition in this notice).*
 - *The number of teachers and principals that successfully completed each program in the previous academic year.*
 - *The total number of teachers and principals certified statewide in the previous academic year.*

D: Great Teachers And Leaders

NEVADA'S STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATION REFORM	GREAT TEACHERS AND LEADERS: PLANNED ACTIVITIES
<p>Improve student performance through collaboration with key stakeholders such as parents, teachers, principals, employee associations, district administrators, state officials, community leaders, and legislators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a transparent system that measures teacher and principal effectiveness with teacher, administrator, and parent associations
<p>Improve classroom instruction on rigorous and relevant content, including an emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop an accelerated pathway to receive full teacher or administrative credentials within 2 years and focus on STEM subjects and special education ▪ Enhance existing partnerships that recruit, train, and support teacher and principal candidates in STEM subjects and special education
<p>Improve classroom instruction and student performance using data at all levels—student, classroom, school, district, state—to support the improvement planning process, evaluate the effectiveness of planned programs, and drive instructional decisions focused on increased student achievement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop the Nevada Growth Model of Achievement to ensure assessment of growth across grades and subjects for every school ▪ Design and implement a statewide system that differentiates teacher and principal effectiveness using multiple measures of student growth ▪ Develop and use the COMPASS system to analyze teacher and principal effectiveness data
<p>Improve achievement through the best practices that have been proven effective in Nevada</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create teacher and principal standards to increase instructional effectiveness ▪ Establish and use individualized development plans for teachers and principals to help enhance knowledge, skills, and/or abilities ▪ Use the State Professional Development Standards to guide teacher and principal training ▪ Use the COMPASS system to guide professional development that is content-based, comprehensive, and rigorous ▪ Expand on successful programs and develop a statewide infrastructure of peer-supported, job-embedded professional development ▪ Establish measures that evaluate and enable continuous improvement of the effectiveness of professional development offerings and access through the COMPASS system

D(1): Providing High-Quality Pathways For Aspiring Teachers And Principals

D(1)(i): Provisions Allowing Alternative Routes To Certification

Nevada will undertake the reforms necessary to produce excellent teachers and principals. With Nevada’s adoption of the Managed Performance/Empowerment Theory of Action— and specifically, the theory’s guiding principle to select and hire high-quality staff— the state needs to transform the way teachers and principals are recruited and prepared to serve high-poverty schools and high-need subject areas. To do so, Nevada will revise and augment the current alternative paths to licensure. Leveraging changes in alternative paths to licensure will also drive the redesign of traditional teacher and principal preparation programs, and fuel the political will for improvement of student performance. This is a systemic reform focused on the expectations of student achievement, the improvement of instruction in the classroom, and the leadership of principals at every campus.

Currently, there exist three options for candidates to pursue an alternative route to licensure in Nevada. Like other traditionally-prepared educators, Alternative Route to Licensure (ARL) participants must engage in prescribed coursework—with the number of credit hours and course content specified under Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) (see Appendix D(1)(i)-1)—as well as pass national subject area examinations, such as the PRAXIS. As required under regulations, ARL participants are issued a conditional license and have three years to finish the necessary coursework for the completion of full license requirements with support from a mentor. While Nevada has historically relied upon ARL as a supporting mechanism to certify teachers, regulations were adopted in the spring of 2010 to support an alterative route for principals (see Appendix D(1)(i)-2).

Nevada’s three current alternative route to licensure options include:

1. Special Qualifications License—certification for persons with aligned work experience and a degree in the area in which the certification is being sought; it is a three-year renewable license;
2. Higher Education-Based Alternative Route to Certification—certification through higher education programs that enroll students in a post-baccalaureate teacher preparation program while concurrently employed as a teacher in a local school district; or

- Principal Pathway (starting Fall 2010)—certification through an alternative route that will enable teachers with three years of experience to pursue education leadership coursework and receive a full administrator’s license upon completion of all requirements.

Table D(1)(i)-1. Measurable Performance Benchmarks For SLDS Enhancements And Expansion

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE TO LICENSURE (ARL) CRITERIA*	NEVADA
Can be provided by various types of qualified providers, including higher education and alternatives operating independently from higher education.	No
Are selective in candidate acceptance.	Yes
Provide supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support such as effective mentoring and coaching.	Yes
Significantly limits the amount of coursework required or have options to test out of courses.	No
Award upon completion the same level of certification as traditional preparation programs.	Yes

**ARL options in greater detail (see Appendix D(1)(i)-2)*

D(1)(ii): Nevada’s Alternative Routes To Certification

During the 2009-2010 school year, 11% , or 132, of Nevada’s 1,200 first-year teachers were certified by an ARL program within Nevada. However, no principals were certified through Nevada ARL. Nearly 90% of teachers from alternative licensure routes teach in Clark County. Rapid growth in Nevada caused alternative routes to licensure (ARL) programs to fill the gap in the educator talent pool; in the future, however, Nevada will depend on ARL programs to help build a high-quality talent pipeline for teachers and administrators in high-poverty schools and high-need subject areas. Higher education has served as the primary provider for alternative programs, and the current ARL regulations require three years of classroom instruction along with concurrent coursework. To fully realize the potential of an ARL option, Nevada will develop an accelerated pathway for candidates to receive full teacher or administrative credentials within two years. This accelerated pathway is designed to fill hard-to-staff positions and serve high-poverty schools. Accelerated alternative route (A²RL) programs will meet all five of the features of exemplary ARL programs listed in the Race to the Top notice (see glossary). The A²RL criteria will be developed through the Teachers and Leaders Council and brought to

the Nevada Professional Standards Commission for adoption in 2011. An alternative pathway for principals was adopted in May 2010 through Nevada’s regulatory approval process (see Appendix D(1)(ii)-1).

Table D(1)(ii)-1. Timeline For Promoting Alternative Route Licensure

Objective for D(1):	Provide high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals				
Primary Strategy:	Promote ARL programs as an outstanding pathway for teacher and principal development				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Create criteria for Accelerated Alternative Routes to Licensure	Jan-Mar				Teachers and Leaders Council; Professional Standards Commission
Approve programs for accelerated routes	Mar-Jun				Professional Standards Commission
Build and implement systems to evaluate the effectiveness of accelerated routes and publish evaluation outcomes		Jul-Oct	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; ARL Providers
Use data to leverage changes in ARL programs		Nov-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	ARL Providers; NDE; Teachers and Leaders Council

D(1)(iii): Critical Shortages

Nevada's current process for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying teacher shortage areas is completed at the school, district and state levels; and at the district and state levels for principals. Similar to many states across the country, Nevada suffers critical shortages in special education, STEM subject areas, and under-performing schools. Critical shortages are determined by the following data:

- The number of teaching positions that are vacant;
- Teaching positions that are filled by teachers who are on a provisional license;
- Teaching positions that are filled by teachers who are licensed, but who are teaching in academic subject areas other than their area of preparation;
- Teaching positions filled by a long-term substitute teacher.

The NDE uses these data to determine the overall percentage of classrooms occupied by unlicensed teachers. These same data are used by the NDE and districts to determine a plan for filling these positions.

One program with a proven record of recruiting outstanding recent college graduates to teach in high-poverty schools and close the achievement gap is Teach For America (TFA). TFA currently manages and trains 98 teachers working in high-poverty, high-minority, and persistently low achieving schools, grades Pre-K-12, in Clark County public and private schools (see Appendix D(1)(iii)-1). The ARL programs will be beneficial in implementing *Nevada's Promise*, particularly in recruiting staff to work in high-poverty schools, and high-need subject areas.

Therefore, Nevada will propose the following to the Professional Standards Commission during the 2010-2011 school year and, if necessary, seek statutory changes during the 2011 legislative session:

- Authorize the Accelerated Alternative Route to Licensure (A²RL) pathway to support the expansion of a teacher and principal pipeline that produces effective educators for high-poverty schools and high-need areas.

- Create a list of criteria for Accelerated A²RL providers. These criteria will enable Nevada to partner with proven high-quality alternative certification programs and expand ARL providers beyond the scope of higher education institutions. Criteria will be developed by the Teachers and Leaders Council under the direction of the Nevada Education Reform Office for regulatory adoption by the Nevada Professional Standards Commission.
- Collect data on the effectiveness of teachers and principals (including measures of student growth and achievement) and link these data to the programs in which the individual received pre-service training, for public reporting purposes.
- Invest resources and expand participation in the most effective preparation programs that demonstrate the strongest results in student achievement.

D(2): Improving Teacher And Principal Effectiveness Based On Performance (58 Points)

The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to ensure that participating LEAs (as defined in this notice)—

(i) Establish clear approaches to measuring student growth (as defined in this notice) and measure it for each individual student; (5 points)

(ii) Design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that (a) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth (as defined in this notice) as a significant factor, and (b) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement; (15 points)

(iii) Conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback; as part of such evaluations, provide teachers and principals with data on student growth for their students, classes, and schools; (10 points) and

(iv) Use these evaluations, at a minimum, to inform decisions regarding— (28 points)

- (a) Developing teachers and principals, including by providing relevant coaching, induction support, and/or professional development;*
- (b) Compensating, promoting, and retaining teachers and principals, including by providing opportunities for highly effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice) to obtain additional compensation and be given additional responsibilities;*
- (c) Whether to grant tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures; and*
- (d) Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals after they have had ample opportunities to improve, and ensuring that such decisions are made using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures.*

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

Recommended maximum response length: Ten pages

D(2): Improving Teacher And Principal Effectiveness

D(2)(i): Tracking Individual Student Growth

By the spring of 2012, the NDE's Assessment, Program Accountability, and Curriculum (APAC) office will undertake leadership for calculating student growth on existing statewide assessments (annual and interim) as it pertains to measuring effectiveness of teachers and principals.

Additional statewide assessments in K-2 and high school will be fully operational by the 2013-2014 school year. The Standards and Assessment Council will disseminate guidelines to participating LEAs for calculating student growth on locally or regionally developed assessments. To assure comparability of measures across participating LEAs, the NDE will use a valid, well-documented process to develop the assessments for calculating student growth. The results will be available to all teachers, principals, district leaders, and Nevada through COMPASS (see Appendix A(1)(i)-5).

Nevada, as part of the SMARTER Balanced Consortium, will replace the current summative assessment with common summative assessments aligned with the Common Core State Standards. As more data are gathered on the student growth from interim and/or benchmark assessments, the Nevada Education Reform Office will collaborate with consortia of school districts and use assessments to measure student growth.

In response to the recognized need for a measure of student growth, the NDE piloted the Nevada Growth Model of Achievement (NGMA) during the 2009-2010 school year. The model was developed by the NDE, in collaboration with LEAs throughout the state, and was passed into law by the Nevada Legislature in 2009. The recently enacted law requires that Nevada establish clear approaches to measure the achievement of students so that the progress of students enrolled in a public school may be tracked from year to year to determine whether the school has made progress in the achievement of pupils (see Appendix A(3)(i)-4).

The NGMA provides information on the growth of individual students and defines legitimate criteria for determining how much growth can be expected of schools. Using the Student Growth Percentile (SGP) methodology, pioneered by Damian Betebenner (2008), the NGMA provides a growth measure that is valid, reliable, evidence-based, and comparable across Nevada. The SGP

measures growth by establishing percentiles that reflect how students compare to their academic peers (i.e., those students with identical past achievement patterns). The SGP approach is primarily descriptive and can be used to measure both the growth of an individual student and the “value-added” by schools or teachers. It is compatible with the test scales used by the Nevada Proficiency Examination Program (NPEP). Furthermore, because it measures relational growth rather than magnitude of growth, vertical scaling is not required—making it feasible to align with, and be supported by, Nevada’s longitudinal data system.

Currently, the NGMA provides growth data on all students in grades 4-8 who take the Nevada statewide criterion-referenced test (CRT) in reading and mathematics, and links these data to teachers and principals. During the 2010-2011 school year, and following the administration of all new summative assessments, NGMA will be expanded to high schools and growth data on all other grade levels will be provided. The NGMA will be expanded to high school during the 2010-2011 school year, and growth data on all other grade levels will be available following the school administration of all new summative assessments.

By 2013, with guidance from the Teachers and Leaders Council, Nevada will develop additional tools and measures to assess growth and progress across grades and subjects for every school, including those not assessed through Nevada accountability systems. The development of these measures will take into consideration the developmental appropriateness for lower elementary students, and the need to assess the mastery of content in high school grades.

D(2)(ii): Teacher And Principal Effectiveness

The capacity to analyze teacher and principal effectiveness, based on student achievement data, is new to Nevada. However, holding teachers and principals responsible for meeting clear and concrete student achievement expectations is consistent with Nevada’s adoption of the Managed Performance/Empowerment Theory of Action. Through statutory amendments ratified during a special session of the legislature in February 2010, Nevada set a clear bar for student achievement to be part of the evaluation for teachers and principals. The prevailing research (Widget Effect TNTP 2009—see Appendix D(2)(ii)-1)—indicates that such analyses are essential in creating schools that offer every student an excellent education.

In 2012-2013, the Nevada Education Reform office and the Teachers and Leaders Council will field test a system that differentiates effectiveness using multiple measures of student growth, for statewide adoption in 2013-2014. This system will include the evaluation tools, training materials, and rubrics that will measure and report overall teacher and principal effectiveness. To support necessary reforms, Nevada will create standards for measuring teachers and principals. These standards will serve as the foundation on which to measure teachers and principals. Nevada will remain focused on the following six principles while developing the evaluation system:

1. The system will be fair, reliable, and accurately assess a teacher or principal's performance, in collaboration with the individual who will be assessed, and include ongoing input for improvement through feedback with principals and teachers.
2. The system will be grounded in student growth and achievement data and include a timeline, proposed approach to improvement, and a definition of "significant," as it relates to student growth and achievement data.
3. Principal effectiveness will include an analysis of retention and enhancement of faculty members' teaching skills through professional development.
4. Evaluations under the proposed system will occur annually.
5. Tools will be developed and training will be offered to ensure inter-rater reliability through the use of rubrics that measure performance.
6. The system will differentiate effectiveness: highly effective, effective, minimally effective, and ineffective.

Table D(2)(ii)-1: Timeline For Development And Implementation Of Infrastructure For Teacher And Principal Evaluation

Objective for D(2):	Improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance				
Primary Strategy:	Create and sustain the infrastructure for evaluating teacher and principal performance based on quantitative and qualitative measures				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Calculate student growth per the Nevada Growth Model of Achievement (NGMA)	Jan-Jun	Jan-Jun	Jan-Jun	Jan-Jun	NDE;
Define levels of teacher and principal effectiveness and seek legislative changes to support decisions	Oct-Jun				Teachers and Leaders Council; LEAs; Teachers and Principals' Associations
Develop teacher and principals standards (to be used in informing collection of qualitative data for evaluative purposes)	Jan-Jun				Teachers and Leaders Council; Professional Standards Commission; NDE
Design and implement multiple measures of student growth to address those elements of evaluation not directly derived from student achievement data			Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Teachers and Leaders Council; NDE
Create mechanisms to assess the performance of teachers who do not teach subjects and/or grades assessed through statewide summative assessments; and/or are ancillary staff (e.g., special education)		Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun		Teachers and Leaders Council; NDE; Teachers and Principals' Associations
Create and support use of tools for assessing teacher and principal mastery of standards		Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Teachers and Leaders Council; NDE
Establish and train Evaluation Development Coaches; provide training for evaluators on		Jan-Jun	Jan-Jun	Jan-Jun	NDE RPDP;

Objective for D(2):	Improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance				
Primary Strategy:	Create and sustain the infrastructure for evaluating teacher and principal performance based on quantitative and qualitative measures				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
collecting and using qualitative data in evaluation					
Conduct stratified field test of evaluation system			Jul-Jun		LEAs NDE
Refine system in response to field test				Jul-Aug	LEAs; NDE
Institute comprehensive evaluation system that determines the effectiveness of teachers and principals				Jul-Jun	LEAs; NDE
Provide training on roll out of COMPASS			Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; RPDP

Stakeholder Development in System Development

Input from teachers, principals, assessment experts, parents, and students to determine the criteria, additional assessments, and comprehensive elements to measure teacher and principal effectiveness are factors critical to the success of a fair and equitable system of evaluation.

During the 2010-2011 school year, the NDE will partner with the Teachers and Leaders Council to design a fair, transparent, and rigorous evaluation system for teachers and principals.

Various stakeholders, including local and state teacher association leadership, have agreed to the following four baseline measures:

1. 50% of the evaluation will cover student achievement data (33% will be based on summative growth data and 17% will be based on local measures of student growth);
2. 50% of the evaluation will be based on other data and information determined by each LEA (e.g. classroom observations);
3. Review of evaluations from the previous three years will be considered; and

Performance review discussions will include areas of strength, growth, and performance with focused areas for the following school year.

In addition to the four baseline measures for teachers, principal effectiveness will include analyses of working conditions, the rate of teacher retention at the school, teacher access to professional development based on data-driven improvement needs, high school graduation rates, and college enrollment rates. Data for these measures will be collected at the district level and submitted to the SAIN system.

Focus On Student Data and Personnel Management Orientation For Principal Effectiveness

Nevada recognizes that change must occur in teacher and principal practices to achieve better results. Race to the Top has served as the catalyst to shift the paradigm as to how Nevada approaches teacher and principal evaluation. In February 2010, NRS 386.650 was amended to mandate that all school districts and charter schools use student performance data as part of their principal and teacher evaluation systems.

Nevada presently hosts a binary system of annual performance evaluation, as stipulated by NRS 391.3125 and 391.3127, where teachers and principals are deemed satisfactory or unsatisfactory. In 2011, however, legislation will be introduced to include four differentiated designations in teacher and principal evaluations that define levels of effectiveness as: *highly effective*, *effective*, *minimally effective* and *ineffective*. In addition to student achievement data, measures of principal effectiveness will include teacher evaluations (see Appendix D(2)(ii)-2 and Appendix D(2)(ii)-3).

Development and Training on Additional Measurement Tools

Although student achievement data are central to the evaluation system, knowledge, skills, and dispositions are also critical components of the evaluation system. Teacher and principal standards will clearly delineate the specific and measurable behaviors necessary to positively effect student learning. To assess the performance of these standards, articulated in Sections D(4) and D(5), a comprehensive observation rubric will be developed, instruments will be made

available, and training will be provided to maintain reliability across settings and evaluators. (See Appendix D(2)(ii)-2 for Minimum Observation Standards.) The comprehensive evaluation system also includes reviews of evaluations from the previous three years and end-of-year performance review conversations to discuss areas of strength, growth, and performance focus areas for the following school year. Principals will be accountable for ensuring that opportunities are made available for teachers, and teachers will be held accountable for implementing data-driven instruction.

D(2)(iii): Annual Evaluations Of Teachers And Principals

Nevada believes all teachers and principals have the capacity to be effective. LEAs and Nevada charter schools will set annual goals to increase teacher and principal effectiveness each year. Nevada will invest heavily in the creation of professional development resources to help teachers and principals improve their effectiveness, as discussed in Section D(5).

Best practice informs that student mastery must be assessed through a combination of interim and summative assessments. This approach will be mirrored in Nevada's comprehensive evaluation system; at least one student interim assessment and one student summative assessment will be embedded. The specific details regarding this system configuration will be built by the Teachers and Leaders Council, and designed with flexibility so that the frequency of evaluations may be determined in response to an educator's experience, placement, and/or effectiveness indicators from the previous year's evaluation.

Summative and formative evaluations will serve as tools to help teachers and principals better understand their performance and help determine more effective professional development opportunities. Formative evaluations serve as an opportunity for teachers and principals to course correct, recognize progress, reflect and, most importantly, make informed decisions that lead to increased student achievement. The frequency of formative evaluation will depend on the experience, placement, and performance of the teacher or principals.

D(2)(iv): Using Teacher And Principal Evaluations

D(2)(iv)(a): Professional Development Of Teachers And Principals

Evaluating teachers and principals involves continuously assessing performance throughout the year through formal discussions (i.e., the annual summative performance review at the end of the school year) and informal opportunities, including classroom visits, observation of behavior on campus, and ongoing feedback. Teachers and principals are the catalyst to address educational inequity. It is vital that the evaluation system is rigorous, fair, and transparent, and that educators use the evaluations to make informed decisions.

Becoming highly effective in any role is an ongoing process. Increasing instructional effectiveness requires discussion between the teacher/principal and the principal/district leader, a regular dialogue that is formalized at specific times of the year. To reach maximum effectiveness, this effort will be a collaborative partnership between teachers, content specialists, principals, and support from external reviewers trained in the evaluation protocols. The constructive conversations conducted through the performance assessments will align with the formative evaluation process and ongoing discussions over the course of a school year.

Evaluations will generate the following five outcomes:

1. All educators will receive feedback on performance as indicated in frequent formative opportunities and a summative formal end of year review (which includes growth data when available, see D(2)(i)).
2. All educators will receive an individualized development plan (IDP) following a summative review. The IDP is an employee development tool designed to help educators identify a set of goals or actions to help enhance knowledge, skills, and/or abilities based on performance as well as career aspirations to increase effectiveness for the following school year.
3. Professional development will be provided as needed. Teachers and principals will be held accountable for accessing professional development.
4. Outstanding educators (or groups of educators) who demonstrate extraordinary effectiveness will be identified. LEAs and the NDE will determine how to maximize their talent through opportunities at the school, district, and state level as part of a career ladder.
5. Evidence will be provided for licensure renewal, career trajectory decisions, and tenure decisions.

In 2013-2014, the NDE will hold LEAs accountable for using annual evaluations to meet the five outcomes, using data from 2012-2013. All quantitative data from observation rubrics and qualitative data will be entered into the Comprehensive Oversight for Managing Performance to Achieve Student Success (COMPASS). This system will allow stakeholders to analyze and synthesize relevant data and make decisions accordingly. The analysis and synthesis of this data is crucial to monitor performance with the intent to appropriately measure how LEAs use performance results to make decisions regarding placement, promotion, retention, compensation, licensure, and termination. The annual evaluation will include an appeal process at the district level.

Table D2(ii)-2. Timeline For Improving Teacher And Principal Use Of Data To Increase Student Achievement

Objective for D(2):	Improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance				
Primary Strategy:	Use teacher and principal performance data to drive decisions that impact student achievement				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Create career ladders across LEAs to ensure providers of professional development, coaching, resources <i>(also cross-referenced in section D(5))</i>		Jul-Jan	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	LEAs; RPDP; NDE
Prioritize professional development for teachers and principals with data-based needs for improvement (i.e., assign coaches to ineffective personnel)			Jul-Jan	Jul-Jun	RPDP; LEAs; NDE
Create infrastructure to establish and sustain teacher and principal individual development plans that result from evaluations			Jul-Jun		NDE; Teachers and Leaders Council; Data Council
Negotiate and implement approaches for applying data-driven decisions related to promotion, tenure, and dismissal of teachers and principals			Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	LEAs; Teachers and Principals' Associations

Invest In The Development And Support Of Our Talent

All professional development opportunities for teachers and principals will be designed to address performance deficiencies as indicated through observations and/or student achievement outcomes. School districts will hold principals accountable for working with teachers to create individualized development plans (IDPs). District leaders will then be responsible for developing an IDP for every principal.

In turn, principals and district leaders will be responsible for evaluating the extent to which professional development was effective. State Professional Development Standards (see Section D(5)) will guide the provision of all training for teachers and principals that is offered in response to evaluation results.

Nevada will produce public annual reports on the results of professional development opportunities and request that LEAs use the data to make informed decisions about professional development programs.

D(2)(iv)(b): Compensation, Promotion, And Retention Of Teachers And Principals

Currently, compensation, promotion, and retention of teachers is determined by tenure and collective bargaining agreements within each of the 17 school districts. Nevada will partner with local and state teacher association and administrator leaders to transition the human assets systems from a tenure-value plan to a performance value approach. To recruit high quality candidates and retain the most effective teachers and principals, compensation reform will be rooted in Nevada's evaluation system. (See Appendix D(2)(iv)(b)-1, 2009 Biennial Report, Chapter 4.) This means that time will no longer be the single factor, or a valid indicator, of effectiveness. In 2011-2012, the Teachers and Leaders Council, which will include teacher association leaders and education stakeholders, will research other possible performance compensation systems. This will create a compensation program that links salary increases to effectiveness, as defined by the Teachers and Leaders Council, transitioning away from the current step system.

In addition to addressing Nevada's need for a revised compensation system, the NDE will engage with LEAs and teacher association leaders to use educator effectiveness as the key factor when making promotion and retention decisions, including surplus and reduction-in-force situations.

D(2)(iv)(c): Tenure Or Full Certification Of Teachers And Principals

Similar to many states across the country, Nevada's current tenure process is automatic after a probationary period as a first year teacher is completed with a rating of satisfactory on three appraisals. The Teachers and Leaders Council will work over 2011-2012 to determine how Nevada should approach tenure so that retention is incentivized, and the value of effective/highly effective teachers is demonstrated.

D(2)(iv)(d): Teacher And Principal Ineffectiveness

Nevada will reform the evaluation system to link student achievement with teacher performance. The current binary evaluation measure of satisfactory or unsatisfactory performance does not support effectiveness measures of *highly effective*, *effective*, *minimally effective*, and *ineffective*; nor does the existing statute that outlines the grounds for suspension or termination of a teacher and administrator, NRS 391.312 (see Appendix (D2)(iv)(d)-1). Consequently, the current designation of unsatisfactory would equate to an ineffective rating. Therefore, to transition from the binary system to the effectiveness system, the Teachers and Leaders Council will determine the benchmark for ineffective teachers and administrators in 2010-2011, and reformulate the termination statute for introduction in the 2011 legislative session. This transition will hasten the review, hearing, and dismissal procedure, so as to expedite the educator's due process and avoid a carry over into the following school year.

Table D(2)(i)-1: Performance Measures

Performance Measures		Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
CRITERIA	GENERAL GOALS TO BE PROVIDED AT TIME OF APPLICATION:	BASELINE DATA AND ANNUAL TARGETS				
D(2)(i)	Percentage of participating LEAs that measure student growth (as defined in this notice).	0	0	100% content subjects	100%	100%
D(2)(ii)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for teachers.	0	0	0	33% field test	100%
D(2)(ii)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for principals.	0	0	0	33% field test	100%
D(2)(iv)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems that are used to inform:					
D(2)(iv)(a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing teachers and principals. 	0	0	0	33% field test	100%
D(2)(iv)(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compensating teachers and principals. 	0	0	0	0	33% field test
D(2)(iv)(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promoting teachers and principals. 	0	0	0	0	33% field test
D(2)(iv)(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retaining effective teachers and principals. 	0	0	0	0	33% field test
D(2)(iv)(c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Granting tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals. 	0	0	0	0	33% field test
D(2)(iv)(d)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals. 	0	0	0	0	33% field test

Nevada’s evaluation system will be built in the first two years of the project; a stratified field test will be conducted in the third year, and in the fourth year, the system will be at 100% implementation.

Table D(2)(i)-2: General Data To Be Provided At Time Of Application

GENERAL DATA TO BE PROVIDED AT TIME OF APPLICATION:	
Total number of participating LEAs.	17
Total number of principals in participating LEAs.	520
Total number of teachers in participating LEAs.	22,911

CRITERION	DATA TO BE REQUESTED OF GRANTEES IN THE FUTURE:
D(2)(ii)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems.
D(2)(iii)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.
D(2)(iii)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as ineffective in the prior academic year.
D(2)(iv)(b)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems whose evaluations were used to inform compensation decisions in the prior academic year.
D(2)(iv)(b)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as effective or better and were retained in the prior academic year.
D(2)(iv)(c)	Number of teachers in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were eligible for tenure in the prior academic year.
D(2)(iv)(c)	Number of teachers in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems whose evaluations were used to inform tenure decisions in the prior academic year.
D(2)(iv)(d)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs who were removed for being ineffective in the prior academic year.

**D(3): Ensuring Equitable Distribution Of Effective Teachers And Principals
(25 points)**

The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to—

(i) Ensure the equitable distribution of teachers and principals by developing a plan, informed by reviews of prior actions and data, to ensure that students in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools (both as defined in this notice) have equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice) and are not served by ineffective teachers and principals at higher rates than other students; (15 points) and

(ii) Increase the number and percentage of effective teachers (as defined in this notice) teaching hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas including mathematics, science, and special education; teaching in language instruction educational programs (as defined under Title III of the ESEA); and teaching in other areas as identified by the State or LEA. (10 points)

Plans for (i) and (ii) may include, but are not limited to, the implementation of incentives and strategies in such areas as recruitment, compensation, teaching and learning environments, professional development, and human resources practices and processes.

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

Evidence for D(3)(i):

- *Definitions of high-minority and low-minority schools as defined by the State for the purposes of the State's Teacher Equity Plan.*

Recommended maximum response length: Three pages

D(3): Ensuring Equitable Distribution Of Effective Teachers And Principals
D(3)(i): High-Need Schools

Based on the most recent data for school years 2008-2009, there is a one percent difference in teachers meeting NCLB “highly qualified” teacher requirements, but a 14% gap between high- and low-poverty schools in terms of teachers with less than three years of experience. Nevada has over 100 “high-need schools” (as per the definition for purposes of equitable distribution of teachers) with 20% or greater teachers not meeting highly-qualified, and/or with less than three years experience in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools that are “in need of improvement” (defined as not having met adequate yearly progress targets for two or more years).

Nevada understands that highly-qualified teachers do not ensure that high-poverty and high-minority schools have access to effective talent. Through SAIN and student assessment overhaul, Nevada will have the capacity to track the effectiveness of every teacher and principal across Nevada. While having access to data is not enough, the data will enable Nevada to transform the distribution of talent and ultimately close the gap in equitable distribution of effective educators.

Table D(3)(i)-1: Timeline For Analyzing Data For Teacher And Principal Assignments

Objectives for D(3):	Ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals				
Primary Strategy:	Analyze data to inform decision making relative to teacher and principal assignments				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Synthesize data on teaching assignments exceptions, long-term substitutes, staff shortages, and effectiveness	Jan-Mar	Jan-Mar	Jan-Mar	Jan-Mar	NDE; LEAs
Use data to identify shortages of teachers and principals	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	NDE; LEAs
Report areas of shortage in Accountability Report Card and use data for program decision-making (i.e., recruitment, retention, selection, hiring)	Apr-Jul	Apr-Jul	Apr-Jul	Apr-Jul	LEAs

Nevada will increase the number and percentage of effective teachers in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools performing the following 10 activities:

1. Put into place a comprehensive evaluation system that determines the effectiveness of every teacher and principal across Nevada (with 50% of effectiveness based on measures of student achievement);
2. Collect evaluation data from the annual summative reviews in COMPASS and determine the percentage of teachers and principals across the proposed effectiveness continuum to determine which schools have inequitable distribution;
3. Increase the supply and geographical reach of effective national educator preparation programs to recruit, train, and support more effective educators (see D(1));
4. Create more selective and accelerated alternative route programs for teachers and principals;
5. Provide professional development avenues to ensure that what is offered is effective in increasing student achievement, including induction and ongoing instructional support;
6. Provide principals with summative evaluation data including student growth for every teacher on their campus by grade and subject;
7. Include in principals' annual evaluations an incentive for increasing the number of teachers who are highly effective, retaining effective and highly effective teachers, and improving teachers' effectiveness through their leadership;
8. Incentivize the decision for highly effective and/or effective teachers to relocate from affluent schools to high-poverty/high-minority urban and rural schools;
9. Partner with effective teacher preparation programs (see D(4)) to increase the number of graduates in high-need areas and provide financial incentives for high-need schools; and
10. Incentivize National Board Teaching Certification for teachers and principals at high need schools.

Table D(3)(i)-2: Timeline For Development Resource Prioritization

Objective for D(3):	Ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals				
Primary Strategy:	Prioritize resources to support an effective teacher in every classroom and an effective principal in every building				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Use results of NCCAT-S and observation data (based on teacher and principal standards) to drive decision-making about professional development needs	Sept	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; LEAs; RPDP
Increase supply and geographical reach of educator preparedness programs		Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; NSHE; ARL
Increase talent pipeline through alternative routes to licensure and place participants in high-needs positions	Jan-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; LEAs
Prioritize professional development to ensure that teachers and principals with demonstrated need for improvement receive training to support increased student achievement	May-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	RPDP; NDE; LEAs
Develop incentives for highly-effective/effective teachers to relocate to high-need locations				Jul-Jun	NDE; LEAs
Revise regulations to eliminate coursework restrictions that negatively impact recruitment of teachers for STEM subjects	Jan-Jun				NDE; Professional Standards Commission
Scale up Working Conditions Survey and use data to improve conditions to attract and retain effective teachers and principals; collect and publicly report data	Jan-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; LEAs; RPDP; Teachers and Leaders Council

Objective for D(3):	Ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals				
Primary Strategy:	Prioritize resources to support an effective teacher in every classroom and an effective principal in every building				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Provide teachers and principals with professional development to support mastery of specialized knowledge and skills to be effective with populations of students typically served in high-needs schools (e.g., English Language Learners, students in poverty)	Jan-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; LEAs; RPDP

D(3)(ii): Hard-To-Staff Subjects And Specialty Areas

With the Race to the Top funding, Nevada will expand and launch partnerships that recruit, train, and support candidates in mathematics, science and special education.

The NDE will analyze teacher effectiveness data for STEM and special education teachers to increase Nevada’s understanding of the distribution of effective teachers in those high-need subject areas. In addition to overall effectiveness data, Nevada will review evaluation data to determine trends so that ineffective and minimally effective teachers can implement prioritized professional development to improve their effectiveness. Nevada will also identify its most effective teachers to determine additional career ladder opportunities to mentor and support teachers or relocate to serve in urban and rural high-need schools. Finally, Nevada will incentivize the opportunity for highly effective and effective elementary teachers to pursue an additional path to teach mathematics or science. The Regional Professional Development Programs (RPDP) offer an 18-credit certificate program in mathematics for licensed teachers in other areas. Teachers that successfully complete the program are eligible to teach algebra for high school credit. This program will be scaled up to increase the number of teachers who pursue this opportunity.

A barrier to recruiting talent for Nevada's STEM classrooms is the coursework requirements as indicated in state licensure code. Therefore, in 2011, the NDE will work to re-evaluate the coursework barrier for STEM subjects while maintaining the subject-area test requirement as the demonstration of content knowledge.

Table D(3)(i)-1: Performance Measures For D(3)(i)

Performance Measures for D(3)(i)	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
GENERAL GOALS TO BE PROVIDED AT TIME OF APPLICATION:	BASELINE DATA* AND ANNUAL TARGETS				
Percentage of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	0	0	0	25% of field test	50%
Percentage of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	0	0	0	25% of field test	50%
Percentage of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	0	0	0	0	0
Percentage of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	0	0	0	0	0
Percentage of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	0	0	0	25% of field test	50%
Percentage of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	0	0	0	25% of field test	50%
Percentage of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	0	0	0	0	0
Percentage of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	0	0	0	0	0

*Baseline data are not available since the system will not be fully operational until 2013-2014. Nevada will conduct a stratified field test in 2012-2013 with full implementation expected in 2013-2014

Table D(3)(i)-2: General Data To Be Provided At Time Of Application

GENERAL DATA TO BE PROVIDED AT TIME OF APPLICATION:	
Total number of schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	319
Total number of schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	300
Total number of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	13,225
Total number of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	9,686
Total number of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	276
Total number of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	244
DATA TO BE REQUESTED OF GRANTEES IN THE FUTURE:	
Number of teachers and principals in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who were evaluated as highly effective (as defined in this notice) in the prior academic year.	
Number of teachers and principals in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who were evaluated as highly effective (as defined in this notice) in the prior academic year.	
Number of teachers and principals in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who were evaluated as ineffective in the prior academic year.	
Number of teachers and principals in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who were evaluated as ineffective in the prior academic year.	

Table D(3)(ii)-1: Performance Measures for D(3)(ii)

<p>Performance Measures for D(3)(ii) <i>Note: All information below is requested for Participating LEAs.</i></p>	<p>Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)</p>	<p>End of SY 2010-2011</p>	<p>End of SY 2011-2012</p>	<p>End of SY 2012-2013</p>	<p>End of SY 2013-2014</p>
<p>GENERAL GOALS TO BE PROVIDED AT TIME OF APPLICATION:</p>	<p>BASELINE DATA AND ANNUAL TARGETS</p>				
<p>Percentage of mathematics teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.</p>	0	0	0	50% of field test	75%
<p>Percentage of science teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.</p>	0	0	0	50% of field test	75%
<p>Percentage of special education teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.</p>	0	0	0	50% of field test	75%
<p>Percentage of teachers in language instruction educational programs who were evaluated as effective or better.</p>	0	0	0	50% of field test	75%
<p>GENERAL DATA TO BE PROVIDED AT TIME OF APPLICATION:</p>					
<p>Total number of mathematics teachers.</p>	1,370				
<p>Total number of science teachers.</p>	1,202				
<p>Total number of special education teachers.</p>	3,116				
<p>Total number of teachers in language instruction educational programs.</p>	472				
<p>DATA TO BE REQUESTED OF GRANTEES IN THE FUTURE:</p>					
<p>Number of mathematics teachers in participating LEAs who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.</p>					
<p>Number of science teachers in participating LEAs who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.</p>					

Performance Measures for D(3)(ii)

Note: All information below is requested for Participating LEAs.

	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
GENERAL GOALS TO BE PROVIDED AT TIME OF APPLICATION:	BASELINE DATA AND ANNUAL TARGETS				
Number of special education teachers in participating LEAs who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.					
Number of teachers in language instruction educational programs in participating LEAs who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.					

D(4): Improving The Effectiveness Of Teacher And Principal Preparation Programs (14 points)

The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to—

- (i) Link student achievement and student growth (both as defined in this notice) data to the students’ teachers and principals, to link this information to the in-State programs where those teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing, and to publicly report the data for each credentialing program in the State; and*
- (ii) Expand preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice).*

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

Recommended maximum response length: One page

D(4): Improving Teacher And Principal Preparation Programs

D(4)(i): Link Student Achievement And Student Growth

Programs that produce the talent serving Nevada's students are an important component in the effort to place highly effective teachers and principals in every school across the State.

Therefore, Nevada will hold educator preparation programs accountable for the talent generated by measuring the effectiveness of program graduates and publicly reporting the data.

Developed by the Teachers and Leaders Council, the evaluation system will include a code for every teacher and principal that describes the preparation program they attended. Over 60% of Nevada's teachers and principals received pre-service training from out-of-state institutions; the coding system will include these programs as well. Through each educator code and the eventual ability to link educator effectiveness data, Nevada will determine which programs produce the most effective talent. Nevada will use this data to hold preparation programs accountable by sharing feedback regarding overall trends related to teacher and principal strengths/areas of growth. Such information will be publicly disseminated and used to shape decisions on possible attendees, recruitment strategies, and licensure/re-licensure systems.

D(4)(ii): Expanding High Quality Paths To Licensure

Nevada will offer high quality paths to licensure for teachers and principals. Nevada will partner with and provide expansion grants to programs that recruit and train effective teachers and principals. One major effort in this area will be an investment in the expansion of Teach For America's (TFA) Las Vegas Valley corps. Recent studies by the Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. and the Broad Foundation demonstrate that TFA corps members are effective at increasing student growth and achievement (see Appendix D(4)(ii)-1 and Appendix D(4)(ii)-2).

Table D(4)(i)-1: Timeline For Development And Implementation Pre-Service Preparation, Licensure, And Professional Development

Objective for D(4):	Improve the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs				
Primary Strategy:	Create aligned and accountable systems of pre-service preparation, licensure, and ongoing professional development which are grounded in teacher and principal standards				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Collaborate with NSHE to ensure that pre-service preparation coursework is aligned to teacher and principal standards (as described in Sections D(2) and D(5)); Revise licensure program approval process to reinforce NSHE for alignment of preparation to teacher and principal standards		Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun		Teachers and Leaders Council; Professional Standards Commission; NDE
Amend regulations so that teacher and principal preparation programs emphasize field-based experiences early and extensively in order for programs to meet criteria for program approval		Mar-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Professional Standards Commission
Develop and implement educator preparedness program accountability system as part of E-MALL				Jul-Jun	NDE
Foster expansion grants for effective teacher preparedness programs such as Teach For America					NDE; Accountability Task Force
Create and implement Principal Academy that supports mastery of standards for principals		Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; RPDP; Teachers and Leaders Council

Nevada will also make significant investments in creating and partnering with other preparation programs that produce effective teachers and principals. Race to the Top funding will provide a

vital opportunity for Nevada to expand the existing Aspiring Leaders Academy provided by the Regional Professional Development Programs, which will cultivate and train aspiring principals for persistently low-achieving schools. This is a one-year program with monthly sessions that will include the following topics:

- school improvement plans;
- essential leadership qualities;
- mission and vision;
- best practices in content areas;
- coaching and mentoring teachers and staff;
- time management, effective communications;
- Adequate Yearly Progress process;
- improving student achievement;
- building collaboration;
- supervision and evaluation;
- positive learning environment;
- data analysis;
- curriculum alignment; and
- testing.

State financial investments will be prioritized for teacher and principal preparation programs that commit to preparing effective teachers for high-poverty schools, low-achieving schools, and schools in the rural counties. Additionally, Nevada will partner with the most effective teacher and principal preparation programs to serve as talent pipelines for turnaround schools.

Table D(4)-1: Performance Measures for D(4)

Performance Measures	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
GENERAL GOALS TO BE PROVIDED AT TIME OF APPLICATION:	BASELINE DATA AND ANNUAL TARGETS				
Percentage of teacher preparation programs in the State for which the public can access data on the achievement and growth (as defined in this notice) of the graduates' students.	0	0	50%	100%	100%
Percentage of principal preparation programs in the State for which the public can access data on the achievement and growth (as defined in this notice) of the graduates' students.	0	0	50%	100%	100%
GENERAL DATA TO BE PROVIDED AT TIME OF APPLICATION:					
Total number of teacher credentialing programs in the State.	11				
Total number of principal credentialing programs in the State.	7				
Total number of teachers in the State.	22,911				
Total number of principals in the State.	520				
DATA TO BE REQUESTED OF GRANTEES IN THE FUTURE:					
Number of teacher credentialing programs in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.					
Number of teachers prepared by each credentialing program in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.					
Number of principal credentialing programs in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.					
Number of principals prepared by each credentialing program in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.					
Number of teachers in the State whose data are aggregated to produce publicly available reports on the State's credentialing programs.					
Number of principals in the State whose data are aggregated to produce publicly available reports on the State's credentialing programs.					

D(5): Providing Effective Support To Teachers And Principals (20 points)

The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan for its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) to—

(i) Provide effective, data-informed professional development, coaching, induction, and common planning and collaboration time to teachers and principals that are, where appropriate, ongoing and job-embedded. Such support might focus on, for example, gathering, analyzing, and using data; designing instructional strategies for improvement; differentiating instruction; creating school environments supportive of data-informed decisions; designing instruction to meet the specific needs of high need students (as defined in this notice); and aligning systems and removing barriers to effective implementation of practices designed to improve student learning outcomes; and

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

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

Recommended maximum response length: Five pages

D(5): Providing Effective Support To Teachers And Principals

D(5)(i): Effective Professional Development

Nevada's commitment to ensure all children have access to an effective or highly effective educators requires increasing the statewide investment in professional development, and ensuring that all professional development decisions are grounded in educator effectiveness data. Teachers and principals are the stewards responsible for improving Nevada's education system. Therefore, high-quality, data-driven, job-embedded professional development is a key component in Nevada's plan to make the state's commitment a reality.

Professional development will be tailored in response to student growth and achievement data. This professional development will focus on student outcomes through a system of transparency and accountability for alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Nevada has laid a foundation for conducting such professional development. Based on professional development evaluation data, effective strategies will be scaled up, and new professional development initiatives will be developed and implemented. Access to teacher and principal effectiveness data will enable Nevada to better determine the teacher and principal preparation programs that Nevada should continue to invest in or, ultimately close. Nevada is committed to identifying and solidifying relationships with partners to meet the demand of the high-need subject area positions and the needs of high-poverty urban and rural schools.

Table D(5)(i)-1: Timeline For Implementation Of A Professional Development System

Objective for D(5):	Provide effective support to teachers and principals				
Primary Strategy:	Implement a comprehensive, data-driven system of professional development that supports continuous improvement for every educator in Nevada				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Create career ladders across LEAs to ensure providers of professional development, coaching, and resources (<i>cross-referenced in Section D2</i>)		Jul-Jan	Jul-Jan	Jul-Jan	LEAs; RPDP; NDE
Build coaching model for teachers and principals, recruit and train coaches, and implement model		Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jan	RPDP; NDE; LEAs
Develop and implement statewide high stakes principal mentoring programs	Jan-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	RPDP; Teachers and Leaders Council
Create professional development database		Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE
Launch professional expectations criteria		Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	RPDP; NDE
Implement full-scale professional development system (including E-MALL)			Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; RPDP; LEAs
Link professional development management system to SAIN (COMPASS)			Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE
Continue to assess effectiveness of existing professional development	Oct-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; RPDP; LEAs; Teachers and Leaders Council
Engage comprehensive evaluation of effectiveness of professional development; report data; use data to shape decision making			Jan-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; RPDP; Teachers and Leaders Council

Regional Professional Development Programs

Developed by the Regional Professional Development Programs in August 2003, the Nevada Professional Development Standards will provide the guidance for all teacher and principal development. Currently, some professional development is built on the following standards, while other programs currently do not align with the standards. Through *Nevada's Promise*, all professional development will adhere to these eight criteria:

- Standard I: Professional development is based on what educators need to know and be able to do to assist all students in achieving high academic standards.
- Standard II: Professional development is data-driven. Student performance data is used to monitor progress, and make appropriate adjustments.
- Standard III: Professional development is based on findings from sound research, facilitating educators' understanding of the theory underlying the knowledge and skills being learned.
- Standard IV: Professional development is continuous and ongoing, and is part of a comprehensive long-range plan that aligns with school and district School Improvement Plans.
- Standard V: Professional development deepens educators' content knowledge, provides them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards, prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately, and gives foundational knowledge and skill in classroom management.
- Standard VI: Professional development is built into the day-to-day work of educators at the school level, and fosters professional learning communities by employing collaborative and problem-solving work groups both within and across disciplines and grade levels.
- Standard VII: Professional development is evaluated on the basis of impact on teacher effectiveness and student learning/achievement.
- Standard VIII: Professional development is connected with and supportive of larger initiatives for comprehensive school reform at all levels (individual school, district, state, and federal), and is an integral part of broad school-wide and district-wide educational improvement plans.

The Regional Professional Development Programs have a demonstrated history of impacting student achievement with evidence collected through research-based analyses. The results of these analyses have yielded the following conclusions:

- Sustained professional development that focuses on the content teachers teach results in greater student achievement gains;
- Content training that is supported at the school, regional area, and district level leads to greater student achievement gains;
- Teachers who reflect on their practice while undergoing sustained professional development show stronger change toward research-based methods, which in turn results in greater student achievement; and
- As suggested in the Backwards Assessment Model (see Appendix D(5)(i)-1, New Teacher Center, 2009), teachers working together in sustained professional development activities results in greater student achievement compared to teachers working alone.

Key Professional Development Strategies

The Regional Professional Development Programs will provide a portion of necessary professional development services to educators. To fully meet Nevadans needs, Race to the Top funding will also be used to implement the following three key strategies aimed at increasing teacher and principal effectiveness statewide:

1. Using COMPASS to track professional development;
2. Implementation of active peer-to-peer collaboration; and
3. Coordination and enhancement of online professional development systems.

Using COMPASS To Track Professional Development

COMPASS will be developed in conjunction with the evaluation system and will enable Nevada to provide content-based, comprehensive, and rigorous professional development for all educators statewide. Data will be a critical component of the system and will be included in the individualized development plans D(2)(iv) that effectively support our teachers and principals.

Through these individualized development plans, teachers and principals will also have access to a professional development database aligned to educator growth needs. The system will be designed for continual evaluation of professional development opportunities to ensure increased teacher effectiveness and greater levels of student achievement.

Implementation Of Active Peer-To-Peer Collaboration

Active peer-to-peer collaboration will provide principals and teachers with opportunities to analyze student data and monitor student progress. Twelve rural districts are implementing the Instructional Consultation Teams Model (Rosenfield & Gravois, 1996—see Appendix A(3)(i)-8), which targets shoulder-to-shoulder skills development regarding the assessment of student need, and the differentiation of instruction to meet identified needs. Nevada will continue to scale up this model, as well as others that focus on peer-supported, job-embedded professional development.

Nevada has instituted mentoring and coaching programs, such as the Urban Teacher Mentoring Program. In the past, Nevada has not collected data to assess the effectiveness of these mentoring and coaching programs. The Teachers and Leaders Council will require that such programs collect information to gauge their effectiveness. These programs will be continued and enhanced if preliminary evaluations reveal that the programs positively impact student achievement.

Race to the Top funding will be used to expand Nevada's infrastructure supporting sustained use of active peer-to-peer collaboration. The Teacher and Leader Council, in concert with stakeholders, will create statewide standards for Professional Learning Communities for teachers and principals and Structured Teacher Planning Time teams, as well as resources to successfully implement these peer-to-peer programs. These resources will be available in E-MALL and professional development will be provided in using these resources. The Regional Development Programs will also create a framework for a leadership mentor program for principals in high-poverty/high-minority schools and/or persistently low achieving schools. Through professional learning community, structural teacher planning time, and leadership mentors, a statewide culture of peer-to-peer coaching will be developed. Coaches will provide feedback and modeling to teachers and principals to close learning gaps and increase student achievement.

Such feedback will include opportunities for focused reflection and dialogue about necessary changes in teacher/principal behavior and how to implement best practices.

To support teachers and principals in mastering standards to increase student achievement, a system of reflective coaching will be developed and sustained. Teachers and principals whose evaluation data indicates improvement is needed will be assigned a coach to support their unique data-driven needs. Coaches will provide feedback and modeling to teachers in closing any gaps in the teaching-learning process and to principals in providing leadership to close such gaps. Feedback will include opportunities for focused reflection and dialogue about necessary changes in teacher and principal behavior and how to implement effective practices.

The power of coaching is that it provides real time instructional or leadership feedback and supports learning by targeting observed instructional/leadership needs, modeling effectiveness in those targeted instructional and leadership skills. This coaching model will be built to provide time for teachers and principals to practice targeted instructional and leadership skills at the required level to refine effectiveness; repeating modeling as needed until targeted skills are attained at the required level to be effective in attaining student outputs.

Teachers who are highly effective will receive additional compensation to serve as coaches for other teachers to become more effective. Additionally, highly effective teachers will have the option to develop and vet high-quality instructional support tools such as sample lesson plans, formative assessments, schedules, and other classroom-based resources. Resources will be available through E-MALL and professional development will be provided to assist teachers. Retired principals who were highly effective will be engaged to support a model of coaching for administrators who are in need of support. Existing resources cannot support the creation of all independent coaching positions that are needed, but additional compensation for coaching and tools development can be prioritized to support a career ladder. A model is established through the New Teacher Center (2009) for science and math teachers and is currently being piloted for special education teachers across Nevada (see Appendix D(5)(i)-1).

Coordination And Enhancement Of Online Professional Development Systems

The Regional Professional Development Program's website is nationally recognized for its content. The instructional and assessment strategies currently available make professional development sessions accessible to all teachers and principals across Nevada. This website will be aligned with COMPASS and E-MALL to ensure resources are coordinated for optimal use by teachers and principals.

Beyond the support of these additional initiatives, LEAs will invest in opportunities directly aligned to trends in teacher and principal evaluations and student achievement results. All professional development providers will demonstrate a clear link to improve student or teacher performance. As a result of Nevada's comprehensive evaluation system, educators will demand more purposeful and effective learning opportunities so that they have every opportunity to improve their effectiveness and increase the achievement of their students. LEAs will demonstrate that local funding is invested in professional development opportunities, as determined by teacher and principal effectiveness data.

D(5)(ii): Continuing Improvement Of Professional Development

The impact on a teacher or principal's effectiveness, and the achievement of Nevada's students, will frame the evaluation of professional development. All professional development opportunities (as referenced in D(2)(iv)(a)) must meet the Nevada Professional Development Standards and include the following: specific learning outcomes for participants, clear examples of how the learning goals will translate to increased effectiveness/student achievement, and survey participants and managers to check for outcomes. Currently, the Regional Professional Development Programs assess participant evaluations using the *RPDP Activity Evaluation Forms* for all professional development activities. These forms provide immediate formative feedback on the quality of the professional development. These questions are designed to ascertain the quality of training. The following are questions in the form, which are rated on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (to a great extent):

1. The activity matched my needs.
2. The activity provided opportunities for interactions and reflections.
3. The presenter/facilitator's experience and expertise enhanced the quality of the activity.
4. The presenter/facilitator efficiently managed time and pacing of activities.
5. The presenter/facilitator modeled effective teaching strategies.
6. This activity added to my knowledge of standards and subject matter content.
7. This activity will improve my teaching skills.
8. I will use the knowledge and skills from this activity in my classroom or professional duties.
9. This activity will help me meet the needs of diverse student populations.

These questions will be incorporated into COMPASS to measure, evaluate, and enable continuous improvement of the effectiveness of Nevada's professional development offerings. Additionally, follow-up surveys with participants and the leaders who observe them will provide opportunity to cross-check for actual change in behavior as a result of professional development.

Section E: Turning Around The Lowest-Achieving Schools (50 Points)

State Reform Conditions Criteria

E(1): Intervening In The Lowest-Achieving Schools And Leas (10 Points)

The extent to which the State has the legal, statutory, or regulatory authority to intervene directly in the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) and in LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action status.

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

Evidence for E(1):

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

E: Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

NEVADA'S STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATION REFORM	TURNING AROUND LOWEST-ACHIEVING SCHOOLS: PLANNED ACTIVITIES
<p>Improve student performance through collaboration with key stakeholders such as parents, teachers, principals, employee associations, district administrators, state officials, community leaders, and legislators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create partnerships with industry, community, and legislative leaders to ensure that existing resources can be reallocated to impact high-needs schools and ensure equity ▪ Hire and use a statewide Parent Engagement Specialist to ensure collaboration between the districts and parents in developing and using community resources at turnaround schools
<p>Improve classroom instruction on rigorous and relevant content, including an emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the development of recruitment tools and systems to ensure the hiring of appropriate staff for the lowest-achieving schools
<p>Improve classroom instruction and student performance using data at all levels—student, classroom, school, district, state—to support the improvement planning process, evaluate the effectiveness of planned programs, and drive instructional decisions focused on increased student achievement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and use focused school profiles to determine appropriate interventions for school improvement ▪ Develop and use the E-MALL online system to provide templates and online resources for longitudinal school and district improvement planning
<p>Improve achievement through the best practices that have been proven effective in Nevada</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build capacity at the state, district, and regional level to turn around schools that might otherwise decline into needs improvement status ▪ Provide support, mentoring, and guidance to district leaders in the implementation of the chosen intervention model relative to evaluation, facilitative administrative support, and systems interventions ▪ Gather and share data on the impact of early learning initiatives to help leverage stakeholders to commit to the adoption and sustain Pre-K programs ▪ Connect schools and districts with comprehensive support programs

E(1): Intervening In The Lowest-Achieving Schools And LEAs

Nevada’s school improvement process culture embraces high expectations for every student. Nevada’s pledge to improve student achievement through the systemic improvement of schools was explicitly affirmed through the passage of the Nevada Education Reform Act (NERA) in 1997, several years prior to the authorization of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). NERA provided

a platform to identify schools that were low achieving and to leverage the necessary support to turn them around.

Following the passage of NCLB, state law NRS 385.357 (see Appendix E(1)(i)-1) was revised to align with those requirements, and went even further to demand that every school—not only those that receive Title I funds—engage in required improvement and accountability efforts. NRS 385.3721 and NRS 385.3773 (pursuant to 20 U.S.C. § 6316 (c)(10)) (see Appendix E(1)(i)-2 and Appendix E(1)(i)-3) give the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) full authority to intervene in all of the state’s persistently lowest-achieving schools, and in all districts designated as being in the third year or beyond of needing improvement. Nevada fully meets the requirement of legal authority to intervene both at the school and LEA level.

Table E(1)-1: Reform Plan Criteria

APPROACH USED	# OF SCHOOLS SINCE SY2004-05	RESULTS AND LESSONS LEARNED
School Support Team with assigned leader	121	One size does not fit all — differentiated supports and consequences are appropriate based on the individual data-driven needs of the school. When high-quality, targeted coaching is provided to teachers and leaders in response to observation data, change occurs in teacher and leader behavior, and student performance increases.
Restructuring (under Title I)	18	Failing schools are more successful with structured monitoring and accountability; aligned curriculum and instruction are essential for increasing student outcomes.
Empowerment	17	A model of managed performance empowerment can work when schools earn autonomy and are then granted decision-making authority; when results are not achieved, autonomy must be removed or credibility of the model is impacted.

Performance Measures	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
The number of schools for which one of the four school intervention models (described in Appendix C) will be initiated each year.	0	10	8	5	0

Schools in Nevada have not previously implemented one of the four intervention models in keeping with the specific criteria established under RTTT, SFSF, and SIG. Schools in Nevada will begin implementation of these models in the 2010-2011 school year and each year thereafter. In 2010/11, 10 schools will begin implementation with SIG funding (to be awarded to districts in June 2010). In 2010-2011, eight schools will begin implementation in 2011-2012 (3 to be funded under SIG and five to be funded under RTTT). Another set of five schools (to be funded with RTTT) will begin implementation in 2013-2014. Each school is expected to receive fiscal support to implement the intervention model for a two-to-three year period depending on the schools' performance data.

Nevada law requires the NDE and the Nevada State Board of Education hold schools and districts that are in year three or more of corrective action accountable for improving student achievement. NRS 385 outlines the accountability tools and authority granted to the NDE. This Statewide System of Support encompasses a structure of cascading consequences to achieve comprehensive school reform. In year three of needing improvement, all schools must administer the Nevada Comprehensive Curriculum Audit Tool for Schools (NCCAT-S), (see Appendix E(1)(i)-4), a standardized needs assessment tool that provides capacity for intra-district comparability, as well as regional and state comparability for program improvement purposes.

The NCCAT-S is a rubric that is used to assess a school's performance against a set of 20 indicators across three categories: (a) curriculum and instruction; (b) assessment and accountability; and (c) leadership. It was built upon a substantial meta-analysis (CCSSO, 2005; Cawelti & Protheroe, 2001; Black & William, 1998; and Newmann Wehlage, 1995) (see Appendix E(1)(i)-5) of the research on school improvement. The NCCAT-S was developed by the NDE in 2008-2009 in active partnership with districts, and with support from nationally recognized experts in school turnaround (the Center for Innovation and Improvement, WestEd, and RMC Research Corporation).

Based on the results of the NCCAT-S, one or more differentiated school reform options must be selected from the Statewide System of Support. Schools in the fourth year of improvement must develop a restructuring plan for Title I schools or a turnaround plan for non-Title I schools, which is implemented in the fifth year. In implementing these plans, schools must do one or more of the following three actions:

1. Execute an alternative governance structure;
2. Develop goals that focus only on Curriculum, Instruction, or Leadership, and/or
3. Replace those employees (such as all school staff and/or principal) who contributed to the school's failure to make adequate yearly progress.

As part of the Statewide System of Support, all schools in Nevada are required to develop and implement school improvement plans, (including restructuring/turnaround plans, if appropriate, and all districts must develop and implement a district improvement plan. The NDE is also required to develop a State Improvement Plan for submission to the Legislature and other stakeholders (see Appendix A(1)(i)-6). These plans must be driven by student achievement and other data, and must contain rigorous yet achievable targets for improving student results.

The Nevada Revised Statutes also requires districts designated in the third year of needing improvement to implement more in-depth reform or corrective action, such as implementing a new curriculum, replacing employees, changing systems of governance, or taking steps to abolish or appoint a trustee to administer the school district. Over the past six years, Nevada has had only one district reach the status of being in need of improvement for three years. The NDE worked with that district to conduct a curriculum audit with the intent of instituting a new curriculum. With the assistance of the NDE, the district made AYP for two consecutive years and moved out of improvement status.

To support robust rigor, Nevada developed the Student Achievement Gap Elimination (SAGE) school improvement process. This provides schools with a framework for problem solving to target school improvement efforts that yield quality results. SAGE is the required school

improvement process for Title I schools in Nevada that are designated as in need of improvement. SAGE has also come to serve as the statewide framework for school improvement for all other schools, regardless of Title I and/or improvement status. The purpose of SAGE is to help external facilitators, administrators, teachers, parents, and community members participate in a continuous improvement cycle that identifies potential barriers, reveals inherent strengths, and outlines a way to move the school forward, implementing efforts so that all students can achieve to their highest potential.

E(2): Turning Around The Lowest-Achieving Schools (40 points)

The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to—

(i) Identify the persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) and, at its discretion, any non-Title I eligible secondary schools that would be considered persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) if they were eligible to receive Title I funds; and (5 points)

(ii) Support its LEAs in turning around these schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models (as described in Appendix C): turnaround model, restart model, school closure, or transformation model (provided that an LEA with more than nine persistently lowest-achieving schools may not use the transformation model for more than 50 percent of its schools). (35 points)

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

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

- *The State's historic performance on school turnaround, as evidenced by the total number of persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) that States or LEAs attempted to turn around in the last five years, the approach used, and the results and lessons learned to date.*

Recommended maximum response length: Eight pages

E(2): Turning Around The Lowest-Achieving Schools

E(2)(i): Plan for Identifying Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools

Nevada identifies its lowest achieving schools in accordance with the state's federally approved definition, which considers both the growth and proficiency status of every student in each school across Nevada, as sanctioned by the U.S. Department of Education in March 2010. This definition is consistent across federal initiatives and applies to the School Improvement Grant, State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, and Race to the Top.

- *Proficiency analyses* are based upon the percent proficient, or the percent of the tested student body that scored in the proficient range in math and English/Language Arts (ELA). Schools are then assigned two ranks on the basis of math percent proficient and ELA percent proficient.
- *Growth analyses* are based upon the change in a school's percent proficient in math and ELA across the most recent four-year period for each school. These ranks are then summed to determine each school's total growth over the four-year period. Schools are also assigned two ranks on the basis of math growth and ELA growth.

A total of the four ranks (i.e., math proficiency, ELA proficiency, math growth, ELA growth) are then computed for each school, and are summed to derive a total rank value for each school, with each rank weighted equally. These total rank values are used to identify Nevada's persistently lowest-achieving schools. In addition to the rank values, high schools with a graduation rate less than 60% over the past four years were also identified as persistently low-achieving.

Table E(2)(i)-1: Timeline For Building Capacity To Turnaround Low-Achieving Schools

Objective for E(2):	Turn around the persistently lowest-achieving schools				
Primary Strategy:	Build capacity to rapidly and consistently turn around low performing schools				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Provide training and technical assistance to key district, regional, and state stakeholders	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; RPDP; LEAs; Turnaround Schools Council
Partner with industry, community, and legislative leaders, to identify and obtain new resources to support turnaround schools	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Accountability Task Force
Develop and implement rich evaluation system to collect data and inform program improvement efforts regarding the use of the designated four models	Oct-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; Turnaround Schools Council
Develop model profiles (transformation, turnaround, restart, and closure); list state statutes and district policies that address each model, as well as limit it, create barriers to it, or provide support for it and how	Oct-Dec				NDE; Turnaround Schools Council
Develop profiles of available partners and/or external providers that are available to assist with each model; provide a brief description of services they can provide and their track record of success	Jan	Jul	Jul	Jul	NDE; Turnaround Schools Council
Promote working relationships among the state, the LEA, lead partners/providers, support partners/providers, internal partners/providers, principals, school teams, parents, and the	Oct-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; LEAs; Parents; Community Partners

Objective for E(2):	Turn around the persistently lowest-achieving schools				
Primary Strategy:	Build capacity to rapidly and consistently turn around low performing schools				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
community					
Create expectations for hiring practices at low-performing and high-needs schools, and support the development and use of recruitment tools and systems	Oct-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE
Develop templates and online resources for longitudinal school and district improvement planning	Oct-Jun	Jul-Dec			NDE
Coordinate and broker professional development	Oct-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE
Assist schools and districts in developing plans that fully incorporate the support and resources for parents and families	Oct-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; LEAs; Parents; Community Partners
Connect schools and districts with comprehensive support programs, such as health, mental health, nutrition, and family support systems	Jun	Jun	Jun		NDE; Parents; Community Partners
Leverage capacity for fiscal and program collaboration with Early Childhood Education programs	Oct-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; Accountability Task Force

E(2)(ii): Plan To Implement Intervention Model

Since the enactment of NCLB, NRS 385 has required the establishment of a School Support Team for every school designated In Need of Improvement year three or beyond. To improve the system, the NDE partnered with the American Institutes for Research to conduct a study of the school improvement process under state law, which resulted in a number of recommendations for systems improvement. Based on this study, the NDE and the Nevada legislature responded directly to the recommendations by developing the following key strategies to transform the lowest-achieving schools into high-performing schools that effectively educate all students.

1. **Nevada has created a differentiated statewide system of support, with school support services based on data-driven needs**—Senate Bill 389 (see Appendix A(3)(i)-7) enacted during the 2009 Nevada Legislature, made substantive changes to the system of support for Nevada schools that are in improvement for three or more years. The NCCAT-S must be conducted at year three and the school improvement plan and consequences are then derived from the analysis of the results. The NCCAT-S is refreshed in subsequent years to inform the restructuring/turnaround plans.
2. **School Support Teams are selectively assigned in response to the specific needs of a school**—School Support Teams are no longer the automatic solution for every school. The school’s needs, as established through data analysis, drive the consequences that are assigned to the school. If a School Support Team is assigned to work with a school, the School Support Team Leader must have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to support schools to realize radical changes in student, teacher, and principal behavior. Evaluation systems are in place to ensure School Support Team Leaders have the necessary skills.
3. **A system is being formalized to ensure feedback from schools and districts on the impact of the differentiated statewide system of support**—This system will ensure that support services for schools and districts can create high impact and contribute to the reform model chosen to improve schools quickly and effectively.
4. **Training must be provided to all stakeholders participating in the school improvement system**—This need is directly targeted through the comprehensive efforts described under the auspices of *Nevada’s Promise*. As part of this work, Nevada will partner with nationally recognized organizations that have expertise in helping schools to make rapid improvements within a two-year timeframe.
5. **Reporting requirements in the school improvement process will be reduced and revised**—As articulated throughout this application, Nevada is transforming the culture from a system of compliance to a focus on collaboration and results. Accordingly, the NDE will partner with districts and others through the Accountability Task Force to engage in program monitoring and evaluation efforts focused on quality implementation. Burden will be reduced and relevancy of results will increase.
6. **Monitoring of School Improvement Plan quality and implementation is improving**—As described throughout this application, the success of this reform depends upon leveraging the right resources at the right time. Monitoring will simultaneously focus on outcomes and process, and implementation will be driven in accordance with the performance empowered management concept central to Nevada’s reform plan. Where necessary, support will be provided through consultation and coaching, facilitative administrative support, and systems interventions, as substantiated by staff evaluations, and program evaluation.

7. **Timing issues around the improvement process will be systemically addressed**—Due to the fact that these schools will only have two years to be turned around, the Nevada Education Reform Office will work closely with designated schools, partners, and all other stakeholders to make this happen. On-demand resources will be developed and made available as described under the support to schools, below.

Table E(2)(i)-1: Timeline For Evidence-Based Practices To Increase Student Results

Objective for E(2):	Turn around the persistently lowest-achieving schools				
Primary Strategy:	Scale up evidence-based practices that drive the highest student results				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Convene annual parent involvement summit	Feb	Feb	Feb	Feb	NDE; Accountability Task Force
Report effective practices and celebrate successful turnaround schools at annual Education Summit	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	NDE; Accountability Task Force
Provide focused training and technical assistance to key district, regional, and state stakeholders	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	Jul-Jun	NDE; RPDP; LEAs

Nevada's Promise will focus on building capacity at the state, district, and regional level to turnaround schools that otherwise might decline into needs improvement status. Each school will have specific targeted outcomes; the NDE will provide direct support to district administrators, the Regional Professional Development Program Staff, and school personnel through focused training and technical assistance. The Nevada Department of Education and district leaders will also partner to resolve issues of school equity. Through partnerships with industry, community, and legislative leaders, new resources will be identified and obtained, and policies will be revised to ensure that existing resources can be reallocated to impact high-needs schools to ensure equity.

Nevada has adopted a Managed Performance/Empowerment theory of action to drive the work of turning around our lowest achieving schools, and through Race to the Top funding, Nevada will have the resources to effectively apply this model for schools that are in need of improvement for three or more years, including those schools identified as persistently low achieving. School-embedded management will be applied to these schools, with direct intervention provided through school districts and the NDE at differentiated levels across the priority categories. As the schools demonstrate successful turnaround outcomes—evidenced by student growth and achievement data—increasing degrees of autonomy will be phased in over time. Nevada will use four priority-based clusters to guide the turnaround process for these low achieving schools, which are listed in Table E(2)(ii)-1:

Table E(2)(ii)-1: Priority Categories for Low-Achieving Schools

PRIORITY LEVEL:	PRIORITY 1 SCHOOLS	PRIORITY 2 SCHOOLS	PRIORITY 3 SCHOOLS	PRIORITY 4 SCHOOLS
SCHOOLS IN THIS CATEGORY:	Tier I and Tier II schools as identified under definition for School Improvement Grant (Title I eligible)	Non-Title I eligible secondary schools identified using the same definition as Priority 1 schools	Schools identified as in need of improvement for 5 or more years (Title I & non-Title I)	Schools identified in need of improvement for 3 or 4 years (Title I & non-Title I)

Direct Intervention in Priority 1 and Priority 2 Schools

The most intensive and rigorous interventions will be applied to schools in these two categories. Nevada will use a process that is well-defined, grounded in current research, and designed to address unique school contextual dynamics to maintain differentiated decision-making. Utilizing the *Decision-Making and Planning Tool* (see Appendix E(2)(ii)-1) developed by the Center on Innovation and Improvement, the Nevada Education Reform Office will assist the school district to create a focused school profile that outlines the demographics of the student and staff populations in the building.

These profiles will include data on the experience and effectiveness of instructional and leadership personnel at the school and will be informed in part by findings from the NCCAT-S.

Once the profiles are complete, NDE and district leaders will analyze and use this information to determine, of the four intervention models, which is the best data-driven match for each school:

1. Turnaround;
2. Restart;
3. School Closure; or
4. Transformation.

In making decisions about selection of the intervention model, consideration will be given to state and school district priorities for reform, as well as statutory and regulatory implications associated with such decisions.

After a model is chosen by the NDE and school district, technical assistance will be provided to help the district select and negotiate relationships with partners and programs that will best support the implementation of the model at the school. To ensure sustained effectiveness and high fidelity of implementation, a Memorandum of Understanding will be created with the NDE, the school district, and the Regional Professional Development Programs, which will detail the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders and partners engaged in the work and their relationship to various aspects of implementation. This Memorandum of Understanding will describe expectations for data collection, reporting, and continuous monitoring and evaluation practices.

For the 2010-2011 academic year, Nevada is anticipating that 10 Priority 1 schools will be served through the School Improvement Grant administered with Title I 1003(g) funds. Four Nevada school districts are eligible for funds under the School Improvement Grant; three are competing, with plans to implement the Turnaround Model in two schools and the Transformation Model in nine schools. In 2011-2012, it is anticipated that three additional schools will come on board with School Improvement Grant funding.

In 2010-2011, five Priority 2 schools will be identified and will begin planning in that year for implementation of the intervention model during the 2012-2013 school year. Similarly, in 2012-2013, five more schools will be identified and will begin planning that year in order to implement the selected intervention model during 2013-2014 with Race to the Top funds.

The same process used for Priority 1 schools will be conducted with Priority 2 schools. The Nevada Education Reform office, in collaboration with school districts and the Regional Professional Development Programs, will create a focused profile for each priority school. This profile will determine which of the four intervention models will be the best match for each of these schools.

All Priority 1 and 2 level schools will sustain implementation of the selected intervention model for a period of three years, with radical change demanded within two years. Each of the schools will be closely monitored to ensure that they are implementing the selected model with fidelity, and that trajectory data demonstrate that targeted results will be met within expected, aggressive timelines. Increasing levels of direct intervention will be applied when the data suggest that such support/consequences are needed. Professional development will be prioritized for these schools; staff will be held accountable for demonstrating mastery of concepts addressed through professional development; fiscal resources will be targeted to areas of need (based on NCCAT-S, accountability, evaluation, and instructional outcomes data); and direct and close support will be provided to building administrators to ensure that the schools deliver on the promises that have been made to stakeholders.

Table E(2)(i)-3: Timeline For Intervention In Nevada’s Priority 1 And 2 Level Schools

Objective for E(2):	Turn around the persistently lowest-achieving schools				
Primary Strategy:	Directly intervene in Nevada’s Priority 1 and 2 level schools				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Annually identify schools for each priority cluster	Aug	Aug	Aug	Aug	NDE; LEAs
Select appropriate model for school based on school performance, as well as school, district, and community capacity	Mar	Oct	Oct	Oct	LEAs; NDE
Select appropriate partners/providers to help implement selected intervention model	Apr	Jan	Jan	Jan	LEAs; NDE
Define roles of each of the groups, partners, or providers relative to the implementation of the intervention model	May	Feb	Feb	Feb	LEAs; NDE
Develop profiles of the context and performance for all identified schools	Feb	Oct	Oct	Oct	LEAs
Develop contracts with each partner/provider to include performance expectations and benchmarks	Jun	Mar	Mar	Mar	LEAs
Enter into an MOU with LEA regarding the chosen model, with detailed expectations for data collection, reporting, and continuous monitoring and evaluation practices	Jun	Jun	Jun	Jun	NDE

Priority level 3 schools are those that have been identified as in need of improvement for five or more years (Title I & non-Title I), and Priority level 4 schools are those that have been identified as needing improvement for a period of three or four years (Title I & non-Title I). In keeping with Nevada’s managed performance approach, the degree of direct intervention provided to schools in Priority levels 3 and 4 will be scaffolded in terms of support. State law already mandates that schools in year three conduct the NCCAT-S, and that schools in years four or

more engage in one or more specified consequences defined in state regulations, to include the following:

1. Update NCCAT-S with facilitation by an entity with relevant experience who is external to the school;
2. Receive targeted technical assistance;
3. Receive targeted professional development;
4. Receive focused external support;
5. Be assigned and engage the implementation of a school support team;
6. Resource acquisition;
7. Other consequence.

The Nevada Department of Education bears responsibility for making the final decision on the consequence(s) that a school in year four or greater will receive. Accordingly, both Priority 3 and 4 Schools will be subject to this system of consequences, but will not be required to implement one of the four prescriptive models of intervention required of Priority 1 and 2 Schools. However, for Priority 3 and 4 schools, districts and the NDE will enter into an MOU which mirrors that described for Priority levels 1 and 2.

The MOUs will detail the roles and responsibilities of partners engaged in the work and their relationship to implementation of designated consequences. The MOUs will describe expectations for data collection, reporting, and continuous monitoring and evaluation practices. Priority 3 schools will be required to enter into contractual relationships with providers that have a demonstrated history of success in implementing the consequence assigned to the school. Priority 4 schools may receive support from the school district, the Regional Professional Development Programs, and/or external providers, but will not be *required* to engage in contractual relationships in the same way that Priority 3 schools will be required. Race to the Top resources will be used to support Priority 3 and 4 level schools to engage in the improvement strategies articulated below, including a targeted focus on using funds to extend the school day/year and to embrace early childhood programming opportunities.

Table E(2)(i)-4: Timeline For Intervention In Nevada’s Priority 3 And 4 Level Schools

Objective or E(2):	Turn around the persistently lowest-achieving schools				
Primary Strategy:	Support school districts to intervene in Priority 3 and 4 level schools				
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	
Support school districts’ capacity to conduct NCCAT-S audit in all Priority 3 schools, through training and technical assistance	Aug-Jun	Aug-Jun	Aug-Jun	Aug-Jun	NDE; LEAs; RPDP
Support school districts’ capacity to implement differentiated approaches in response to NCCAT-S results and to plan for restructuring/turnaround in all Priority 4 schools	Aug-Jun	Aug-Jun	Aug-Jun	Aug-Jun	NDE; LEAs
Assign focused improvement strategies to schools and districts based on data-driven needs	Aug-Jun	Aug-Jun	Aug-Jun	Aug-Jun	NDE; LEAs; RPDP

Improvement Strategies—NDE expects that a number of school improvement initiatives will be needed to turn around the lowest-achieving schools. Available strategies will include:

- Extended day options for specific groups of students to be used for academic improvement or enrichment activities.
- Math coaches to support teachers with the delivery of an effective mathematics curriculum, and interpretation of assessments to provide differentiated math instruction to all students.
- Reading coaches to support teachers with the delivery of an effective English Language/Arts curriculum, and interpretation of assessments to provide differentiated English Language/Arts instruction to all students.
- Targeted professional development for teachers, focused on the Nevada Professional Development Standards (as referenced in D(5)).
- Implementation of an instructional improvement system (E-MALL), which provides teachers with a web-based portal to manage curriculum resources, create assessments for students, score, evaluate and group students, and develop report cards and profiles for each student.

- Access to upper division courses for students through Nevada Higher Education Systems, which provides dual-credit courses to students in the lowest-achieving high schools with access to advanced courses (including courses in STEM) that they may not be able to get otherwise in their home districts.
- Credit recovery services for students. Nevada recognizes that students who are more than one year behind academically may not necessarily benefit from individual credit recovery services and will need a structured support or supervision of a graduation coach.
- Dropout prevention programs through the expansion of Nevada’s current partnership with Communities in Schools.
- Collaborative support for participating LEAs to develop strategic initiatives appropriate for lowest-achieving feeder schools.

Comprehensive Technical Assistance. The Nevada Education Reform Office will provide support, mentoring, and guidance to district leaders in the implementation of the chosen intervention model relative to evaluation, facilitative administrative support, and systems interventions. The NDE will coordinate the efforts of the Turn-Around Schools Council. The Turn-Around Schools Council will create tools to help schools meet expectations for hiring practices at low performing and high needs schools, and support the development of recruitment tools and systems to ensure the hiring of appropriate staff. Such tools will support the need for knowledge of cultural competence and other subpopulation considerations. The Turn-Around Schools Council will assist in developing and refining templates and online resources for longitudinal school and district improvement planning to be made available through E-MALL (Electronic Media Access to Leverage Learning).

Professional Development. The Nevada’s Promise office will broker professional development in the areas of (a) common core standards and formative assessments; (b) continuous support and constructive feedback; (c) mentorship; (d) curriculum and instruction; and (e) access to expertise, resources, and effective practices. The Regional Professional Development Programs will be a central source of support for these efforts. One essential focus for professional development will be to assist schools in conducting the NCCAT-S and districts with the NCCAT-D. This work will be supported by helping stakeholders across Nevada use the Nevada Professional Development Standards (as referenced in D(5)) as a guide for effective professional development.

Parent Involvement and Family Engagement. A Parent Engagement Specialist will be on staff in the Nevada Education Reform Office, and will assist schools and districts in developing plans that fully incorporate the support, abilities, and resources that parents bring to the education of their children. This specialist will convene a yearly Parent Involvement Summit, assist schools in developing transition plans for children and families as they progress from Pre-K to high school and post-secondary schooling, and provide training in best practices for family-friendly schools.

The Parent Engagement Specialist will build capacity through training for schools to develop a school team, including families, to analyze its policies, practices and culture for including families in the academic success of their children. These teams will partner with the Nevada State Parent Information Resource Center (PIRC) to identify relevant research-based programs such as Math and Parent Partnerships, Family Literacy Experience, the Parent Teacher Home Visit Project, and the Parent School Partnership program from Mexican/American Legal Defense Education Fund for ongoing support of families and outreach to hard-to-reach families.

Comprehensive Behavioral and Supplemental Services. The *Nevada's Promise* office will connect schools and districts with comprehensive support programs such as health, mental health, nutrition, family support services, and supplemental educational services. Staff will assist schools and districts in developing comprehensive plans to meet the needs of their students. Programs such as the *Nevada Family Resource Centers*, the *Nevada Afterschool Network* and *Communities in Schools* will provide training and technical assistance to LEA and school leaders in order to engage in the appropriate programs and services.

It is well established that students who receive breakfast and lunch at school achieve higher test scores, have higher attendance, less tardiness, and greater student participation in the classroom. At the request of the Nevada State Legislature in a 2009 Session Letter of Intent, school districts will be working toward full utilization of federal nutrition programs in schools, with particular attention on implementation of school breakfast after-the-bell.

Schools will receive technical assistance through the NDE, school district leaders, and non-profit partners such as the Nevada Food Bank and the Three Square Program, to implement nutrition programs—especially free breakfast programs. Schools will be encouraged to do so through publicly reported data regarding program participation, and, for non-participants, include the reasons the school chose not to provide the children with breakfast. This effort aligns with the plan to *End Hunger by 2015*, which is built on incorporating and expanding federal nutrition programs.

Early Learning Outcomes. Initiatives such as the state-funded Nevada Early Literacy Intervention Program, state-funded Early Childhood Programs, full-day Kindergarten (funded through Title I and via state funds until 2011), and others have been embraced when resources have been made available. Part of the work of the Turn-Around Schools Council will be to gather and share data on the impact of early learning initiatives and to help leverage stakeholders to commit to the adoption and sustenance of Pre-K programs, especially attached to those schools that serve the Nevada’s highest needs students. Leveraging capacity for fiscal and program collaboration with early childhood special education programs will be a central part of this work, to the benefit of young children with and without disabilities.

School Improvement Grant Awards. The Nevada Education Reform Office will coordinate the flow of supplemental funding through the School Improvement Grants awards program.

Progress Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting. The Nevada Education Reform Office will work with partners to ensure that continuous monitoring of progress is taking place, and that feedback is provided to and from participating schools and districts. Data will be reported through E-MALL. Effective practices will also be shared through E-MALL. Additionally, effective practices will be highlighted during presentations made at the annual Education Summit described in Section A(2). The Summit will be attended by educators, students, families, business and community leaders, media representatives, and policymakers. Schools that have successfully turned around will be featured and strategies will be shared with attendees.

Identification Of Persistently Low-Achieving Schools

Nevada identified the initial list of persistently lowest-achieving schools this spring. Ten Priority 1 schools will begin implementing one of the four intervention models during the 2010-2011 school year. In addition, at least five Priority 2 schools will be identified in September, 2010, and will be served during the 2011-2012 school year. Five more will begin interventions in 2012-2013. Priority 1 and Priority 2 schools that receive support through the Nevada Education Reform Office will be expected to make rapid improvements within two years and will be held accountable for meeting this rigorous expectation. The implementation of the interventions will be monitored throughout the year to ensure fidelity to all components of the chosen model. Schools that achieve targeted goals will be granted greater levels of autonomy.

Section F: General (55 Points)

State Reform Conditions Criteria

F(1): Making Education Funding A Priority (10 Points)

The extent to which—

(i) The percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice) that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for FY 2009 was greater than or equal to the percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice) that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for FY 2008; and

(ii) The State's policies lead to equitable funding (a) between high-need LEAs (as defined in this notice) and other LEAs, and (b) within LEAs, between high-poverty schools (as defined in this notice) and other schools.

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

Evidence for F(1)(i):

- *Financial data to show whether and to what extent expenditures, as a percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice), increased, decreased, or remained the same.*

Evidence for F(1)(ii):

- *Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers.*

F: General

NEVADA'S STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATION REFORM	GENERAL: PLANNED ACTIVITIES
<p>Improve student performance through collaboration with key stakeholders such as parents, teachers, principals, employee associations, district administrators, state officials, community leaders, and legislators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leverage the focused collaboration required by the Nevada Plan for an adequate and equitably funding, which includes meaningful parent and community involvement
<p>Improve classroom instruction on rigorous and relevant content, including an emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build upon the Nevada Plan funding structure to support equitable academic achievement in all 17 LEAs
<p>Improve classroom instruction and student performance using data at all levels—student, classroom, school, district, state—to support the improvement planning process, evaluate the effectiveness of planned programs, and drive instructional decisions focused on increased student achievement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build upon the accountability structure instituted by Nevada where student achievement data is used to assess the performance of charter schools
<p>Improve achievement through the best practices that have been proven effective in Nevada</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collaborate with the proposed Charter School office to develop and maintain innovative instructional practices that increase student achievement ▪ Leverage the results from research studies evaluating the effectiveness of empowerment schools and use lessons learned to promote best practices

F(1): Making Education Funding A Priority

F(1)(i): State Spending On Education

Even though Nevada has been severely impact by the current economic crisis, the ratio of total state appropriations for education has remained stable. A summary comparing the percentage of total revenues available to Nevada that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education in FY 2008 and FY 2009 are found in Table F(1)-1. Although the Total State Appropriations were lower in FY 2009 than FY 2008, the FY 2009 Total General Fund Support for Education was slightly higher than the FY 2008 education expenditures as a percentage of total expenditures. Maintaining a stable funding posture in the face of the economic crisis shows

that Nevada is committed to ensuring that every student in Nevada receives a quality education, equipped with 21st century skills and the opportunity for college and career-readiness.

**Table F(1)-1: The Percentage Of Total Revenue Available To The State:
FY 2008 & FY 2009**

	FY 2008	FY 2009	± % CHANGE
Total General Fund Support for Education	\$1,801,753,609	\$1,834,032,251	+1.8%
Total State Appropriations	\$3,194,883,249	\$3,305,228,707	+3.5%
Percent of Total Appropriations for Education	56%	55%	-1.8%

F(1)(ii): State Policies That Support Equitable Funding

Nevada policies stipulate the requirement of adequate and equitable education funding. Article 11, Section 6 of the Nevada Constitution requires that the Legislature fund education *first*, which is fully consistent with the state’s adoption of the Managed Performance/Empowerment Theory of Action. This means that during the Nevada legislative session, the education budget must be approved before any other budgets can be presented. The “Nevada Plan” is the State’s guarantee and legislative declaration “that the proper objective of state financial aid to public education is to ensure each Nevada child a reasonably equal educational opportunity.” The Nevada Plan established the Distributive School Account to “supplement local financial ability to whatever extent necessary” and provide the means by which Nevada meets its guaranteed financial support to school districts (NRS 387.121 and NRS 387.122) (see Appendix F(1)-1 and see Appendix F(1)-2).

The Nevada Plan guarantees that financial support to public schools is comprised of a combination of state revenues and two locally generated tax revenue sources. The state revenue sources include:

1. General fund revenues;
2. An Out-of-State Local School Support Tax not attributable to any single county or school district; and

3. A portion of the Annual Slot Machine Tax.

The two locally generated revenues of the Nevada Plan include:

1. County-specific and apportioned Local School Support Tax and
2. One-third of public schools operating property tax (NRS 387.1235) (see Appendix F(1)-3).

Assembly Concurrent Resolution 10 from the 2005 Legislative Session required an adequacy study be performed. The study, conducted by Augenblick, Palaich and Associates, Inc. (APA), reviewed the Nevada Plan to verify that it provides adequate educational opportunities for Nevada students. After analysis, APA found that the Nevada Plan provides a school finance system that is highly equitable in terms of inter-district spending, and made no recommendations to alter the Nevada Plan for equity purposes. (School Financing Adequacy, August, 2006) (see Appendix F(1)-4).

The Nevada State Board of Education goals address the need for adequate funding to support academic achievement for learners in all 17 school districts. The Nevada State Improvement Plan (See Appendix A(1)(i)-6) addresses funding as a priority in the “Alignment” section, as follows:

“To improve student performance through focused collaboration with all key partners for an adequate and equitably funded system of public education with a cohesive statewide continuous improvement process that includes meaningful parent and community involvement and drives all levels (school, district, and state) to improve student learning and classroom instruction.”

Without a strong state-level commitment to equity, many schools and districts in Nevada would be financially constrained in their ability to meet the educational needs of the students. Embedded in the Nevada Plan is the conviction that every child must and will learn. This compels the equitable distribution of funds that will be used by schools and districts, so that each student can achieve their full potential. To support the Nevada Plan that equalizes funding for schools and districts, Nevada has implemented a statewide cost accounting system that documents the expenditure of federal, state, and local funds by district and school. This

information provides not only accountability for how funds have been spent, but is also is a powerful tool used to reallocate resources.

One primary source of funding for school districts from Nevada is the Distributive School Account, which specifies the statewide unrestricted funding per pupil (for FY 2010 the legislatively approved amount was \$5,251, which was reduced to \$5,186 during the 26th Special Session due to the current State budget crisis).

The Distributive School Account begins with the NRS 387 report for the fiscal year ending the year prior to the legislative session or the first fiscal year of the biennium. In this report, the district provides line item detail regarding income and expenditures related to general funds, special education, class-size reduction, and adult education. The general fund and special education totals statewide become the base for the next biennium's Distributive School Account. In most biennia, salaries are rolled up by two percent for the second year, and again for each year of the upcoming biennium to cover the cost of step and column adjustments. The salaries are also adjusted to with the same Cost-Of-Living-Adjustment state employees receive, while fringe benefits are adjusted based on known and projected changes in fringe benefit rates (retirement, health benefits, etc). The health benefit change is normally the same change in funding as the state health benefits plan.

By using information regarding average teacher salaries and projected enrollment, the Distributive School Account is increased for projected growth given the aggregate number of new teachers needed. Funding is also provided for maintenance and utilities for projected increases in the number of classrooms (based on reports submitted by the districts). Inflation adjustments are included for items such as textbooks, instructional supplies, fuel and utilities.

Special Education is included in this aggregate total and is funded based on a unit (teacher) methodology with a specified number of units available and rate per unit being determined by rolling the prior year rate up by the two percent per year and the Cost-Of-Living-Adjustment.

Class-Size Reduction funding is based upon the projected enrollment for grades 1-3, the desired class-sizes (16:1 for grades 1 and 2, and 19:1 for grade 3), the number of teachers needed, the current number of teachers and the average teacher salary (and benefits). This funding is in addition to the unrestricted and special education funding.

From the revenue side, local taxes are subtracted from the total of the expenditures listed above (primarily Local School Support Tax and Public School Operating Property Tax). State general funds make up the majority of what is left with a few other minor revenues rounding out the funding.

F(2): Ensuring Successful Conditions For High-Performing Charter Schools And Other Innovative Schools (40 points)

The extent to which—

(i) The State has a charter school law that does not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of high-performing charter schools (as defined in this notice) in the State, measured (as set forth in Appendix B) by the percentage of total schools in the State that are allowed to be charter schools or otherwise restrict student enrollment in charter schools;

(ii) The State has laws, statutes, regulations, or guidelines regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools; in particular, whether authorizers require that student achievement (as defined in this notice) be one significant factor, among others, in authorization or renewal; encourage charter schools that serve student populations that are similar to local district student populations, especially relative to high-need students (as defined in this notice); and have closed or not renewed ineffective charter schools;

(iii) The State's charter schools receive (as set forth in Appendix B) equitable funding compared to traditional public schools, and a commensurate share of local, State, and Federal revenues;

(iv) The State provides charter schools with funding for facilities (for leasing facilities, purchasing facilities, or making tenant improvements), assistance with facilities acquisition,

access to public facilities, the ability to share in bonds and mill levies, or other supports; and the extent to which the State does not impose any facility-related requirements on charter schools that are stricter than those applied to traditional public schools; and

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

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

Evidence for F(2)(i):

- *A description of the State's applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.*
- *The number of charter schools allowed under State law and the percentage this represents of the total number of schools in the State.*
- *The number and types of charter schools currently operating in the State.*

Evidence for F(2)(ii):

- *A description of the State's approach to charter school accountability and authorization, and a description of the State's applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.*
- *For each of the last five years:*
 - *The number of charter school applications made in the State.*
 - *The number of charter school applications approved.*
 - *The number of charter school applications denied and reasons for the denials (academic, financial, low enrollment, other).*
 - *The number of charter schools closed (including charter schools that were not reauthorized to operate).*

Evidence for F(2)(iii):

- *A description of the State’s applicable statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.*
- *A description of the State’s approach to charter school funding, the amount of funding passed through to charter schools per student, and how those amounts compare with traditional public school per-student funding allocations.*

Evidence for F(2)(iv):

- *A description of the State’s applicable statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.*
- *A description of the statewide facilities supports provided to charter schools, if any.*

Evidence for F(2)(v):

- *A description of how the State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools (as defined in this notice) other than charter schools.*

Recommended maximum response length: Six pages

F(2): Success For High-Performing Charter Schools And Other Innovative Schools

F(2)(i): High-performing Charter Schools in the State

Nevada has no cap on the number of charter schools in the State and no restriction on the number of students who may enroll in charter schools (NRS 386.500 – 386.610) (see Appendix F(2)(i)-1). As of the current school year, there are 28 charter schools operating in Nevada (see Appendix F(2)(i)-2 for list of schools). More than 12,500 (2.86%) students are currently enrolled in these schools. This reflects an increase from approximately 2.3% during the previous school year and is consistent with the overall trend of expansion of Nevada's charter schools.

Charter schools are public schools, responsible for their own governance and operation. There is an increased emphasis on accountability for their performance. The first charter school legislation in Nevada was enacted in 1997, and Nevada's charter school law was substantially amended in subsequent sessions (see Appendix F(2)(i)-1).

In 2011, a Senate Bill will be presented at the legislature to establish a Nevada Charter School Institute. The proposed Institute will create an 18th LEA to further expand charter schools.

Upon establishment, all charter schools sponsored by the Nevada State Board of Education will be transferred to the Institute for sponsorship. All other charter schools sponsored by school districts or higher education will have the opportunity to change their sponsorship to the Institute.

Currently, local school boards and institutions of the Nevada System of Higher Education are authorized to be sponsors of charter schools. Each charter school is overseen by a governing body, which includes teachers and may include parents, or representatives of nonprofit organizations, businesses, or high education institutions.

F(2)(ii): Laws Supporting Charter School Authorization And Accountability

The "charter" consists of the charter school application and a signed agreement between the school and its sponsor. The application includes a statement of goals including "the time by which certain academic or educational results will be achieved" (NRS 386.520(2)(m))(see

Appendix F(2)(i)-1). A charter may be revoked for noncompliance with the terms or conditions of the charter, including improper fiscal management (NRS 386.535) (see Appendix F(2)(i)-1): Nevada Revised Statutes, Charter School Application Process and Authorization).

Therefore, if the academic or educational results identified in the application are not met by the time identified in the application, the charter can be revoked. Furthermore, the quality of the application, including the quality of the school's educational goals, determines whether the application will be approved or not. Due process is afforded; the applicant has the right to appeal, should the application be denied. Table F(2)(ii)-1 summarizes the status of charter schools in Nevada over the past five years, 2006-2010. Five ineffective charter schools have had charters revoked.

To provide better support and accountability for Nevada’s charter schools, the NDE has provided the framework for a Charter School Office.

Table F(2)(ii)-1: Status Of Charter Schools In Nevada Over The Past Five Years, 2006-2010

YEAR	# Charter School Applications	# Charter School Application Approved	# Charter Schools Application Denied	Reason For Denial (Academic, Financial, Low-Enrollment, Other)	# Charter Schools Closed
2010	1	N/A	N/A	A	0
2009	12	1	11	B	0
2008	8	3	5	C	0
2007	10	3	7	D	2
2006	7	6	1	E	1

LEGEND: Reason for Denial of Charter School Applications, Table F(2)(ii)-1. “Status of Charter Schools”

- A. Not applicable; the 2010 application was received on 4/30/10 and is currently being reviewed by the Department.

- B. Eleven applications were denied because a number of items in each application were found incomplete and/or noncompliant.
- C. One application became inactive because the applicant missed a resubmission deadline. Four applications were denied because a number of items in each application were found incomplete and/or noncompliant.
- D. Two applications were withdrawn by the applicant from consideration for sponsorship. Five applications became inactive because the applicants missed resubmission deadlines.
- E. One application became inactive when the applicant determined it was unable to find a facility for the school.

F(2)(iii): Equitable Funding Of Charter Schools

Nevada's charter schools are considered public schools [NRS 385.007(1)] (see Appendix F(2)(iii)-1) and therefore come under the funding obligation of the Nevada Plan guarantee and are paid by the State through the general funds' Distributive School Account (DSA) [NRS 387.124(2)] (see Appendix F(2)(iii)-2).

When the Department determines the DSA payment to be made to a charter school, it includes in the charter school's total apportionment the full amount of the respective school district's basic support per pupil guarantee times the charter school's certified number of the pupils within that school district, plus any special education program funding, plus an additional amount which consists of the respective school district's "outside" revenues on a per pupil basis times the charter school's number of pupils [NRS 387.124(2) or (3)] (see Appendix F(2)(iii)-2). The amount of "outside" revenues per pupil credited to the charter school is based on certain local tax revenues that are not part of the Nevada Plan obligation (i.e., 2/3 PSOPT, governmental services tax, and franchise fees). For multi-district charter schools, the pupil's county of residence determines both the basic support amount and the additional outside revenue payment to be made.

If a charter school has pupils residing in more than one school district, then the calculation of its DSA apportionment will be based on the certified count day weighted apportioned enrollment of pupils residing within each respective school district [NRS 387.124(2)] (see Appendix F(2)(iii)-2).

F(2)(iv): Funding For Charter School Facilities

A charter school may use any public facility located within the school district where the charter school is located. A charter school may use school buildings owned by the school district only upon approval of the board of trustees of the school district and not during regular school hours. Although NRS 386.5515 (see Appendix F(2)(i)-1) allows certain types of charter schools that are performing effectively to access facilities funding, the legislature has not yet appropriated funding for this purpose.

F(2)(v): Empowerment Schools

In accordance with NRS 386.720 (see Appendix F(2)(v)-1), Nevada established a Program of Empowerment Schools for public schools within the state. Additionally, NRS 386.4154 – 386.4158 (see Appendix F(2)(v)-2), states that the “board of trustees of a school district may prescribe rules relating to the creation and administration of a program of school-based decision making for the public schools within the district.”

According a Clark County School District document titled: *Empowerment Schools*, the concept of empowerment is anchored in the belief that critical decisions affecting instruction should be made at the school level by those most closely involved with the children (see Appendix F(2)(v)-3). If schools are to be held accountable for student achievement, they should be given adequate resources and the freedom to determine how to attain targeted, specific goals by deploying those resources effectively and engaging the school community in the process.

The State of Nevada’s Program of Empowerment Schools provides a framework for the control that school personnel exercise over school resources. An empowerment school may control 90% of its apportionment from state and local resources, enroll students who are not zoned to attend school, and create an incentive pay structure for all school personnel.

Based upon Governor Gibbons’ recommendation to establish a Program of Empowerment Schools in Nevada, the 2007 legislative session created a statutory framework for empowerment schools. Table F(2)(v)-1 shows a timeline of the implementation of empowerment schools in Nevada. Although State funding for empowerment schools has been suspended due to budget

reductions, the Clark County School District currently has 17 empowerment schools and is scheduled to support additional 11 empowerment schools in 2011.

Table F(2)(v)-1: Timeline Of Implementation Of Empowerment Schools In Nevada

1993	Legislature approves laws governing school-based decision making. (Nevada Revised Statutes [NRS]386.4154-386.4158)
2007	Clark County School District implements first 4 empowerment schools
2008	2007 Legislature approve laws governing empowerment schools. (Nevada Revised Statutes [NRS]386.700-386.780); Clark County School District operates 8 empowerment schools
2009	Clark County School District operates 14 empowerment schools
2010	Clark County School District operates 17 empowerment schools; 11 new empowerment schools scheduled for 2011

F(3): Demonstrating Other Significant Reform Conditions (5 points)

The extent to which the State, in addition to information provided under other State Reform Conditions Criteria, has created, through law, regulation, or policy, other conditions favorable to education reform or innovation that have increased student achievement or graduation rates, narrowed achievement gaps, or resulted in other important outcomes.

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

Evidence for F(3):

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

Recommended maximum response length: Two pages

F(3): Demonstrating Other Significant Reform Conditions

In addition to the laws previously mentioned, Nevada has the following existing statutes creating conditions favorable to education innovation and furthering the reform initiatives contained in the Race To The Top application:

- NRS 385.379 (see Appendix F(3)-1) Creating the account for Programs for Innovation and Prevention of Remediation – In the previous biennium, funding was provided to districts and schools for strategies identified in improvement plans. The external evaluator, Douglas Reeves, of the Leadership and Learning Center, concluded that these programs improved student achievement particularly for students in poverty, English Language Learners, and students with disabilities.
- NRS 388.700 (see Appendix F(3)-2) Class size reduction – Nevada has had a long-standing state funded class size reduction program for classes where core curriculum is taught. The statutory limits in kindergarten and graded 1, 2 and 3 must not exceed 15 to 1. In FY10, an amount equal to \$144,263,320 was appropriated to pay salaries and benefits of not less than 3,142 teachers and \$145,935,501 for FY11.
- NRS 388.790 (see Appendix F(3)-3) Commission on Educational Technology – State funds have been appropriated to expand educational technology and are awarded by this commission. \$9 million was appropriated for the current biennium.
- NRS 385.610 (see Appendix F(3)-4) Established the Parental Involvement Advisory Council to work with State PTA and advise the NDE and Legislature on strategies for expansion of meaningful parental involvement to support improved student achievement.
- NRS 386.4154 (see Appendix F(2)(v)-2) Provides for School-Based Decision Councils for public schools within districts and allows the State Board to waive specific regulatory requirements.
- NRS 396.911-938 (see Appendix F(3)-5) Provides for the availability of “Millennium Scholarships” for use in any Nevada State college or university for Nevada high school graduates who meet certain academic and residency requirements.

In the previous biennium, funding was provided to districts and schools for strategies identified in improvement plans. An external evaluator concluded that these programs improved student achievement particularly for students in poverty, English language learners, and students with disabilities.

I. Competition Priorities

Priority 2: Competitive Preference Priority -- Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)

To meet this priority, the State's application must have a high-quality plan to address the need to (i) offer a rigorous course of study in mathematics, the sciences, technology, and engineering; (ii) cooperate with industry experts, museums, universities, research centers, or other STEM-capable community partners to prepare and assist teachers in integrating STEM content across grades and disciplines, in promoting effective and relevant instruction, and in offering applied learning opportunities for students; and (iii) prepare more students for advanced study and careers in the sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including by addressing the needs of underrepresented groups and of women and girls in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The competitive preference priority will be evaluated in the context of the State's entire application. Therefore, a State that is responding to this priority should address it throughout the application, as appropriate, and provide a summary of its approach to addressing the priority in the text box below. The reviewers will assess the priority as part of their review of a State's application and determine whether it has been met.

Recommended maximum response length, if any: One page

Competitive Priority Guidance: The application will be judged to determine whether it has met the competitive preference priority set forth below. The competitive preference priority will be evaluated in the context of the State's entire application. Therefore, a State that is responding to this priority should address it throughout the application, as appropriate, and provide a summary of its approach to addressing the priority. The reviewers will assess the priority as part of their review of a State's application and determine whether it has been met.

Priority 2: Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)

Nevada's Race to the Top proposal integrates STEM initiatives throughout the Selection Criteria. These initiatives will help Nevada further its agenda to increase capacity, replicate best practices, and engage all students in STEM and initiatives. The primary objectives of the STEM initiatives in Nevada's Race to the Top plan include:

- Secure state funding to increase the capacity of the existing STEM education centers at Nevada's Institution of Higher Education (Center for Math and Science Teaching at University of Nevada, Las Vegas and Raggio Center for STEM Education at University of Nevada, Reno) to act as clearing houses for coordinating professional development and enhancing their abilities to provide meaningful connections for content instruction, research to support learning, and program evaluation for projects across the state.
- Support the development of new or expanded programs within the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) teacher preparation programs to increase the STEM content preparation of new K-8 teachers, including training in the use of technology in teaching, and in integration of STEM content with literacy.
- Expansion of the Pathways to Nevada's Future project to include additional schools across the state and prepare for eventual placement in the majority schools.
- Support the development of infrastructure and professional development for increased use of hand-held technology for classroom instruction and assessment.
- Develop specific end of course assessments for STEM related high school courses (e.g., biology, algebra, geometry, environmental science, etc.) to be used as part of requirements for courses specified as needed for graduation. Success on specified end-of-course exams could serve as a substitute for meeting the Nevada HSPE requirement for graduation.
- Support expansion of the Silver State Summer AP Institute to train more teachers to be ready to teach AP courses in Nevada.
- Encourage and support the inclusion of more STEM based curriculum at the K-8 level, including development of more integrated curriculum models, greater use of technology for elementary schools, and more problem/project based instructional models such as the Engineering is Elementary program developed by the Boston Museum of Science.
- Support the addition of STEM trainers within the existing regional professional development programs. Currently the number of RPDG trainers is not sufficient to provide more than basic support in mathematics, science, and literacy.
- Encourage and support the partnerships of schools/districts/the Nevada System of Higher Education with partners from Nevada STEM-related business and industry to provide

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classroom support for instruction, and support for professional development for teachers (both funds to support professional development programs and also opportunities for teachers to participate in job shadowing and summer STEM field internships).

- Providing STEM-related online course content for both teachers and students to enable rural LEAs to broaden their available STEM curriculum.
- Support expansion of programs such as the University of Nevada's Girls Math Camp, the Mathematics, Engineering, Science and Achievement (MESA) program, summer engineering camps, and the Upward Bound Program at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, to enable greater access for underrepresented groups to enter and be successful in STEM field education and career opportunities.

Nevada already has a rich STEM community that includes industry, business, federal and university laboratories, and education partners. Nevada is home to many well-established employers, including General Electric, International Game Technologies, Nevada mining companies, NV Energy, and entrepreneurial start-ups in areas such as computer science, nanotechnology and renewable energy. In the past five years, Nevada colleges, universities and other organizations focused on STEM have received significant funding for STEM research from the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy, the National Institutes of Health, and related businesses and industries in aerospace, bioscience, energy, and information technology. These investments have promoted partnerships and alliances among higher education, LEAs, informal education organizations, government agencies, and business and industry to focus on the broad, complex issues of STEM education.

However, even though many of these research endeavors include a K-12 education outreach component, the absence of a statewide coordinating body has limited the potential impact of these STEM partnerships in Nevada schools. With Race to the Top funding, Nevada will be able to apply a concentrated and cohesive effort to increase the number of students pursuing STEM majors in Nevada's colleges and universities.

Priority 2-3

Priority 3: Invitational Priority – Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (not scored)

The Secretary is particularly interested in applications that include practices, strategies, or programs to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (prekindergarten through third grade) by enhancing the quality of preschool programs. Of particular interest are proposals that support practices that (i) improve school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive); and (ii) improve the transition between preschool and kindergarten.

The State is invited to provide a discussion of this priority in the text box below, but such description is optional. Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Recommended maximum response length, if any: Two pages

Early Learning Outcomes

State funds were first committed to Early Learning Outcomes (ELO) through the passage of State legislation in 2001, which created a statewide early childhood education program. Since that time, the State has allocated approximately \$3 million per year for State-funded Pre-K programs. The major goal is to promote school readiness for Nevada's Pre-K children through high-quality early education with a strong focus on parent involvement.

The data from Nevada Pre-K Programs are strong. In 2008-2009, participating preschool children made large cognitive gains, and evaluative results showed they were better prepared to enter kindergarten. In addition, children who participated in the programs during 2003-2004, and entered fourth grade in 2008-2009, scored higher than those who did not participate. The children scored statistically higher on the grade-4 Nevada CRT reading and math tests.

These programs focus on serving students with high-needs based on poverty and/or second language considerations, and serve to help close the gap. Early childhood standards will align with Common Core State Standards and early literacy assessments will be performed at grades K-2. The data will guide interventions when a need is determined. Part of these efforts will also include developing and conducting a needs assessment for kindergarten readiness upon entry to help establish baseline data on students.

Childhood educators will be included in professional development efforts, as well as the expansion of principal preparation and development programs, to ensure that leaders are equipped to support early learning opportunities and environments, and provide developmentally appropriate early childhood programs (P-3).

Efforts to address the needs of young children include a proposed collaboration and support from the Accountability Task Force to endorse the State's application for funding from the Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention (TACSEI). The goal of the Nevada/TACSEI Partnership is to build state capacity to foster professional development of the early care and education workforce that:

- Enhances knowledge and skills;
- Supports the implementation and sustainability of evidence-based practices; and
- Increases the size of the workforce skilled in supporting the social-emotional development of young children (birth–5 years) in inclusive, natural environments.

This project will support early childhood programs across systems (e.g., ECSE, State Pre-K, Title I, etc.), and if funded, provide for professional development that enhances the social, emotional, and behavioral development of children ages birth through five, focusing on children at risk for and with delays and disabilities.

Priority 3-2

School districts will be required to incorporate a thorough analysis of their “feeder systems” and provide incentives for districts to include comprehensive early childhood programming and services in school improvement planning for elementary, middle, and high schools.

Nevada’s Promise will make recommendations for statewide kindergarten readiness assessment and definition. The following state of the art models will be reviewed for best-practices:

- Maryland’s School Readiness Assessment,
- Work Sampling System, and
- Ready Schools Assessment and Initiative.

This work will be engaged by the Standards and Assessment Council.

Having targeted Priority 1, 2, 3, and 4 schools (as described in Section E), *Nevada’s Promise* will build upon the Professional Learning Communities models currently being implemented to connect with appropriate early childhood programs bridging the P-3 continuum, with links to appropriate school improvement plans.