State of New Jersey
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
PO Box 001
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0001

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

June 1, 2010

Honorable Arne Duncan
U.S. Secretary of Education
Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ)
Department of Education Building
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

I am pleased to submit New Jersey's application for the Race to the Top program.

New Jersey is rightly proud of its outstanding public schools, many of which are recognized as among the best in the country. So, too, are we proud of our children's academic achievement, as evidenced, for example, on the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

Still, given the money that New Jersey taxpayers spend on public education - - we are currently the second highest state in per-pupil spending - - student achievement is not what it should be.

Perhaps more troubling is the fact that the state which boasts some of the nation's best public schools also is home to some of its worst. This long-standing achievement gap has been treated as intractable. It persists despite massive infusions of funds into chronically failing school districts and schools.

This application embodies my administration's belief that the path to progress leads through the classroom directly to student achievement. It recognizes that after a child walks through the school house doors, no single factor influences that student's academic success more than the quality of his or her teachers.

Accordingly, this application emphasizes and includes several bold initiatives to improve teacher quality. These initiatives elevate the importance of teacher evaluations. Currently, however, the data does not exist to make proper evaluations. This application proposes to enhance school districts' capabilities to measure student learning in the classroom and use those measures to evaluate teachers' effectiveness.

A merit-pay system will financially reward highly effective teachers and serve as an incentive for adequate teachers to improve their craft. It also rewards effective teachers who accept assignments in low-performing schools.

This application also proposes to evaluate teacher training programs, so that the most effective programs can be identified and teachers schooled in those programs can be recruited.

We also recognize that together with rewarding and promoting effective teachers, it is necessary to weed out ineffective teachers. Specifically, the application proposes to make it easier for school districts to terminate ineffective teachers and completely overhaul low-performing schools.

Under this application, teacher evaluation based on student achievement will form the basis for decisions to grant tenure, promote and develop teachers. In the event of a workforce reduction, educational effectiveness, not seniority, will determine which teachers retain their jobs.

Successful schools usually are led by effective principals. This application proposes to offer a financial incentive to effective principals, as it does to effective teachers, to relocate to low-performing schools.

Please know that my Administration is committed to implementing these initiatives regardless of whether or not this application is successful.

Indeed, I am so committed to them that I decided that they should not be compromised to achieve a contrived consensus among the various affected special interest groups. Winning the federal government's financial support is not the end, but rather a means to an end, which is to improve the quality of education provided to New Jersey students. Special interests that have selfishly thwarted reform should not be permitted to hold good ideas hostage.

That said, I am proud that so many organizations that represent New Jersey's public schools and educators have endorsed this application and committed themselves to implementing these reform initiatives.

I am particularly proud that the New Jersey Legislature through a unanimous vote endorsed the principles which form the basis of this application.

Student achievement is the cornerstone of the education reform plan that is embodied in this application. We ask for your support of this application and look forward to working with the US Department of Education and the full range of New Jersey stakeholders in public education to implement this plan and improve educational achievement by our students.

Very truly yours,

Chris Christie

State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PO BOX 500
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

BRET SCHUNDLER
Commissioner

June 25, 2010

In New Jersey, we believe it is possible for education to compensate for disadvantage, and that social justice demands that this possibility be actualized.

These beliefs are held in many states. But in NO other state have the people and their government demonstrated so deep a commitment to these tenets.

Not surprisingly, there is broad-based support in New Jersey for the Obama Administration's Race To the Top initiative. We see it as a federal endorsement of the education reform principles to which we have long been committed, and an opportunity to accelerate the improvement of our public education system, advance towards our vision of social justice, benefit every New Jerseyan, and benefit every American as we prove just how powerfully progressive in impact an excellently-designed, constantly learning and improving public education system can be.

There has often been controversy in the past attached to the steps we have taken to progress towards our vision of what public education can achieve. But our citizens' commitment to social justice has propelled us forward in spite of the controversy, and in every instance our hope of what might be gained has been confirmed by empirical evidence, with the result that what was once debated has become increasingly affirmed by all.

We believe this experience will be repeated as we complete the implementation of the reforms highlighted in this grant application. There will be controversy. But deep popular and political support for reform will enable us to press on, implement our plan, benefit our children, and prove the justice-advancing power of the Race To the Top reform principles to which both we and the Obama Administration are passionately committed.

New Jersey will be better for it. America too.

The Power of Education to Compensate for Disadvantage,
And the Demand of Social Justice that this Potential be Actualized

In New Jersey, we have never bought into the belief that poverty is destiny. We acknowledge that parental wealth and education remain powerful predictors of whether a child will succeed in school and proceed to a successful life. But we reject the idea that it must always be so – that our public schools can never so improve as to lift the life prospects of a disadvantaged child to the same level as his or her more advantaged peers.

Our abiding faith in the potential of public education derives not from our hearts speaking louder than our minds. It proceeds from our parents, teachers and principals so often seeing exceptional educators make a difference in children's lives.

We believe our faith was confirmed by the federal government's Effective Schools Research some years back. It threw a spotlight on No Excuses schools where exceptional leaders established cultures of success, fully developed the educational effectiveness of their teaching staffs, and dramatically improved the learning and life prospects of even their most disadvantaged students. A great example of such a public school is the Harriet Tubman School in Newark.

Empirical data to the contrary has not stopped some people from arguing that nothing can be done to help children from disadvantaged backgrounds learn more successfully. But these arguments no longer persuade many. Those who want to justify the educational failure schools now must turn to other canards. Some are arguing that great teaching and school leadership are natural or developed abilities that individuals may serendipitously possess, but that cannot be taught.

Happily, accumulating research data persuades that this second justification for school failure is also invalid. The research indicates that people who love teaching and are dedicated to doing it well (both qualities which are in great abundance amongst educators) can be taught to teach *very* skillfully with a hugely positive impact on their students' learning.

Research is now focusing on the factors necessary to support effective teacher development, and how such factors can be scaled up in a school district and, even more broadly, throughout a state public education system.

These are not small questions. Some organizations – for instance, the KIPP Academies – have demonstrated that they can establish one school after the next capable of dramatically increasing the learning and life prospects of disadvantaged children. But no one knows yet how to manufacture such schools rapidly.

Social justice demands that we search for answers to such questions and that our public education systems implement the kinds of incentives and accountability mechanisms that will encourage district and school decision-makers to make use of such answers.

Evidence of New Jersey's Historic Commitment
To Actualizing the Justice-Advancing Potential
Of an Excellent Public Education System

In New Jersey, we have written into our state constitution the requirement that the State make freely available to every child a THOROUGH education.

Many states say they are committed to such an ideal, but no other state has so put its money where its mouth is. New Jersey spends more per child on its public schools than any other state in America, and both its courts and its legislature have worked to ensure that the state's poorest school districts have financial resources absolutely equal to its wealthiest.

Of course, justice demands more than merely equalizing the financial resources of rich and poor school districts. It also demands that greater resources be made available to educate children with greater needs. Here too New Jersey stands out. It allocates dollars for the education of a child based on the child's needs and these dollars follow the child to the public school (and even, in some instances, to the privately managed school) in which the child enrolls. In poor school districts, the state provides the resources necessary to make a pre-school education available to children for free. We were the first state in America to do this. In all districts, the State covers extraordinary costs attached to the education of special needs children. In both of these examples, the state and local tax dollars committed to the education of a child follow that child to the public or privately managed school in which he or she enrolls.

The evidence of New Jersey's historic commitment to actualizing the justice-advancing potential of public education is much more than monetary. We long ago began putting into place the education reform elements being so excellently encouraged by the United States Department of Education through this Race To the Top initiative.

For instance, in recent years, when some other states were lowering their academic standards and loosening their assessment procedures to obscure educational problems, New Jersey was raising its academic standards and improving its assessment instruments and procedures to flag our educational problems. Our goal was to concentrate effort on successfully addressing them.

One major problem identified is the size of New Jersey's achievement gap. We are proud that our NAEP scores are among the highest in the nation – especially since we have such a complete cross-section of students being sampled. But we are horrified that our achievement gap is simultaneously one of the largest in America.

New Jersey has been working hard to close its achievement gap, and the latest NAEP results show a narrowing. But in this application you will learn about many brand new initiatives that we believe will even more successfully and rapidly narrow the gap – and that will do so while raising the average achievement scores of *every* quintile of New Jersey students.

A key to successful standards-based reform is the capacity to track student learning growth and correlate it with diverse factors in the learning experience of students. New Jersey has been working hard to develop its longitudinal data tracking capabilities, and while we are not where we want to be, we are making steady progress. Winning this Race To the Top grant competition would significantly accelerate that progress and with our expanded longitudinal data tracking capacity, make New Jersey a national model of data-driven education reform.

Of course, for data to drive reform a state must have the political will to act upon it. New Jersey has always been at the cutting edge of education reform in America because New Jersey has always had the political will to press forward towards its vision of a justice-advancing public education system.

We pioneered the use of alternate-route teacher certification. We were the first to have the state take direct administrative control of failing school districts as a way to enforce educational accountability. We were an early passer of charter school legislation.

Of greater importance than our historic commitment to public education excellence is our commitment to press forward from where we are today all the way to the TOP: that mountaintop where all the individual pieces of education reform have been assembled, so all the world can begin to see just how powerfully public education can advance the actualization of social justice.

The Commitment We Make Today That New Jersey WILL Race To The Top And FULLY Actualize the Justice-Advancing Potential Of An Excellent Public Education System

New Jersey is seeking via its Race To the Top initiatives to:

- Close our academic achievement gap even as we substantially raise the achievement level of every quintile of New Jersey students;
- Cut our drop-out rate by more than half; and
- Graduate our students from high school truly college or work-ready.

To guide our steps in this effort, we commit that we will make student learning growth the yardstick by which we measure the educational effectiveness of everything we do in public education. We believe this focus will make New Jersey's education system one which constantly learns and improves.

We are already enroute, as mentioned earlier, to having the necessary elements of such a public education system in place. As the political and educational leaders who are most responsible for public education in New Jersey, we commit to finishing the job by working to implement all of the additional legislative and regulatory changes needed. Specifically, we will work to:

1) Incorporate the Common Core into New Jersey's high-quality academic standards;
2) Develop and support easily-administered assessments that support instructional analysis, and accountability;
3) Deploy a cloud-based longitudinal data system that tracks student learning growth, facilitates good analyses of "what works," and supports good decision-making by teachers, educational leaders and parents;
4) Create incentive, support, and accountability frameworks for our teachers, principals and school district leaders that are aligned with student learning growth and success;
5) Do what it takes to boldly turn around our most struggling schools and districts; and
6) Sustain reform conditions to advance and improve educational services across our state.

Together, these reform initiatives map directly to the assurances being sought by the United State Department of Education in this Race to the Top grant competition. More importantly, they form a coherent plan of action for a constantly learning, constantly improving public education system:

Incorporate the Common Core into New Jersey's high-quality academic standards:

New Jersey is nationally recognized for the quality and high level of its academic standards. The collaborative effort between states has developed an even better set of Common Core Standards which reflects a clear and high set of aspirations for students across the country that we see as

building on our state's work. We will adopt these standards for English Language Arts and for Mathematics, while retaining our own high standards in other subject areas.

Develop and support easily-administered assessments that support instructional analysis and accountability:

We will complete our building of an assessment and curricular support framework – the "Curriculum and Assessment Spine" – to link formative and summative data with teaching supports. For "untested" grades and subjects, and for formative classroom assessment, we will establish a state model of assessment but allow for local approaches to be used, so long as they meet rigorous quality criteria. In parallel, we will participate in two state-led consortia that are developing assessments based on the Common Core as part of a Federal grant program, with expected availability in 2014-2015. We are enthusiastic about the potential innovations that these consortia may yield, but do not believe that our reform agenda can wait four years. Finally, recognizing that new standards, assessments, and instructional practices require changes in classroom practice, we will provide large-scale professional development, coaching, and support to teachers to transition from our current system.

Deploy a web ("cloud") based longitudinal data system that tracks student learning growth, facilitates good analyses of what works, and supports good decision-making by teachers, educational leaders and parents:

Building on our new framework of standards and assessments, we plan to use data to inform instructional planning in our schools, to establish professional development plans and evaluate their effectiveness, to support evaluation of teacher effectiveness, and to monitor the performance of our schools. We will fully bring our data systems into the 21st century. By hosting a web or "cloud" based system to support school operations, instructional planning, human capital management, and public access to our schools data, we will create meaningful efficiencies for our school districts, support high-quality focused instruction, develop virtuous learning cycles about what works and why, and promote public stewardship of our school system.

Create incentive, support, and accountability frameworks for our teachers, principals and school district leaders that are aligned with student learning growth and success:

The quality of a child's teacher is the single most important factor in his or her educational attainment. So we will do everything we can to recruit, develop, support, and retain effective teachers in our classrooms. We will greatly emphasize the role of content courses in our teacher preparation programs, build on our alternate-pathway recruiting initiatives, extend provisional certification to qualified teachers from other states, and facilitate some recruiting and training activity under our County Executive Offices, working with partners that demonstrate the strongest records of success in these areas.

For teachers in the early years of the profession, we will encourage induction and support mechanisms that provide a solid foundation for career success. For our provisional teachers, we will encourage and provide high-quality coaching and support, both in our schools and off-site, to increase skill sets and content knowledge. After the provisional period, we will require that tenure decisions be based on effectiveness, not simply elapsed time.

We will establish a state framework that bases half of the evaluation score upon student achievement, and half on high-quality teaching and leadership practices. The framework will be developed deliberately by a stakeholder committee, incorporating locally-determined factors in addition to the state factors, and will be required in every participating LEA. It will enable the provision of professional development based on meaningful data. It will inform the granting of tenure. And to the extent that economic conditions require reductions in our workforce, we will use these evaluations as a basis for personnel decisions relating to retention.

Importantly, we will implement bonuses to reward teachers and leaders who accelerate broad-based student learning growth, and will place an extra emphasis on the growth of our most struggling students. A bonus pool will be allocated to high-achieving schools, where a local committee will apportion the funds to individual teachers, teacher teams, other personnel and programs. Up to half of a school's pool will be allocable to staff.

We will provide financial incentives for effective teachers who are willing to serve in schools, districts, and classrooms with concentrations of high-needs students. A career ladder, creating a path to "Master Teacher" or "Master Principal" status, will be developed that gives our professionals clear opportunities for advancement and influence.

Finally, we will develop an annual measure of school performance to inform school and district decision-making, and formalize minimum charter and district school performance criteria.

Do what it takes to boldly turn around our most struggling schools and districts:

We will support local LEAs in their selection among the four US Department of Education-approved models for reversing direction in our lowest-performing schools: turnaround, transformation, restart, or closure. To support turnarounds and transformation, we will create a network of "turnaround officers" to oversee and support the improvement of schools. For schools that are restarted, we will assist in the selection of a strong charter operator to manage the school. And in the event that a district elects to close a school, we will support efficient use of the space in support of student learning.

We will also support the implementation of local school board-authorized, teacher-led, small-scale Achievement Academies, embedded in the district. By establishing performance objectives and providing Master Teachers with professional discretion, we believe they can help provide more uniquely-suited schooling opportunities to our children.

Sustain reform conditions to advance and improve educational services across our state:

Despite adverse economic conditions, we will continue to support education funding. Despite enormous budget challenges in 2010, the State *increased* the level of state tax dollars committed to our public schools. We continue to demonstrate our commitment to our children with our pocketbook.

We will engage the offices of our Executive County Superintendents to facilitate contract consolidation, shared services arrangements between school districts, and to enforce sound labor contract standards. We will also reorganize the Department of Education with new divisions to

support Professional Excellence (human capital strategies for our teachers and leaders), Education System Efficiency (to improve service delivery and reduce costs), and School Effectiveness and Choice (to support board development, improved school design, school-level accountability and turnarounds).

The process that we will use to take input from stakeholders is described later in this grant submission.

Per the timeline discussed, we will work to introduce the educational reform bills and regulatory changes informed by this input by July 1, 2011, and to pass final bills and regulations to effectuate all of the reforms highlighted in this application no later than January 1, 2012.

Signed,

Josephine E. Hernandez
President
New Jersey State Board of Education

Bret Schundler
Commissioner
New Jersey State Board of Education

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Signed,

Thomas H. Kean, Jr.
Senate Minority Leader & Education Cmte. Ranking Member

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Signed,

Alex DeCroce
Assembly Republican Leader

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Signed,

Joseph R. Malone, III
Assembly Education Cmte. Ranking Member

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Signed,

David Wolfe
Assembly Education Cmte. Ranking Member

STEPHEN M. SWEENEY
SENATE PRESIDENT
P.O. BOX 099
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625-0099

NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE

SHEILA Y. OLIVER
GENERAL ASSEMBLY SPEAKER
P.O. BOX 098
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625-0098

June 25, 2010

In New Jersey, we believe it is possible for education to compensate for disadvantage, and that social justice demands that this possibility be actualized.

These beliefs are held in many states. But in NO other state have the people and their government demonstrated so deep a commitment to these tenets.

Not surprisingly, there is broad-based support in New Jersey for the Obama Administration's Race To the Top initiative. We see it as a federal endorsement of the education reform principles to which we have long been committed, and an opportunity to accelerate the improvement of our public education system, advance towards our vision of social justice, benefit every New Jerseyan, and benefit every American as we prove just how powerfully progressive in impact an excellently-designed, constantly learning and improving public education system can be.

There has often been controversy in the past attached to the steps we have taken to progress towards our vision of what public education can achieve. But our citizens' commitment to social justice has propelled us forward in spite of the controversy, and in every instance our hope of what might be gained has been confirmed by empirical evidence, with the result that what was once debated has become increasingly affirmed by all.

We believe this experience will be repeated as we work together to complete the implementation of the reforms highlighted in this grant application. There will be controversy. But deep popular and political support for reform will enable us to press on, implement our plan, benefit our children, and prove the justice-advancing power of the Race To the Top reform principles to which both we and the Obama Administration are passionately committed.

New Jersey will be better for it. America too.

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Empirical data to the contrary has not stopped some people from arguing that nothing can be done to help children from disadvantaged backgrounds learn more successfully. But these arguments no longer persuade many. Those who want to justify the educational failure of schools now must turn to other canards. Some are arguing that great teaching and school leadership are natural or developed abilities that individuals may serendipitously possess, but that cannot be taught.

Happily, accumulating research data persuades that this second justification for school failure is also invalid. The research indicates that people who love teaching and are dedicated to doing it well (both qualities which are in great abundance amongst educators) can be taught to teach *very* skillfully with a hugely positive impact on their students' learning.

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Social justice demands that we search for answers to such questions and that our public education systems implement the kinds of incentives and accountability mechanisms that will encourage district and school decision-makers to make use of such answers.

Evidence of New Jersey's Historic Commitment To Actualizing the Justice-Advancing Potential Of an Excellent Public Education System

In New Jersey, we have written into our state constitution the requirement that the State make freely available to every child a THOROUGH education.

Many states say they are committed to such an ideal, but no other state has so put its money where its mouth is. New Jersey spends more per child on its public schools than any other state in America, and both its courts and its legislature have worked to ensure that the state's poorest school districts have financial resources absolutely equal to its wealthiest.

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The evidence of New Jersey's historic commitment to actualizing the justice-advancing potential of public education is much more than monetary. We long ago began putting into place the education reform elements being so excellently encouraged by the United States Department of Education through this Race To the Top initiative.

For instance, in recent years, when some other states were lowering their academic standards and loosening their assessment procedures to obscure educational problems, New Jersey was raising its academic standards and improving its assessment instruments and procedures to flag our educational problems. Our goal was to concentrate effort on successfully addressing them.

One major problem identified is the size of New Jersey's achievement gap. We are proud that our NAEP scores are among the highest in the nation – especially since we have such a complete cross-section of students being sampled. But we are horrified that our achievement gap is simultaneously one of the largest in America.

New Jersey has been working hard to close its achievement gap, and the latest NAEP results show a narrowing. But in this application you will learn about many brand new initiatives that we believe will even more successfully and rapidly narrow the gap – and that will do so while raising the average achievement scores of *every* quintile of New Jersey students.

A key to successful standards-based reform is the capacity to track student learning growth and correlate it with diverse factors in the learning experience of students. New Jersey has been working hard to develop its longitudinal data tracking capabilities, and while we are not where we want to be, we are making steady progress. Winning this Race To the Top grant competition would significantly accelerate that progress and with our expanded longitudinal data tracking capacity and make New Jersey a national model of data-driven education reform.

Of course, for data to drive reform a state must have the political will to act upon it. New Jersey has always been at the cutting edge of education reform

in America because New Jersey has always had the political will to press forward towards its vision of a justice-advancing public education system.

We pioneered the use of alternate-route teacher certification. We were the first to have the state take direct administrative control of failing school districts as a way to enforce educational accountability. We were an early passer of charter school and school choice legislation. We have the will to work together on bold changes.

The Commitment We Make Today That New Jersey WILL Race To The Top And FULLY Actualize the Justice-Advancing Potential Of An Excellent Public Education System

New Jersey is seeking via its Race To the Top initiatives to:

- Close our academic achievement gap even as we substantially raise the achievement level of every quintile of New Jersey students;
- Cut our drop-out rate by more than half; and
- Graduate our students from high school truly college or work-ready.

To guide our steps in this effort, we will work together to make student learning growth central to evaluating the educational effectiveness of our education policies and practices. We believe this focus will make New Jersey's education system one which constantly learns and improves.

As the political and educational leaders who are most responsible for public education in New Jersey, we commit to working together to make the necessary legislative and regulatory changes to meet the goals of the Race to the Top initiative. These include:

1. Incorporating the Common Core into New Jersey's high-quality academic standards; Developing and supporting multiple, easily-administered assessments that support instructional analysis, and accountability;
2. Developing a longitudinal data system that tracks student learning growth, facilitates good analyses of "what works," and supports good decision-making by teachers, educational leaders and parents;
3. Creating incentive, support, and accountability frameworks for our teachers, principals and school district leaders that are aligned with student learning growth and success;
4. Doing what it takes to boldly turn around our most struggling schools and districts; and
5. Sustaining reform conditions to advance and improve educational services across our state.

Together, these reform initiatives map directly to the assurances being sought by the United States Department of Education in this Race to the Top grant competition. More importantly, they form a coherent plan of action for a constantly learning, constantly improving public education system.

We welcome the opportunity to improve our public educational system by working collaboratively to implement reforms which meet the goals of the Race to the Top initiative.

Signed,

Stephen M. Sweeney
Senate President

Sheila Y. Oliver
Assembly Speaker

M. Teresa Ruiz
Chairperson
New Jersey Senate Education Committee
Education Committee

PatrickJ. Diegnan, Jr.
Chairperson
New Jersey Assembly

Race to the Top
Application for Initial Funding
CFDA Number: 84.395A

U.S. Department of Education
Washington, D.C. 20202
OMB Number: 1810-0697
Expiration Date: 05/31/2010
Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1810-0697. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 681 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4537. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: Race to the Top, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., S.W., Room 3E108, Washington, D.C. 20202-3118

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

Legal Name of Applicant (Office of the Governor): Office of the Governor State of New Jersey	Applicant's Mailing Address: P.O. Box 001 Trenton, NJ 08625-0001
Employer Identification Number: 216000928	Organizational DUNS: 067373258
State Race to the Top Contact Name: (Single point of contact for communication) Bret Schundler	Contact Position and Office: Commissioner of Education
Contact Telephone: 609-292-0193	Contact E-mail Address: michael.blaustein@doe.state.nj.us

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 Chris Christie	Telephone: 609-292-6000
Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor:	Date: 6/1/10
Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): Commissioner Bret Schundler	Telephone: 609-292-0193
Signature of the Chief State School Officer:	Date: 6/1/10
President of the State Board of Education (Printed Name): Josephine E. Hernández	Telephone: (908) 553-3384
Signature of the President of the State Board of Education:	Date: 5/27/10

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:
Paula T. Dow New Jersey Attorney General	609-292-4930
Signature of the State Attorney General or Authorized Representative:	Date:
	6/1/10

II. ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY, REPORTING AND OTHER ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

Accountability, Transparency and Reporting Assurances

The Governor or his/her authorized representative assures that the State will comply with all of the accountability, transparency, and reporting requirements that apply to the Race to the Top program, including the following:

- For each year of the program, the State will submit a report to the Secretary, at such time and in such manner as the Secretary may require, that describes:
    - the uses of funds within the State;
    - how the State distributed the funds it received;
    - the number of jobs that the Governor estimates were saved or created with the funds;
    - the State's progress in reducing inequities in the distribution of highly qualified teachers, implementing a State longitudinal data system, and developing and implementing valid and reliable assessments for limited English proficient students and students with disabilities; and
    - if applicable, a description of each modernization, renovation, or repair project approved in the State application and funded, including the amounts awarded and project costs (ARRA Division A, Section 14008)

- The State will cooperate with any U.S. Comptroller General evaluation of the uses of funds and the impact of funding on the progress made toward closing achievement gaps (ARRA Division A, Section 14009)

- If the State uses funds for any infrastructure investment, the State will certify that the investment received the full review and vetting required by law and that the chief executive accepts responsibility that the investment is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds. This certification will include a description of the investment, the estimated total cost, and the amount of covered funds to be used. The certification will be posted on the State's website and linked to www.Recovery.gov. A State or local agency may not use funds under the ARRA for infrastructure investment funding unless this certification is made and posted. (ARRA Division A, Section 1511)

- The State will submit reports, within 10 days after the end of each calendar quarter, that contain the information required under section 1512(c) of the ARRA in accordance with any guidance issued by the Office of Management and Budget or the Department. (ARRA Division A, Section 1512(c))

- The State will cooperate with any appropriate Federal Inspector General's examination of records under the program. (ARRA Division A, Section 1515)

Other Assurances and Certifications

The Governor or his/her authorized representative assures or certifies the following:

- The State will comply with all applicable assurances in OMB Standard Forms 424B (Assurances for Non-Construction Programs) and to the extent consistent with the State's application, OMB Standard Form 424D (Assurances for Construction Programs), including the assurances relating to the legal authority to apply for assistance; access to records; conflict of interest; merit systems; nondiscrimination; Hatch Act provisions; labor standards; flood hazards; historic preservation; protection of human subjects; animal welfare; lead-based paint; Single Audit Act; and the general agreement to comply with all applicable Federal laws, executive orders and regulations.

- With respect to the certification regarding lobbying in Department Form 80-0013, no Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the making or renewal of Federal grants under this program; the State will complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," when required (34 C.F.R. Part 82, Appendix B); and the State will require the full certification, as set forth in 34 C.F.R. Part 82, Appendix A, in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers.

- The State will comply with all of the operational and administrative provisions in Title XV and XIV of the ARRA, including Buy American Requirements (ARRA Division A, Section 1605), Wage Rate Requirements (section 1606), and any applicable environmental impact requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970 (NEPA), as amended, (42 U.S.C. 4371 et seq.) (ARRA Division A, Section 1609). In using ARRA funds for infrastructure investment, recipients will comply with the requirement regarding Preferences for Quick Start Activities (ARRA Division A, Section 1602).

- Any local educational agency (LEA) receiving funding under this program will have on file with the State a set of assurances that meets the requirements of section 442 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232e).

- Any LEA receiving funding under this program will have on file with the State (through either its Stabilization Fiscal Stabilization Fund application or another U.S. Department of Education Federal grant) a description of how the LEA will comply with the requirements of section 427 of GEPA (20 U.S.C. 1228a). The description must include information on the steps the LEA proposes to take to permit students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers (including barriers based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability, and age) that impede access to, or participation in, the program.

- The State and other entities will comply with the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), including the following provisions as applicable: 34 CFR Part 74–Administration of Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations; 34 CFR Part 75–Direct Grant Programs; 34 CFR Part 77– Definitions that Apply to Department Regulations; 34 CFR Part

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 Chris Christie	
Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor:	Date: 6/1/10

A(1)(i) COMPREHENSIVE REFORM AGENDA

In New Jersey, we believe it is possible for education to compensate for disadvantage, and that social justice demands that this possibility be actualized.

These beliefs are held in many states, but in no other state have the people and their government demonstrated so deep a commitment to these tenets.

The potential of education to compensate for disadvantage

Our citizens reject the idea that poverty is destiny. We acknowledge that parental wealth and education remain strong predictors of whether a child will succeed in school, but we reject the notion that this must always be so. Effective Schools Research long ago demonstrated that "No Excuses" schools can lift the learning and life prospects of even the most disadvantaged students to the same level as their advantaged peers.

Some apologists justify the educational failure of schools by arguing that great teaching and school leadership are natural abilities that cannot be taught. Yet research demonstrates that people who are dedicated to teaching well (of which there are many) can be taught to teach *very* skillfully with a hugely positive impact on their students' learning.

Research accordingly is now focusing on the factors necessary to support effective teacher development and how it and key pillars of school excellence can be scaled up first in a school district, and then across a state. Some organizations – for instance, the KIPP academies – have demonstrated that they can establish one school after the next capable of dramatically increasing the learning and life prospects of disadvantaged children. However, no one yet knows how to manufacture such schools rapidly.

We are impelled to search for answers to these questions and to create the incentives and accountability mechanisms that will ensure they are applied in our education system.

New Jersey has long been committed to using public education to advance social justice

In New Jersey, our state constitution requires that we make a THOROUGH education available to every child. We have applied the power of the purse: New Jersey spends more per child on our public schools than any other state, and our courts and legislature have worked to ensure that the state's poorest school districts have financial resources on par with its wealthiest.

Beyond equalizing the financial resources of rich and poor school districts, social justice demands that greater resources be applied to educate children with greater needs. Here too, New Jersey stands out. We allocate dollars for a child's education based on the child's needs and these dollars follow the child to his or her school. In poor school districts, the state provides the resources necessary to make a free preschool education available to children. We were the first state in America to do this. In all districts, the State covers extraordinary costs which are attached to the education of special needs children.

Still, we know that money is not enough. Standards, practices, and people must change. To that end, we have long pursued a reform agenda aligned with Race to the Top.

For instance, in recent years, while other states lowered their academic standards and loosened their assessment procedures to obscure educational problems, we raised our academic standards and improved our assessments. With clear eyes, we confront our challenges.

One major problem is the size of our achievement gap. We are proud that our NAEP scores are among the highest in the nation. However, we are horrified that our achievement gap is simultaneously one of the largest. We have been working hard to close the gap, and have seen a modest narrowing. We will close it, even as we accelerate learning for all.

Standards-based reform depends on tracking student learning growth to support both planning and evaluation. We have made strides in our longitudinal data tracking capabilities, but are not yet where we want to be. We will accelerate our progress and make New Jersey a national model of data-driven education reform.

Of course, for data to drive reform a state must have the political will to act upon it. We have demonstrated that we do. We pioneered the use of alternative-route teacher certification. We were the first to have the state take direct administrative control of failing school districts. We were one of the first to pass charter school legislation.

New Jersey has a comprehensive reform agenda and is prepared for controversy

In the past, there has often been controversy as we have taken steps to progress towards our vision of public education's potential. Our citizens' commitment to social justice has propelled us forward in spite of the controversy, and in every instance our hope of what might be gained has been confirmed by empirical evidence, with the result that what was once debated has become increasingly affirmed by all.

We believe this experience will be repeated as we complete the implementation of the reforms highlighted in this grant application. There will be controversy. However, deep popular and political support for reform will enable us to press on, implement our plan, benefit our children, and prove the justice-advancing power of the Race to the Top reform principles to which both the Obama Administration and we are passionately committed.

New Jersey will be better for this. America too.

Our Race to the Top goals

New Jersey is seeking via its Race to the Top initiatives to:

- Close our academic achievement gap even as we substantially raise the achievement level of every cohort and sub-group of New Jersey students;
- Graduate our students from high school truly college or work-ready; and
- Substantially improve our college attendance rates.

To guide our steps in this effort, we will make student learning growth central to evaluating the educational effectiveness of our education policies and practices. It will be the yardstick by which we measure the success of everything we do. Specifically, we will:

- Incorporate the Common Core into New Jersey's high-quality academic standards;
- Develop and support multiple, curriculum-embedded assessments that support instructional analysis, and accountability;
- Deploy a cloud-based data system that supports longitudinal analysis, management of effectiveness, and instructional improvement;

- Create evaluation systems for our teachers, principals and school district leaders that are based upon student achievement;
- Implement merit pay and equitable distribution incentives for teachers and leaders;
- Do what it takes to boldly turn around our most struggling schools and districts; and
- Sustain reform conditions to advance and improve educational services across our state.

Together, these reform initiatives map directly to the assurances being sought by the United States Department of Education in this Race to the Top grant competition. More importantly, they form a coherent plan of action for a constantly learning, constantly improving public education system.

Incorporate the Common Core into New Jersey's high-quality academic standards:

New Jersey is nationally recognized for the quality and high level of its academic standards. The recent collaborative effort between states has developed an even better set of Common Core Standards – a clear and high set of aspirations for students all across the country. We will adopt these standards for English Language Arts and for Mathematics, while retaining our own high standards in other subject areas.

Develop and support multiple curriculum-embedded assessments that support instructional analysis and accountability:

We will participate in two state-led assessment consortia, with expected availability in 2014-2015. We are enthusiastic about the consortia, but do not believe that our reform agenda can wait four years. Accordingly, we will deploy an assessment and curricular support framework – the "Curriculum and Assessment Spine" – to link formative and summative data with teaching supports and to support professional evaluations. We will establish multiple state assessment tools while allowing for local approaches to be used, so long as they meet rigorous quality criteria. Finally, we will provide large-scale professional development, coaching, and support to teachers to transition from our current system.

Deploy a cloud-based data system that supports longitudinal analysis, management of effectiveness, and instructional improvement:

Building on our new framework of standards and multiple assessments, we will use data to inform instructional planning in our schools, to establish professional development plans and evaluate their impact, to evaluate the effectiveness of our teachers and leaders, and to monitor and publicly report on the performance of our schools. By hosting a web or "cloud" based system to do so, we will create meaningful efficiencies for our school districts, support high-quality focused instruction, develop virtuous learning cycles about what works and why, and promote public stewardship of our school system.

Create incentive, support, and accountability frameworks for our teachers, principals and school district leaders that are aligned with student learning growth and success:

The quality of a child's teacher is the single most important lever to improve his or her educational attainment; so we will do everything we can to recruit, develop, evaluate, distribute, and reward effective teachers in our classrooms.

We will **recruit** a new generation of committed educators in New Jersey by building on our groundbreaking alternative-pathway recruiting initiatives, extending provisional certification to qualified teachers from all other states, coordinating our efforts with LEAs and Executive County Offices to find the best teachers for hard-to-fill vacancies, and working with expert national partners in human capital recruitment.

We will **develop** better teachers and school leaders. For our provisional teachers, we will improve induction by providing high-quality coaching and support, both in our schools and off-site, to increase skill sets and content knowledge. We will also conduct rigorous annual educator effectiveness evaluations, which will provide feedback for developing teachers and school leaders and which districts will use in determining whether tenure should be granted.

To **evaluate** effective teaching and leadership, we will establish a state framework that bases 50% of the evaluation score upon student achievement and growth, and 50% upon high quality, student-learning correlated teaching and leadership practices. The framework, which will be developed by a stakeholder committee, will include locally determined, state-approved factors in addition to state-determined factors, and will be required in every Participating LEA. It will

enable the provision of professional development based on meaningful data and will inform the granting of tenure. Evaluations will also inform teacher dismissals. Participating LEAs will initiate action to remove for inefficiency teachers in persistently low-performing schools who receive three consecutive "ineffective" evaluations. Further, the Commissioner will work with New Jersey legislators to recommend statutory changes so that RIFs will be based on evaluations and our dismissal procedures will be streamlined to support the use of evaluations. Additionally, the Commissioner and the State Board will work to establish a career ladder, creating a path to "Master Teacher" or "Master Principal" status, will give our most effective professionals clear opportunities for advancement and influence.

To **distribute** our most effective teachers, we will provide financial incentives for Highly Effective and Master educators who are willing to serve in classrooms and schools with concentrations of high-needs students.

To **reward** teachers and leaders for accelerating student learning growth, we will implement merit pay that will reward exceptional student learning growth, with an extra emphasis on the growth of our most struggling students. We will pay individual teachers and teacher teams based on student performance, in addition to a bonus pool for school programs.

Finally, to encourage top notch school and district leadership, we will develop an annual measure of school performance to inform school and district decision-making, formalize minimum charter and district school performance criteria, and help school leaders see how the performance of their school or schools ranks versus that of others'.

Do what it takes to boldly turn around our most struggling schools and districts:

We will support local LEAs in their selection among the four U.S. Department of Education-approved models for reversing direction in our lowest-performing schools: turnaround, transformation, restart, or closure. To support turnarounds and transformation, we will create a network of "turnaround officers" to oversee and support the improvement of schools. For schools that are restarted, we will assist in the selection of a strong charter operator to manage the school. In the event that a district elects to close a school, we will support efficient use of the space in support of student learning.

We will also support the creation of local school board-authorized, small-scale Achievement Academies, embedded in the district. By establishing performance objectives and providing Master Teachers and Principals with an unusually high degree of school management discretion, we believe they can help provide many excellent new schooling opportunities to our children.

Sustain reform conditions to advance and improve educational services across our state:

Despite varying economic circumstances over the years, we have always maintained support for education funding. To ensure that our dollars go as far as possible, we will engage the offices of our Executive County Superintendents to facilitate shared services and contract consolidation between school districts.

We will also reorganize the New Jersey Department of Education with new divisions to support Professional Excellence (human capital strategies), Education System Efficiency (to improve service delivery and reduce costs), and School Effectiveness and Choice (to support board development, improved school design, school-level accountability and turnarounds).

New Jersey is uniquely aligned to deliver on these reforms

Ours is an ambitious reform agenda. Certain elements – particularly related to human capital – have attracted controversy in many states. In New Jersey, we have a stable political environment (our Governor's term does not expire until 2014), a reform-oriented Commissioner of Education, and a Legislature that supports these reforms. We will deliver.

As evidence, consider: the enclosed letters from our Governor and the leaders of the New Jersey Legislature, the President of our State Board of Education, and the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Education; the unanimous endorsement resolution of our state legislature; the nearly 400 memoranda of understanding from Participating LEAs; the full support of New Jersey's higher education community; the 65 accompanying endorsement letters from business, civic, and religious leaders and organizations; and the support of New Jersey's education leadership stakeholder organizations. Our state is fully behind the reforms embodied in this application.

(ii) STRONG COMMITMENT FROM LEAS

(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)[1] or other binding agreements between the State and its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) that include—*(45 points)*

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

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).

New Jersey's Participating LEAs are strongly committed to our reform.

Each of the participating LEAs signed a strong and binding MOU committing it fully to our reform agenda. We used the US Department of Education's model MOU as our template, with two key modifications that make it even stronger.

First, we required each LEA to sign on to every significant element of our plan. Participating in RTTT means implementing new evaluation models and acting on effectiveness information to make meaningful changes to hiring practices, professional supports, and compensation systems.

[1] See Appendix D for more on participating LEA MOUs and for a model MOU.

Second, for those elements of the reform plan not statutorily mandated that require collective bargaining, we secured commitment from the superintendent in every participating LEA to negotiate the plan elements locally.

We are so committed to these reforms that should collective bargaining negotiations break down, or a collective bargaining agreement be signed that is inconsistent with the requirements of this plan, the LEA will lose its participation status and be required to return its RTTT funds to the NJDOE.

A sample MOU is available in Appendix I.

A substantial percentage of LEAs are participating in our Race to the Top.

We are extremely proud that 387 of New Jersey LEAs, including a high proportion of our urban, large, and high-need schools, signed MOUs agreeing to implement New Jersey's bold Race to the Top initiatives. We have a range of sizes, from LEAs representing 62 students all the way to the largest LEA, representing 39,440 children. The LEAs participating represent 59.1% of all LEAs and 1,626 of our schools. Roughly 950,000 of our students are represented, including 74.8% of the high poverty population in New Jersey.

The state's leadership fully understands that in order for reform to be meaningful and sustainable, it must be broadly supported by key education stakeholders. Consequently, we undertook extensive activity to engage districts, unions, legislators, and countless other stakeholders in this collaborative process.

Moving forward, individuals and organizations across New Jersey's education landscape are prepared for and committed to bold action.

Our local school boards fully support reform

99% of LEA MOUs have support signatures from both the Superintendent and the School Board President. In New Jersey, local School Boards are especially powerful as they are responsible for establishing the LEA budget and negotiating the teacher contract with the local union leadership.

Our local union leaders support reform

Our state AFT affiliate, the New Jersey Federation of Teachers, has endorsed our plan, and our key AFT districts (including the Newark School District, the state's largest) have unanimously signed MOUs.

While the NJEA is not endorsing our application, we did discuss our plans with them during its development. Our administration's firm commitment to strong policy around merit pay for individual teachers and retention decisions based on effectiveness was at odds with the NJEA's position. We are choosing to act boldly rather than seek perfect consensus.

The submission of this application does not represent the end of our outreach to stakeholders. We believe deeply in these reforms and the importance of consensus, so we will continue to engage local superintendents, school board presidents, and state and local union leadership to build additional support for these reforms. We see them as permanent and we want all education stakeholders involved in this reform effort.

Our state presents an unprecedented opportunity to demonstrate the potential of public education to compensate for individual disadvantage and achieve a just society where every child is afforded a full opportunity to learn and succeed in life.

LEAs and educational associations have been intimately involved in the development of our plans.

This plan was given momentum by the state's new leadership and the participation of all key interest groups. Since Governor Christie took office on January 19th, 2010, the NJDOE has conducted a remarkable series of outreach and collaborative design sessions, including:

- Seven "town hall" meetings for superintendents, state board members, and teachers, including one marked by a four hour question and answer session. These meetings were conducted in every region of the state, to provide a briefing on the plan's key elements, answer questions, and collect feedback for plan refinement;

- Four stakeholder meetings with the leading educational associations, including the NJ Principal and Supervisors Association, the NJEA, the New Jersey School Boards Association, and many others.
- Additional meetings around the state with stakeholders, including one with over 500 Local Superintendents and Union Representatives, business organizations and elected officials.
- Meeting and follow-up discussions with a key group of 10 representative school districts, including both urban and suburban districts, to design and refine our evaluation and incentive frameworks.

Though we are committed to listening, considering, and improving our approaches, one principle has been non-negotiable from the start: student learning growth will be the yardstick for everything we do. We believe that children must come first, so professional decisions must be made on the basis of effectiveness.

Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(b)

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	377 (Y) 9 (C)	97% (Y) 2% (C)
C. Data Systems to Support Instruction		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction:		
(i) Use of local instructional improvement systems	378 (Y) 8 (C)	97% (Y) 2% (C)
(ii) Professional development on use of data	380 (Y) 6 (C)	98% (Y) 2% (C)
(iii) Availability and accessibility of data to researchers	367 (Y) 15 (C)	95% (Y) 4% (C)
D. Great Teachers and Leaders		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance:		
(i) Measure student growth	356 (Y) 31 (C)	92% (Y) 8% (C)
(ii) Design and implement evaluation systems	336 (Y) 51 (C)	87% (Y) 13% (C)

Elements of State Reform Plans	Number of LEAs Participating (#)	Percentage of Total Participating LEAs (%)
(iii) Conduct annual evaluations	357 (Y) 30 (C)	92% (Y) 8% (C)
(iv)(a) Use evaluations to inform professional development	361 (Y) 26 (C)	93% (Y) 7% (C)
(iv)(b) Use evaluations to inform compensation, promotion and retention	223 (Y) 164 (C)	57% (Y) 42% (C)
(iv)(c) Use evaluations to inform tenure and/or full certification	313 (Y) 74 (C)	81% (Y) 18% (C)
(iv)(d) Use evaluations to inform removal	318 (Y) 69 (C)	82% (Y) 9% (C)
(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals:		
(i) High-poverty and/or high-minority schools	313 (Y) 34 (C)	81% (Y) 7% (C)
(ii) Hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	349 (Y) 28 (C)	90% (Y) 7% (C)
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals:		
(i) Quality professional development	378 (Y) 9 (C)	97% (Y) 2% (C)
(ii) Measure effectiveness of professional development	371 (Y) 14 (C)	96% (Y) 4% (C)
E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	273 (Y) 29 (C)	70%(Y) 7% (C)

Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(c)

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)	387	387	100%
President of Local School Board (or equivalent, if applicable)	385	387	99.5%
Local Teachers' Union Leader (if applicable)	4	387	1.0%

Summary Table for (A)(1)(iii)

	Participating LEAs (#)	Statewide (#)	Percentage of Total Statewide (%) (Participating LEAs / Statewide)
LEAs	**387**	**656**	**59.1%**
Schools	**1,615**	**2,465**	**65.5%**
K-12 Students	**949,329**	**1,372,449**	**69.2%**
Students in poverty	**317,268**	**424,310**	**74.8%**

The detailed table for (A)(1)(iii) has been placed in Appendix I as Evidence. Please refer to the Appendix I Table of Contents and Bookmarks.
We have also included information in Appendix I on districts still being verified.

(iii) BROAD STATEWIDE IMPACT FROM PARTICIPATION

(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)*

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

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

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

(d) 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.

Our plan will achieve broad statewide impact

Our ambition is to help every child in New Jersey graduate from high school career- or college-ready. The support of so many LEAs, unions, and external partners ensures that we will be able to drive meaningful change across the state:

- **Participating LEAs serve New Jersey's highest-need student populations.** 74.8% of our children in poverty will participate directly in the benefits of our plan. Overall, nearly 70% of our students statewide will participate in RTTT. By providing special incentives to support highly effective teachers in high-needs districts, and intensive support for the turnarounds of our neediest schools, we will meaningfully close our achievement gap and reduce our dropout rate.

- **We are leveraging all of our federal resources to reinforce this plan.** For example, LEAs will be required to coordinate Title II, School Improvement Grant, Title I, and IDEA resources in targeted schools in efforts that reinforce the turnaround strategies in this plan.

- **We are leveraging and scaling effective state initiatives as part of this plan**. For example, both our successful Progressive Science Institute and our "Traders to Teachers" recruiting program (each discussed in Section (D)(3)) will have their scale and impact increased as part of this plan.

- **All Participating LEAs will receive resources to support reform and ensure compliance.** New Jersey has 656 local school districts. In many of our suburban and rural districts, little to no Title I funding is distributed, meaning that the local LEA funding allocation under RTTT will serve to flow few or no funds. However, many of our reforms require substantial LEA effort – for example, revised evaluation and assessment practices. Accordingly, we are guaranteeing that every Participating LEA will receive a minimum of $100,000 in directly allocated funds – and will be providing supplemental funding to LEAs from the state RTTT budget to do so. By supporting all LEAs financially, we have confidence that we will have a mechanism to ensure compliance and that significant local effort will be brought to bear on the RTTT agenda.

- **Our instructional reforms will reach every child in the state.** Many of our RTTT initiatives will provide resources and policies that will change instruction for every child in New Jersey. Specifically, the evaluation framework, new assessment protocols, Curriculum and Assessment Spine, and our instructional improvement data system, as articulated in this plan, will change practice and yield benefits for all children. Details of our plans for scaling and sustainability are described in section A(2).

- **Our human capital reforms will improve the teaching corps for the entire state.** Our plans to reform pre-service, recruiting, and induction practices will have an impact beyond the participating LEAs. Programs like "Teach for New Jersey" will recruit a generation of teachers to our state, and improved pre-service and induction practices will ensure all teachers are well-prepared and well-trained.

Our goals are ambitious but achievable

As detailed in section (A)(3) of this application, New Jersey has already made considerable progress in academic achievement and graduation rates in recent years, even as our standards

have risen. New Jersey's test scores on NAEP, the nation's report card, are among the highest in the nation, and performance gaps between whites and minorities are declining in important areas.

Still, we know we can do far better; so we have established ambitious but achievable goals for improved educational outcomes in our state. These are measurable goals that can be monitored, allowing us to track our progress on an ongoing basis. Achieving these goals will accelerate the improvement of our public education system, move forward toward our vision of social justice, and benefit our state's children.

As we work to provide the best P-12 education in the country for *all* of our students, we will measure progress toward our three core goals whether we win RTTT dollars or not. These goals are:

- Closing the achievement gap by half even as we raise the academic achievement of all cohorts and sub-groups of students (including our highest performing students) by 2014;
- Graduating students who are college and career ready; and
- Substantially improving our college attendance rates.

We expect that gains will accelerate in the two years following RTTT as the benefits from the LEA and school efforts to measure and use effectiveness evaluations take hold. Our goals for each measure are ambitious yet grounded in New Jersey's demonstrated capacity to make historic gains in performance.

(a) Accelerating Academic Achievement for All Students

New Jersey will accelerate academic achievement for all students by 15% between 2010 and 2012 and by 20% between 2012 and 2014. This will increase the share of students scoring Advanced and Proficient and reduce the share of students scoring below basic and basic on both NAEP and NJ ESEA assessments.

- 231 average scale score by 2014 in reading and 249 average scale score in mathematics for grade 4 on ESEA assessments (increase of nearly 25 points).

- 239 average scale score in reading and 237 average scale score in mathematics for grade 8 (increase of nearly 16 points).
- 56% proficient for all students in 4th grade reading and 65% proficient for all students in 4th grade math.
- 58 % proficient for all students in 8th grade reading and 60% for all students in 8th grade math.

Detailed annual goals are available in Appendix I.

……

(b) Closing the Opportunity Gap

……

New Jersey will close the opportunity gap for all students – by race and socioeconomic status – by half by 2014. On NAEP and ESEA assessment, New Jersey demonstrates impressive gains for student groups, with our African American and Hispanic students scores' increasing at a faster rate than their peers. We believe closing the opportunity gap is achievable by 2014, and more importantly, the right goal to ensure social justice in our state.

- Reduce the achievement gap by half on ESEA mathematics assessments (16 points in grade 4 and 19 points in grade 8).
- Reduce the achievement gap by half on NAEP mathematics assessments (13 points in grade 4 and 17 points in grade 8).
- Reduce the achievement gap by half on ESEA English language arts assessments (11 points in grade 4 and 10 points in grade 8).
- Reduce the achievement gap by half on NAEP English language arts assessments (12 points in grade 4 and 15points in grade 8).

Detailed annual goals are available in Appendix I.

……

(c) Graduating More Students College and Career Ready

……

Our graduation rate currently stands at over 90% due to the fact that New Jersey uses a "leaver rate" rather than a more accurate longitudinal cohort method to calculate graduation rates. We expect our inflated graduation rate to drop for the 2010-11 school year because of the change to the longitudinal adjusted-cohort method for calculating graduation rates. However, New Jersey will not reduce our goal of a 90% four-year graduation rate. With nearly every LEA in the state committed to our application's reforms – including a focus on preparing all students for college and work – we believe this can be achieved.

Detailed annual goals are available in Appendix I.

(d) Increasing College Enrollment

We have these two goals relative to increasing college enrollment:

- Increasing enrollment in our public, postsecondary education institutions by 5 percent per year from the 2010 baseline to 2014.
- Increasing the number of students who complete a year's worth of degree-applicable college credit within two years of their initial enrollment by 5 percent per year.

Race to the Top will enable us to move farther and faster on each of these goals. New Jersey is committed to pursuing these reforms and achieving progress in these areas with or without RTTT funding. We will improve our academic standards, redesign our educator evaluation system to measure effectiveness, improve our data systems, and take bold steps to turnaround persistently low achieving schools. We have the support needed from stakeholders to succeed. But without the additional funding, we anticipate it will take five to seven additional years to achieve the results we believe are obtainable by 2014 with RTTT funding.

Full list of Goals

In Appendix A, you will find the full list of goals to which we are committed, and the advanced goals we believe we can achieve via RTTT.

(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) 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; 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)

(i)(a)BUILDING STRONG STATEWIDE CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT, SCALE UP, AND SUSTAIN PROPOSED PLANS

Introduction

Our Commissioner, a former big city mayor, has a national reputation for driving education reform in high-need urban districts, and our new Governor is fundamentally committed to ensuring that every class is taught by an effective teacher. Our state has demonstrated our ability to deliver high academic achievement, and we can say with confidence that we will fully and completely implement, scale up, and sustain our RTTT plan.

Of course, every RTTT application will promise scale and sustainability. Here are the reasons the U.S. Department of Education should be confident we will deliver:

Consistent political leadership and governance is critical to success.

Unlike the 37 states with gubernatorial elections in the fall of 2010, with the state DOE leadership changes that will follow, our administration will be responsible for the implementation of at least three and a half years of these RTTT reforms.The commitments we make in this plan will be ours to keep.

Governor Christie took office on January 19, 2010; Commissioner Schundler was confirmed by the Senate on March 11, 2010. Education reform was a key plank in Governor Christie's platform. He exhorted the prior administration to submit a Race to the Top proposal so that a planning foundation would be in place. When he appointed Commissioner Schundler, he chose a proven, reform-oriented leader to deliver on his agenda – and that agenda is completely aligned with RTTT.

A May 21, 2010 editorial in the Courier Post put it best:

> *The goals Democratic President Obama has set forth in Race to the Top and Republican New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie have set forth for improving education, particularly in urban areas, are amazingly similar. There's a recognition that, with failing schools,*

major changes are needed -- smaller learning communities, charter schools, better teachers, etc. Race to the Top is the program designed to foster such change.

Our Governor, Legislature and State Board are strongly committed to reform and today's difficult economy has created an opportunity to address some very difficult issues.

While most elements of our reform agenda could be implemented via NJDOE action and LEA action supported by our MOU process, we are committed to implementing supporting legislation and regulations that will cement these reforms. The strong support letter from the majority and minority leadership of our legislature, the unanimous resolution of our legislature backing these reforms in their entirety, and the endorsement of this application by our State Board all signal our commitment to rooting our reforms in statute and code and implementing them according to our work plan's timetable.

The budget crisis that is impacting schools across the country has hit New Jersey hard. All levels of education leadership in education in New Jersey – state, county, and local – realize that we cannot deal with our education challenges by just spending more money. We need to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our spending, and we believe that these reforms are the way to do it.

The NJDOE is reorganizing around key functional areas that map to RTTT reforms.

We are reorganizing our New Jersey Department of Education to align its operations with our reform agenda. The Commissioner has presented a reorganization plan to the State Board of Education that, when approved, establishes:

- **The Division of Academic Standards, Curriculum, and Assessments -** We believe that what we expect students to learn, what we teach, the curricular resources we make available, and our formative and summative assessments should all be aligned. Accordingly, this division is being organized to deliver an exceptionally high quality "Curriculum and Assessment Spine" to New Jersey's schools and teachers.

- **The Division for Professional Excellence -** This division is being organized to improve our professional preparatory programs, recruiting, licensing, placement, induction, professional development, evaluation, certification endorsement, compensation, and

contract standards. It is charged with ensuring that our entering teachers are of the highest caliber and prepared to impact student achievement; that we continually improve the quality of our existing teaching corps; and that we make certain that the highest-need children in New Jersey are taught by our most effective teachers.

- **The Division of Student Support Services –** This division is being organized to ensure that individual students receive all of the support they need in-school and out to thrive; including at risk and special needs children.

- **The Division for School Effectiveness and Choice -** This division is being organized to support the development of our public school boards; to establish and/or support the establishment of an excellent school culture, climate, and student learning environment for every child; to support small learning communities and Alternative Academies within our district schools; to assist the expansion of school choice options including inter-district choice, intra-district choice, county academy and career-tech options, charter school options, online education and dual enrollment options, non-public school scholarship program options, and home-schooling options. Additionally, it is responsible for ensuring that all schools are held accountable for student achievement and ensuring that perennially low-performing schools are turned around, replaced, or closed.

- **The Division of Education System Efficiency** – This division is being organized to facilitate the countywide coordination of various school support services and the consolidation of district service contracts so that a large percentage of fixed costs, including facilities costs, can be moved out of individual schools districts. (This saves tax dollars and enables individual LEA enrollments to wax and wane with expanded school choice without the LEAs being financially destabilized.) This division will work with the Division of School Effectiveness and Choice and the Division of Finance to ensure that school districts have high quality systems in place and operate efficiently. It also prepares district performance information for school boards to use in reviewing the performance of the district's superintendent.

- **The Division of Finance and Regulatory Compliance -** This division is responsible for ensuring that all LEAs have the financial resources they need to provide children a

thorough education, for ensuring that districts oversee their funds and grants prudently, and comply with all applicable state and federal regulations.

Each of these new divisions will report directly to our Deputy Commissioner.

Beyond these divisions, the NJDOE has a number of offices, most of which will report to the Commissioner's Chief of Staff, specifically staffed to support New Jersey's RTTT initiatives and its commitment to making its public education system one that constantly learns and improves, driven by high quality data, research, analysis, and education system reform. For a complete review of our proposed new organization chart presented to the State Board of Education, please see Appendix II.

The NJDOE has a comprehensive approach to project management for RTTT.

To successfully implement our RTTT initiatives and transform education practice in New Jersey, we are building the departmental capacity needed to manage our overall reform agenda, coordinate activities, and provide districts with support and oversight. As our RTTT initiatives represent not an add-on to our departmental work, but rather its core, we are completely integrating these initiatives into the NJDOE's day-to-day operations.

With Race to the Top funding, the Commissioner will establish the position of Chief RTTT Officer (CRO) to drive program implementation and ensure compliance with federal guidelines. The CRO will be supported by two Project Managers and a fiscal manager, report directly to the Commissioner, and work closely with the Deputy Director and Chief of Staff.

The job description for the role is included as Appendix II. The work will include:

- **Connections with stakeholders and integration with partners -** The CRO will act as the school, district, and county connection to RTTT activities as directed by the Commissioner and will regularly engage stakeholders and key partners to participate in this work. In addition, the NJDOE's newly proposed Office of Parental Information will work with stakeholder organizations across the state – including schools, libraries, community and religious organizations, and parent and education advocacy organizations – to develop their capacity to share information with parents and the public about RTTT research findings, and about

school and program performance, to help parents choose schools that are most suitable for their children, and to help the public drive continued public education system reform.

- **Integrated management within the NJDOE -** Overseeing implementation of the RTTT reforms in an integrated, coordinated fashion, including weekly meetings will all key NJDOE leaders for updates on deliverables and discussion of implementation issues. For each RTTT project task, an internal project manager will be assigned to track implementation by NJDOE or partners, report status to the CRO, and aggregate reporting to achieve U.S. Department of Education compliance.

- **Oversight of subcontractors -** While each team will have day-to-day ownership of tasks and deliverables, the CRO will oversee the contract process for RTTT as a grant and will have authority to settle significant issues. The CRO will be responsible for ensuring vendors are managed efficiently and responsibly. Vendor accountability, including incentives for strong performance and negative consequences for weak performance, will be enforced in accordance with state and federal law.

- **Coordination of LEA MOUs and Deliverables:** the CRO will manage the design and finalization of the Statement of Work developed with each Participating LEA.

The CRO would be responsible for implementing the following timeline:

Chief RTTT Officer responsibilities timeline

	Months 1-2 (from hire date)	Months 3-6	Months 7-48+
Supporting	• Offer technical assistance to LEAs as they complete scopes of work • Providing regular report-outs to stakeholders, Commissioner	• Assist NJDOE department and project leaders with project plans, performance management • Providing regular report-outs to stakeholders, Commissioner	• "Troubleshoot" implementation challenges at NJDOE, LEAs
Managing performance	• Work with Assistant and Deputy Commissioners and other senior staff to modify job descriptions and goals to account for RTTT • Evaluate and strengthen proposed LEA scopes of work	• Hold regular conversations with implementers (LEA, NJDOE staff) • Evaluate their performance against stated goals	• Hold regular conversations with implementers (LEA, NJDOE staff) • Evaluate their performance against stated goals
Providing financial oversight	• Finalize "Return on RTTT Investment" metrics that recipient LEAs and NJDOE departments will use to share updates on their use of funds • Rollout financial reporting structures	• Conduct audits of programs or LEAs, as necessary • Analyze and report out on findings on uses of funds – medium level every month, "deep dive" every 6 months or where necessary	• Conduct audits of programs or LEAs, as necessary • Analyze and report out on findings on uses of funds
Sharing best practices	• Designing a "What Works" database for RTTT programs within NJDOE as well as LEAs	• Populating the database • Actively "pushing out" the content of the database (e.g., monthly newsletters) to affected parties	• Provide recommendations to all LEAs • Support NJDOE in contribution to national conversation about "What Works" in RTTT, with lessons for future policy and grant competitions

To *integrate* capacity, many NJDOE departments will be responsible for implementing this work. At the state NJDOE offices, some of the teams involved will be led by officials from critical offices within our agency divisions, including: the Office of Math and Science, the Office of Academic Standards and 21st Century Schools, the Office of Language Arts Literacy, the Office of District and School Improvement, the Office of Professional Standards, Licensing and Higher Education Collaboration, the Office of Early Childhood Education, the Office of Educational Support Services, and the Office of Career and Technical Education. The timelines embedded within sections account for specific responsibilities at all levels of the educational continuum on deliverables related to the proposed work.

New Jersey's Executive County Superintendents found in the Division of Education System Efficiency will be a crucial communication and implementation partner in our work with LEAs and schools on our RTTT plan.

Within the NJDOE, our Executive County Superintendent Offices are responsible for the consistent implementation of statewide initiatives across the state. They communicate with, train, and consult with our LEAs. The 21 County Offices will have a central activity in

coordinating activities among LEAs, and providing day-to-day support for the implementation of our RTTT reforms.

With 387 LEAs of varying sizes and capacity participating in RTTT, this intermediary role is essential. To support this activity, the state will fund the hiring or designation of one full-time staff member in each county (two in our four most populous counties) who will be responsible for oversight and engagement of superintendents on district staff on RTTT reforms. These RTTT Coordinators will report to the Executive County Superintendents but day-to-day activities will be directed by the NJDOE Chief Race to the Top Officer to ensure aligned and consistent to support for all our districts, schools, and students.

The Executive County Superintendents are also responsible for the coordination of shared services among LEAs. As part of our overall efficiency agenda, they will work with LEAs to consolidate recruiting and professional development across districts.

Lines of authority and accountability in LEAs are clear.

The staff working in the CRO will be responsible for direct communication with the Counties and also for the divisions within NJDOE. A plan of this magnitude requires clear communication structures and obvious decision making patterns. The CRO will establish the roles and day-to-day operations. NJDOE has solid communication patterns in place with the County Offices. We will set regular communications among County Offices around each of the four assurances to discuss upcoming major milestones, identify potential barriers, and problem-solve solutions.
To ensure clear communication to the schools, teachers, and school leaders at the heart of our reform efforts, the NJDOE will use County Offices, the NJDOE website, and relationships with our partner associations and organizations. Similar to the NJDOE, County Offices will set regular communications among their LEAs around each of the four assurances to discuss upcoming deliverables, evaluation designs, and to identify promising practices. These critical communications will provide a necessary link through County Offices regarding how our reforms affect schools and classrooms across the state.

NJDOE has a solid financial plan for RTTT.

New Jersey is asking for $399 million, to be spent primarily on getting good teachers to the neediest classrooms and on transfers to participating LEAs.

50% of the funds will be distributed to LEAs according to the Title I funding formula. The remaining 50% will be spent on key projects:

1) RTTT Administration: $16.8M for stakeholder communication, county-level implementation support, and project oversight;

2) Supplemental Funding to Participating LEAs: $31M to ensure every Participating LEA receives at least $100,000 over the course of the grant;

3) Data Systems: $47.4M to complete the development of our State Longitudinal Data System and deploy our Instructional Improvement System;

4) Curriculum and Assessment Enhancement: $20.5M to improve our assessment systems, provide curricular support to the Common Core standards, and develop our evaluation system;

5) Teacher Effectiveness: $63.5M to provide merit pay and incentives for equitable distribution of effective teachers;

6) Virtual Schooling: $5.4M to provide virtual classes in high-needs subjects (including STEM) to at-risk students; and

7) School Turnarounds: $14.5M to turn around our lowest-performing schools.

A detailed budget and budget narrative is provided in Appendix I.

We have developed a financial review process, as detailed below, to ensure that districts and the NJDOE spend RTTT funds with prudence and can measure the return on our federal government's investment:

- The Chief RTTT Officer will be hired based on his or her ability to lead change management in and across organizations. He or she will rely on our Division of Finance to carefully manage the RTTT budget and expenditures.

- The Division of Finance will fill an additional position- a financial analyst—who would have dotted line reporting into the CRO. These staff would be responsible for strengthening RTTT budgets, evaluating spending patterns, identifying best financial practices, and flagging questionable patterns requiring additional investigation.

- The RTTT budget includes an accounting fee of $250,000 to hire an independent auditing firm to evaluate the programs' use of funds and financial controls.

- The CRO would be responsible for regular report outs on the program's financial health—medium level reviews monthly, and deep dives every six months.

Our plan is designed for sustainability.

There are two key aspects to sustainability: whether the policies and practices will remain in place after the conclusion of the RTTT grant, and whether adequate funding will support the practices at the NJDOE and in the LEAs.

As highlighted above and described in the relevant sections, we intend to implement our reforms via NJDOE and LEA action, via regulatory revisions proposed to the State Board, and then ultimately work with the New Jersey legislature to fix these new practices in statute. While we believe that we could accomplish most aspects of our plan without new enabling legislation, we intend to enshrine in statute the key human capital, assessment, and evaluation strategies that are core to our RTTT reforms. We are deliberate in doing so – while we intend for our reforms to speak for themselves by driving student achievement, we also know that long-term sustainability will be enhanced by legislative action.

Financially, many of our costs are "front-loaded" – e.g., the development of our curriculum and assessment spine, longitudinal data tracking and instructional improvement system development, professional development transitions, and the creation of our new assessment and evaluation frameworks. While we anticipate ongoing maintenance fees and periodic updates to the curriculum and assessment spine, these expenses will be a fraction of up-front costs and we will easily be able to incorporate them into our state budget.

On the other hand, we are designing certain expenses to increase over time – for example, our merit pay program, which will grow over the course of the project as more districts elect to participate and more teachers move to support students in high-need districts. Here too, we are committed to incorporating these expenses into our state budget.

We believe these reforms will persist because it is ultimately no more expensive to pay for performance than for non-performance, and because the public armed with good data will always demand the former. Indeed, we are confident that as New Jersey's experience with these reforms continues, support for them will only increase – from teachers, principals, parents, and other

community members. We do not believe that New Jersey will “turn back the clock” on these reforms and stop caring about the educational effectiveness of teachers, programs, and practices.

(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

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up and sustain proposed plans
The extent to which the State has a high-quality overall plan to—
(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.

Education stakeholders – including teachers, principals, superintendents and their respective associations – have all been involved in planning our RTTT initiatives.

We engaged a huge array of stakeholders in crafting these education initiatives and have been able to generate broad and deep support for this reform agenda.

Teachers, principals and their associations spent untold hours discussing and refining our plan elements with us. The leadership of the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, the New Jersey Association of School Business Officials, the New Jersey Association of School Administrators and the Urban Superintendents Association intensely engaged with us and all have provided formal letters of support for this submission and its particulars. Our AFT affiliate – the NJFT – not only endorsed this plan but encouraged its local leadership to sign MOUs.

We also engaged the New Jersey School Boards Association, the Garden State Coalition of Schools, Excellent Education for Everyone, the New Jersey Parents and Teachers Organization, and numerous other education organizations in the development of this plan, and took testimony and input from a wide array of higher education, business, civic, taxpayer, and religious organizations.

By establishing a participatory process that included all of the aforementioned organizations, by fully demonstrating our commitment to collaboration, and by building in an adequate timeline for all of these diverse stakeholder organizations to continue to participate with us in the development of evaluation and assessment frameworks, we secured the endorsement of nearly every major education stakeholder organization in the state, as well as more than sixty other organizations within the diverse categories already mentioned.

We will continue to work with each of these stakeholder organizations – particularly our principal, superintendent, and school board organizations and others – so we can ensure a successful implementation of our RTTT reforms: one that produces confidence in the design of our evaluation methodologies and the plan developed for their deployment.

We are enjoying a powerful confluence of reform-oriented leadership and public buy-in.

The June 2010 issue of *Forbes Magazine* includes a profile of New Jersey's Education Commissioner, Bret Schundler (available in Appendix II):

> For Schundler… the key to improving New Jersey's schools is improving the quality of the state's 110,000 K--12 public school teachers. He would use state money to pay annual bonuses to the best teachers, especially if they volunteer to move to tough schools. He would make it easier for out-of-state teachers or career switchers to be certified in New Jersey…

The determined support for these reforms by Republican Governor Christie and his Commissioner of Education Bret Schundler, the strong support for them by the Democratic and

Republican leaders and members of New Jersey's State Senate and Assembly, the broad and strong support for these reforms by New Jersey's business, civic, and educational organizations, along with two-thirds of our school districts, creates an opportunity that is unique in the nation: New Jersey is positioned to deliver on a truly ambitious education reform agenda in a collective bargaining state.

As a result of feedback from Round I, we made a concerted effort to gather letters of support from our partners in this work. We know that such an ambitious reform agenda requires significant partnership from every facet of a child's life. Our letters of support, available in Appendix III, evidence the deep commitment from the following groups.

Category of Support	**Number of Supporters Expressed in Appendix III**
State Agencies	6
Education Associations and Nonprofits	11
Business and Industry Leaders	19
Deans and University Presidents	19
Local Government Officials , Civic and Religious Organizations	10
U.S. Senators and Congressmen	1
State Legislators	1
Charter Schools	3
Editorial Boards	3

This extensive list of supporters provides evidence of the impact and sustainability of this work beyond the life of the Race to the Top Grant. Within state agencies, the secured cooperation and support of the Department of Children and Families and Agriculture, for example is critical in the implementation and long-term success of the work proposed in Section (E) when you consider the connections within services being provided by those agencies and the NJDOE to the schools identified as Persistently Low Achieving Schools.

Our plan enjoys the support of a vast collection of disparate groups – different religious groups, political affiliations, corporate competitors – have all united to support New Jersey in our effort to serve our children.

Consider the broad base of support represented by excerpts from the following endorsers:

New Jersey School Boards Association

> Although New Jersey has made substantial progress in closing the academic achievement gap, every effort must be made to improve academic achievement in persistently low-performing schools. The grant application calls for implementation of innovative strategies to change the culture of these schools and provide essential opportunity for their students. Significantly, it would enable local boards of education to originate initiatives to turn around troubled schools through the creation of innovative" achievement academies."

The New Jersey Reading Association

> We truly hope that a Race to the Top award will support the implementation of New Jersey's Education Reform Plan and propel our education system into a model of success and global competitiveness … Our belief is that every child is a reader and working together we can make the necessary changes to accomplish these goals.

The New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities

> New Jersey's nine state colleges and universities are the state's primary source of baccalaureate and graduate education, graduating annually, nearly 50% of all baccalaureate graduates, and serve as the state's major teacher training institutions.
>
> These colleges and universities are committed to strong, effective partnership with New Jersey's schools. I believe that New Jersey's proposal will help to ensure college and career readiness for our students, and will help to make New Jersey and America more economically competitive.
>
> The proposal contains important innovative provisions regarding assessment and evaluation of learning outcomes and professional standards; it provides for systematic collection of longitudinal data; and provides a sound system of accountability to help sustain needed reform, and to ensure success over the long-term.

Support is not limited to our educational stakeholder groups:

Another measure of the breadth of our support is endorsement of the editorial boards from major state newspapers.

The *Asbury Park Press* Editorial Board wrote:

Gov. Chris Christie and Bret Schundler, his commissioner of education, have a sweeping vision for improving the quality of education in New Jersey – one that would benefit all of the state's students and reward the state's best teachers. Their common-sense reform agenda deserves bipartisan support….Many of Schundler's proposed reforms are remarkably similar to the ideas found in the Obama administration's Race to the Top fact sheet… designing and implementing rigorous standards and high-quality assessments… assessing and using data to drive instruction… Every governor pays lip service to education reform, but often little is accomplished. This may be the moment in which real reform will happen. New Jersey's students deserve it.

(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 assessment 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

(i) MADE 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

Standards & Assessment

New Jersey has remained committed to rigorous academic standards that prepare students for college or work in the 21st Century. New Jersey has already raised, and redesigned, standards in 7 of 9 core content areas and has won national awards for its work. With the support of Title II funds under ESEA, New Jersey has created an innovative, systemic professional-development system that supports teachers in translating the new standards into classroom practice. We are equally committed to ensuring that our assessments are of the highest caliber. In a time when states are scaling back state assessment programs, New Jersey is building on its existing open-ended items for all state assessments and has pushed forward with the piloting of performance-based assessment as part of the state assessment in biology, as the only state to do so. New Jersey also recognizes the need for teachers to have daily formative-assessment tools to inform the adaptation of instruction based on student needs and performance. New Jersey has provided a state-funded service for LEAs to offer *Learnia*, an online formative- and interim-assessment platform. Finally, New Jersey has earned a national reputation for the quality of its state-funded preschool programs and has demonstrated that its high-quality preschool programs have a significant impact on New Jersey children through second grade.

Data Systems

New Jersey recognizes the need for relevant, timely, and accurate data to shape and inform education policy, and also to provide teachers with the information they need to support student

success. The New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (QSAC) has focused LEA attention on fidelity of implementation, evaluation of, and continuous improvement of programs. Through state funding, New Jersey has launched the NJ SMART data system providing new access and improved availability of state data in order to increase its use by the SEA, LEAs, and schools. With the support of ARRA funds, New Jersey's LEAs have invested in new educational technology to transform their classrooms to reflect the 21st Century work environments.

Teachers & Leaders

New Jersey is a nationally recognized leader in alternative teacher certification. The first state to offer an alternate route, New Jersey has continued to innovate and research new ways to open the pipeline so that skilled professionals can become classroom teachers. Through state funding and support from non-profits and grant-making foundations, New Jersey has piloted innovative programs to redesign STEM teacher preparation and has laid the foundation for building a network of professional-learning communities within and across schools. New Jersey invests heavily through state and federal funds to provide high-quality professional development to grow and support outstanding teachers.

Struggling Schools

Through state funding and with the support of School Improvement Grants, New Jersey has developed a comprehensive system of supports and monitoring for schools and districts that have been identified for improvement under Title I of ESEA. The QSAC and the Collaborative Assessment and Planning for Achievement (CAPA) tools gather information across a range of school leadership, performance, and operational indicators for use in designing improvement plans. New Jersey also recognizes that struggling schools are part of a struggling community. We have engaged a wide range of partners with the goal of graduating more students ready for

college and work. New Jersey's High School Graduation Campaign demonstrates New Jersey's willingness and success in working across organizations and state agencies to ensure that our students graduate from high school ready for college and work.

(ii) INCREASING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN READING/LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATHEMATICS

New Jersey has achieved remarkable results–consistently one of the top performers on NAEP and demonstrated progress on closing the achievement gap. We attribute our successes to high standards, accountability, and support for teachers and students. Education reform in New Jersey has been powerful and effective but it remains unfinished. Even as our overall performance on state assessment and NAEP has increased, our students need performance to accelerate exponentially to graduate ready for college or work. While we are making progress to improve academic achievement for students in poverty, our eighth grade achievement gap between students in poverty and their peers is tied for second in the nation in reading and third for mathematics. With or without Race to the Top, New Jersey will enact reforms to give our students the academic tools they need to succeed in school, work, and life.

National Assessment of Educational Progress

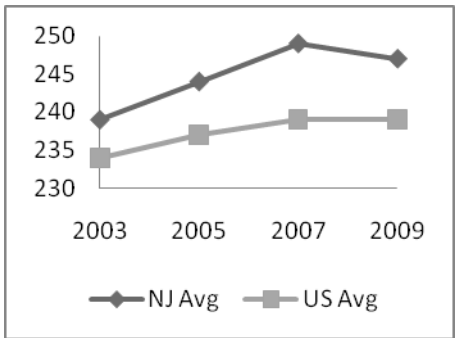
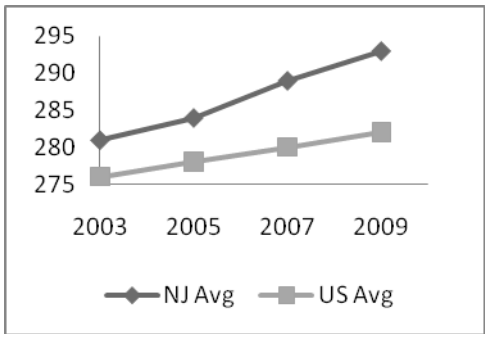
Mathematics results

- New Jersey fourth-grade scores surpass the national average by eight points;
- Eighth-grade scores in New Jersey are eleven points higher than the national average

On the 2009 National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) for mathematics, New Jersey 8th graders are the best in the country, and have improved significantly since 2003. Only two states' students scored better on the eighth-grade test. New Jersey fourth-graders continue to score higher on the NAEP math test than students in all but three other states. The average math

score of fourth graders in New Jersey was 247, while the average score for public- school students across the nation was 239. The average scale score for New Jersey's grade-eight students , 293, is twelve points higher that it was in 2003, and eleven points higher than the national average of 282. While there is still much more work to be done, the eighth-grade results, in particular, show that the investments New Jersey is making in education and emphasis on real world STEM experience for teachers and students is paying off, and that the efforts of our educators are yielding positive results. A partnership with Rutgers, which focused on resilience and perseverance in solving mathematic problems, helped to shape mathematics instruction in New Jersey. Through this program teachers learned that by giving students challenging problems, more difficult than those they have receive previously, the students worked at them longer and did not give up until a solution was found.

New Jersey students with disabilities showed particular improvement on the eighth-grade math test; the average score for those students increased from 251 in 2007, to 259 in 2009. The national average grade-eight math score for students with disabilities was 249 in 2009. New Jersey's commitment to supporting both general education and special education teachers to improve instruction for students with disabilities is apparent in our results.

Grade 4 Mathematics	Grade 8 Mathematics
	

Reading NAEP Results

The newest grade four and grade eight reading scores from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) confirm that New Jersey students remain among the nation's top

achievers in reading skills. The results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests show New Jersey students trailing only one state in fourth-grade reading results, and tied with six other states. In eighth grade, New Jersey has the second highest average scale score in the nation.

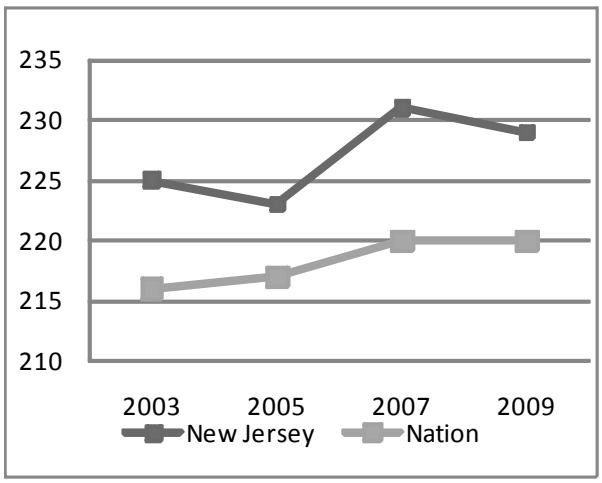
The jump in the statewide scale score from 223 in 2005, to 231 in 2007 is the second-highest increase in the nation- a direct result of our intensive investments in early literacy. Fourth-graders' scores increased across the board in seven out of the eight major demographic groups tested. The 2009 NAEP results exemplify New Jersey's commitment to improving educational attainment in our elementary schools. New Jersey attributes our increases to sound preschool- and early-childhood-education programs. For example, our K-3 literacy and Reading First programs have focused early childhood classroom teachers on teaching reading. These programs are providing our youngest students with a solid foundation of basic fundamentals, and the efforts are achieving positive results. New Jersey can trace its exceptional writing scores to the instruction of the state's teachers. New Jersey's project to shape writing instruction became one of the first to be validated in the nation. The program embedded proven pedagogical practice in writing instruction throughout the state and was successfully modeled in other states.

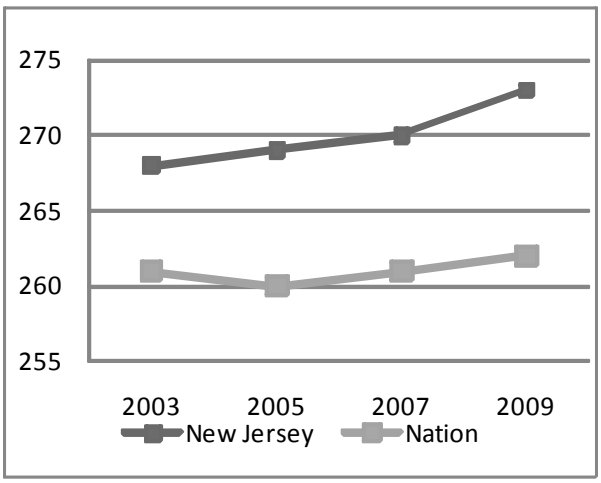
With regard to scaled scores, the 2009 average scale score in reading for grade 8 was 273 in New Jersey, compared to 262 in the nation. Also, the average score for male, female, black, white and Hispanic students, as well as students both eligible and not eligible for the National School Lunch Program has increased since 2005. These sustained increases are a direct result of our continued efforts to raise our expectations of student literacy as evidence in our redesigned assessments and standards. In grade 4, the average scale score for New Jersey was 229, compared to 220 for the nation.

New Jersey also demonstrates a strong record of our support for special education students. At grade eight, the percentage of New Jersey students with disabilities in the NAEP sample reading at grade level or above increased notably, from 46 percent in 2007 to 59 percent in 2009; their average scale score increased from 236 in 2007 to 250 in 2009.

Grade 4 Reading

Grade 8 Reading





New Jersey students have a history of strong performances on the NAEP tests. In 2007, New Jersey eighth graders were the best writers in the nation for their grade level, and fourth graders trailed only one state in reading scores.

New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK)

New Jersey has made several changes to its assessment system between 2003 and 2009 in order to raise both the academic standards expected of all students and the quality of the assessment instruments. The NCES report "Mapping State Proficiency onto NAEP Scales: 2005-2007" demonstrates the high caliber of New Jersey's Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (ASK) with academic-achievement levels in grade 8, for both reading and mathematics, well above the basic cut point on the NAEP. However, these changes do impact the validity of comparisons across years for New Jersey assessment data.

In 2007-08, New Jersey redesigned its statewide assessment and raised performance standards for students in grades 5-8. The 2008 results of the redesigned NJ ASK 5-8 Language Arts Literacy (LAL) and mathematics cannot be compared with those of previous assessments due to changes in test design. The redesigned NJ ASK 5-8 for LAL and mathematics differ significantly in terms of item type, passage length, and testing time. Additionally, New Jersey significantly

raised performance expectations for students on the grade-3 and -4 assessments during the 2008-2009 school year. Complete data for all assessment years can be found in Appendix I.

The recently-released 2008-09 assessment results allow for comparisons between grades 5-8 between the 2007-08 and 2008-09 school years. As evidenced in the test results, New Jersey educators stand ready to meet raised expectations for students. In literacy, academic achievement increased significantly across grades 5-8, with greater increases in the percent proficient for black, Hispanic, and economically-disadvantaged students. In mathematics, the percent of all students scoring proficient or above increased in grades 5, 7, and 8, with accompanying increases in the percent of black, Hispanic, and economically- disadvantaged students scoring proficient or higher. The percent of economically-disadvantaged students scoring proficient or higher increased from 44% in 2008 to 51% in 2009, and the percent of black students scoring proficient or above increased from 37.8% in 2008 to 44.5% in 2009. As noted in a recent study commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education, New Jersey was one of only 11 states that met NCLB accountability goals for ELL students.

With the continuation of efforts to translate higher standards into classroom practice, extensive professional development for teachers, and supports for students, New Jersey fully expects this level of progress to continue.

DECREASING ACHIEVEMENT GAPS BETWEEN SUBGROUPS IN READING/LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATHEMATICS

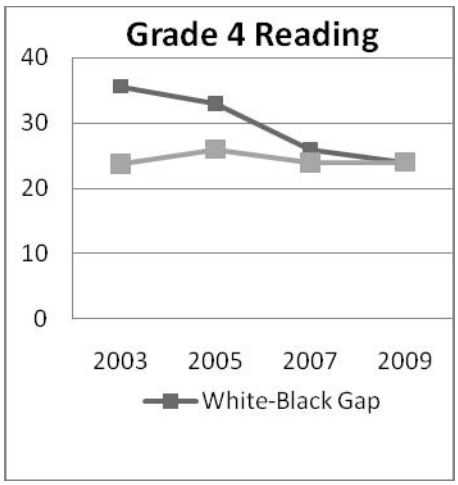
National Assessment of Educational Progress

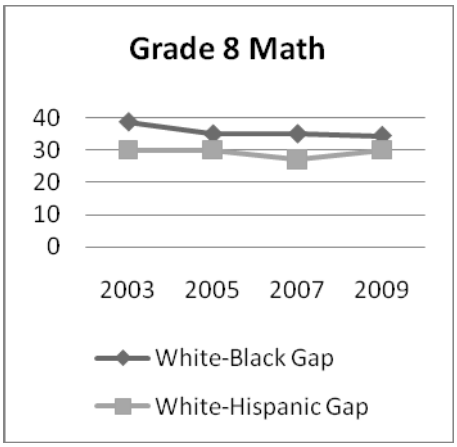
An achievement gap exists in New Jersey between our Hispanic and Black students and their White peers. Further, New Jersey has responded to significant gaps between economically

disadvantaged students and their non-disadvantaged peers with leadership in school funding reform. However, the fact that New Jersey has the third largest gap between eligible and in-eligible national school lunch grade 8 students is simply not acceptable. As evidenced on the NAEP, this longstanding gap is closing over time, but New Jersey intends to enact the bold and comprehensive reform effort laid out in this Race to the Top application to accelerate the elimination of the achievement gap in New Jersey.

We have proven our record with successes in grade-4 reading. From 2003 to 2007, the achievement gap between black and white students significantly decreased. Black students' scores increased by 12 points, and the gap between black and white students decreased by 10 points. This was the largest gap reduction in the nation, and New Jersey was one of only three states with a 10-point decrease.

In mathematics, the achievement gap between white and black students has decreased since 2003. The achievement gap between white and Hispanic students has narrowed slightly between 2003 and 2007. A recent education-trust report titled "Gauging the Gaps, A Deeper Look at Student Achievement" recognizes New Jersey as one of the top states in closing the achievement gap between low-income or minority students and their peers. The Education Trust's latest report confirms that New Jersey is closing the achievement gap while making gains among all groups of students. Likewise, New Jersey's low-income and minority students are outperforming their peers in other states. This analysis shows that New Jersey is a leader in closing the achievement gap among students, but our job is not done until all children are equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to compete in the 21st century global marketplace.





New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK)

New Jersey's public schools are making notable progress in closing the achievement gap between African American, Latino and low-income students and their classmates. The center of Education Policy (CEP) released the report *State Test Score Trends Through 2007-08,* which indicates that between 2006 and 2008, the percentage of students proficient in math and reading has increased throughout New Jersey.

At the fourth-grade level, math proficiency for African American students increased from 63% to 68%. For Latino students, the proficiency rate rose from 72% to 76%, and for low-income students, math proficiency grew from 68 % to 72%. Scores for White students rose from 90% to 92%, while proficiency scores for Asian students improved from 94% to 95%, and for Native American students, results rose from 78% to 83%.

Moderate improvements were experienced in fourth-grade reading scores. From 2006-2008, the percentage of fourth-grade African American students reaching reading proficiency grew from 63% to 67%. Proficiency rates for Latino students increased from 67% to 73%, and low-income student figures rose from 63% to 69%. For White students, reading proficiency grew from 88% to 89%. Asian students' scores improved from 91% to 93%, while Native American student proficiency decreased slightly from 73% to 72%.

As evidenced by this data, New Jersey is on the right track, but much hard work remains for us to make sure that every child in New Jersey has an equal chance at a quality education and a bright future. Improving educational opportunities for all children throughout the state is a priority.

INCREASING HIGH-SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES

New Jersey recognizes the importance of reliable and timely data to inform high-school re-design. Through improvements to the data system, New Jersey will be able to report adjusted cohort graduation rates starting next school year. While we recognize the limitations of our current leaver rate, even this basic metric reveals significant differences in the preparation of student groups for college and work:

Graduation Rates			
	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
White	95.0	95.2	95.6
African American	83.9	87.0	88.0
Asian	98.8	97.0	97.8
Hispanic	83.2	84.9	85.1
Students with Disabilities		77.7	78.3

The New Jersey High School Graduation Campaign approximated that 19,000 students did not graduate from New Jersey's high schools in 2007, and the lost lifetime earnings for that class of dropouts is estimated at $4.9 billion. Estimates show that only 63% of African American and 67% of Hispanic high school students will graduate in New Jersey. Further, the number of young people, ages 18-24, who are not in school and also are not working increased by 34% in New Jersey between 2002 and 2006. In response, New Jersey has launched a High School Redesign initiative to raise graduation recruitments and increase standards, in order to create a public education system that is seamlessly-aligned from pre-school to college, and that ensures that students gain the requisite academic knowledge for life and work in the 21st Century.

New Jersey also recognizes that a challenge like this requires great partnerships. Through the collaborative efforts of state agencies, community associations and the business community, New Jersey has launched the New Jersey High School Graduation Campaign. The recent report "Forging New Jersey's Cradle to College & Workforce Pipeline for All Children – Year One, Preliminary Findings and Proposed Plan for Action" provides a framework of much of New Jersey's Race to the Top application.

SECTION B

Standards and Assessments
(70 total points)

STATE REFORM CONDITIONS CRITERIA

(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)*

(a) For Phase 1 applications, the State's high-quality plan demonstrating its commitment to and progress toward adopting 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, and to implementing the standards thereafter in a well-planned way; or

(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.[1]

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.
- 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.

[1] Phase 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.

STATE STANDARDS CONSORTIUM

- Active in the Common Core State Standards Initiative
- Clear pathways for stakeholder-engagement to develop higher, clearer, and fewer academic standards

(i) DEVELOPING AND ADOPTING COMMON STANDARDS

New Jersey has a comprehensive and deep commitment to the development of evidence-based standards, international benchmarking, and college- and career-readiness. The roots of this work are evidenced in the spectrum of state efforts, ranging from high-quality early-childhood programs to recent and ongoing efforts to transform secondary education and ensure the success of all P-16 students. New Jersey was one of the first states to implement core-curriculum-content standards that specify uniform and challenging educational expectations for all students in the state. The original set of standards was adopted in 1996. In 2008, the New Jersey Department of Education engaged in the third revision of these standards with goals that are congruent with the principles, rigor, and expectations of both the Race to the Top guidelines and the Common Core Standards Initiative. In June 2009, the New Jersey State Board adopted core-curriculum content standards in seven of nine areas. Although significant energy was committed to the review and development of revised language-arts literacy and mathematics standards, these areas were put on hold as the state signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Common Core Standards Initiative -- a consortium of 48 states, including New Jersey (all participating states are listed in the Appendix I). The process and organizational infrastructure that resulted from the revision of the standards in the other content areas will be extremely valuable in the transition to the common standards in language-arts literacy and mathematics.

(ii) STANDARDS ADOPTION PLAN

The State Board has authority to adopt all standards for New Jersey under NJSA 18A:7F-46. Since the initial announcement of the Common Core Standards Initiative, members of the NJDOE have been working with members of the State Board and educators in the field to build awareness and support for the Standards. New Jersey has developed a plan to recommend adoption of standards by the State Board in a way that incorporates the feedback received from all stakeholders throughout the adoption process.

October 2009—Upon release of the Common Core College and Career Expectations, the NJDOE issued a press release, posted the standards on its website, and opened a special email box to take comments from the public.

December 16, 2009—The State Board reviewed all comments and affirmed its members' support of the Common Core Career and College Expectations.

January 20, 2010—The full plan for review of the grade-level standards was set forth at the State Board meeting.

March 10, **2010**—NJDOE again issued a press release and an invitation to comment on the K-12 Common Core Standards, either through the NJDOE website and/or directly to the Common Core Standards mailbox. The invitation went to stakeholders via NJDOE-issued press release and the listserv. An invitation to comment, both to the NJDOE website and/or directly to the Common Core Standards site, went to educators via the NJDOE email listserv.

March 17, 2010—The State Board held public hearings for testimony regarding the content of the K-12 Common Core Standards.

March 2010—NJDOE conducted a series of professional development sessions entitled, "How do fewer, clearer, higher standards affect my classroom?". All relevant workshops and meetings convened by the NJDOE included a segment on the Core Curriculum Standards that was designed to increase awareness among educators, engage them in a

review of the Common Core Standards in both Math and English Language Arts (ELA), and elicit feedback regarding the Common Core Standards. These sessions focused on understanding the implications of learning progressions, teaching to mastery, and deep understanding of content. NJDOE invited writers of the common core standards to give direct testimony at these public meetings.

Additional meetings were held with two-year and four-year college and university faculty and admissions counselors regarding college-readiness and the impact of the Common Core Standards. Efforts will be made to ensure closer working relationships with colleges and high schools in preparing New Jersey students for postsecondary education and training through traditional or alternative routes.

Early April 2010—All comments about the grade-level Common Core Standards in English Language Arts and Math were forwarded to the developers of the standards.

May 19, 2010 –The State Board discussed the resolution to adopt the final version of the standards and took public testimony regarding adoption of the standards.

June 16, 2010 –The State Board is scheduled to vote on a resolution to adopt the Common Core Mathematics and English Language Arts Standards.

The New Jersey Parents and Teachers Association is one of the four State associations that received funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to support the Common Core Standards. NJDOE is working closely with the organization in the implementation of their initiatives.

Once adopted, NJDOE is planning to bring LEAs together to collaborate regarding implementation strategies, including linking to curriculum and aligning with higher education. NJDOE's full standards-implementation plan is included in Appendix I.

(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

DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING COMMON, HIGH-QUALITY ASSESSMENTS

- Active participation in the design of the assessment consortium and deliberate, informed selection process of the most promising consortium
- Proven record of innovation in assessment systems

(i) ASSESSMENT CONSORTIUM

The NJDOE has signed MOUs with two consortia to engage in the system design, including the "Balanced Assessment Consortium," led by Dr. Linda Darling Hammond and Sue Gendron; and the "Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC)," led by Achieve. The MOUs for the consortia are included as Appendix I. Twenty-six states are members of the Balanced Assessment Consortium, and 24 are members of the PARCC consortium. We believe we have the experience to importantly contribute to these efforts, and we know that we have much to gain from the collaborative-assessment efforts. Our work with the American Diploma Project is a good example of our experience in reviewing the scope of work from a consortium and aligning the consortium to our system. The work of the consortia is currently in development. As the consortia continue their work, we expect to examine the results and choose the most promising organizations. Important considerations for selection of the consortia will be the number of states participating, and the quality of the proposed end instruments compared to those of our current assessment system. In selecting the most promising consortium, New Jersey will bring its extensive experience to bear in developing the assessments, including its experience with field testing and using internationally-benchmarked materials; its experience with the development of multiple-choice items that focus on application and critical thinking; its use of Language Arts inquiry-based items; and its use of performance exams in biology. New Jersey will also consider the advice of its Assessment Technical Advisory Committee, under the

leadership of Ron Hambleton from the University of Massachusetts; the Committee's members also include Suzanne Lane, from the University of Pittsburgh; Greg Camilli, from the University of Colorado; George Engelhard, from Emory University; Greg Cizek, from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and Stephen Koffler, former vice president of ETS.

Approach to Assessment

Ever since the adoption of its Core Curriculum Content Standards in 1996, New Jersey's summative assessments have been designed to include significant constructed-response or performance components at all grade-levels. These assessment designs reflected a conscious emphasis on critical thinking and higher-order problem-solving skills. New Jersey's mathematics assessments contain both shorter and extended constructed-response items, accounting for approximately 30% of the total possible points, in addition to selected-response content. In Language Arts Literacy (LAL), which covers both writing and reading at all grade-levels, the proportion of constructed-response content typically ranges from 45% to 55% of the total points. These summative assessments include two writing prompts at each grade-level from 3 through 8, and at grade 11.

New Jersey's commitment to larger-scale, authentic performance-assessments extends back to 2003, when the state initiated six years of funding for a statewide consortium, the New Jersey Performance Assessment Alliance (NJ PAA). The NJ PAA was charged with developing and modeling performance assessments across multiple grades and subjects, and creating associated professional-development programs to promote the use of curriculum-embedded assessments throughout New Jersey. The NJ PAA trained hundreds of New Jersey teachers to develop, administer, score, and analyze results from performance assessments in language arts, mathematics, and science.

New Jersey is committed to the belief that decisions on student performance standards and cut scores should be the result of deliberate educational policy, not merely the consequence of psychometric processes. This commitment has been articulated explicitly in New Jersey's contracts with testing vendors, and it has been expressed most recently in

two standard settings for the elementary- and middle-school assessments. New, higher achievement standards in grades 5-8 language arts and math were adopted by the State Board in July 2008; higher, more challenging performance standards in grades 3 and 4 were adopted in July 2009. In raising the bar at six grade levels, New Jersey has resisted the pressures that were felt both here and in other states to maintain or lower existing standards in the face of the accountability challenges of NCLB.

American Diploma Project (ADP)

New Jersey was a founding member of the Achieve/ADP Algebra consortium in 2006 – indeed, we were the first participating state to sign the memorandum of agreement committing ourselves to this work. Among the ADP Algebra states, we have been the third-largest user of the Algebra II test, and the largest user of the ADP Algebra I test. As a result of our involvement in the ADP consortium, we have developed collegial relationships with standards and assessment leaders in many other states, and have direct experience in working with consortia in the development of assessments.

REFORM PLAN CRITERIA

(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.

Recommended maximum response length: Eight pages

SUPPORTING THE TRANSITION TO ENHANCED STANDARDS AND HIGH-QUALITY ASSESSMENTS

- Ensure that high-quality instruction, not test prep, is at the heart of the system.
- Create a P-12 "Curriculum and Assessment Spine" -- an aligned framework of evidence-based instructional tools coupled with integrated assessment practice, and professional development.
- Employ flexible approaches to assessment, embedded within the curriculum, to provide teachers with instructionally-relevant information about students focused on critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills.
- Enhance instructional tools by embedding cognitive research on learning progressions with a clear pathway toward college- and career-readiness.
- Engage with state consortium to redesign assessments and work collaboratively to develop new psychometrics and expand approaches to assessment in early grades and additional subjects.

BUILDING ON NEW JERSEY'S HISTORY OF SUCCESS

New Jersey has worked hard to build a coordinated set of high-quality standards, performance assessments and professional development. This history helps prepare us for a very significant change in our curriculum and assessment that will dramatically improve classroom instruction and student outcomes.

Performance Assessments

The New Jersey Department of Education has worked collaboratively and contracted with the New Jersey Performance Assessment Alliance (NJ PAA) to both develop performance-assessment prompts for a performance assessment in biology, and train teachers from every high school in the state on the holistic scoring of the performance-

assessment prompts. Last year's prompt, *Live and Let Live*, was a 90-minute prompt designed through the collaborative efforts of the NJ PAA, the New Jersey Department of Education, and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. It was administered to over 95,000 students and scored by New Jersey teachers and supervisors. In our third year of this initiative, we certainly have a significant number of educators who have the skills to both design quality performance-assessment tasks and score them.

The Department's commitment to performance-assessment has influenced critical thinking and the application of knowledge in high-school science classrooms, for students at all academic levels, throughout the state. New Jersey's experience with performance assessment positions the state well to include similar types of testing in its through course and summative-assessment programs.

Formative-Assessment Practices

New Jersey is already well along its way in deploying a high-quality, standards-based, system of formative assessment throughout the state. New Jersey introduced web-based formative- and benchmark-assessment resources as a part of the statewide assessment system starting in 2007-2008 with the *Learnia* program for mathematics and English language arts. *Learnia* is a vendor-based, multi-tiered online resource for locally-administered benchmark and formative assessments that is used in approximately 200 LEAs. It includes considerable data-reporting and data-analysis features, as well as an item-authoring capacity that allows LEAs to create their own assessment content. The *Learnia* program has emphasized an ongoing professional-development-and-training program as an essential complement to the web-based formative- and benchmark-assessment resources. The evidence to date shows promising results. A recent study by Pearson of the 22-26% of New Jersey students in grades 3-8 who participated in the *Learnia* formative-assessment program showed that in LEAs that fully implemented the system, students improved over the course of the school year, with the most dramatic results in grade 3. Furthermore, preliminary results suggest that LEAs that fully

implemented the formative-assessment system scored higher on the statewide assessment, NJ ASK, in comparison to other LEAs. Race to the Top presents an opportunity to deepen this formative-assessment practice and create innovation for aligning curriculum and assessment.

Twenty-First Century Standards to Transform Classroom Practice

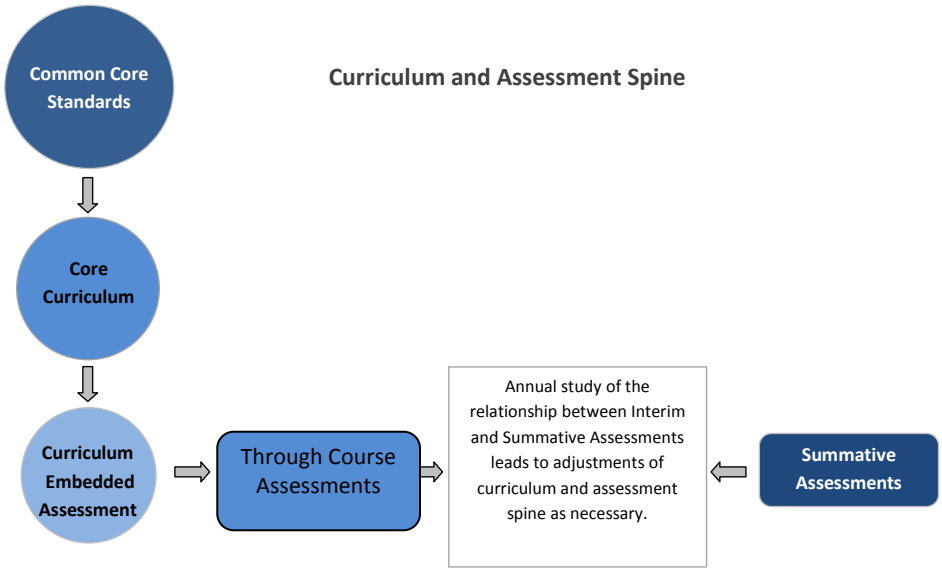
In recognition of the need to align students' educational experiences with the demands of a rapidly-changing world economy, New Jersey adopted a series of rigorous graduation requirements and revised standards in 7 of 9 content areas: Visual and Performing Arts, Comprehensive Health and Physical Education, Science, Social Studies, World Languages, Technology, and 21st Century Life and Careers. The redesigned standards require a deeper understanding of academic content, at much higher levels, facilitated by the integration of 21st-Century knowledge, skills, and themes. Implementation of the new standards is supported by Core Curriculum Content Standards interactive website features that enable educators to easily access supports for curriculum development, curriculum mapping, instructional planning, and curriculum-embedded assessments. Coupled with these resources is the Statewide Systemic Professional Development and Growth Initiative of onsite and online learning opportunities. The professional development offered through this plan provides the context for the rich discussions, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing that support the work of onsite and virtual professional-learning communities.

TRANSITIONING TO COMMON CORE STANDARDS

Once adopted by the State Board, the K-12 English language arts and mathematics standards will be built on a set of learning trajectories that are grounded in research and practice and that provide an order and sequence for instruction. With this instructionally-relevant structure acting as the backbone of our core content standards in all nine areas, we can actualize a system of content standards, curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional development that will transform our educational system.

A CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT SPINE

New Jersey's contention is that student achievement will not rise sufficiently with standards and assessment alone. A *curriculum spine* needs to be at the heart of the system, and it must be one that is directly tied to the new standards, and that will bring them to life in classrooms. The current process to review and update the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards will serve as the catalyst for the alignment of the curriculum, instruction, professional development, and assessment systems across the state that students experience from early childhood through high school. Building on the work already underway in New Jersey to assist with all aspects of standards-implementation, with Race to the Top funding New Jersey will work with local content-area leaders from the LEAs and national experts to create a Curriculum and Assessment Spine – an integrated set of formative-assessment tools,



learning trajectories and curricular exemplars. The spine will provide clear and consistent guidance to teachers about pedagogy and expectations for all children for college entrance or 21st Century work. We will surround the Curriculum and Assessment Spine with a comprehensive program of in-person and on-line professional development, leverage a unifying technology platform, and provide collaborative time for teachers and school leaders to review and plan instruction based on real-time student data, and to collectively review student work.

Balanced Assessment System to Improve Teaching and Learning

A balanced assessment system includes a combination of assessment *for*, and assessment *of*, learning. These summative, through-course and curriculum-embedded formative assessments serve separate, but complementary purposes in the process of learning and teaching, and will be an integral part of every instructional program. All three approaches to assessment must, and will, be aligned – e.g., the formative assessments must align with the through-course assessment, while at the same time reflecting the local enacted P-12 core-curriculum sequence. Our work with the assessment consortium mirrors this philosophy and approach to student assessment, in which a series of through-course assessments work in concert with the summative assessment to provide rich performance-based tasks that contribute to a summative score. The end product of this work will be assessments that are worthy of instructional imitation.

Evidence-based instructional tools and formative assessments will surround a core-curriculum sequence to provide teachers with the instructionally-relevant information that is necessary to adapt instruction based on students' academic needs. We will closely monitor the alignment of the entire system by annually analyzing the capability of through-course assessments to contribute to a summative score; inform pacing and intervention strategies, by evaluating the responsiveness of through course assessments to teacher and student use of instructional units; and make adjustments as necessary to exemplar curriculum materials and assessments. Evaluation and continuous improvement

will be a critical component to ensure the high-quality implementation of this innovative system. New Jersey has already identified a research partner to evaluate this work to ensure that it is of the highest caliber.

Through-Course Assessment

"Through-course" assessments will serve as a critical link between formative-assessment practices that are tied to the curriculum and summative assessments that are based on content standards. Our perspective is that these assessments work best when they are linked to gateway instructional units – e.g., when they are evaluating whether a child is "at benchmark" on specific skills and content, closely following instruction. At the same time, these performance-based assessments will allow for classroom-, school-, and LEA-level aggregation, analysis, and reporting, in order to support instructional leadership and management.

We propose to design and administer through-course assessments that will be linked to the gateway concepts and important-to-master aspects of the grade-level core curriculum sequence that are typically hard to measure through extended or open response items -- such as writing and research and extended mathematics problems. By focusing on these gateway aspects of the grade-level curriculum, we will ensure that teachers have the critical information they need to measure students' mastery of academically-rigorous content, and we will provide the tools that teachers need to adapt their instruction so that it is most effective. These critical areas present the most challenging concepts to teach, with the biggest impact for students' long-term understanding of complex material.

To identify the gateway aspects of the grade-level curriculum that are typically hard to measure in subjects other than math and literacy,[2] New Jersey will conduct a survey across a sample of teachers in each content area, with particular attention to the representation of the various LEA urban, rural, high-performing and low-performing contexts across the state. An expert panel will select the four areas for which New Jersey will develop through-course assessments by exploring the latest research on learning

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2 Assessment consortia will be developing through-course assessments in literacy and mathematics.

progressions in all content areas, examining the depth of knowledge related to each teacher-identified area, and studying the summative-assessment results.

We recognize that local ownership is essential if new standards and aligned assessments are to truly improve student outcomes, as they are designed to do. While the assessment consortium moves forward with the development of through-course assessments in literacy and mathematics, New Jersey will provide a series of challenge grants for LEAs working in collaboration to design innovative, open-source methods of assessing the remaining core-content subject-areas and grade-levels. Our balanced system will include literacy and mathematics assessments designed by the consortium, coupled with peer-reviewed assessments developed by educators in the field for the remaining subject areas and grade levels. NJDOE will announce the assessment- development competitive-grant process in November 2010. Working in collaboration with our county offices, NDJOE will convene a series of peer-review teams to review grant applications. The peer-review teams will include teachers, school leaders, curriculum specialists, higher-education faculty, and other community members and content experts. In order to maintain the high standards in the peer-review process, NJDOE will drive a process that sets clear standards and guidelines. The detailed schedule for development and review of assessments is found in the timeline for this section.

Curriculum-Embedded Assessments

Our Curriculum-Embedded Assessments will reflect a carefully-designed sequence of tasks, based on learning progressions that have been tested in classrooms. Building on the existing lesson-study-and-development process in New Jersey, teachers and supervisors will work together to thread embedded assessment opportunities throughout the local curriculum. Each curricular unit in the curriculum-and-assessment spine will include assessment of knowledge of facts and skills, and of the conceptual frameworks that connect them. Collected evidence will include monitoring questions and a series of performance-based tasks and extended-response items that are designed to inform the pedagogical routines in the classroom, such as student tasks that include extended analysis, research, and communication. With these tools, educators will be able to differentiate instruction based upon students' academic needs.

The curriculum-embedded performance tasks and constructed-response items will be delivered through a "classroom assessment engine" that allows teachers to create assessments tied to curriculum, with careful attention paid to the technical quality of such measures. Teachers will develop new items to collect evidence that supports understanding of how students are thinking and progressing. When appropriate, these items will be validated by instructional coaches and LEA curriculum experts, and will include scoring rubrics to evaluate student work. Each item will be aligned to a specific content-standard and instructional tool, to allow teachers to select multiple measures of the content that is assessed, and to ensure that the formative assessments will occur during the natural course of instruction. These items will be available in English and Spanish, to support New Jersey's significant Spanish-speaking ELL population, and accommodations will be available to adapt these items for use with special-needs students.

Our system will capture the items assessed; student work developed in response to the items; and teacher observations of the student work. The quality of student responses and teacher feedback can then be monitored by skilled instructional coaches and school leaders. Within each LEA, the central office will serve as a collection-point for a cyclical review of student work, with the review intended to enable both monitoring and sharing of the results of lesson study. Teachers will use student work samples that are aligned with state content standards, including the new common core standards, and will evaluate these artifacts using rubrics while working in their grade-level and content-level teams. This process supports the core work of the professional-learning community, which is to focus on the relationship between instruction and student outcomes.

Effective Practice: Using Formative Data to Inform Instruction

Certificated supervisors will support the collaborative use and analysis of student data. These interactions among teachers and supervisors will span across grade-levels to include teachers in other grades, in order to build knowledge and sequential alignment. School leaders and individuals beyond the school may also be involved, so that they may learn from successful implementers in other schools, and in order to build equality of opportunity and inter-school coherence.

Curriculum and Instructional Tools in the Curriculum-and-Assessment Spine to Transform Classroom Practice

To support adaptive instruction based on formative-assessment practices, teachers will need instructional tools that are sophisticated, nuanced, and adaptable. To meet this need, New Jersey will provide a set of exemplar units from the Curriculum and Assessment Spine that illustrate specific, research-based content and pedagogical routines and provide jumping-off points to generalize the approach and practices. These exemplar units will suggest teaching progressions and routines that assure a focus on specific, relevant content and best practices for teaching and learning. Exemplar units will include suggested materials, tasks, and teaching routines, and will provide opportunities for extensions and guidance for teachers, as well as supports for gifted students, English-language learners, and students with disabilities. Curriculum experts, instructional coaches, school leaders, and teachers will also receive training and support to adapt existing curriculum and instructional resources to support these evidence-based strategies. For most LEAs, these units will provide a template to guide the revision of local curriculum and, in the case of chronically-low-performing schools, these units will provide an alternative curriculum. As a result, students will benefit because the best-available evidence about what works will guide teachers' decisions.

Content and Pedagogical Routines Embedded in Exemplar Lessons and Units

Exemplar lessons and units will be developed by a national expert contractor. These lessons and units will contain the pedagogical and content routines needed to produce customized instruction, and will be based on research findings that show that these aspects of instruction have large effects on student achievement,[3] including:

[3] Corcoran, Mosher, Rogat, 2009

- Connecting the lesson to important concepts or skills (standards), selecting appropriate tasks, re-accessing and reviewing prior knowledge, engaging students, making learning goals explicit, providing time for students to explore the content and apply it, and closing the lesson with a review and summary.
- Teaching students to perform academically-focused and rigorous tasks with a high cognitive demand, such as lessons asking them to generalize, analyze, make conjectures, offer alternative explanations, solve unfamiliar problems, or create new questions.
- Using adaptive-instruction routines that help teachers to modify instruction as necessary to address students' particular needs and difficulties, as identified through formative-assessment strategies that are rooted in coherent conceptions of students' progress and likely problems.
- Enhancing team or group learning, in part by paying particular attention to how class-size, group-composition and roles, seating arrangements, group stability, the number of groups, and other factors influence the effectiveness of this approach.
- Incorporating student-centered discussions that support open discourse and thus both help teachers understand their students' academic thinking, and give students opportunities to express their ideas in order to develop greater understanding of the subject matter.

First, exemplar units developed by a contractor and New Jersey teachers will be available in the areas of mathematics, science, and language arts literacy. Then, as resources expand, we will look to include additional content areas. Exemplar units are typically comprised of a series of lessons, depending on the subject matter and grade-level. Lessons will be academically-rigorous, engaging, and accessible to students. These exemplar units include clearly-linked formative assessment on content and disciplinary skills and practices, and the conceptual frameworks that connect them, to support adaptive instruction. Importantly, the exemplar lessons apply the instructional practices shown above to increase student achievement in the specific content area. We will incrementally build resources for teachers to draw upon.

All units will be designed to provide a coherent arc of lessons within each topic, to develop disciplinary thinking and practices, and to hone reasoning and inquiry skills. The units will be aligned across grade levels so that they build on each other to progressively deepen students' understanding of concepts. For example, middle-school units develop foundational concepts, skills, and routines that support students' later success with the high-school college-readiness units.

Each unit will follow a thoughtfully-designed scope and sequence, reflecting the new common core standards and the latest research on learning progressions across early learning and up through the high-school grades. They will also align with most curricula used in the LEAs. To embed the content and pedagogical routines modeled in the exemplar units in the LEA curriculum, we will convene workshops in which the participating LEAs will refine or adapt units that they now use to deliver this evidence-based approach within their own curriculum. If LEAs so choose, the exemplar units may be used to supplement or supplant existing instructional materials, in order to improve or guide alignment with state content standards, or new Common Core standards. The units will be used in chronically-underperforming schools.

Aligning Instructional Strategies to New State Content Standards

To ensure that the exemplar units and lessons are closely aligned with the new Common Core Content Standards, we will also undertake a review of the units, and, where necessary, revise or develop new units in conjunction with New Jersey teachers and instructional coaches, in order to fill any critical gaps. This alignment process will identify both the horizontal and vertical alignment of the exemplar units and lessons with respect to the new state content standards. Units and lessons will be tied to specific standards, allowing teachers to select from a set of exemplar lessons that fit within the state's content-standards framework, which includes the Common Core standards.

This alignment process will also serve as a professional-development tool for teachers and LEA leaders to identify overlaps and gaps in the curricular units that are tied to the new standards. Furthermore, the exemplar units and lessons will assist teachers in rapidly

understanding how the change in academic-content standards, with respect to both the content and the skills taught, affects instruction within the classroom.

Process to Refine and Build an Exemplar-Lesson Bank

The bank of exemplar units will be seeded with a core set of aligned units from the Curriculum and Assessment Spine. Teachers, instructional coaches, and LEA teams can adjust, edit, and improve elements of every lesson to meet their own classroom needs. Teachers can submit these changes, or submit entirely new lessons, to a subject-area review committee for approval. Once approved, these new lessons would be made available to all users in the LEA and state. The state and LEA leaders in curriculum and instruction will govern the process of refining, adapting, developing, and approving new lessons. Over time, the bank of exemplar units and lessons will expand, as new and refined exemplar lessons are developed within the state by teachers, instructional coaches, and LEA curriculum specialists.

New Jersey will leverage its experience with the Progressive Math and Science Initiative, as described in the Appendix II, to convene a review committee, composed of teachers and content-area experts, to review exemplar units and suggest improvements. The content-area experts will lead this review to a consensus, and then implement the suggested changes. The unit will then be posted on the Instructional Improvement System (IIS) in order that all the schools in the LEA may use it, and in order to encourage further comments and improvements. A key value of this approach, in addition to creating these course materials, is that the members work as multi-grade teams developing and reviewing lessons – so that the teachers are forced to confront differences in curricular approaches that detract from coherence between, and even within, courses. Terms, approaches and methods are discussed in the context of creating exemplar lessons that will be used by all. New Jersey will design subject-area review teams to mirror the successful strategies used by the Progressive Math and Science Initiative (see D(3)).

As states adopt and implement the Common Core Standards, teachers and LEA leaders will also be able to leverage the open educational resources across states to develop, adapt, and refine exemplar lessons that are publicly-available in other states. In return, the

activities within the state will contribute to this open resource, as their exemplar lessons will be publicly available – thus allowing educators from other states to access, adapt, and redistribute the materials that have been reviewed by a team of instructional coaches, and by LEA and state curriculum specialists.

Aligning High-School-Exit Criteria with College-Entry Requirements

The consortium will be creating high-school-exit criteria, based on the Common Core standards. Once that occurs, we will establish a committee with the IHE's to align that set of criteria with college admission and learning requirements. Our goal is to make very clear what students need to know, so that they do not need remedial courses during college.

TIMELINE

New Jersey is proposing an ambitious timeline to design, develop, and implement a strong system of the curriculum-and-assessment spine that adheres to New Jersey's history of maintaining the highest-quality education and professional development. Exemplar lessons, coupled with formative assessments, will be aligned to New Jersey's content standards and the new common core standards and will be rolled out beginning in 2011-12. The following year, through-course assessments will be available for all students in participating LEAs, and exemplar lessons and units in the remaining content areas will also begin to be made available to teachers. In the 2012-13 school year, teachers will have access to the full range of the Curriculum and Assessment Spine for literacy and mathematics.

Section B Action Plan: Timeline and Responsible Parties		
Action Steps	**Timeline**	**Responsible Parties**
Participate in Design Committee of PARCC assessment consortium, active participation in SMARTER/Balanced	January 2010-	Office of Student Learning Assessments
Launch of NJ Standards Website	February 2010	Office of Academic Standards
State Board review of K-12 Common Core Standards	May 17, 2010	Deputy Commissioner, State Board
Select Assessment Consortium	June 2010	Commissioner
Adopt Common Core standards in English language arts and mathematics	June 17, 2010	State Board
Align exemplar lessons to Common Core Standards and identify gaps	September – October 2010	NJDOE, selected contractor
Develop teacher survey of gateway content and meet with Technical Advisory Committee to refine and improve survey and design	September 2010	Office of Student Learning Assessments
Administer teacher survey, collect and analyze teacher survey responses	October 2010	County Offices
Convene content and assessment experts to select 4 areas per grade level for assessment development in non-tested grades and subjects	October 2010	Office of Student Learning Assessments
Exemplar lessons aligned to core content made widely available	October 2010	Assistant Commissioner of Academic Standards, Curriculum, and Assessments
Content-focused training for teacher leaders and supervisors on pedagogical routines associated with exemplar lessons	October 2010-ongoing	Office of Curriculum Development, selected contractor
Ongoing work to build and refine exemplar lessons	October 2010 – ongoing	Teachers, instructional coaches
Engage Technical Advisory Committee in design of clear guidelines for local development of through-course assessments in remaining core content areas	October – November 2010	Office of Student Learning Assessments
Open competition for challenge grants for LEAs working in partnerships to develop through-course assessments in remaining content areas and flexible approaches to K-12 assessment	November 2010	Assistant Commissioner of Academic Standards, Curriculum and Assessments
Select multidisciplinary peer-review panels for LEA through-course assessments	December 2010	NJDOE Office of Student Learning Assessments, County Office,

Launch exemplar lessons and curriculum-embedded assessments through Instructional Improvement System (IIS)	January 2011	Office of Curriculum Development, selected contractor
Ongoing work to develop and refine curriculum-embedded assessments	January 2011 - ongoing	Teachers, School Leaders
Announce challenge-grant winners selected from multi-disciplinary committee	January 2011	Commissioner
Commence item development, field test, and bias review for second-semester through-course assessment	January – June 2011	Selected LEAs
Continue to scale and expand access to high-quality instructional tools in STEM subjects	January 2011-ongoing	Office of Curriculum Development
Launch open-source "quiz engine" for curriculum-embedded assessments	January 2011	Office of Education Technology, Office of Student Learning Assessments
Ongoing through-course assessment development work	January 2011-ongoing	Selected LEAs
Begin training on new through-course assessments	July 2011 - ongoing	Selected LEA, County Offices
Field-test new through-course assessments	August 2011-June 2012	Selected LEAs
Preliminary standards-setting on first semester through-course assessments; ongoing field test	May –June 2012	Selected LEAs
Preliminary standards-setting on second semester through-course assessments	June -July 2012	Selected LEA
Reconvene Challenge-grant peer-review panels to review field-test results and scoring procedures	July 2012	Office of Student Learning Assessments
Full implementation of through-course assessments in all core - content subject areas	September 2012	Office of Student Learning Assessments

SECTION C

Data Systems to Support Instruction
(47 total points)

(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

FULLY IMPLEMENTING A STATEWIDE LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEM

New Jersey's statewide longitudinal data system – called NJ SMART – fully implements seven of the America COMPETES elements. We have contracted with leading data experts from multiple vendors to audit the current systems and to do the systems-design work to ensure that we have a swift, efficient path to completing the rest of the COMPETES data elements – and to go well beyond. New Jersey is fully committed to having a top-tier statewide longitudinal data system by 2012, and offers herein a detailed plan for getting there.

The seven fully-implemented America COMPETES data elements are:

(1) The implementation of a statewide unique student-identification number, known as the "SID." New Jersey began its implementation of SIDs in 2007, and has since assigned over 1.6 million SIDs to all public pre-school-through-high-school students. Through the NJ SMART portal, LEAs have the ability to acquire new SIDs, view and download existing SIDs, correct errors in a SID record, resolve conflicts between SID records, update individual-student data, and upload files. State policy requires that an LEA assign a SID to every student and that all SID conflicts be resolved before each of two annual State data submissions, taking place on October 15 and on June 30. Evidence as to this element is in the NJ SMART Overview available in

Appendix I, as is the data definition for the SID data element, as published in our SID Management Student Data Handbook version 1.2, and an overview of the NJ SMART system.

(2) Student-level enrollment, demographic, and program-participation information. All enrollment and demographic information is currently uploaded by LEAs and included in NJ SMART. New Jersey also collects participation information in the following areas: Homeless; Title I Programs in Language Arts, Math, and Science; Supplemental Education Services programs, Limited-English-Proficient programs, Special Education programs and services, and the Migrant program. Evidence of this element is available within the NJ SMART Overview – the disaggregator view shows program, participation, and demographic fields tracked in NJ SMART. Further evidence is available in our Data-Elements Outline, available in Appendix I, with the list of fields collected in our state data submission, as published in our Student Data Handbook, version 1.3.

(3) The collection of yearly assessment data for students in tested grades. At the beginning of each assessment cycle, student-level information is provided to New Jersey's testing vendor. This includes information regarding testing accommodation (if appropriate), program participation, demographic information, and the student's unique SID. This process enables the test vendor to place labels on each booklet, which in turn allows the vendor to create electronic files of test results at the end of the assessment cycle. These data files are then uploaded into NJ SMART, where LEAs and schools can access the data via the NJ SMART analytics tool to conduct their own analyses. Evidence as to this element is available on page 4 of the NJ SMART Overview, available in Appendix I – the view of student roster information with performance level based on yearly-assessment data.

(4) Information regarding students who are not tested. In addition to the information that is provided to the test vendors at the beginning of the assessment cycle, schools and LEAs also provide information, via the test booklet, regarding the reasons why a test booklet may not be fully completed. The label on the test booklet provides a space for school personnel to indicate, using established codes, the reason a student was not tested. (For example, a student may have had a medical emergency during the testing period.) This information is then included in the test vendor's electronic files, which are uploaded into NJ SMART. Evidence as to this element is

available on page 3 of the NJ SMART Overview available in Appendix I – the disaggregator view shows void codes, which are entered when a student does not take an assessment.

(5) A State data-audit system. During the data-submission process, school districts participate in a 'practice submission' prior to official snap-shot dates. The data provided to NJ SMART is run through a series of data-quality processes, including over 300 separate business rules. When the official submission-period begins, summary reports provide snapshots of district aggregate data that districts can use to verify their submission. Additionally, announcements, FAQs, data dictionaries, training sessions, and a dedicated help desk provide support to districts. Once received by NJ DOE, the submitted data is subjected to additional scrutiny as it is cross referenced against other collections and submitted to the U.S. Department of Education's Education Data Exchange Network (EDEN/EDFacts). State policy dictates that district submissions are not permitted to contain more than 2% errors. For an example of the business rules against which submissions are evaluated, see Appendix I Data Audit – an example of the business rules by which the Referral Date field is validated during data submission, as published in our Special-Education Student Data Handbook.

(6) Student-level college-readiness scores. New Jersey collects student-level data from the College Board on SAT, ACT, and AP results and links them to student records in NJ SMART. Evidence of this collection is included in Appendix I, as a table description for the AP-course record data, which is linked at the student level in our NJ SMART system.

(7) Other information that has been determined to be necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in post-secondary education. In addition to our regular and alternate assessments and College Board scores, New Jersey also collects surveys of post-secondary plans and remedial-course enrollment in New Jersey's Institutions of Higher Education. A strong collaboration among state agencies and higher education includes the integration of data from students served by the New Jersey Department of Corrections, the Juvenile Justice Commission, the New Jersey Department of Human Services, and the New Jersey Department of Children and Families; and workforce data from the New Jersey Department of Labor. We also utilize data from the Commission on Higher Education in order to address the linkage between our high-school curriculum and post-secondary curriculum.

New Jersey's longitudinal-data system has partially implemented the following America COMPETES Act elements:

Student-level information about entry, exit, transfers, etc. New Jersey currently collects and analyzes entry, exit, transfer, and drop-out data for all P-12 students in the state. The State does not currently include the same data for college students.

A teacher-identification system. New Jersey currently has a teacher identifier that is generated for all certificated staff. The identifier is tied to the individual's credential. However, New Jersey's systems do not yet link student and teacher information beyond the "snapshot" data collections that take place twice per year.

New Jersey's State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) application, which was submitted on December 14th, 2009, includes a commitment to fully implement the five un- or partially-implemented COMPETES elements, as well as SFSF indicators B2 (student growth) and B3 (teacher impact). The description of our work-plan and budget to accomplish this implementation is contained in section (C)(2).

Reform-Plan Criteria

(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.[1]

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

[1] 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.

narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Recommended maximum response length: Two pages

ACCESSING AND USING STATEWIDE DATA

NJ SMART is the State Longitudinal-Data System (SLDS). It currently aggregates data for accountability and analysis purposes, and provides statewide reporting on student performance. Under the Race to the Top program, we will enhance NJ SMART as our accountability system while simultaneously extending it with an integrated Instructional Improvement System (IIS). Because mobile computing is ascendant (One million iPads sold in a month!), we will design user interfaces to support tablet, netbook, and traditional data views, and encourage LEAs to ensure that every teacher has access to our data systems both at school and at home. In enhancing and extending our system we will:

- Provide ready access to data in the classroom, both for the *Aggregate Reporting* functionality outlined in this section and for the *Instructional Support Tools* outlined in (C)(3);
- Provide context-sensitive access to student, school, and district information for teachers, administrators, and parents;
- Expand the data sets that are included in NJ SMART and in the IIS, to generate a much more comprehensive picture of student and school performance over time;
- Implement monitoring-systems to identify students in need of support early, while intervention can still change outcomes;
- Create a foundation for instructional use of the data (as described in section C3).

This section describes our two-phase work plan for NJ SMART (our accountability system), along with our professional-development plan to ensure that the data is well-used as part of our overall reform. Section (C)(3) describes our work-plan for our IIS.

NJ SMART Phase 1: Complete America COMPETES. NJDOE will deliver on our SFSF commitment to fully implement all America COMPETES elements, as well as SFSF indicators B2 (student growth) and B3 (teacher impact). Our Office of Education Data, which reports directly to our Deputy Commissioner and is managed by Dr. Bari Erlichson, will manage the development effort, using both NJDOE staff and an external contractor. To accomplish the work, the state anticipates they will submit a resolution to allocate $6.5M in funds under the Governor's proposed 2011 Fiscal Year budget to complete the first year of work; work in years 2 and 3 will be funded by the RTTT grant.

Consistent with our SFSF commitment, work on every COMPETES element except teacher impact will be complete by September 2011. (Teacher impact will be piloted as part of the evaluation system pilots in 2011-2012, and will be fully implemented by September 2012). To oversee development, NJDOE will assign a Contract Manager, a Project Manager, and a Business Analyst, all supervised by Dr. Erlichson in the Office of Education Data. The majority of the NJ SMART development work will be performed by our existing SLDS contract vendor, the Public Consulting Group (PCG), under contract number A61236, which may be amended and extended to support this work.

To ensure that the NJ SMART data is used integrally across NJDOE as part of our RTTT reform, we have established two internal working groups: the NJ SMART Steering Committee, comprised of Directors and Assistant Commissioners, which meets weekly and is responsible for policy direction and development decisions; and a Data Stewards Working Group, which is responsible for ensuring the accurate and timely data flow of all data collections and analyses conducted by the DOE. Members of the Data Stewards Working Group liaise with identified Data Stewards in each of the LEAs to support current data-collections. NJDOE Data Stewards have established policies regarding the quality, consistency, privacy, and security of student data, and LEA Data Stewards are responsible for adhering to and enforcing the policies. Information on membership in each of these working groups is included in Appendix II.

To broaden both input to, and participation in, the SLDS, the DOE will establish a NJ SMART Stakeholder Council with participation from select County Office Superintendents, LEA leadership, parents, teachers, and community leaders. The Council will meet bimonthly over the

2010-2011 school year, then quarterly in the subsequent years of the grant. The Council will be responsible for providing input on the key metrics, desired data views, and professional development programs that are required to ensure that the data in NJ SMART is helping all stakeholders understand educational attainment, and that it can improve results.

The enhanced NJ SMART system will provide web views targeted to each user group: policymakers; school leaders and administrators; and teachers. Key features include:

- A *Student Growth Model*, similar to the Colorado growth model. Visualizations of the growth-model data will allow educational stakeholders to see growth at the (anonymized) student, class, school, region, and LEA levels.
- An *Early Warning System* to alert schools and LEAs that a student is at risk of failing or dropping out. These alerts will be triggered based on established rules (e.g., alert when a student's attendance rate drops below a given threshold), and will be automatically sent to teachers, school leaders, and student-support teams.
- *On-time Graduation Reporting*, to allow schools and LEAs to track their graduation cohorts. Such data will include, for example, courses taken and credits earned.
- *Post-Secondary Reporting* to allow schools and LEAs to follow students into either post-secondary institutions and/or the workforce, tracking their progress.
- *Discipline Reports*, which will allow schools and LEAs to access records of disciplinary incidents, actions taken, and services provided, so that these categories of information can be integrated into analyses of students' attendance and progress toward graduation.
- *Aggregate Reporting* that includes data for individual students, classes, and cohorts, aggregated with historical data for the student population in both pre-formatted and customizable formats. More sophisticated users will be able to access ad hoc reporting and analysis facilities.

In addition to these features, during this phase NJ SMART will be enhanced to ensure that it addresses all 12 of the elements required in the America COMPETES Act, including more robust implementations and integrations of some of our existing elements. For more details of the enhancements, see Appendix II, which provides our NJ SMART project outcomes and subtasks.

NJ SMART Phase 2: Parent-Focused Reporting. A second phase of development will begin in March 2011, and is expected to be complete by the end of March 2012. A web-based *Parent-Focused Reporting* application will encourage parental participation in student achievement and school performance by offering a guided view of student performance. Students' profiles, educational progress, and attendance data will be integrated with the *Personalized Planning Tools* discussed in section (C)(3) to empower parents to better manage their children's education.

Professional Development. Data systems are only as valuable as the uses to which they are put. To that end, we will pair each of our development phases with an intensive professional-development program, including:

- Clear communication about the features to be included in each release, through materials distributed via the County Executive's monthly roundtables, emails for distribution to teachers and school leaders, and notifications supplied on our website;
- Training sessions for teachers, school leaders, and administrators, delivered as web-based modules; as training sessions operated by the County Executive Offices, and at hosted-presentation sessions at the NJDOE;
- User-friendly system documentation that is distributed to end users; and
- Direct-to-parent communications, including public-service announcements and communication through other channels.

Integration with Overall Reform Agenda

New Jersey is building an education system that is continually learning and improving. To that end, the NJDOE, LEAs, County Offices, schools, and teachers will use NJ SMART data to support our instructional, human-capital, and school-management strategies. For example:

- Student performance data on high-stakes assessments will be aggregated at the teacher level, for use as part of the teacher-evaluation process described in section D(2).
- The School Performance Index, described in section E(2), will be calculated in NJ SMART, will be published online, and will provide a key input with respect to the selection of schools for turnarounds or additional support.

These are just a few examples; more references to use of our data system to drive reform can be found throughout this plan.

(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

(i) INSTRUCTIONAL-IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM.

In addition to enhancing our SLDS, NJ SMART, New Jersey plans to provide a web-based Instructional-Improvement System (IIS) to all Participating LEAs. By doing so, we will leverage our SLDS investment, create an economy of scale, and ensure that we can sustainably provide the necessary support-tools and resources for the other reform initiatives that New Jersey will be undertaking as part of this proposal.

Instructional Improvement spans many areas, including collaboration, knowledge management, formative assessment, actionable reporting, and targeted instruction. By providing a seamless platform, presenting the tools to classroom users on both traditional computers and the new generation of highly-usable tablet computers, and getting the right data to the right actors and stakeholders in the system in near-real-time, we are confident that we will be able to significantly improve the quality of teaching and learning in our State.

Instructional-Support Tools

The IIS will include components that help teachers use data to develop a rich picture of student ability and plan high-impact, standards-aligned instruction. The components will be web-based, allowing for access on both traditional computers and iPad / slate devices:

Academic Standards

Using breakthrough visualizations, the IIS will help teachers use standards-aligned assessments to plan and deliver instruction.

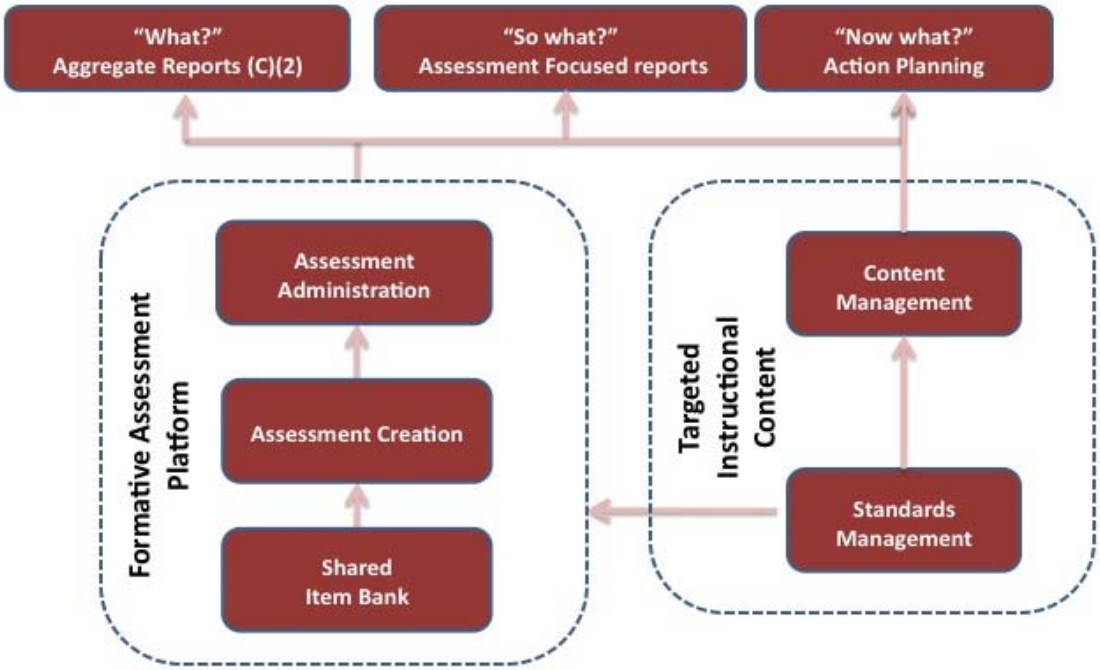
The components will include:

- A *Formative-Assessment Platform* that is aligned with the curriculum spine, to enable more frequent and focused evaluation of student performance and student needs. The platform will include a *Shared Item Bank* allowing collaborative sharing of items and assessments across the state, and an *Assessment Creation* tool that will allow for specific assessments to be created and shared. The platform will support both interim and curriculum-embedded assessments as described in section B, and will complement the current statewide high-stakes assessments, *Learnia* implementations, and LEA formative assessment systems. The assessment challenge grants described in B(3) will be expected to implement new assessments on this platform to assure broad availability to all Participating LEAs.
- *Assessment-Focused Reporting* will complement the *Aggregate Reports* outlined in section (C)(2) with a richer set of reports, including formative-assessment data from the IIS platform and integrated from LEA systems. These reports will build up from the view of an individual student's performance, rather than applying a school-level aggregate perspective. The focus of these reports is to help teachers understand "So what does this data mean?" and provide a direct path to action-planning.
- A *Targeted Instructional-Content System*, where classroom resources such as online video exemplar lessons, and performance tasks stored in a *Content-Management* system will be aligned with the currently-implemented *New Jersey 21st Century Standards* system. The platform will support two types of content: (1) the "Curriculum and Assessment Spine" content described in Section B(3), which provides a structured foundation for classroom teaching and learning; and (2) educator-created assessments and lessons. By offering a juried promotion path for user-contributed assets, exemplars can be identified either at the LEA level or the state level. Educators will be able to navigate standards to locate lesson plans, assessments, and other instructional assets.
- A standards-aligned *Action-Planning Module* will help teachers to plan instruction based on individual, small-group, and whole-class student needs. Inputs to the Action-Planning process will include formative-assessment data from the *Formative-Assessment Platform*, *Learnia*, and other formative-assessment systems used in the state. The system will

provide a structured process for the review of assessment data by standard; the selection of specific types of instruction and areas of instruction for individual students, small groups, and the whole class; and the capability to select instructional materials from the *Instructional-Content System* to support instruction.

- *Self-service Upload Interface*s for the LEAs will be enhanced and expanded – for example, including additional data sets and a mechanism for more frequent data-collection. Our objective is to provide a system to which an LEA could easily upload data on a weekly basis. The State will also pilot Schools-Interoperability-Framework (SIF) integration with several LEAs, to determine whether the technology and taxonomy could reduce costs and increase the value of data-integration between the LEAs and the state.

This diagram illustrates the integration of the action-planning, reporting, assessment, and standards components of the New Jersey IIS:



Continuous-Improvement Tools

The IIS will also offer planning tools to allow teachers and leaders to manage individual-, grade-, building-, and LEA-level goals, monitor progress towards those goals, and plan improvement:

(a) An *Effectiveness-Management System*, designed for school administrators, will extend the existing NJ SMART Portal to provide a dashboard for schools to track student achievement and teacher-effectiveness data. The dashboards will allow teachers and administrators to identify key opportunities for instructional improvement and take action accordingly. As an example of types of effectiveness-reporting we will provide, see a teacher's view of effectiveness by unit:

The dashboard will link to the more robust aggregate-reporting tools that are outlined in section (C) (2) to allow for root-cause analysis of specific performance patterns.

(b) An *Observation Toolset* will allow the capture and tracking of data collected in both formative and formal classroom observations, which are described in more depth in Section D.

(c) The *Professional-Development Support* system will assist administrators, principals, instructional coaches, and professional development staff in working with educators to identify training needs based on the data captured by the IIS, along with data from the existing New Jersey *Educator-Certification* database, and the results of the structured classroom observations and formal evaluations described in Section D. Administrators and teachers will be able to build individualized, targeted professional-development plans, and to monitor the implementation of

those plans. The connection between the Professional-Development tool and the IIS will provide for a process of continuous development for educators, and for ongoing collaborative support for teachers throughout the process of instruction.

(d) A *Climate-Survey Tool* will be implemented across the state, enabling surveys of stakeholder perceptions, school environment, etc. This data will be used to support our turnaround-planning efforts, and in evaluations of our school and district leadership. The surveys will be able to be taken on-line securely and anonymously, with the results being made available to researchers alongside data from the IIS and NJ SMART.

Work Plan and Project Oversight

A pilot release of the *Instructional Support Tools (IST)* system will be available to users by September 2011. The pilot release will include the *Formative-Assessment Platform* and *Assessment-Focused Reporting*, to support the pilot assessment projects described in section B(3). The remaining features – *Instructionally-Targeted Content, Action-Planning, and Self-Service Uploads*, will be available by September 2012. An Instructional-Support-Tools team -- consisting of a Project Manager, a User Experience lead, and a Business Analyst -- will be responsible for delivering the project, and will report to the Office of Student Data. For input, IIS Subcommittees will be established from the NJ SMART Steering Committee and the NJ SMART Stakeholder Committee (both described in Section (C)(2)), including staff and leaders who are primarily focused on standards, assessments, and human capital.

The project to develop and implement both the IST and the CIT will utilize accelerated procurement-procedures to select a suitable vendor by October 30th 2010. The procurement will define required features and functionality and allow for custom development that extends existing K-12 software platforms, which we expect to allow for an accelerated timeframe.

Following the September 2011 release of the enhanced data-elements and educator-focused reporting tools detailed in (C)(2), the *Continuous-Improvement Tools (CIT)* system will be made

available to users by March 31st 2012 in its fully-integrated form. A custom-development vendor, existing products, and/or an integrator will be selected through the procurement process by March 31st 2011. A New Jersey DOE CIT subcommittee will be established from the NJ SMART Steering Committee and the NJ SMART Stakeholder Committee.

Participating LEAs have committed to ensure the adoption and use of the IIS among LEA educators and stakeholders, by permitting time for teachers to undertake training, and by ensuring that teachers are encouraged to do so. The fidelity of training attendance will be monitored through the IIS, and this data will be offered to each Participating LEA through the NJ SMART Portal.

The Participating LEAs have also committed to integrating additional defined data-elements from their local Student Information Systems using the enhanced upload and integration facilities, aligning local learning and content-management systems with the curriculum spine where applicable, and ensuring the upload of the results from locally-implemented formative assessments. LEAs will have the freedom to tailor the system to local needs at their own expense -- for example, by integrating instructional-support tools with other web-based teacher-facing applications; or by integrating personalized planning with their student-facing websites.

(ii) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In addition to the professional development outlined in (C)(2), professional development for (C)(3) will focus on system use, user adoption at all levels, and the integration of the system into daily practice. The professional-development modules will be developed by the IIS development vendor in collaboration with, and using input from, the NJ SMART Steering and Stakeholder Committees. Delivery of the PD modules will be provided via the County Executive Offices.

Usage-tracking will be available to monitor access to the system, use of the tools, the extent of user contributions and community participation, and fidelity to guide ongoing professional development. New Jersey recognizes that instructional change requires significant efforts beyond the initial implementation of the IIS. The training will promote collaboration to enable educators

to continue to develop their skills after implementation, building grade-level and content-level teams. In particular, educators in a data-informed school system will need new skills in five domains:

- Data-interpretation and inference
- Data conversations
- Differentiated instruction
- Inquiry work and action-research
- Online collaboration

As educators begin to access data, their appetite for more data and better data will increase. At the same time, they will ask, "Now what?" New Jersey's professional- development program is designed to build critical data skills to answer that very question. Specifically, professional development will focus on three domains:

1. The Cycle of Inquiry – Professional development will train educators to use the "Cycle of Inquiry" that has recently been endorsed by the What Works Clearinghouse. In this process, educators analyze data to identify an area of weakness, develop and implement new strategies, assess, analyze the results, and then begin the process anew.

2. Data Conversations – As educators interpret and understand the data they access, they often need to engage in low-stakes, non-judgmental conversations with students and parents in order to understand results, enlist support, and motivate change. Training will assist instructional leaders in how to have such conversations with staff members.

3. Data-Analysis – In a data-driven culture, the abundance of data can quickly overwhelm educators, especially those without a mathematics background. New Jersey will help educators learn to ask good analytic questions and to use multiple data-sources to draw appropriate inferences from the data they are accessing.

(iii) DATA FOR RESEARCH

The NJDOE will provide a data mart, containing fully de-identified data, to deliver data extracts for researchers based on the extended NJ SMART data elements. The data mart will be differentiated from NJ SMART alone by its incorporation of data from the Instructional Improvement System (IIS), to enable researchers to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, and approaches for educating different types of students. For example, the data mart will contain granular data regarding:

- Groups of students receiving targeted instruction
- Fidelity of action-plan implementation
- Materials used as a part of instruction
- Assessments delivered, results, and student work
- Student biography and demographics
- Records of all professional development undertaken by educators

Only data from Participating LEAs will be extracted into the de-identified data mart. Each Participating LEA will be required to sign a data-release agreement allowing de-identified data to be used for research and policy purposes. Each researcher desiring access to the de-identified data will be required to complete a data-request form indicating the intended use of the data, but all requests will be honored in a timely manner and no restrictions, other than those set forth under FERPA 42 USC 1232g(b)(1)(f), will be placed on the use or publication of the data.

SECTION D

Great Teachers and Leaders
(138 total 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.

Recommended maximum response length: Two pages

HIGH-QUALITY ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS FOR TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

- New Jersey has a strong record of innovation and outstanding, demonstrable success in preparing teachers through alternative pathways to certification.
- New Jersey was the first state in the country to provide an alternative route to teaching, and New Jersey continues to lead the nation in using and expanding alternative pathways to certification.
- New Jersey is working to expand its pipeline of great teachers by proposing regulations that would make it the first state in the nation to grant equivalent certification to teachers who are licensed in any other state, and who can provide evidence of their content knowledge and past success in teaching.
- New Jersey is demonstrating its commitment to addressing the shortage of teachers and school leaders in certain areas of the State by systematically monitoring and improving the alternative-route avenues to certification for both, as evidenced in (D)(3).

(i) (ii) ALTERNATIVE ROUTES TO CERTIFICATION: TEACHERS

In 1985, New Jersey spearheaded the first alternative-routes-to-teacher-certification movement in the United States, the Provisional Teacher Program.[1] Over the twenty-five years since then, New Jersey's nationally-recognized alternative-route approach to teacher preparation has been supported by law (*N.J.A.C.* 6A:9-8 and 6A:9-11) and has operated continuously and very effectively. Our state is committed to alternative-route programs that allow a wide spectrum of individuals who are considering teaching for the

[1] *Feistritzer, Education Week, November 18, 2009.*

first time – from mid-career professionals to newly-minted college graduates – to expeditiously become well-trained teachers.

As part of our next phase of reform, New Jersey will provide entry to America's best teachers, no matter the state in which they serve. We propose to accomplish this by offering equivalent certifications to teachers who possess certifications from their home states, who can provide documented evidence of content knowledge, and who possess three years of successful teaching experience. The State Board has proposed amendments to the licensing regulations that would allow for certification to teachers licensed in other states who can provide evidence of past success. The measure offers dramatic evidence of New Jersey's commitment to clearing non-constructive barriers to teaching in New Jersey and putting the most effective teachers possible in our classrooms.

New Jersey recruits quality candidates and trains them to succeed. Individuals who hold a bachelor's (or higher) degree and a Certificate of Eligibility (CE) are immediately eligible to participate in alternative-route programs. To receive a CE from NJDOE, each incoming alternative-route teacher must provide evidence of appropriate subject-matter preparation, must complete 24 hours of education requirements (which includes, among other things, the completion of introductory teaching courses and substantial classroom time), and must pass the corresponding Praxis II exam.

Over the history of New Jersey's alternative-route program, approximately 30,000 teachers have been recommended for certification to teach. (See Appendix I (D)(1) for a graph of alternative-route-completion statistics.)

Summary of Types of Alternative-Route Programs*

To assist non-traditional candidates in successfully becoming teachers, New Jersey has established relationships with the types of alternative-route providers that are listed by category in the table below. New Jersey authorizes a variety of provider and provider arrangements. All alternative-route providers benefit from their strong relationships with

institutions of higher learning. There are many models within the state -- ranging from intensive programs that are designed to get well-qualified candidates into classrooms quickly, to degree programs that offer flexible scheduling and online coursework for candidates. Some of New Jersey's alternative-certification programs include partnerships with community colleges and with LEA providers to ensure geographic accessibility. In addition, the NJDOE recognizes the need for even more flexible models that engage an even greater variety of candidates. Thus, it has encouraged partnerships, like those in New Pathways to Teaching in New Jersey, a program through which Jersey City University offers its teaching curriculum from various state community colleges. Such partnerships offer broad accessibility for geographically-dispersed candidates, and cover diverse areas of focus.

Type of Alternative-Route Program	**Number of Programs****
Teach for America	1 – operated in three cities
Regional Training Center Programs	9 (in 26 sites)
District Consortium	3
MAT Program	6
Preschool – Grade 3 program	10
Bilingual Bicultural Program	11
ESL Program	13
Special Education Program	18
World Language Alternative Route	2
NASDTEC Interstate Contract	24

* A list of programs by name is available as further evidence in Appendix I.

**Several campuses offer multiple programs. A direct count of programs cannot be aggregated from this chart.

We estimate that alternative-route programs train approximately one-third of the teachers who are placed in urban settings in New Jersey. Moreover, alternative-route certification programs in New Jersey are producing a much more diverse set of teachers than traditional-route programs have produced.[2] Indeed, a full 37 percent of the teacher

[2] *Alternative Route Pathway to Teacher Certification Evaluation Report. Raymond Barclay et al., Western Carolina University. 2008. Available on the NJDOE Website under "educators research."*

candidates who complete alternative-certification programs in New Jersey belong to minority groups.

Alternative-route programs not only are a strong force in New Jersey, but also are growing in strength. They continue to provide a greater and greater percentage of the teachers in New Jersey, and they continue to expand their delivery methods. New programs offer diverse methods of seeking teacher licensure, and of ensuring that quality candidates are recruited and supported. For example, a new apprenticeship program that is currently being used in three New Jersey districts has a fifth-year residency as part of the preparation program. Importantly, too, New Jersey's commitment to alternative-route candidates extends into the classroom, where, during their first year of teaching, candidates are offered seasoned mentors and additional professional-development opportunities. (These opportunities are described later in this section.)

	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009
TRADITIONAL-ROUTE CERTIFICATES AWARDED	10,234	10,981	7,728
ALTERNATIVE-ROUTE CERTIFICATES AWARDED	2,914	3,134	2,778
Alternative-Route Certificates as a Percentage of Total Certificates	28.5%	28.5%	35.9%
TOTAL INSTRUCTIONAL CERTIFICATES AWARDED	13,148	14,115	10,506

Evidence: Roughly one-quarter[3] of New Jersey's 115,000-plus teachers were certified via the alternative route. In 2008-2009, the state issued 10,506 standard instructional certificates; 2,778 (26%) of these were issued to teachers who had prepared to teach through the alternative route.

[3] *Although a greater number of candidates were recommended for certification, not all of them chose to pursue teaching within New Jersey.*

In sum, New Jersey launched, and has expanded, a nationally-recognized alternative-route approach to teacher preparation that has provided quality candidates to the state's schools for 25 years.[4] And now, New Jersey is taking steps to raise the bar still higher.

Within New Jersey's Educator Development Continuum, all beginning teachers enter as provisional teachers. During an Alternate Route Teacher's provisional period, he or she must take a minimum of 200 hours of approved coursework in professional teacher education. The teacher's completion of this coursework is concurrent with on-the-job mentoring, support, and formative evaluation that is aimed at developing and documenting his or her instructional competency. The building administrator recommends a candidate for standard licensure upon his or her completion of the provisional teacher program. The recommendation is based upon a candidate's successful completion of required coursework, and takes into account whether the two formative evaluations and one summative evaluation support such a recommendation.[5]

A two-year evaluation study of the New Jersey alternative-routes-to-teaching program was conducted starting in 2005, pursuant to New Jersey's federal Teacher Quality Enhancement (TQE) Grant. Based on the evaluation's findings, New Jersey formed an Alternative Route Advisory Committee in 2008, to conduct a systemic review of the alternative-routes program and to make recommendations for improvement. (A summary of findings from the evaluation study, and of the Advisory Committee's review, is provided in Appendix II.) After reviewing the evaluation findings, New Jersey instituted changes to its requirements for alternative-route certification in three areas: (1) the initial requirements for securing a credential to teach (i.e., the CE); (2) the additional hours of preparation required to teach elementary language arts/literacy and elementary mathematics; and (3) the preparation of career- and technical educators.

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[4] *Feistritzer, Education Week, November 18, 2009.*

[5] *N.J.A.C. 6A:9-8.3, 8.6, 8.7.*

Successful Aspects of New Jersey's Alternative Route:

1. Certification can be provided by various types of qualified partnerships with universities—involving districts, community colleges, Teach for America, and state programs.
2. New Jersey accepts candidates based on rigorous selection criteria such as GPA, prior coursework, subject-matter expertise, and assessment results.
3. New Jersey offers supervised school-based experiences and ongoing support for alternative-route candidates.
4. New Jersey offers options through which candidates can provide evidence of alternative experience or study, to limit the coursework they are required to complete.
5. Upon completion of the alternative route, New Jersey awards to candidates the same level of certification that traditional prep programs award.

Legal Provisions

A single regulatory framework applies to all alternative-route providers. These regulations are found at *N.J.A.C.* 6A:9-8 and 6A:9-11; specific requirements for eligibility are found in Appendix I (D)(1). All programs are required to align with the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers (*N.J.A.C.* 6A:9-3.3). An initial CE is given to those aspiring teachers who enter through the alternative route. In contrast, teachers who enter through "traditional" approved higher-education programs receive a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing (CEAS). (See Appendix I (D)(1) for a summary of alternative-route requirements and providers.)

(i)(ii) ALTERNATIVE ROUTES TO CERTIFICATION: SCHOOL LEADERS[6]

Since 2003, in addition to its non-traditional pathways for teacher education, New Jersey has offered a non-traditional preparation pathway for aspiring school administrators, principals, supervisors, and (since 2008) directors of school counseling services. The New Jersey Expedited Certification for Educational Leadership (NJ EXCEL) program, provided by the New Jersey Principal and Supervisors Association (NJPSA), Foundation for Educational Administration was cited as an exemplar program by the U.S. Department of Education in *Innovative Pathways to School Leadership* (ED, December 2004). The program was created to respond to statewide survey results indicating a shortage of highly-qualified principal applicants in the state, particularly in districts with many low-performing schools; and to address the need for more diversity in the candidate pool.

NJ EXCEL's program design, curriculum, and standards are aligned with the New Jersey Standards for School Leaders and the national ISLLC standards. The program addresses the following four leadership areas: Visionary Leadership, Community Leadership, Instructional Leadership, and Strategic Management. The program emphasizes continual professional growth and has a strong technology component infused throughout the curriculum, as well as offering job-embedded and internship experiences. The program stresses action research, data-driven decision-making**,** and technology-driven research applications.

A formal application-and-selection process ensures that all candidates meet rigorous established criteria. Participants are required to hold, at minimum, a Master's degree before entering the program. Between 10% and 15% of principal candidates receive CEs

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[6] *"School leader" here refers to a head of school, principal and/or supervisor.*

through the EXCEL program each year. In 2008, NJ EXCEL was awarded candidate status for national accreditation by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. For the past three years, the NJDOE has issued just under 1,200 principal CEs a year -- with slightly more than 1,000 per year going to people who trained through the traditional higher-education programs. In 2008-2009, the NJDOE issued 372 standard principal certificates.

Legal Provisions

In May 2002, the New Jersey State Board of Education approved revisions to its regulations to authorize expedited certification pathways, and approved programs leading to school-leader certification from providers other than institutions of higher education (see *N.J.A.C.* 6A:9-12 for regulations governing the certification of administrators, and *N.J.A.C.* 6A:9-13.7 for regulations governing the certification of directors of school-counseling services). The NJ EXCEL program design is aligned with the New Jersey Professional Standards for School Leaders (*N.J.A.C.* 6A:9-3.4), and the national Technology Standards for School Administrators.

(iii) MONITORING, EVALUATING, AND IDENTIFYING AREAS OF TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL SHORTAGES

New Jersey has a close connection with its LEAs and professional associations and thus, it annually monitors certified staff to determine shortage areas, predict the number of vacancies by subject area, analyze the number of alternative-route-certified teachers within shortage areas, and identify areas where there is an excess of qualified teachers. Annually, LEAs report on positions remaining vacant within two months into the school year. In 2009-10, the LEAs reported on the percentage of positions that remained vacant

two months into the school year. Science and mathematics teaching positions in grades 5-8 and high school represented a significant proportion of the vacancies across the state.

The NJDOE uses this data and multiple other sources to determine teacher- and school-leader shortage areas. An example of a monitoring and documentation report that was submitted to the federal government is available in Appendix II(D)(I) for review. These factors contribute to a comprehensive and need-specific review that addresses high-poverty/high-need classrooms. The data that are being collected, and that are informing this work, will become more accessible and actionable over time.

New Jersey also analyzes policy changes that would increase the needs for teachers, such as the NJDOE's expansion of preschools; its additional emphasis on, and offerings in, world languages; and its math, science, and technology initiatives. In 2000, recognizing that as many as one-third of New Jersey's teachers may retire in the next ten years, the NJDOE established a Teacher Recruitment Initiative, to improve both the quantity and the quality of the state's teaching force. The scope of the programs that have been established is broad: The programs include partnerships with institutions of higher education, both in-state and out-of-state, to enhance traditional placement-office programs; collaborations with other key higher-education administration and faculty; an active Troops to Teachers program; and an emphasis on promoting careers in teaching to middle- and high-school students. Over 200 teachers have been certified through programs falling within these categories. Several of these programs are described in greater detail later, in Section (D)(3).

In teacher-shortage areas, especially, New Jersey continues to work to improve the quality of the pathways through which teachers can become certified. Alternative-route programs are a key pipeline for high-need LEAs, and alternative-route options have been expanded since 2004, with the introduction of targeted alternative-route programs in high-needs subject areas such as Special Education, English as a Second Language, Bilingual Education, World Languages, and most recently, in 2008, career and technical education. In addition, alternative-route pilot programs to increase the number of science

and mathematics teachers are currently being implemented under N.J.A.C. 6A:9-18. (See Appendix II(D)(3) for more information about new pilot programs in math and science.)

REQUIRED EVIDENCE

Evidence for (D)(1)(ii), regarding alternative routes to certification for both teachers and principals, is summarized above in this section, and is described in greater detail in Appendix I (D)(1).

REFORM PLAN CRITERIA

(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

IMPROVING TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EFFECTIVENESS BASED ON PERFORMANCE

- New Jersey will collaborate with LEA leaders, institutions of higher education, research organizations, teachers, school leaders, and national experts to develop, test, and implement an evaluation system for teachers and principals that is based 50% on multiple measures of student progress and 50% on measures of effective practice.
- New Jersey will rigorously develop, thoroughly field test and pilot, and continually improve measures of student academic progress and effective practice.
- New Jersey is taking controversial and bold steps to change the status quo and make evaluations a consideration for tenure decisions, bonuses for individual teachers, and the criteria for Reductions in Force.
- New Jersey will ensure that, by 2015, that all students are taught by effective teachers.

EVALUATION-SYSTEM OVERVIEW

New Jersey believes, and the research demonstrates, that great teachers and leaders are the lifeblood of our educational system. Every child has the right to be taught by an effective teacher, and our highest-need children have a special claim on quality instruction. Our present state policy framework expresses this belief: We have strong professional standards for our teachers and leaders, and our state regulations require that teacher evaluations must be based on "student progress" data. However, in practice, we have failed to live up to our ambitions. Evaluation models have been locally-developed and scattershot; no agreed-upon definition of "student progress" has existed. As a result, key decisions about professionals often ignore teacher evaluations and the question of whether a teacher's students are learning. We will make profound changes in the way teachers are evaluated in New Jersey – as well as in the way teacher evaluations are used -- and we have a clear, effective strategy for doing so.

Our Governor, our Commissioner, our State Board, our legislative leadership all believe that, in order to improve the teaching profession, we must begin by drastically improving teacher evaluations. With fair and transparent evaluations in place, principals,

superintendents, and policy makers will be in a position to make well-informed decisions that are grounded in evidence. In doing so, we will dramatically improve the quality of our teacher and leadership corps – and the educational achievement of our students.

Our reform strategy in this area will follow a three-step process: First, we will measure student academic progress. Second, we will create the nation's finest teacher-evaluation system: a system that is based directly on measures of student academic progress, and on measures of practices that correlate with student academic progress. Third, we will use these evaluations to drive the most important personnel decisions. We believe deeply that this will continually improve the effectiveness of New Jersey's teachers and make it possible for all of our children to be taught by high-quality educators.

This work takes place in three important contexts. To drive the work and maintain the broad-based educator buy-in we have achieved, we will have stakeholders working across all three contexts:

- **Regulatory and Legislative:** After we explore and determine acceptable evaluation system models, we will need regulatory changes to scale them statewide; some changes, moreover, may require legislation to implement the evaluation system statewide. Fortunately, New Jersey received unanimous bipartisan legislative support for its reform plan on May 20, 2010, with a vote of 78-to-0 in the Assembly and 39-to-0 in the New Jersey Senate.

- **Stakeholder Groups:** If we want the evaluation system to be robust, trusted, and sustainable, we must bring together and make full use of our stakeholders, including professional organizations, principals, superintendents, and teachers. We will ask each of these groups to participate in our state Educational Effectiveness Evaluation Committee (EEEC) to define and design an evaluation and incentive system to be used across the state.

- **Local District Conditions:** New Jersey's 656 school districts exemplify significant diversity. Some elements of a high-quality evaluation system will apply to all participating LEAs, regardless of their individual demography or geography. For example, various metrics for student learning growth will be

statewide and non-negotiable. However, we understand that allowing a degree of district autonomy makes sense. Thus, local school districts will be permitted to propose to the state various additional components of the evaluation model, such as measures of effective practice and the evaluation methodology suitable for non-state tested subjects and grades. The need for state approval will allow for some district autonomy without compromising the statewide comparability of effectiveness measures.

In 2011-12, the evaluation system will be piloted in a sample set of participating LEAs representing the diversity of our state. By the 2012-13 school year, RTTT participating LEAs will adopt the evaluation framework and will serve as leaders for the state-wide implementation of the redesigned evaluation system.

New Jersey is committed to taking significant action to recruit, develop, support, and retain effective teachers in every one of our classrooms. By 2015, we want all of our children, especially our highest-need children, taught by either effective or highly-effective teachers.

(i) ESTABLISHING CLEAR MEASURES FOR STUDENT GROWTH

Since 1978, New Jersey has required measures of pupil progress to be a part of every teacher and school leader's evaluation[1]. However, in the absence of a statewide measure of pupil progress, existing indicators have ranged widely across the state. Past approaches vary from simple measures of student attendance, to measures that examine student grades, to local assessments. In practice, these indicators fail to distinguish great teachers from good teachers, good from fair, and fair from poor.

With the implementation of the New Jersey growth model in the 2009-10 school year, we now have accurate, fair, and consistent measures for the impact a teacher has on individual student learning. New Jersey is committed to two measures of academic

[1] *NJAC 6A:32-4.4*

growth in our evaluation system: absolute growth, and relative growth. An absolute measure requiring at least one year of academic growth for one year of instruction mirrors our teachers' and school leaders' commitment to maintaining or improving the academic progress of all students. A relative-growth measure will allow us to see when a student's academic progress is "beating the odds." We are keenly interested in beating the odds with respect to the performance of our lowest-achieving students. In New Jersey, we have a significant population that is persistently low-performing. A significant number of these students are in poverty or represent minority populations. New Jersey's education stakeholders are committed to the principle that poverty is not destiny. Closely measuring the absolute and relative progress of our students will give us the information we need to hold ourselves accountable for improving the quality of public education for all of the students who attend our schools. This is absolutely essential to ensuring that our system beats the odds by raising the absolute and the relative achievement of even our lowest-performing students in comparison with their peers.

NJDOE will include the following set of student-growth metrics as student progress indicators in each participating LEA's evaluation system by 2012-13.

Growth Measures

New Jersey's Absolute-Student-Progress Measure

Part of the evaluation measure will include evidence of absolute student progress. Progress will be measured, first, on summative assessments and, second, on both summative and "within school year" or "through-course" assessments (see B(3)). For the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years, New Jersey will calculate absolute year-to-year student progress from the annual summative assessment, NJ ASK, in literacy and mathematics. Building on the work of the assessment consortium outlined in B(3), New Jersey will develop a set of within-year, through-course assessment measures. These measures will be administered every quarter, throughout the year, in literacy and mathematics. "Growth" on these within-year, through-course measures will be defined

as "progress." Multiple measures of pupil progress, including but not limited to state standardized tests, must be part of any assessment system.

New Jersey's Relative-Student-Growth Measure

New Jersey has the necessary data to measure year-to-year individual student growth from grades 3-8, and will deliver student-level growth reports in Fall 2010. One particular advantage of this growth model is that it provides results that are easy for educators to interpret, and that can be aggregated meaningfully by student subgroups, schools, and LEAs. This growth-model data will also be tied directly to individual teachers.

The growth model compares data on multiple cohorts of students, and compares each student's performance with that of the other students throughout the state who are in the same grade and who had a similar sequence of test scores in previous years.[2] Through an approach developed by Damian Betebenner at the Center for Assessment, a statistical-analysis procedure known as "quantile regression" is used to calculate percentile-growth scores[3] for each student. For example, a student whose performance grew more than the performance of 60% of his/her academic peers would have a growth percentile of 60. With this model, New Jersey has the capacity to understand how each teacher is performing compared to his/her peers, in a manner that makes adjustments for the previous performance of that particular teacher's students. The growth model will also be based on multiple measures, including but not limited to state standardized tests.

New Jersey's Plan to Address Growth-Measurement Challenges

Measures Regarding Non-Tested Grades and Subjects

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[2] *Braun, Henry, Naomi Chudowsky, and Judith Koenig, Editors; Committee on Value-Added Methodology for Instructional Improvement, Program Evaluation, and Accountability; National Research Council*

[3] *Betebenner, Damian (2008). Norm- and Criterion-Referenced Student Growth. National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment.*

For non-tested grades and subjects (such as art and technology), the NJDOE will build upon the work that is described in Section B (3) to provide grants to a consortium of LEAs that are partnering with assessment experts to design objective, validated, and comparable measures of student learning in currently non-tested grades and subjects. The Educational Effectiveness Evaluation Committee will be closely engaged with the design and implementation of these assessments. We believe that the assessment of performance on currently non-tested subjects is among the most important parts of this initiative: it will help broaden our current, too-narrow focus beyond reading and math, and it will enable schools, districts, and the state to integrate a far larger number of teachers into the new system of evaluation, which will better inform professional-development and compensation decisions.

This wider set of instructional and assessment tools will allow for a richer set of metrics to be incorporated into the evaluation system for school leaders and teachers. These assessments will align with the core principles of our assessment consortium, because we will mirror the design of through-course assessments to include sophisticated measures of higher-order thinking skills and the application of knowledge in real-world situations (see B(3)). The assessment-development competition will be announced in November 2010; grants will be awarded in January 2011; assessments will be piloted in 2011-12, and this assessment system will be fully operational by 2012-13.

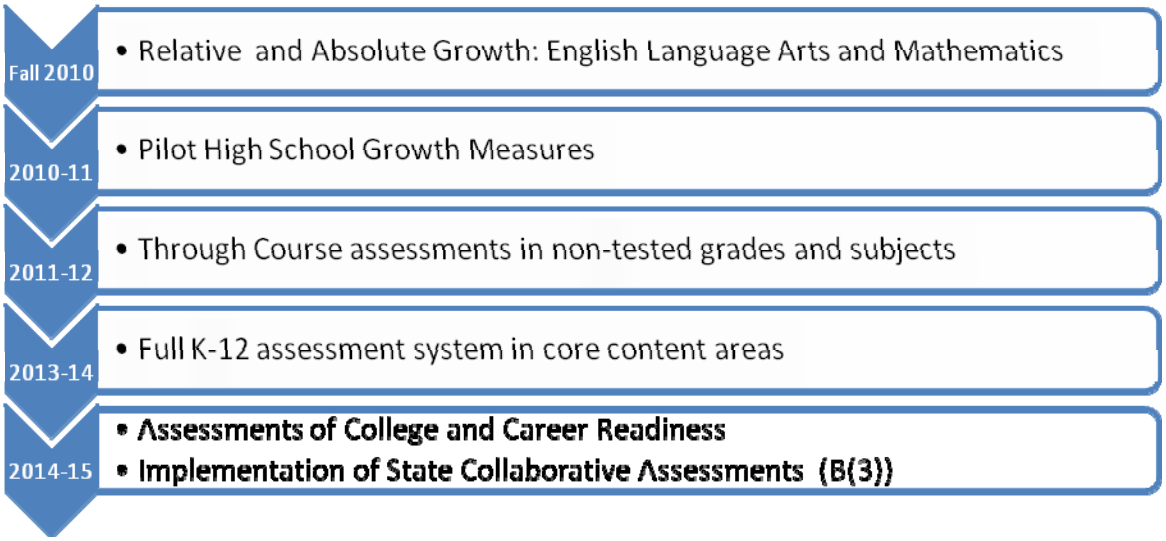
High-School-Growth Measures

New Jersey, along with many other states, currently lacks a measure for student growth at the high-school level. Through the assessment consortium, we will work with other states to learn from past and current approaches and to develop measures of student growth for the diversity of courses offered in high schools. Until such assessments can be developed, New Jersey has identified several possible and will pilot these solutions in the 2010-11and 2011-12 school years with at least 15 LEAs, confer with its assessment Technical Advisory Committee, and select the best available option by 2012-13.

Measuring Progress towards College- and Career- Readiness

NJDOE and New Jersey's institutions of higher education are committed to measuring our effectiveness in graduating students who are ready for college and work. New Jersey has already begun to engage institutions of higher education in aligning high-school-exit criteria with college-entry requirements.[4] New Jersey will establish a framework for the measurement of college and career readiness by the 2014-15 school year, and will present these plans to the EEEC, for their review and consideration for inclusion in the evaluation of teachers and school leaders, as part of the 3-5 year cycle for review of the evaluation system.

Development Timeline for Multiple Measures of Pupil Progress



(ii) A CONSISTENT, TRANSPARENT EVALUATION SYSTEM FOR SCHOOL LEADERS AND TEACHERS

New Jersey will develop a state-level teacher- and school-leader evaluation framework with multiple measures that support standards for professional practice, high-quality assessment practice, and systems of support.

[4] *New Jersey will define college-readiness as being able to enter a community college with a college schedule and without the need for remedial courses.*

Supporting Legislation and Regulations

Our Governor, legislators, State Board, and education stakeholders are committed to transforming the evaluation system in New Jersey. We recognize that legislative and regulatory changes will be required to bring our evaluation system that is designed, tested, and evaluated under Race to the Top to all LEAs in the state. Therefore, we have obtained strong commitments from the State Board and from legislators that they will support these changes and the evaluation-design process (see Appendix II). Policymakers in New Jersey are committed to the principle that student learning will represent at least 50% of the evaluation. The remaining 50% will be based on core effective practices that are correlated with increases in student learning.

The existing statute and regulations will not act as barriers to participating LEAs as they work with the state on the design and implementation of the evaluation system. New Jersey has already established basic requirements for the evaluation of school leaders and teachers (referred to in the regulation as "teaching staff members") in N.J.A.C. 6A:32-4.4 and -4.5. The regulations lay out the timing of three observations per year for non-tenured teachers, and at least one for tenured teachers, and they require annual summative evaluations of both tenured and non-tenured teachers and school leaders.

New Jersey's existing regulations for both tenured and non-tenured school leaders and teachers include the academic progress of students as a component of the evaluation system. New Jersey aims to further define these student-learning measures to align them with the growth measures outlined above, and with recommendations from our stakeholder advisory committee.

For tenured school leaders and teachers, the regulations require that the evaluation be accompanied by an annual summary conference between a supervisor and a tenured teaching staff member and must include: (1) a review of the performance of the educator, based upon the job description, which reflects instructional priorities; (2) a review of the educator's progress towards the objectives of his or her individual professional-

development plan, as determined at the previous annual conference; and (3) a review of available indicators of student progress and growth towards program objectives[5].

For non-tenured school leaders and teachers, the current regulations call for at least three observations, and must include an annual written evaluation of the staff member's total performance including: (1) performance areas of strength; (2) performance areas needing improvement; (3) an individual professional-development plan developed by the supervisor and the staff member; (4) a summary of indicators of student progress and growth; and (5) a statement of how these indicators relate to the effectiveness of the overall program and to the performance of the individual teacher or school leader[6].

Collaborative Evaluation-System Design

New Jersey has established a foundation for measuring the effectiveness of teachers and school leaders. The use of student progress indicators, regular classroom observations, and individualized professional-development plans demonstrates our educational system's intent to use student and teacher data to improve teaching and learning. However, we can and will improve our evaluation system in important ways. In particular, New Jersey will increase the scope and precision of our pupil progress indicators so that such indicators count for 50% of teacher and school-leader evaluations in participating LEAs.

COLLABORATIVE DESIGN

New Jersey educators are committed to change.

- Support from Legislators and Governor
- Support from Institutions of Higher Education
- Nearly 60% of LEAs willing to make this work

The transformation of New Jersey's teacher and school-leader evaluations will require the application of the broadest possible range of expertise. Rather than wait for the Race to the Top award announcement, by July 2010, NJDOE will work with the Governor's Office to establish the Educational Effectiveness

[5] *School leaders and teachers, NJAC 6A:32-4.4.*

[6] *School leaders and teachers, NJAC 6A:32-4.5.*

Evaluation Committee (EEEC) by executive order. In order to select the EEEC's members, the Commissioner of Education will call for public nominations of education scholars; practicing teachers; practicing school leaders; and representatives of education-stakeholder organizations including teacher and school leader associations, state legislators, curriculum specialist, charter schools, urban superintendents, other stakeholder groups outside of the education establishment, and parent groups. From these nominations, the Commissioner will appoint members to the committee. At least one representative will be appointed from each of the following five organizations: New Jersey School Boards Association, the Garden State Coalition of Schools, the New Jersey Association of School Administrators, the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, the New Jersey Education Association, and the American Federation of Teachers. New Jersey will also engage a partner organization, such as the New Teacher Center or the New Teacher Project, to build on their lessons learned from designing and implementing new evaluation systems.

The purpose of the EEEC is to help New Jersey devise the best possible evaluation system that meets these goals while also addressing the concerns and interests of educators. Working under the aegis of, and with staff support from, the New Jersey Commissioner of Education, the EEEC will solicit ideas and feedback from interested individuals and organizations about how the effectiveness of teachers and school leaders might best be evaluated. The EEEC will be tasked with returning recommendations by January 2011 regarding: (1) the weighting of the multiple measures of student learning that will represent at least 50% of the teacher/school leader evaluation; (2) other effective practices that should comprise the remaining basis for evaluations; and (3) how the measures of effective practices should be weighted. The EEEC will present a draft for comment by August 2010, convene a series of public hearings to solicit expert advice, and deliver final recommendations to the Commissioner of Education by January 2011. Within 15 days, the Commissioner will present formal DOE recommendations, fully informed by the EEEC's recommendations, to the State Board of Education for adoption as code.

Pursuant to those regulations, the Commissioner, with guidance from the EEEC, will then select no less than five urban and five suburban LEAs that represent at least 20% of the student population to pilot the evaluation system in the 2011-12 school year in at least English language arts and mathematics. We are choosing to pilot this new system, rather than immediately launching it statewide, because we seek to identify and address early challenges during this 1-year refinement period. New Jersey is fully committed to bringing the evaluation system to scale as swiftly as possible. This pilot will inform the training for teachers and school leaders, improve the peer-review process for local measures of effectiveness, and allow New Jersey to test implementation mechanics.

New Jersey will apply the designed evaluation system to all teachers and school leaders in the state no later than the 2012-13 school year.

EVALUATION-SYSTEM MEASURES

Research has consistently shown that the single most important factor in a student's educational attainment is the quality of his or her teachers and school leaders.[7] New Jersey's re-designed evaluation system will include a balanced measurement of student learning and qualitative measures of effective practices. At least 50% of the evaluation of teachers and school leaders will be based on multiple measures of student learning, and the remaining 50% will be based on measures of effective practices. Participating LEAs will implement this evaluation system no later than the 2012-13 school year.

NEW JERSEY EVALUATION SYSTEM

- 50% based on student learning
- 50% based on local measures of effective practice correlated with high student achievement

Evaluation results will be used to assign each teacher and school leader to one of four categories (ineffective, approaching effective, effective, or highly effective) based on a range of performance criteria. A highly-effective rating will be awarded to the teachers

[7] *Waters, Tim, Robert Marzano, and Brian McNulty (2003). Balanced Leadership: What 30 Years of Research Tells Us About the Effect of Leadership of Student Achievement. Aurora, Colo. Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning. Rivkin, Steven, Eric Hanushek, and John Kain (2005). Teachers, schools, and academic achievement. Econometrica, 73(2):417-458.*

with the highest qualitative ratings regarding their classroom practice and the demonstration of exceptional academic growth among their students. A highly effective rating will be awarded to school leaders supporting exceptional academic student progress, demonstrating successful leadership practices, and creating a high-quality professional-learning environment in which all school personnel can improve their craft.

Multiple Measures of Student Learning

For the 50% of the evaluation that is based on multiple measures of student progress including but not limited to state standardized tests, teachers, school leaders, and districts will be able to recommend assessments to the state that they believe accurately measure student learning. New Jersey's plan includes multi-dimensional information on student progress based on measuring the absolute learning gains of all students within one instructional year, and on measuring the relative growth of our state's students. The use of student-growth measures -- as opposed to one-year proficiency rates -- is an important decision that allows schools to be recognized for raising the achievement both of already high-performing students and of significantly under-performing students over the course of a school year. The use of within-year assessments that assess higher-order thinking skills also ensures that multiple-choice exams do not serve as the sole measure of a student's success. The EEEC will recommend to the Commissioner the appropriate statewide proportional weighting of these multiple measures of student learning for school-leader and teacher evaluations.

Measures of Effective Practice

The remaining 50% of the evaluation will include state and comparable local measures of core effective practices. Participating LEAs will either (1) select EEEC-recommended observation protocols, performance rubrics, 360-degree feedback, and/or collections of teacher artifacts (lesson plans, portfolios) that measure core effective practices that are highly correlated to student learning; or (2) design or adapt their own measures of

effective practices. To maintain the integrity of the evaluation systems, the EEEC will recommend to the Commissioner a set of criteria by which locally-designed effective-practice measures will be reviewed by a group of peers and experts including teachers, principals, superintendents, and researchers to ensure system-wide comparability. Peer-review panels will be organized by the Professional Teaching Standard Board and Professional Development Advisory Board, with logistics handled by the DOE's county offices. These boards will recommend locally-designed effective-practice measures to the Commissioner of Education, and the Commissioner will make a recommendation to the State Board of Education about which such locally-designed effective-practice measures should receive State Board approval.

Teacher Effective-Practice Measures

Evidence-Based Measures of Classroom Instruction

High-quality classroom instruction is the key component of both effective teaching and successful schools. The EEEC will develop a list of criteria for a participating LEA's selection or development of qualitative, rubric-based evaluation tools that are discipline-specific, that are aligned to New Jersey Professional Standards, that require the collection of evidence and/or observations of classroom practice, that encourage the use of multiple observers, and that offer multiple ratings (e.g., not merely pass/fail). NJDOE will support and facilitate the use of these measures through its instructional-improvement system (see C(3)). In creating these criteria, the EEEC will review national efforts to research and design observation tools that correlate with effective teaching. To support this effort, New Jersey is closely monitoring the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Measures of Effective Teaching research effort, and will incorporate the measures that are deemed valid by this unprecedented body of research into its recommendations.

Continuing to Build Teacher Effectiveness

Effectiveness data will be the guidepost for developing teachers' professional development plans. The EEEC will thoroughly review measures of the fidelity by which teachers engage in the high-quality professional development that is required as part of individualized professional-development plans, and the extent to which teachers adapt

classroom practice in response to feedback from both formal and informal observation. Specific evidence may include the professional-development modules in which the teacher participated, coupled with demonstrated evidence of learning. The Commissioner, in turn, will make recommendations this regard to the State Board of Education for adoption as regulatory code.

Professional Responsibility

Teaching is a collaborative profession. The most successful teachers work closely with administrators, colleagues, parents, students, and the community to ensure that their students have the tools they need to be successful. A recent study suggests that teachers believe that collaboration among colleagues is critical to improving student achievement, and that teachers learn from other teachers who are effective.[8] The EEEC will be directed to explore qualitative measures of collaboration with respect to the professional responsibilities of teachers within the New Jersey evaluation system and make recommendations to the Commissioner of Education, who will present a formal DOE recommendation to the State Board of Education.

School Leader Effective Practice Measures

Instructional Leadership

Our plan aims to ensure that school leaders give better formative and formal feedback to teachers, regarding both teaching and learning. The provision of such feedback is crucial for the improvement of instructional practice. Specific evidence of the quality of these interactions – including both evidence of the fidelity of implementation of the observation protocols, and evidence of the quality of the feedback provided – will be a component of a school leader's evaluation. New Jersey will support extensive professional development for school leaders in participating LEAs regarding the use of classroom observations and other methods of obtaining evidence of effective classroom practice and linking feedback to the evidence collected.

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[8] MetLife (2010). The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher, Collaborating for Student Success, Part 1: Effective Teaching and Leadership. New York: Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

Developing Professional-Learning Environments

The EEEC will work closely in conjunction with NJDOE on the selection or design of surveys of the professional-learning environment or of working conditions within a school. New Jersey has two existing, successful, and already-implemented models, which will be carefully evaluated, along with instruments that have been successfully implemented statewide in other states, including North Carolina's Working Conditions Survey (see D(3)). Improved professional environments are critical to our goal of both recruiting and retaining highly-effective teachers. Setting the conditions by which teachers can work both efficiently and effectively to improve student outcomes is a core responsibility of a school leader.

School Leadership and Management

For school leaders, the state-level evaluation system will take into account the management and operational aspects of school leadership, with an evaluation protocol based on the New Jersey Professional Standards for School Leaders. School leaders will be evaluated by LEA leadership on the effective implementation of a systemic approach to organizational management.

Professional Development on Evaluation Frameworks

Unless all educators have a clear understanding of the selected multiple measures of student learning and effective instructional methods, the evaluator's capacity to distinguish between effective and ineffective educators will be limited. Thus, to implement the School Leader and Teacher Evaluation Frameworks, NJDOE will design and deploy training through county offices, based upon the evaluation data collected from the LEAs. NJDOE, working with the EEEC, will design training programs in the early Spring 2011, pilot training through county offices in the evaluation pilot LEAs in the 2011-12 school year, and fully implement the training through all county offices in 2012-13. Participating LEAs will be expected to commit principal and coach time to training on the implementation of the revised state-level evaluation system, as well as on

classroom observation protocols. NJDOE will also partner with educator-preparing institutions of higher education and alternative-certification programs to educate incoming principals and teachers about the multiple measures that are involved with the state-level evaluation system, and about the resources that are being created to support teaching and learning in the classroom.

NJDOE will deliver in-person training sessions in conjunction with each of the county offices, starting in April 2011. NJDOE will also work closely with professional associations to develop virtual interactive training, which will be delivered through the IIS system and available for use in LEAs or by teachers or school leaders throughout the year.

Continuously Improving the Evaluation Frameworks

Because this system will represent a new approach to measuring effectiveness in New Jersey, our intention is to move deliberately, over the next year, to ensure that the design is well-informed. To ensure that this work is of the highest caliber, the NJDOE has engaged a qualified research partner to evaluate the fairness, reliability, and validity of our measures of effective teaching, and is creating a new in-house Office of Education Research (see organization chart in Appendix II) that, post-evaluation system implementation, will examine the correlation between the evaluation of teachers in regard to an adopted effective practice measure and student learning progress. This will give us two independent analyses of how well our evaluation system is working. The EEEC and NJDOE, working closely with our research partner and in-house research office, will review the validity of our growth measures, assess the impact of our bonus systems on student achievement, capitalize on proven tools used in other states, disseminate information about promising practices, and make recommendations to the Commissioner of Education about code changes that may be warranted. The Commissioner, in turn, will make appropriate recommendations to the State Board of Education.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- Learning from research and experience
- Data-informed continuous improvement

NJDOE will design a 360-degree survey of the evaluation system, in order to collect information from the pilot LEAs in the 2011-12 school year regarding how the evaluation system is changing classroom practice and student performance. Then, starting with the 2012-13 school year, NJDOE will collect information annually from a random sample of LEAs. Finally, the EEEC will reconvene on a monthly basis in the first year; every 4-6 months in the second year; and on an annual basis at a minimum in the years that follow to review effectiveness data and to assess the implementation of the evaluation system. We are committed to both having the nation's highest-quality evaluation system and ensuring that the system is used to drive continuous improvements in the teaching profession.

We acknowledge that measuring teacher-effectiveness is a challenging endeavor, especially for specialty-area educators such as special-education teachers and English-language-learners (ELL) specialists. New Jersey stands ready to meet these challenges. Our system of validated direct measures of student progress, coupled with customized local measures of effective practice, will allows for innovation around complex problems without compromising validity. Our research partner and in-house research office will ensure that approved practice measures correlate with student progress, and will be actively involved as New Jersey encounters implementation challenges. Through these concerted efforts, New Jersey will build on the significant body of empirical evidence that identifies instructional practices that are linked to improved academic achievement for diverse learners.

After the evaluation system has been in place statewide for three years, the EEEC will make recommendations to reaffirm or amend, as necessary, the evaluation system using the same public process that was employed for the initial design of the system. Careful attention will be given to data from the evaluation system and current research on measuring teacher and school-leader effectiveness. As New Jersey adopts new assessments in reading and mathematics in 2014-15, developed in collaboration with the state assessment consortium (see (B(3)), the EEEC will convene to ensure a seamless transition and address any impact on the evaluation system metrics.

(iii) ANNUAL EVALUATIONS

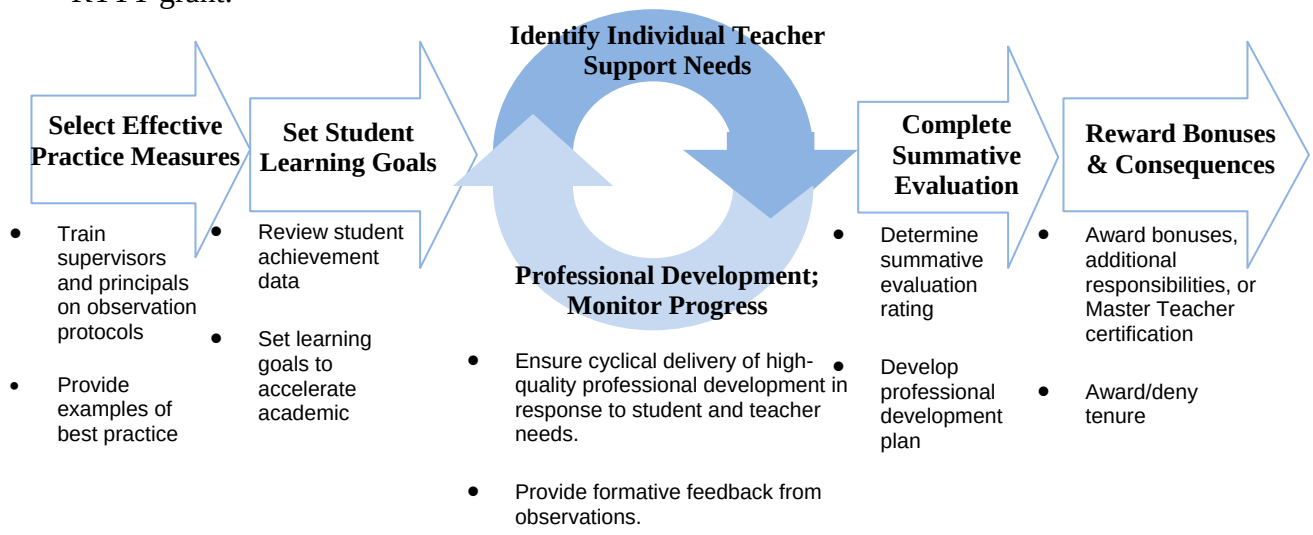
New Jersey's statute and regulations require every tenured and non-tenured teacher and school leader to be evaluated every year. The evaluation of all school personnel, except the Superintendent, is controlled by regulation, and those provisions include the incorporation of student-performance data as a factor in personnel assessment (N.J.A.C. 6A:32-4.4, -4.5). The New Jersey Administrative Code requires an annual summative evaluation, based on a specific schedule for formal classroom observations over the instructional year. Provisionally-certified and untenured teachers are observed at least three times per year, while tenured teachers have at least one observation per year. In addition to these formal observations, participating LEA will use formative observation so that teachers can adapt their practices, receive additional professional support, and improve their practices throughout the school year. School leaders and supervisors will provide timely and constructive feedback to teachers, along with recommendations for strategies to improve instructional practice that will be integrated into each teacher's professional-development plan. Administrative coaches and LEA leadership teams will provide school leaders with the same tool-set to improve leadership and instructional practices within their schools. These formative measures will be accessible to teachers and school leaders through the Instructional Improvement System (IIS), along with data on student growth, and formative and interim assessments by classroom and school, by the 2011-12 school year.

The NJDOE will be responsible for monitoring the evaluation process from the state level and, working through its county offices, will ensure that participating LEAs implement the evaluations with fidelity. The NJDOE will be reviewing the LEAs' work with school leaders, both to see how it is conducting school leader evaluations and to study how teacher evaluations are being conducted. Further, the Division of Professional Excellence will be responsible for designing and implementing public reports of effectiveness data for every Participating LEA with input from the EEEC. The fidelity of

an LEA's implementation of the new evaluation process will be a significant element in the state protocols developed for the evaluation of district superintendents.

(iv) MAKING INFORMED DECISIONS WITH EVALUATION DATA

Implementing an evaluation system is the crucial first step to improving teaching and learning in our schools. But it is only the first step. Evaluations must be meaningful, and we must act on the evidence and data to help teachers improve their craft and to inform personnel decisions. Participating LEAs will use effectiveness data to inform and trigger a range of human-capital decisions. New Jersey is taking controversial and bold steps to change the status quo and make evaluations a consideration for tenure decisions, bonuses for individual teachers, and the criteria for Reductions in Force. As noted in our Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU), participating LEAs will negotiate the agreements that are necessary for the full implementation of the New Jersey Teachers and Leaders plan. LEAs that signed the MOU understand that the failure to use evaluation data to inform professional development, compensation, acquisition of tenure, and to determine whether to initiate action to remove a tenured employee for inefficiency pursuant to N.J.S.A 18A:6-11 will result in the termination of the participating LEA's RTTT grant.



These significant reforms will be coupled with evidence-based and data-informed professional development to support all teachers and leaders in the continuous improvement of their teaching and leadership.

(a) Professional Development

For teachers, the Professional Development Plan (PDP) must be developed in collaboration with the supervisor, and the goals of the PDP must be aligned with the learning needs of the teacher in relation to his/her students' needs, the professional-development standards, the teaching standards, and the LEA's and school's goals.

LINKING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO EVALUATIONS

- Proven peer-to-peer support for teachers and school leaders
- PDP plans designed to meet specific needs based on evaluation data
- Intensive support for teachers and leaders not yet rates as effective

Our evaluations of teacher and school-leader effectiveness will drive professional development for teachers and school leaders in ways that will strongly encourage them to improve their practice. New Jersey will provide a continuous system of support for teachers and school leaders throughout their careers, starting from teacher preparation, and continuing through all levels of certification. In New Jersey, under current regulations, the state professional-development requirement for teachers and school leaders is tied to the evaluation process. Each tenured and non-tenured teacher and school leader is required to develop a professional-development plan that supports professional growth, addresses areas that are in need of improvement, and is focused on improving student learning.

New Jersey is a national leader in the delivery of high-quality, data-based professional development. We have already learned the lesson that the old paradigms of one-shot workshops and in-service training will not achieve the teaching and learning improvements that New Jersey seeks. Rather, New Jersey will build on its successful

system of LEA- and school-based professional learning communities (PLCs). Our policymakers, school leaders and teachers have embraced these more productive professional-learning strategies and practices, which have a track record of success in improving instruction and student results. NJDOE will support the thoughtful planning, support, monitoring, and evaluation of school-based collaborative-learning opportunities based on evaluation information. Both LEA and school professional-development plans will focus on:

- the use of student achievement and school-based data to inform professional development and identify student needs;
- a needs assessment that supports the connection of student-learning goals and professional-learning goals;
- the development of collaborative and individual professional-learning processes and structures for adult learning that are focused on curriculum, instruction, assessment and the social-emotional learning of students;
- planning to set aside the resources and time to support the learning needs of the adults; and
- a comprehensive evaluation of the professional-development plans that assesses each plan's impact on student learning (as reflected in a change in leadership practices at all levels, a change in teacher and administrator conversations, a change in teacher practices as a result of learning, a change in student behaviors in the classroom and school, and a change in student achievement).

Teachers and school leaders who have not yet achieved an evaluation rating of "effective" or better will be assigned a highly-effective teacher or school leader to serve as a mentor by the LEA. These mentors will provide onsite formative feedback to teachers and school leaders, and will directly support improvements to pedagogical and content knowledge and school leadership. For example, the mentor will design high-quality lessons plans that include the pedagogical routines proven to increase student achievement, for delivery by their mentees, in order to ensure the mentees' delivery of high-quality instruction in the classroom. Highly-effective principals will work with their mentees to select evidence of classroom practice that will be used to provide formative

feedback to teachers. Peer-to-peer coaching is demonstrated to have the greatest impact among professional development methods. Thus, the design of the mentor-support system accomplishes two goals: (1) It immediately improves the quality of instruction or instructional leadership in the schools; and (2) It supports the educator in the development of his or her skills.

Participating LEAs will comprehensively review teachers' and school leaders' evaluation results, to target and customize professional services to areas of need. With this information, LEAs can streamline programs to offer face-to-face and online training through IIS that meets teacher and school-leader needs. Additionally, the county offices will be able to leverage economies of scale by encouraging LEAs with similar needs to collaborate in deploying professional services. NJDOE will provide the LEAs with access to, and training on, the professional-development plan-management software that will be delivered as part of the IIS.

(b) Compensation

Differentiated Professional Opportunities

Differentiated professional opportunities will be awarded to effective and highly-effective teachers, in order to provide such teachers with opportunities to build their professional skill-set and acquire additional compensation while still remaining instructional leaders in the classroom. Research clearly shows that teachers do not have adequate opportunities for advancement unless they leave the classroom.[9] When teachers undertake additional responsibilities, commensurate compensation that has been negotiated by the participating LEA will be provided from state-level RTTT grant funds and re-directed RTTT LEA funds. The existing Professional Teaching Standards Board

[9] *Marvel, John, Deanna Lyter, Pia Peltola, Gregory Strizek, and Beth Morton (2006). Teacher Attrition and Mobility: Results from the 2004-05 Teacher Follow-up Survey. (NCES 2007-307). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics*

will design guidelines for participating LEAs to use in offering differentiated professional opportunities, based on the evaluation data, for such additional responsibilities as:

- Becoming an instructional coach to teachers or school leaders who are not yet rated as effective or higher;
- Leading a professional-learning community;
- Mentoring a new teacher;
- Training a student teacher;
- Scoring constructed-response items on locally-developed assessments;
- Conducting reviews of LEA or school curricula.

NJDOE will also support our Professional Teaching Standards Board's close collaboration with national efforts to design standards for teacher leaders.

NEW JERSEY BONUS SYSTEM

- **Widespread experimentation**: Departures from the conventional pay system are the exception. They should be the norm.
- **Intense focus on results**: Performance pay will have a common goal – increase student learning.
- **Rigorous Evaluation:** Assess the impact on recruitment, retention, practices, and effectiveness.
- **Merit Pay:** Will be used in all participating schools and LEAS

Bryan Hassel (2002). *Better Pay for Better Teaching*. Progressive Policy Institute.

Master Teacher Endorsement

In collaboration with participating LEAs and the EEEC, NJDOE will work with the State Board to propose amendments to regulations that would allow for the establishment of a career ladder with "Master Teacher" and "Master Principal" endorsements. Creating this ladder will both recognize and empower our state's highly-effective teachers and school leaders who have demonstrated their mastery of academic content and their ability to deliver high-quality instruction. We intend to set a high bar for Master Teacher or Master Principals endorsement and anticipate that only a select few teachers and school leaders will receive a Master Teacher or School Leader endorsement.

Only teachers or school leaders who receive an evaluation of "highly effective" for at least three consecutive years will be eligible for Master Teacher or Master School Leader certification. Further, eligible candidates will submit evidence to demonstrate and/or foster pedagogical content knowledge, a history of fulfillment of professional responsibility requirements, demonstrated improvement of student outcomes and a

demonstrated capacity to deliver or foster exceptional classroom instruction as evidenced by videos, lesson portfolios, or observation. The Professional Teaching Standards Board will recommend the explicit criteria for the Master Teacher endorsement and the Professional Development Advisory Board will recommend the explicit criteria for Master Principal endorsement. NJDOE will work to promulgate regulations incorporating these criteria. The Board of Examiners will then apply the criteria to applicants for the Master Teacher or Principal. The first set of Master Teacher endorsements will be awarded three years after the implementation of the evaluation system.

Merit Pay Systems

New Jersey will design, evaluate, and implement merit pay programs that pay individual teachers based on student achievement. Every Participating LEA will implement these programs. All participating LEAs will use merit pay systems to create clear financial incentives for individual teachers and leaders to focus on our most challenging educational issues – closing significant achievement gaps between students in poverty and their peers, and making dramatic improvements across all students in a given school. It is our intention that this will expand to statewide practice.

Closing the Gap Bonus

The Closing the Gap bonus will reward individual teachers or teacher teams for exceptional student growth among our lowest-achieving students. NJDOE will use state-RTTT funds to provide merit pay to individual teachers and teacher teams on the basis of each low-achieving student (defined as at or below the fortieth percentile in achievement) demonstrating exceptional academic growth. New Jersey recognizes that awarding bonuses on the basis of each student that demonstrates exceptional growth will necessitate imposing a high bar for defining "exceptional growth," in order to ensure that the level of growth required is significantly greater than that which may be attributed to measurement or random error. However, we are steadfast in our commitment that teachers and school leaders will meet these goals.

For each state-RTTT-funded award, at least half of the bonus must be allocated to the individual teacher or teacher team directly responsible for the student outcomes. The remaining award will be allocated to individual teachers, teacher teams or to the individual school in the discretion of the local school district, with the approval of the Commissioner of Education.

By January 2011, the EEEC, in collaboration with our Technical Advisory Committee (see B(3)), will recommend to the State Board the amount of "exceptional student growth" that is necessary to receive a bonus and NJDOE will publish the amount of the bonus.

All Students Advancing Bonus

A second compensation program will recognize schools achieving a breadth of improved academic achievement through exceptional school-wide student growth. We believe that the exceptional school-wide growth is the result of a successful collaboration across personnel of all subjects and responsibilities.[10] Therefore, the state-RTTT-funded bonus will be allocated among school staff.

By January 2011, the EEEC, in collaboration with our Technical Advisory Committee (see B(3)), will recommend to the State Board the amount of school-wide growth that is necessary to receive a bonus and NJDOE will publish the amount of the bonus.

Evaluating Merit Pay Programs

Both bonus programs will be piloted along with the evaluation system in the 2011-12 school year. NJDOE will conduct an independent evaluation of each merit pay program and will widely publish the results. The EEEC will review the evaluation data in Summer 2012 and will recommend to the Commissioner the compensation strategies that are best supported by evidence for adoption by all participating LEAs. With an aligned system of incentives and supports that focus with laser-like precision on our biggest

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[10] *Johnson, A., P. Poetter, J. Pughsley, C. Wallace, E. Kellor, and A. Odden. (1999). A Case Study of the Charlotte-Mecklenberg Public Schools School-Based Performance Award Program. Madison, WI: Consortium for Policy Research in Education.*

challenges, we have absolute confidence that our state's teachers and school leaders can accomplish what no other state has done: closing the opportunity gap in three years (see A(1)(iii)).

Exploring compensation systems that reward exceptional practice is simply the right thing to do. While winning Race to the Top will serve as a federal endorsement for our bold reforms, New Jersey will not wait to act, and intends to move forward immediately with these reforms. NJDOE intends to apply on behalf of interested LEAs for a Teacher Incentive Fund grant to improve, support, and sustain a bonus system in our state.

(c) Tenure

New Jersey uses evaluations to inform decisions along the pathway towards tenure. For our provisional teachers and school leaders, we encourage and provide high-quality coaching and professional services, which emphasize an increase in pedagogical skills and content knowledge. For a teacher to advance to receive a standard teaching certificate, that teacher must participate in a state provisional-teacher program that includes a formal mentoring and induction process. The candidate must undergo three observations, and one summative assessment by the principal, which includes the principal's recommendation for standard licensure. Currently, the large majority of teachers progress from provisional to standard certification, preventing potentially-ineffective teachers from receiving the continued supports they need to improve their practice, and preventing the State from achieving our goal of having every student taught by an effective teacher.

By 2012-13, all participating LEAs will use effectiveness evaluations as the cornerstone of decisions to grant tenure. The effectiveness evaluation system will provide a more precise metric to inform decisions along the pathway towards tenure. Participating LEAs will be expected to establish and implement clear and transparent criteria, based on multiple measures used in the evaluation, to inform decisions related to the transition from provisional to standard teacher certification at the end of the first year of teaching, and from untenured to tenured teacher status at the end of the third year of teaching. As is

evidenced by the New Jersey legislators' unanimous, bipartisan endorsement of the New Jersey application (see (Appendix II and section(A)(2)), NJDOE has strong support for its proposal.

(d) Use of evaluations to inform removal

LEAs in New Jersey are already empowered to remove teachers on the basis of evaluation results. There is a specific statute regarding the dismissal of tenured teaching-staff members, N.J.S.A 18A:28-5, and such teaching-staff members must be accorded all due process required by N.J.S.A 18A:6-10 et seq. However, action is seldom taken in New Jersey, largely due to the lack of a clear measure of teacher and school leader effectiveness. Once our effectiveness evaluation system is in place, we will have the data necessary to guide our removal decisions for tenured teachers. With effectiveness-evaluations as a central factor in the removal decision, we can be assured that ineffective teachers will not remain in our classrooms indefinitely. Our students deserve no less.

In our neediest schools, concerted action must be taken to ensure ineffective teachers are removed. Therefore, in persistently low- achieving schools identified in Section E, if a teacher is rated ineffective for three consecutive years, the LEA will take action pursuant to N.J.S.A 18A:6-11 to remove the individual for inefficiency.

Since the removal process often leaves both parties too long without resolution, NJDOE will establish a task force to recommend ways to streamline the removal process and clear non-constructive barriers. New Jersey's Office of Professional Learning will manage and support the task force in its efforts to identify better ways to support superintendents and principals through the removal process and eliminate any burdensome regulatory and statutory hurdles. The task force will be established by September 2011 and provide their recommendations to the Commissioner no later than March 2012. The Commissioner will then work with New Jersey's legislator and State Board to propose amendments to regulation and statute to ensure the removal process efficiently balances the need for expediency in the removal of ineffective teachers with

due process considerations. The LEAs who are piloting the process will be the first to have access to it and will provide feedback on the model.

Finally, the Commissioner will work with New Jersey legislators to recommend statutory and code changes so that reduction in force decisions are based on evaluations of effectiveness. Our goal is that LEAs will make reductions in force of non-tenured teachers first. For tenured teachers, reductions in force decisions will be made according to effectiveness ratings (ineffective, approaching effective, and highly effective). Within each category, standard seniority will apply.

Appeals Process for Evaluation System

New Jersey has in place a comprehensive system of appeals for the denial of certification or the revocation of tenure. Additionally, each LEA has developed a system to respond to grievances resulting from the evaluation system. Under the new evaluation system, teachers and school leaders will continue to have the opportunity for mediation and review of their evaluation-system result through the grievance system set up by the participating LEA. The EEEC will monitor the number of appeals that are granted and denied on an annual basis, as they consider potential refinements and improvements to the evaluation system.

CONCLUSION

New Jersey is strongly and completely committed to taking bold and controversial steps to implement a robust, fair, and transparent evaluation system in the 2012-13 school year, and to making that system a cornerstone of compensation, advancement, tenure, and termination decisions. Within our collective-bargaining context, this is an ambitious plan, but this plan has been made achievable through the resolute commitment of political and policy leaders to making this happen. Basing our decisions, policies, and practice on

the evidence regarding effectiveness data is essential as we work to achieve our goals of the dramatic acceleration of student learning and school improvement.

TIMELINES

2009-10 SY		
Action Steps	**Timeline**	**Responsible Parties**
Meet with LEAs to determine areas of improvement and successful practice regarding teacher and school leader evaluations	May-June 2010	Commissioner of Education,
Create EEEC, issue call for EEEC nominations, select EEEC members and convene EEEC	July 2010	Commissioner of Education; Office of the Governor
Draft evaluation framework released for public comment (45 days)	August – October 2010	EEEC, NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence
Growth Model data reported for every school and student; analyze NJ growth model data; EEEC in conjunction with SBOE sets preliminary growth amount for student learning bonus	September 2010	NJDOE Office of Education Research, SBOE, EEEC
Engage TAC in design of clear guidelines for local development of through-course assessments in remaining core content areas	October – November 2010	NJ TAC, Office of Student Learning Assessment
Review of Public Comment on Draft Effectiveness Evaluation Framework	October 2010	EEEC, NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence
Opens competition for challenge grants for LEAs working in partnerships to develop through-course assessments in remaining content areas and flexible approaches to K-2 assessment	November 2010	NJDOE, Office of Student Learning Assessment
Select multidisciplinary peer review panels for LEA through-course assessments	December 2010	NJDOE Office of Student Learning Assessment; County Offices
Set preliminary growth amount for student learning bonus and student growth bonus	December 2010	EEEC, SBOE
Public hearings on revised plan and follow up working group	October – November 2010	EEEC
LEAs selected to pilot evaluation System	November 20101	EEEC, NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence
Announces challenge grant winners selected from multi-	January 2011	NJDOE Office of Student Learning

disciplinary committees to assess non-tested grades and subjects		Assessment
Commence item develop, field testing for assessments in non-tested grades and subjects	January 2011 - ongoing	LEA Challenge Grant winners
Finalize evaluation framework, criteria, and review protocols and presents to the Commissioner	January 2011	EEEC
Training on evaluation system, select design and test effective practice measures, field test content-specific observation protocols	February – April 2011	Evaluation Pilot LEAs, NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence, EEEC
Pilot peer review process to review and approve measures of effective practices	May 2011	Pilot LEAs, EEEC, NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence
Begin training on new through-course assessments in conjunction with county offices	August 2011	LEA challenge grant winners
Statewide training commences on teacher and school leader evaluation system	August 2011	NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence, County Offices
Design 360 degree survey for pilot LEAs regarding evaluation system	July 2011- August 2011	NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence, Office of Education Research, EEEC
Field test assessments for non-tested grades and subjects (B(3))	September 2011-May 2012	LEA challenge grant winners, NJDOE Office of Student Assessment
Release growth model data; set final criteria for student learning bonus	September 2011-October 2011	EEEC, SBOE, NJDOE Office of Education Research
Pilot evaluation system for teachers and leaders in literacy and mathematics in selected 10-15 LEAs	September 2011-June 2012	Evaluation Pilot LEAs
Continued outreach and professional development on new evaluation system	September 2011- ongoing	County Offices
Ongoing training on evaluation systems; design/selection of effective practice measures	September 2011-ongoing	County Offices, LEAs
Administer 360 degree survey for evaluation pilot LEAs	May 2012	NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence, Office of Education Research
Reconvene Challenge grant peer review panels to review field	May-June 2012	NJDOE Office of Student Learning

test results and scoring procedures (also B(3))		Assessments
Review and evaluate pilot data on effectiveness	July 2012	EEEC, Office of Education Research, Division of Professional Excellence
Submit effective practice evaluation measures for peer review and approval	July 2012	All Participating LEAs, Professional Teaching Standards Board, Professional Development Advisory Board, NJDOE Office of Professional Excellence,
Design of teacher and school leader effectiveness reports	July 2012	NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence, EEEC
For Pilot LEAs, Closing The Gap bonuses awarded to schools in which individual students achieved exceptional growth and All Students Achieving bonuses awarded when the school as a whole achieved exceptional growth	August 2012	NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence
Full implementation of through-course assessments in all core content subject areas	August 2012	NJDOE Office of Student Learning Assessments
Full Implementation of evaluation system statewide	August 2012	NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence
Closing The Gap bonuses awarded to schools in which individual students achieved exceptional growth or the school as a whole achieved exceptional growth	August 2013	NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence
Publicly report school and district level reports of teacher effectiveness by subject	August 2013	NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence
Review effectiveness data, appeals data, and current research	September 2013	EEEC, Office of Education Research
Teachers and school leaders design professional development plans on the basis of effectiveness evaluation	September 2013	LEAs, school leaders
Publicly report school and district level reports of teacher effectiveness by subject	August 2014	NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence
Review effectiveness data, appeals data, and current research	September 2014	EEEC

Eligible Teachers and school leaders in pilot LEAs apply for Master Teacher Certification	September 2014	Board of Examiners
Review and refine or reaffirm evaluation criteria	January 2015	EEEC

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance Measures Notes: Data should be reported in a manner consistent with the definitions contained in this application package in Section II. Qualifying evaluation		Actual Data: Baseline (C school year or most recen	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).	Data not available	100%	100%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(ii)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for teachers.		Data not available	20%	90%*	100%
(D)(2)(ii)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for principals.				100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems that are used to inform:					
(D)(2)(iv)(a)	• Developing teachers and principals.		Data not available	Developing	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	• Compensating teachers and principals.				50%**	75%**
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	• Promoting teachers and principals.				40%	75%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	• Retaining effective teachers and principals.				75 %	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(c)	• Granting tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals.				20%	90%
(D)(2)(iv)(d)	• Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals.				25%***	50%***

The role of the LEA must be kept in mind when considering performance measures in New Jersey. LEAs have the responsibility to negotiate with unions on issues regarding teacher and leader contracts. *Due to the development process for non-tested grades and subjects, there may be a small number of LEAs that are unable to implement the evaluation system in the 2012-13 school year. **Our compensation structure has three components. The rewards for student learning and professional responsibilities will be available to all participating LEAs. Master Teacher certification will require three years of evaluation data. Pilot LEAs will be the first to have the three consecutive years of data that is required to offer Master Teacher Certification. **Keeping in mind the LEA's role, the system will have the capacity to inform the removal of ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals.

General data to be provided at time of application:	
Total number of participating LEAs.	387
Total number of principals* in participating LEAs.	1,478
Total number of teachers in participating LEAs.	78,946

It is to New Jersey's credit with LEAs, teachers, and principals that this application demonstrates the involvement of teachers in 59.1% of the LEAs in the state. *A principal is defined as the building head for purposes of this count.

(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

ENSURING AN EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF EFFECTIVE TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS

New Jersey's Governor, Legislature, State Board and Commissioner of Education are putting in place statute and code changes that will:

- Expand the pipeline of exceptional teachers and leaders by improving recruitment, preparation and development
- Identify highly-effective teachers and leaders based upon the state's proposed new evaluation system
- Give districts and schools with a high percentage of at-risk students state assistance and a competitive edge in recruitment and placement
- Financially support an equitable distribution of our education system's highest- quality human capital by offering monetary incentives to highly-effective teachers and leaders who are willing to serve in classrooms and schools with a high proportion of at-risk students
- Monitor subject areas as to which teachers are in short supply
- Train more outstanding teachers in our most high-need subjects: science, mathematics, World Languages, ELL and special education
- Expand programs that are effective in this regard and that serve urban areas, such as the Garden State Partnership for Teacher Quality

(i) HIGH-POVERTY AND/OR HIGH-MINORITY SCHOOLS

Under New Jersey's current teacher-evaluation system, 99.7% of teachers are considered highly-qualified. This means that nearly all of our teachers have demonstrated knowledge of their content area, as required under state and federal law. But we realize that this "highly-qualified" designation doesn't always translate to "highly-effective." In fact, our preliminary growth-model data indicates that 65% of students demonstrated typical or high growth in all districts compared to 55% for students in high-poverty schools. Clearly, a problem exists regarding the equitable distribution of high-quality teachers.

New Jersey is committed to accelerating the academic growth of its at-risk children and providing them with the great teachers that are so foundational to this work. Our RTTT initiatives, and particularly our efforts to improve our data systems and teacher-

evaluation process, will enable us to accurately assess the performance of our educators. With that information in hand, we will aggressively move to ensure that our neediest schools have access to our best teachers.

Since it will take time to complete these improvements and to gather this data, New Jersey has a near-term strategy to increase equitable distribution immediately. The NJDOE will offer this program to current National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) Certified Teachers. In addition, under RTTT, the NJDOE will implement an interim strategy by February 2011 for identifying high-quality teachers and principals, and will consider the following factors in setting the interim definition: evaluations, awards, available measures of growth, evidence from other teacher-leader roles, and recommendation letters. This strategy will provide districts and schools with a high percentage of at-risk students with state assistance and a competitive edge in recruitment and placement; will offer these professionals a monetary incentive to work in our neediest classrooms and schools; will expand the online course opportunities that are available to students in these schools; and will begin monitoring the placement of highly-effective teachers and principals in New Jersey. Both our interim and longer-term strategies for increasing equitable distribution are described in more detail below.

Some of our most challenged high-minority, high-poverty schools already have a number of superior educators, so keeping these stellar teachers in place is an equally-important strategy. Research clearly shows that additional compensation is only one factor in a teacher's decision to remain at a school.[1] Of comparable importance is the school's environment. Without delay, New Jersey will take steps to improve working conditions in high-need schools. In 2010-11, New Jersey will focus upon developing within these schools a professional, collegial school environment led by content-focused coaches, as described in (D)(5), and will provide teachers and school leaders in these schools with access to the best professional-development opportunities in the nation.

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[1] *Imazeki and Goe. The Distribution of Highly Qualified, Experienced Teachers: Challenges and Opportunities. National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, August 2009.*

NJDOE already conducts a working-conditions survey, offered through the Collaborative Assessment and Planning for Achievement (CAPA) initiative, in high-need schools. LEAs are required to use the data to develop a collegial school environment. The NJDOE will propose regulatory amendments to significantly improve and expand the current instrument to include a range of new indicators, such as indicators of how teachers are assigned to classrooms and how leaders support professional-learning communities. For each New Jersey school, the state will continue to monitor data on the average years of teaching experience for educators in each school; the number of open positions in each school; the percentage of minority students in each school; the percentage of free/reduced-price-lunch students in each school, and more. When our new evaluation system comes online, we will also monitor teacher effectiveness. We will use these metrics to identify the districts and schools that are most in need of additional highly-effective educators.

Recruiting Effective Teachers and School Leaders

All children deserve to be taught by highly-effective teachers. Despite New Jersey's good-faith efforts over time, schools across our state still experience an inequitable distribution of superb teachers and leaders.

We want to have more of our best educators working with the students who need the best instruction. We recognize that teachers need new, compelling incentives to consider change, and we believe that they deserve assurances that the state will stand behind them if they answer this call. This proposal outlines the steps that New Jersey will be taking to provide these incentives and assurances, which include new Answering the Call bonuses, new teacher leadership and content roles within Achievement Academies (described in Section E), and coaching and mentoring roles (described in Section D5).

Answering the Call Bonus

New Jersey will provide state-funded bonuses for highly-effective teachers and leaders who are willing to serve in schools and classrooms with a high proportion of students at risk. Highly-effective teachers or school leaders will be recruited into schools that meet the New Jersey definition of high-minority or high-poverty, and where academic achievement has been stagnant or declining over the previous two years. Highly-effective teachers who are already serving students in qualifying schools are eligible for incentives as well.

NJDOE will use a staggered-incentive approach, whereby highly-effective teachers will receive an initial bonus of $3,000 for committing to spend three years in a classroom with a high proportion of at-risk students. A second bonus of $2,000 will be awarded at the end of three years of service. To be eligible for the second bonus, the teacher will have to have earned a highly-effective rating for at least two of the previous three years.

The bonuses will be drawn from a pool of money that is set aside for participating districts, and will be based upon the number of eligible, interested LEAs. Additional compensation will be available to highly-effective teachers in persistently-low-achieving schools. This compensation is further described in (E)(2). The NJDOE Office of Professional Compensation and Contract Standards will monitor the distribution of, and eligibility for, these incentives.

Because the data regarding highly-effective teachers will take two years to become available, as an interim measure, the NJDOE is offering NBPTS and those teachers who have qualified under the interim definition the opportunity to participate in this prestigious program beginning in the Fall 2011. This opportunity will be widely promoted in the spring of 2011. The first cohort of teachers and leaders, from LEAs that are willing to pilot the evaluation system, will move to their new assignments in Fall 2012, and teachers who belong to the first round of NBPTS placements will be eligible for their third-year incentives in Spring 2014.

As a second reward for moving into schools and classrooms with a high percentage of at-risk children, these teachers and leaders will receive seniority retreat rights. Under existing regulations, the teacher that chooses to move into a school with a high

percentage of at risk children will retain their years of service should they return to their original districts. Our hope and expectation is that in most cases, these teachers and leaders will choose to stay in their new positions. But we realize that for a number of personal and professional reasons, some will prefer to return to their previous posts. The preservation of retreat rights recognizes this eventuality, and will therefore help entice more teachers to consider and accept this opportunity.

Opening Certification to Out-of-State Candidates

As discussed in (D)(1), New Jersey will provide entry to America's best teachers, no matter the state in which they currently serve. We propose to accomplish this by offering equivalent certifications to teachers who have certifications from other states, who can provide documented evidence of their content knowledge, and who have at least three years of successful teaching experience. The State Board has proposed amendments to the licensing regulations that would allow for the certification of teachers who are licensed in other states and who can provide evidence of past teaching success. The proposed regulations offer dramatic evidence of New Jersey's commitment to clearing non-constructive barriers to teaching in New Jersey, and to putting the most effective teachers possible in our classrooms.

The NJDOE will continue to monitor teacher-placement data through the CAPA working-conditions survey and to look for potential and actual areas of shortfall in content-expertise in high-need schools. NJDOE will monitor data that will show vacancies by school and class, and by grade and subject area.

Raising Awareness of Vacancies and Exclusive Access for High-Need Schools

New Jersey will create a new section of the NJ Hire[2] website that collects and advertises vacancies in high-minority, high-poverty settings.

This section of the website will provide detailed information about opportunities in high-need schools, including information regarding their unique strengths and the reform initiatives that are underway there, and will draw attention to schools in which highly-effective teachers and school leaders may receive Answering the Call bonuses. To advance these recruitment efforts as swiftly as possible, this site will go live by Spring 2011.

This strategy has already been used successfully in four LEAs where human-resources supervisors have seen the number of qualified candidates and out-of-state applicants rise, and have experienced a reduction in the time between job postings and the receipt of inquiries and applications from high-quality applicants.

The candidate side of NJ Hire will also be improved to allow candidates to be more specific about their interest in working in disadvantaged schools—for instance, by indicating their preference for serving in high-poverty urban settings. The site will work to match qualified candidates with high-needs LEAs and schools.

Finally, high-poverty and high-need LEAs will be provided with seven-day exclusive access to candidate resumes. This innovative new policy for our improved online-recruiting system will give needy LEAs first access to the teachers who are most likely to make a significant contribution to New Jersey's most underperforming schools.

Recruiting the Best and the Brightest College Students

Our renewed efforts to expand the pipeline of effective educators will also emphasize the recruitment of teachers from the most successful preparation programs in New Jersey and neighboring states. The NJDOE will focus upon recruiting the highest-performing liberal arts graduates from the area's most prestigious institutions of higher education --

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[2] *NJ Hire is web service supporting an online application process for teachers and LEAs. This is a current contract, it is likely that an open RFP will be issued on this work in the next six months.*

including Princeton, the University of Pennsylvania, Columbia, and New York University -- to participate in Alternative Route programs.

The NJDOE will also dedicate a team lead, who will work with staff internally and through the counties to identify alumni who will personally connect and recruit undergraduates and graduates from education programs at these schools.

We will also develop online materials and focus a portion of NJ Hire specifically upon the recruitment of the best and the brightest education graduates. These candidates will be encouraged to consider a teaching career in a high-needs district within New Jersey.

Our materials will advertise the incentive system and the professional-development opportunities available to teachers within New Jersey. The materials will also highlight the innovative practice[3] at schools and within LEA partnerships, to create a compelling message to potential candidates.

Expanding Successful Programs

The Garden State Partnership for Teacher Quality (GSPTQ) is one of New Jersey's most successful and promising education initiatives in recent years. GSPTQ is a collaborative effort among Kean University; Paterson University, Rowan University; Bridgeton, Camden, Jersey City, Passaic, Paterson and Union City school LEAs; and the NJDOE. With the financial support of a Teacher Quality Grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the partnership has developed the Garden State Urban Teacher Residency Program and created fifteen professional-development schools to support and retain teachers and educational leaders in New Jersey's most challenging urban communities. The GSPTQ graduates almost 2,500 new teachers each year. The GSPTQ is also developing a tracking system, in partnership with the NJDOE, to track whether residency candidates are retained in an urban school LEA, and if so, what impact they have on student learning. Many of these universities have indicated their support for this proposal

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3 Examples include the Uncommon Schools North Star Academy and the Harlem Children's Zone partnerships in Newark.

and have submitted letters available in Appendix III. We see them as critical partners in this work.

New Jersey will expand the GSPTQ by 40% in two years, and invite more universities and districts to participate. By doing so, we will increase the number of teachers graduating who are targeted to serve an urban population to 3,500 annually. New Jersey will focus at least one-third of the expansion activities specifically on preparing teachers and school leaders for work in Special Education and Alternative Education urban settings.

Students Becoming Teachers

Research supports the conclusion that teachers are more likely than all other college graduates to stay local when searching for employment.[4] A number of institutions of higher education within New Jersey have programs, such as the New Jersey Center for Future Education[5] at the College of New Jersey and Urban Teacher Academy (UTA), that recruit high-performing high school students to become teachers in urban areas within the state where there are shortages. Where the program at issue is documented to be well-run, and when it includes "student teaching" by those in the programs, the numbers of students recruited who actually pursue teaching degrees is significant.[6] New Jersey will expand these successful programs to target high-poverty, high-minority schools in participating LEAs. The NJDOE proposes to expand this work in subject-specific areas that are described later in this section.

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[4] *Imazeki and Goe. The Distribution of Highly-Qualified, Experienced Teachers: Challenges and Opportunities. National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, August 2009.*

[5] *This is funded by our supporters NJEA and the University.*

[6] *160 Students have participated in the UTA since 2006. 60% of the participants have enrolled in collegiate teacher preparation programs.*

Retaining Outstanding Teachers and Leaders

Improving the environment in which teachers work is a proven strategy to retain great teachers.[7] Distributed leadership, coupled with a professional environment in which all teachers seek to improve their practice, will be the cornerstone to supporting LEAs' efforts to retain outstanding teachers and leaders.

Participating LEAs will assign supervisors to high-poverty schools who have been trained as content-based instructional leaders (see (D)(5)), and will use instructional coaching where there is a specific need for such coaching within particular content areas, e.g., Algebra I. This combination of individual and team support for teachers and leaders is designed to foster a professional environment in which teachers collectively work to improve their practice.

As part of the NJDOE Professional Development Initiative, schools and districts have access to a nationally-acclaimed, research-based, collaborative professional-learning toolkit at no cost. New Jersey has already initiated an ambitious agenda for teachers' and principals' professional growth that is focused on increased student achievement.

In Fall 2011, participating LEAs will have access to additional NJDOE resources that will allow them to further cultivate a professional-learning environment that develops and supports regular access to, and participation in, exemplary professional development, as described in (D)(5). Furthermore, New Jersey will work to assess the impact of these collaborative-learning environments and professional-development experiences through teaching-conditions surveys,[8] to ensure that the necessary conditions of reform, such as teacher engagement, are being met.

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[7] *Sharon Feiman-Nemser. What New Teachers Need to Learn. Educational Leadership.Vol. 60 Num. 8. May 2003.*

[8] *The School Assessment Inventory surveys professional development conditions and was developed by National Staff Development Council.*

Using Evaluation Data to Develop Equitable-Distribution Plans

With the implementation of the state's new teacher-evaluation system, proposed in (D)(2), for the 2012–13 school year, participating LEAs will connect their equitable-distribution plans to teacher performance, complete with timelines and goals; and will use the incentive system described above to attract highly-effective teachers and school leaders to, and retain them at, high-poverty, high-minority, and low-achieving schools. As part of these plans, participating LEAs will gather and maintain data on vacancies, recruitment, selection, staffing, and educator-effectiveness.

The NJDOE will also use the LEA equitable-distribution plans to monitor the link between effectiveness data and LEA actions such as tenure decisions, retention programs, and decisions related to professional-development services. Participating LEAs will update and review progress on their plans annually, and will submit them to their county and ultimately the Office of Professional Induction, Development, Evaluation and Certification of the NJDOE for review and approval. As information regarding high-performing preparation programs becomes available (in Fall 2013), LEAs will expand their strategies to recruit new and highly-skilled teachers from those programs to fill vacancies. As a part of the monitoring of this work, the NJDOE will withhold a portion of district RTTT funds if the LEA goals for the equitable-distribution plan are not met.

To ensure the effectiveness of these initiatives over the next several years, during the 2013-14 school year the New Jersey State Board of Education will conduct a comprehensive review of its LEA-evaluation system, QSAC, to ensure that students in high-poverty, high-minority schools are not served by ineffective teachers and school leaders at higher rates than other students.

(ii) HARD-TO-STAFF SUBJECTS AND SPECIALTY AREAS

New Jersey closely monitors trends in LEA staffing data. Currently, New Jersey has identified ESL, STEM, Special Education, World Languages and preschool as areas of potential shortfall in the future.[9] NJDOE has created several successful programs to attract and retain teachers for hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas. Through support from RTTT, New Jersey will rapidly bring these efforts to scale.

Extending the Reach of Highly-Effective Teachers

Through increased access to virtual classes, New Jersey will greatly expand the reach of the state's best teachers and increase the variety of course offerings that are available to students. We seek to raise the overall number of students taking and passing AP and IB courses, and to include coursework that taps into critical-thinking and problem-solving skills to ensure future student success with challenging coursework. We see this as a key strategy to assist in closing the significant gap in learning outcomes between white and minority students, and for increasing achievement on local and state assessments.

In order to expedite this work, we will use currently-available online coursework that aligns with New Jersey standards, while working to increase our capacity to deliver online learning in the state. In Fall 2010, New Jersey will purchase access to online coursework and related professional development for teachers, and a cohort of teachers will begin training on how to effectively teach in virtual environments. All online classes will be offered in accordance with applicable New Jersey law and regulations. In Winter

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[9] *These areas were identified in a letter to the Office of Postsecondary Education in the U.S. Department of Education. The methodology to determine the predicted shortfalls is also available in the letter, which is included in Appendix II.*

2011, the NJDOE will expand online coursework offerings to students in high-needs schools.

New Jersey now offers online-learning opportunities to students through two providers; this proposed work will significantly expand these offerings and provide the opportunity to study content in more depth than is typically offered in high-school programs of study. These new course offerings will be initially piloted in high-needs LEAs, and will be scaled up over time

In order to build sustainable resources beyond RTTT, we are partnering with universities and businesses in New Jersey to develop a more comprehensive model for a collection of online coursework. We have received several letters of support from potential partners for this work, including Rutgers, Dell, Apple, and Verizon (all included in Appendix III.) These and other partnerships will provide various supports, and may offer in-kind resources that allow us to expand online access to a larger group of students with a focus on developing and adapting coursework for hard-to-staff subjects.

Once partners are identified and work plans are finalized, the NJDOE will work with participating districts to identify a range of options for training educators that assist in meeting the diverse needs of students. As such, New Jersey will be well-positioned to offer personalized virtual-learning experiences to a broader population of high-need students in both rural and urban settings. These learning experiences will appeal to varying student interests and aptitudes, and most importantly, will be delivered by an expanded pool of highly-effective teachers.

When RTTT ends, an infrastructure will be in place to enable the NJDOE to work with counties statewide and to extend services based upon a per-pupil cost that includes routine maintenance and development of the online offerings. This aspect of the proposal offers an opportunity to truly transform the delivery and reach of effective teachers in a sustainable model that would be otherwise difficult to fund, given the current economic environment.

Targeting Shortage Areas

Targeted alternate routes in high-need content areas provide a flexible and efficient manner for teachers to gain certification. New Jersey has several methods for monitoring and addressing the needs of shortage areas (as described elsewhere within this section), and has extensive experience in building or facilitating the creation of programs that will function as effective solutions in shortage areas. (See our results regarding alternative routes in Section D1.) The sections below discuss both general and specific next steps that New Jersey will take to address the potential shortfall areas identified in the Hard-to-Staff Subjects section above.

Special Education

Licensure regulations establish an alternative route for the special-education endorsement. Specifically, the regulations allow any individual who is eligible for an instructional certificate to receive a special-education certification of eligibility, which permits him or her to be employed as a special-education teacher while completing the NJDOE -approved students-with-disabilities special-education-endorsement program. New Jersey will expand its efforts to recruit individuals under this program.

New Jersey will also expand professional-development opportunities for teachers of special-needs and alternative-education students, as described in Section (E). A close examination of the data regarding turnaround schools, identified in Section (E), reveals a higher population of these students in our neediest schools. When we propose sending high-quality teachers into high-needs settings, we are aware that we need to equip them with a greater range of classroom behavior-management tools, greater access to approaches to working in classroom teacher-teams, and an understanding about the community in which they will be serving. Accordingly, we will give these teachers the tools they need for success, and we will continue to improve the continuum of services

that are offered to students in these settings. This will require further professional-development work at the district and county level, and closer monitoring and evaluation of the needs within this area.

Mathematics & Science

This past year, legislation (commonly referred to as "Traders to Teachers") was passed to allow the creation of pilot teacher-preparation programs to recruit and issue teaching certificates to individuals who possess mathematics or science skills and work-related backgrounds using their skills, and who have lost their positions due to economic conditions.

The Traders-to-Teachers Program

One such program allows individuals who are displaced from the financial sector or similar industries to pursue their certification to teach mathematics. This accelerated program is for individuals who have used mathematics in their jobs, and who have a sincere desire to teach.

Successful applicants spend three months in an intensive, full-time program, refreshing their mathematics knowledge and learning how to teach the subject. Each week, they also spend one day observing the teaching of, and beginning to teach, mathematics in a middle- or high school. The 50 participating candidates in the first cohort were placed in paid teaching positions in New Jersey public schools, and are expected to commit to teach for at least two school years, during which they will receive intensive professional support. After teaching successfully for two years, completing the additional mathematics courses that are necessary (as determined on an individual basis), and passing the state's required Praxis II mathematics exam, candidates will be recommended for standard, permanent teaching certification in Mathematics.

Results from external evaluations, as required by the regulations, will provide us with critical information to make decisions regarding revisions or expansions.

We will look for other math-related industries that are experiencing layoffs (such as banking, engineering, etc.) and we will look to recruit potential teachers from these industries and fast-track them into the classroom. Traders to Teachers has been successful in certifying math teachers, and needs support in order to continue. Additionally, this program will be revised and implemented for the other math industries the following Fall. The NJDOE will use the STEM Council to inform this work.

The Progressive Science Initiative (PSI)—A Model for Science and Mathematics Teachers

New Jersey is also taking on the challenge of creating great science teachers by training a talented corps of teachers who will lead the next generation to high levels of student achievement in science. Using the PSI approach, New Jersey is instructing highly-skilled teachers in how to best teach science, by providing them with a rigorous curriculum; providing them with professional-development instruction regarding how to teach that curriculum; and providing professional learning just as the teachers need it.

In the program's first year alone, PSI has trained and certified twice the number of physics teachers that were certified in prior years by all the universities in New Jersey. More than 1,200 students in Newark, Paterson, and Jersey City are studying physics with that first cohort of 39 PSI teachers. A strong preliminary indicator of the program's success is that more than 40% of those students, when surveyed in December, have indicated that they intend to take AP Physics B, in addition to PSI Chemistry, next year.

The state is adapting the PSI model to apply it first to Chemistry and then to Biology as well. The NJDOE has selected the first Chemistry cohort of 26 currently-certified teachers with appropriate skills, and will teach them the content that is required to lead highly-effective Chemistry classrooms. The Chemistry and Biology units will be piloted and revised as needed during the 2011-2012 school year. By next fall, there will be over 100 teachers trained or in training in Physics and Chemistry. Our strong emphasis will be to place these new Chemistry and Biology teachers in high-needs schools. If adaptations are successful, we will research and consider improving the teaching of other subjects in similar ways.

Partnerships with Museums, Companies, and Institutions of Higher Education

New Jersey's brilliant thinkers and inventors have made enormous contributions to the world of science and technology. The NJDOE plans to expand its longstanding partnerships with the state's museums and institutes of higher education to bring these assets to bear on K-12 schooling.

For example, the Liberty Science Center produces research-based, high-quality professional-development curricula for teachers, and has developed modules for student learning that are available to supplement student field trips and to extend the learning experience. The NJDOE will work more closely with museums, universities, and companies to create and extend professional-development experiences with hands-on science and mathematics opportunities.

The NJDOE will work with museums and companies to develop a future Science and Mathematics Educators Program (SMEP). This new program will provide students with opportunities to participate in research-based summer- and extended-learning opportunities, mentoring, and tutoring, while still in high school. These programs will build higher-order content knowledge and provide the students with mentoring and tutoring opportunities.

Using an adapted version of the UTA program as a model, NJDOE has already created a one-week, Pre-engineering Teaching Academy to recruit future pre-engineering teachers. We would like to further adapt this model for biology and mathematics for high-achieving urban students, with the program to be implemented in Summer 2011. The NJDOE will work with the STEM council in Fall 2010 to identify appropriate partners and develop work plans to support the program.

Programs like this are critical in New Jersey, because of the many career opportunities that exist for students who are strong in STEM subjects. This work will allow students who are often lured into business and industry to first consider the teaching profession.

World Languages and ESL

New Jersey will use its current infrastructure to expand access to high-quality language instruction. Importantly, New Jersey currently has the infrastructure in place to expand teacher capacity in the area of World Languages, and will work hard to do so. In 2005, NJDOE developed an Accelerated Chinese-Language Teacher-Certification Program. The program provides training for native or heritage speakers of Chinese who are currently working in other fields, and who seek to earn New Jersey Chinese-teacher certification, to meet the needs of the state's schools. From 2006 to 2008, the program has served 102 teacher candidates, with 27 of these earning Certificates of Eligibility to teach Chinese over the two-year period**.**

With the support of Race to the Top, New Jersey will take the existing accelerated-training model and apply it to develop highly-skilled teachers in Arabic, Korean, and Hindi. After modifying this program in the next year, the NJDOE will work to provide teaching slots for native or heritage speakers in these languages.

NJDOE will also work to make World Languages a centerpiece of its online coursework for students who might otherwise not have access to world-language instruction.

New Jersey also has a growing population of English-language learners, and will need to train additional ESL and bilingual teachers to serve these students. New Jersey will work closely with the associations of native or heritage speakers, recruit potential teachers, and create more alternative routes, similar to the World Languages example, for ESL/Bilingual teachers. These teaching routes will provide training for individuals who are currently working in other fields and who seek to earn a teacher's certification.

For both sets of teachers, New Jersey will offer targeted professional-development courses, employing evidence-based pedagogical strategies that are specific to the relevant populations.

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TIMELINE

Task	Date Due	NJDOE Lead Division/Office
Draft and finalize modifications to professional-learning-environment survey	September 2010	Divisions for Professional Excellence and Education System Efficiency
NJ Hires web-design group commences	September 2010	Office of Professional Recruitment, Licensing, & Placement
Working group on expansion/adaptation of PSI to Biology and Chemistry commences	September 2010	Office of Math & Science Education
Working group on expansion of Traders to Teachers adaptation commences	September 2010	Office of Math & Science Education
Draft program guidelines for Science and Mathematics Educators Program (SMEP) for STEM Council Review	November 2010	Office of Math & Science Education
Purchase available, eligible coursework for virtual classes/or virtual school; begin teacher-training and development process for state content	January 2011	Division of Academic Standards, Offices of Math & Science Education, Education Technology and Academic Standards
NJDOE releases interim criteria for Highly-Effective-Teacher status	February 2011	Division for Professional Excellence
Launch modified version of NJ Hire with the emphasis on high-need schools *(updated regularly thereafter)*	March 2011	Division for Professional Excellence, Office of Professional Recruitment, Licensing and Placement
Recruit for SMEP summer program	March 2011	Office of Math & Science Education &

Task	Date Due	NJDOE Lead Division/Office
(annually thereafter)		Student Services
Recruit and train teachers for Virtual School Classes	May 2011	Offices of Online Education, Academic Standards, Office of Professional Induction, Development, Evaluation, and Certification
Provider further PD tools for NBPTS teachers online, through D5 tools and SIG grants	May 2011	Offices of Professional Induction, Development, Evaluation, and Certification and Division of Student Services
Traders to Teachers presents findings to STEM Council, seeks recommendations for Fall pilot	May 2011	Office of Math & Science Education
Administer and collect CAPA results *(Administered annually thereafter)*	May 2011	Divisions of Professional Standards and Education System Efficiency
Offer High-Need-School Placement Incentive to NBPTS teachers *(annual until Highly-Effective Teacher data is available)*	May 2011	Office of Professional Standards, Office of the Deputy Commissioner
First SMEP summer camp commences *(annually thereafter)*	June 2011	Office of Math & Science Education
PSI Biology and Chemistry are piloted (revised during the course of the year)	September 2011	Office of Math & Science Education
Traders to Teachers Pilot	September 2011	STEM Offices
Working group for expansion of GSPTQ commences	January 2011	Divisions of Professional Standards, Special Education, and Student Svcs.
Ongoing PD targeted at Incentive Teachers (online and in-person coaching continuously thereafter)	September 2011	Divisions of Professional Standards and Student Svcs.
Offer second portion of incentive for high-needs classroom to qualifying first cohort of NBPTS teachers	June 2012	RTTT officer w/County Offices
Offer Placement Incentive to first cohort of Highly-Effective Teachers *(annually thereafter)*	June 2012	RTTT officer w/County Offices
PSI Biology and Chemistry programs	September 2012	Office of Math & Science Education

Task	Date Due	NJDOE Lead Division/Office
instituted based upon feedback from pilot		
LEAs submit equitable-distribution plan based upon Highly-Effective- Teacher Status	September 2013	Divisions of Professional Standards and Student Svcs
NJDOE Monitors equitable distribution based upon Highly-Effective Teacher Status *(ongoing thereafter)*	October 2013	Divisions of Professional Standards and Student Services
Initial expansion of GSPTQ	September 2012	Divisions of Professional Standards, Special Education, and Student Svcs.
State Board of Education reviews LEA evaluation policy	Spring 2013	RTTT officer, Deputy Commissioner, and Commissioner
Full expansion of GSPTQ	September 2013	Divisions of Professional Standards, Special Education, and Student Svcs.

EVIDENCE

(D)(3)(i):

Following the precedent required by the Federal reporting rules regarding HQT status, NJDOE has constructed high-/low-poverty/minority quartiles. We rank-order schools in terms of the percentage of their total student population that qualifies for free/reduced lunch. Once rank-ordered, the schools that comprise the top 25% of all schools in the ranking are deemed High-Poverty, the schools that are in the last 25% are deemed Low-Poverty, and the ones in the middle 50% are not labeled. This is the methodology currently required in all of our EDEN/EDFacts reporting for HQT.

To construct the minority quartiles, we rank-ordered schools in terms of their percentage of non-white students. Those that were in the top cut of 25%, when ranked based on their percentage of non-white students, are labeled high-minority.

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PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance Measures for (D)(3)(i) – *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**				
Percentage of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	Data Not Available	Data Not Available	Pilot Year	Baseline	10% in crease
Percentage of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).					10% Increase
Percentage of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.					10% decrease

Percentage of teachers in schools that are low-poverty (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	Data Not Available	Data Not Available	Data Not Available	Baseline Year	10% decrease
Percentage of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly-effective (as defined in this notice).					10 % increase
Percentage of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).					10 % increase
Percentage of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.					10% decrease
Percentage of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.					10% decrease

Baseline data for these goals using the highly-effective teacher definition in this application will not be available for New Jersey until the end of the 2012-13 school year. For participating LEAs, we propose to increase the baseline number of teachers who are highly effective by 10% annually, and to decrease the number of ineffective teachers by 10% each year. We are proposing this goal based upon the design, implementation, and active use of the reform efforts outlined in Sections B, D, and E. We believe that this ambitious level of improvement is possible with the comprehensive reform efforts that we have outlined, and that demonstrate significant improvement over time. ED has raised the stakes by proposing a high level of measurable performance, and New Jersey is proposing to meet and exceed that challenge.

General data to be provided at time of application:	
Total number of schools that are high-poverty and/or high minority	555
Total number of schools that are low-poverty and/or low minority	460
Total number of teachers in schools that are high-poverty and/or high minority (as defined in this notice).	24,546
Total number of teachers in schools that are low-poverty and/or low minority (as defined in this notice).	18,956
Total number of principals* leading schools that are high-poverty and/or high minority (as defined in this notice).	475
Total number of principals leading schools that are low-poverty and/or low minority (as defined in this notice).	361
Information on high- and low-minority designation is not collected by the state; the state is electing to present numbers based upon poverty data alone. * New Jersey is counting only the building head as a principal.	

Performance Measures for (D)(3)(ii) – *Note: All information below is requested for Participating LEAs.*	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or	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 mathematics teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.	Data not available			Baseline	Improve-ment 7%
Percentage of science teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.	Data not available			Baseline	Improve-ment 7%
Percentage of special-education teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.	Data not available			Baseline	Improve-ment 7%
Percentage of teachers in language-instruction educational programs who were evaluated as effective or better.	Data not available			Baseline	Improve-ment 7%

There is currently no data available on the cohort of subject-area teachers and their effectiveness that is comparable across LEAs. We will be able to collect baseline data on teacher-effectiveness, as defined in this application, no sooner than the 2012-13 SY. After gathering the initial data, we are committed to raising the percentage of highly-effective mathematics and science teachers by 7%. There will likely be an initial spike in improvement when the professional-development tools are rolled out, but we propose to continue to engage teachers to improve their effectiveness after that spike occurs, and into the future.	
General data to be provided at time of application:	
Total number of mathematics teachers.	5,330
Total number of science teachers.	3,438
Total number of special-education teachers.	12,426
Total number of teachers in language-instruction educational programs.	2,172

(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

NEW JERSEY'S SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS

Over the past several years, NJDOE has taken many steps to improve the effectiveness of teacher- and school-leader preparation programs and to link these programs with student achievement and student growth.

In 2006, the Higher Education Task Force made recommendations for a performance-based approach to program approval. As a result, New Jersey has instituted, through regulations, a new performance-based program-approval process to improve the effectiveness of teacher- and school-leader preparation programs (*N.J.A.C.* 6A:9-10.1) led by the Program Approval Council (PAC). As part of this effort, New Jersey is in the process of creating a professional-educator database and tracking system that will gather

and analyze data on graduate performance, including employment, retention, and impact on student achievement. Importantly, this system will directly link student-achievement and student-growth data to students' teachers and principals. This database will begin operating in 2012-2013. Then, beginning with the 2013-14 year, when two years of effectiveness evaluation data will be available, New Jersey will publicly report the data broadly for each credentialing program.

One of New Jersey's important goals is to provide a student-teaching experience for every teacher-preparation student that directly leads him or her to be ready to teach effectively. The State's overarching goal is to develop a system where new teachers can be followed throughout their preparation, student teaching, and observation, all the way through to their tenure decisions.

(i) NEW JERSEY WILL LINK STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND GROWTH DATA TO TEACHER-PREPARATION DATA

As part of New Jersey's State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) application, we propose to calculate individual student-growth scores and to enable our data system to compile this information and connect it to individual teachers. By 2011-12, we will have established growth metrics that include our current statewide annual assessments, as well as statewide interim assessments (see B(3)) for non-tested grades and subjects. Also proposed in SFSF is the creation of Teacher and Course Modules. The Teacher Module will collect individual teacher-level data such as teaching assignment, highly-qualified status, and credentialing/preparation program information through the integration of K-12 education and the higher education system. The Course Module will collect enrollment information for each section of each class, so that NJDOE is able to link each student to each course and each teacher. This functionality will also allow New Jersey to create eTranscripts that compare students' course grades to their end-of-course assessments, and to ultimately study the relationship between students' course-taking patterns and their success in post-secondary institutions and in the workforce.

Importantly, at the state level, we will be able link student-level growth scores and other statewide assessments to teachers' preparation and credentialing programs. This functionality will allow us to follow recently-credentialed teachers into the workforce, tracking them by program, and to study their patterns of job attainment and their movement within and among the schools in which they teach, in order to determine what types of assignments they receive, how long they remain in an assignment, and how well they do. Furthermore, for all teachers, we will be able to use this data to study the effectiveness of teacher-preparation programs in terms of teacher longevity in the workforce, student-level outcomes, and success with various types of course content and/or student populations.

The data system will begin operating in the 2012-13 school year, and the data will be reported publicly for each credentialing program in the State in the following year (2013-14).

(ii) NEW JERSEY WILL EXPAND PREPARATION PROGRAMS PROVEN TO BE SUCCESSFUL AT PRODUCING EFFECTIVE TEACHERS

New Jersey will work with the State Board to propose regulations to establish a Preparation Program Effectiveness Evaluation Committee (PPEEC) to develop an evaluation scale that includes key indicators of success in preparation programs. Such indicators will include multiple measures of student achievement, measures of candidates' knowledge of the relevant course content and their pedagogical knowledge, a metric assessing the strength of candidates' clinical experience, and an assessment of the preparation program's systemic use of data for continuous improvement. Once this evaluation system is established, NJDOE will use the system to evaluate teacher- and school-leader-preparation programs in the State.

The committee will include key education stakeholders from institutes of higher education, leaders of nontraditional or alternative-route preparation programs,

superintendents, teachers, school leaders, and national accrediting organizations. New Jersey will work with the State Board to include in the proposed regulations that a draft of the effectiveness evaluation system, including the metrics proposed and the weighting system to be employed, will be shared for comment, before its adoption, with both traditional and non-traditional programs. This process will allow the PPEEC to solicit ideas from a wide range of national and local experts in order to align the evaluation of preparation programs with national and state standards, as well as with the educational goals of New Jersey. The Office of Professional Learning Standards will be responsible for coordinating the work of the committee. Our goal is for the effectiveness evaluation rating system to be designed by February 2011 and subject to approval by the Commissioner.

Once the effectiveness evaluation framework is adopted, the NJDOE will have a consistent metric to determine which preparation programs are successful at producing effective teachers and principals. Programs exhibiting particular success -- such as, for example, success in specific subject areas -- will be identified, and they will be examined in order to discern the correlating success factors.

In the 2013-14 school year, NJDOE will be able to draw upon two consecutive years of effectiveness data and will publish the complete range of effectiveness data for all preparation programs in order to further program transparency, to allow prospective applicants to make informed decisions, and to provide LEAs with important information about where to recruit teachers and principals. We will also work to ensure that prospective students receive this information, so that they will have the opportunity to attend the best possible programs.

The transparency of the data relating to the programs will help provide necessary information on what programs should be scaled up – possibly to a state-wide level -- as well as what programs should be changed. To expand those preparation programs that produce effective teachers and principals, NJDOE will provide incentive grants funded through RTTT-state-funds that will allow the scaling-up of effective traditional and alternative programs, or will expand successful preparation partnerships with LEAs.

Once the effectiveness evaluation system is fully operation, NJDOE will work with the State Board of Education to propose amendments to the regulations regarding the Program Approval Council (N.J.A.C. 6A:9-10.1 et seq.) to include the effectiveness evaluation data in the review of preparation programs and a significant factor in their recommendations regarding program approval status. As a result, the PAC will take significant actions with respect to reforming or eliminating preparation programs that consistently fail to produce effective teachers.

As the effectiveness evaluation system is designed and implemented, New Jersey will continue improving preparation programs, as well as working to expand effective ones. We will collaborate with traditional- and alternative-preparation programs and routes. Our goals in this collaboration will be to ensure that training on the use of the Curriculum and Assessment Spine (see B(3)) is embedded into teacher-preparation programs in advance of the student-teacher experience, and to ensure that incoming teachers are better-prepared for their classrooms by being equipped with the tools and pedagogic routines that are necessary to support student achievement in reading and mathematics. New Jersey will also leverage existing efforts to have the State Program Approval Council (PAC) embed the Curriculum and Assessment Spine in content-specific standards for preparation programs and LEAs. With these efforts, new teachers will receive the same professional learning that their more-experienced peers are receiving in school settings.

TIMELINES

Section D4: Timeline and Responsible Parties		
Action Steps	**Timeline**	**Responsible Parties**
Begin to embed the curriculum spine in teacher- and principal-preparation programs	October 2010	NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence, Program Approval Council
Embed the curriculum spine in all teacher- and school-leader preparation programs	2010-11; 2011-12	NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence, Program Approval Council
Following the release of the New Jersey	February 2011	NJDOE Division of

teacher and school-leader evaluations, begin the development of an evaluation system for teacher and school-leadership programs.		Professional Excellence, Program Approval Council
Release first draft of the evaluation framework for teacher and school-leadership programs, provide a 45 day-long public-comment period and solicit expert comments.	April 2011	NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence, PPEEC
Develop a revised draft of the preparation program evaluation system, followed by a second one-month public-comment period and expert review.	June 2011	NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence, PPEEC
The final preparation program evaluation system rating system will be established.	September 2011	NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence, PPEEC
Each teacher and school leadership program will be evaluated, according to the evaluation system.	2013-14	NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence
The ratings of all teacher and school-leadership programs will be publicly and broadly announced	2013-14	NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence
The state-RTTT-funded incentive program for expanding successful LEA alternative programs will begin.	June 2014	NJDOE Division of Professional Excellence

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance Measures	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most	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.	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available	Baseline	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.					100%
The data on the links established between higher education and the NJDOE will not be available until the third year of this proposed work.					
General data to be provided at time of application:					
Total number of teacher credentialing programs in the State.	116*	[redacted]			

Total number of principal credentialing programs in the State.	19**	[redacted]
Total number of teachers in the State.	114,109	
Total number of principals in the State.	4,083	

*There are 24 traditional preparation programs and over 90 alternative routes (through different campuses and programs). A list of programs and categories is available in Appendix I.

**There are 18 traditional leader-preparation programs and one alternative route – the EXCEL program –which is described in Section D.

(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

PROVIDING EFFECTIVE SUPPORT TO TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

- New Jersey ensures that all teachers and school leaders receive relevant, timely and sustained support from supervisors, content-focused instructional coaches, and teacher leaders to further develop effective professional-learning environments.

- New Jersey will also create networks of discipline-focused learning communities to build relationships across schools to study, reflect, and assess student work and instructional practice, both face-to-face and online.

New Jersey has spent the past decade developing a content-based, comprehensive, and rigorous professional-development system for all educators, including teachers and

school and LEA leaders, as they move across the continuum of practice from novice to veteran educator. We have created a school-based, collaborative professional-development-planning process, recognizing that the school is the locus of organizational change.

As part of RTTT, the State will have the opportunity to increase its capacity to directly provide or coordinate the delivery of face-to-face or online professional services, by implementing a technology platform to support asynchronous professional development. In addition, implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment Spine – a central theme of our proposal – will require new kinds of professional collaboration, new ways of working together, and a new platform for sustained adult learning.

Professional Development for Teachers: An Integrated System of Learning

State regulations require all teachers to accrue 100 hours of professional-development time every five years, which are tied to teacher evaluations (N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.2). The regulations also require LEA- and school-based planning for professional learning, and call for teachers to play a key role in the design and review of school-based professional-learning opportunities that are specifically tied to student-learning results.

Professional Development for School and LEA Leaders (N.J.A.C. 6A:9-16)

The school-leader professional-development requirement calls for each school leader to develop a professional-growth plan every three years, by working with a team that supports his or her efforts through collegial reflection. This requirement aligns school leaders' learning with their professional standards, the professional-development standards, and each individual's professional-growth plan (PGP). Every three years, school leaders must provide evidence of plan fulfillment, including a narrative account of goals and their achievement, along with related documentation. The plans will be strengthened through expanded opportunities for collaborations among school leaders, with a particular focus on the Curriculum and Assessment Spine (see B(3)).

Monitoring of the Professional-Development Planning Process

Monitoring of the LEA professional-development plan is conducted in two ways: First, the LEAs and their schools are required to develop a sound evaluation process to examine the impact of professional development on teachers' practice and students' learning. Secondly, LEA professional-development plans are reviewed through the Quality Single Accountability Continuum (QSAC) at the state level, to ensure that the planning and implementation of professional development remains focused on improving student learning.

Individual teachers are asked to provide evidence of learning through their individual professional development plan (PDP), and to provide evidence of the implementation of what has been learned at the annual summary conference, for evaluation. Teachers' learning is focused on student-learning needs and can be team-based to support collective goals, or differentiated to support the specific learning needs of the teacher.

An administrator's professional learning is monitored annually through peer-review committees. While the professional learning of administrators is not tied to the annual evaluation process, the plan is reviewed and approved by the LEAs' Chief School Administrator.

PROVIDING EFFECTIVE, DATA-INFORMED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Through RTTT, New Jersey will provide significant professional-development services and support to assist participating LEAs in building the content and pedagogical knowledge of school leaders and teachers. Research suggests that effective teacher

learning focuses on academic content,[1] and emerging research suggests that effective teacher learning and instructional improvement also involves teachers actively working together and with experts to examine student work, identify effective instructional strategies, and establish a cycle of continuous improvement of teaching and learning.[2] There will be face-to-face, content-focused training for LEA supervisors and for principals at Regional Service Centers, and there will be ongoing online support for principals, supervisors, and teachers as they engage in formative assessment practices, data analysis to inform instruction, and ongoing modeling of effective collaborative processes.

Effective Professional Services to Build Teacher Knowledge and Skills

Emerging evidence shows that the continuous improvement of practice and student performance requires sustained and content-focused professional development for teachers. The professional development that will occur will be the result of sustained relationships among professionals in the context of specific schools and classrooms. Drawing upon the relevant research, we have outlined below the critical features of the effective professional services that will be provided:

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[1] *Yoon, Kwang-Suk, Teresa Duncan, Silvia Lee, Beth Scarloss, and Kathy Shapley (2007). Reviewing the Evidence on How Teacher Professional Development Affects Student Achievement. (Issues & Answers report, REL 2007-No. 033). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Science, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Education Laboratory Southwest.*

[2] *Darling-Hammond, Linda, Ruth Chung Wei, Aletha Andree, Nikole Richardson, and Stelio Orphanos (2009). Professional Learning in the Learning Profession: A Status Report on Teacher Development in the U.S. and Abroad: Technical report. Dallas: National Staff Development Council and The School Design Network at Stanford University.*

- The adult-learning activity will be **content-based** — improving and deepening teachers' knowledge of the content of the curriculum they teach. Teachers need to know the content they teach well, and also need to know about common student misconceptions or learning challenges. Professional services will be grounded in pedagogical routines associated with a specific content area, and will be supported by supervisors who are trained as instructional coaches, and teacher leaders who are skilled in adapting instruction in response to student misconceptions.

- The use of **evidence** in design. Employing evidence of the strengths and needs of learners in the setting, and evidence of what works that is drawn from research and clinical experience, enhances the likelihood that the professional development will contribute to better learning outcomes. We will provide teachers with models of effective practice and tools to improve their skills as diagnosticians, developers, and users of knowledge about their practice.

- The work will emphasize the **collective participation** of groups of teachers from the same school, department, or grade level. Research suggests that the most effective professional development is organized around groups of teachers from a school who share responsibility for the same children and/or subject. Our approach designs content-focused collaborative learning, led by instructional coaches and teacher-leaders, for all teachers across the grade levels within a given discipline. Over time, teachers will engage with teachers in other schools as well.

- There will be an emphasis on **active learning**, as suggested by research on adult learning. Teachers will be engaged in the meaningful analysis of teaching and learning -- for example, by scoring and analyzing student work, by developing and "perfecting" a standards-based curriculum unit, by sharing data and observing a lesson and reflecting on it, and by observing classroom practice or video of classroom practice, which will be stored and accessible in video libraries.

- **Coherence** will be created as teachers are exposed to the connections among student content and performance standards, instructional materials, local and state

assessments, school and LEA goals, and the development of a professional community.

- The active support of **school and LEA leaders is critical**. School leaders will participate in professional-development activities, in order to be able to support the use of the new knowledge and skills by teachers.

These features imply that professional services should be a serious business, be a product of thoughtful design, and be clear and compelling. From this perspective, if provided with rich opportunities to learn and with compelling rationales for engaging in these activities, teachers who are professionals should be expected to incorporate newly-acquired knowledge and skills into their classroom practices.

Delivering Curriculum-Focused and Sustained Professional Training through a Blended System

Relatively few LEAs are now equipped to provide the intensive curriculum-based and labor-intensive coaching, mentoring, and school-based work that is required for teachers to develop and deepen their subject-matter expertise and pedagogical-content knowledge. The Regional Centers will help equip the LEA teacher leaders and supervisors with the knowledge they need to provide customized and targeted professional development, based on specific teacher needs that are identified in each teacher's evaluation. Participating LEAs will place a priority on assigning teacher leaders and supervisors as content-focused instructional coaches to our neediest schools, in order to bring the learning alive in the teachers' professional communities.

Teachers and school leaders will be supported in improving their practice through attending face-to-face workshops, participating in professional-learning communities, engaging in asynchronous distance learning, and taking advantage of virtual collaborative environments. In New Jersey's model, professional development for educators – at any level of the organization – will be rooted in practice and in the communities in which educators work. The focus will be on how educators analyze their practice against examples of "best practices" and principles and routines of effective instruction.

Instructional coaching will extend this training by providing on-site support and guidance. Ultimately, the collective work of supervisors, content-focused instructional coaches, and teacher-leaders will reduce teacher isolation, lead teachers to develop common habits of mind, and contribute to the development of a collaborative-learning community.

Face-to Face Professional Development for Teachers

Face-to-face professional services will include two modes: content-focused training, and data-centric training. Instructional coaches and teacher leaders will deliver content-specific professional development through face-to-face workshops and courses. Additionally, teacher leaders, instructional coaches, and supervisors will facilitate workshops to assist teachers in analyzing formative, end-of-unit, and summative assessment data, as well as adapting instruction based on student needs. These data-centric workshops for teachers are designed to foster a culture of data-informed decision-making throughout the school and LEA.

Asynchronous Distance Learning

To extend the reach of face-to-face professional development, web-based modules will be accessible to teachers and school leaders throughout the school year, to provide ongoing support to individual teachers and teams as they roll out the concepts they have learned in face-to-face workshops. Online training modules will be structured around readings, discussion forums, and online conversations with colleagues and experts in the field, which will address common questions and challenges that educators face. In addition, participants will have access to a library of online resources regarding the content and pedagogical routines that are embedded in exemplar lessons. Finally, modules will have strands for the instruction of students with disabilities, English-language-learners, and students of poverty, and will include strategies for effective instruction and assessment that are aligned to content standards.

Collaborative Real-Time Feedback by Video

Video provides an excellent medium for teacher learning—both to view exemplar lessons and to receive feedback on personal practice. The professional-services system will include interactive video features that allow teachers to participate in virtual classrooms where they engage as learners in exemplar lessons. Teachers will also be able to upload video of their own teaching and receive feedback from teacher leaders and instructional coaches on their actual classroom practice. Video recording of classroom instruction, for feedback during or after the conclusion of the lesson, will encourage teachers to collectively observe and examine the pedagogical routines associated with particular content, and share their observations and suggestions with a larger network.

Support for Data Analysis

Research has shown the importance of school staff's using multiple sources of data to identify and monitor student learning challenges and successes. Teachers and school leaders will be provided with tools, resources, and training that will promote their ability to "dig deeply" into the data to find causal relationships. The curriculum-focused and sustained professional training will produce much data about teaching and learning, including answers to formative assessments, student work, and classroom observations, and it is important to know how to analyze such data in ways that are productive for both teachers and students. There will be tools on the IIS to help analyze such data, and the instructional coaches will also be available to offer assistance in understanding, analyzing, and applying the lessons to be learned from this information.

Instructional Coaches

Research has shown that content-focused coaching is a professional-development model that can improve instruction and promote student achievement by supporting teachers in delivering and reflecting on rigorous, standards-based lessons.[3] Such content-focused coaching helps to expand the capacity of an LEA by assisting teachers in developing their

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[3] *Matsumura, L.C. (2009)*

practice. In New Jersey, certificated supervisors will provide targeted, content-based professional development, both onsite and through the online system. Highly-effective practicing teachers will have the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities by becoming teacher leaders who provide instructional leadership, as needed, for specific targeted content areas (e.g. algebra , Shakespeare units). Both certificated supervisors and teacher leaders will become well-versed in the pedagogy and content routines that are illustrated by the exemplar lessons.

In order to ensure a high degree of specialized support to teachers, schools will have access to expertise in all core content areas (English/language arts, mathematics, and science, at a minimum). New Jersey will initially train teacher leaders selected from LEAs and supervisors as content-focused instructional coaches in participating LEAs. After the roll-out of the proposed state-level evaluation system, highly-effective teachers in participating LEAs may also be selected to serve as instructional coaches. Instructional coaches will be members of the school-leadership team who take an active role in improving classroom instruction and intervention by sharing their expertise through training and in-class support.

Over the next three-to-six months, New Jersey will work with the LEAs to design an efficient selection, training, distribution, and accountability system for teacher leaders and supervisors who serve as instructional coaches. All instructional coaches will be content-oriented, and will not be doing out-of-content coaching. Instructional coaches will apply for the position. Applicants will have to show that they meet the following requirements: formal education and required certifications, a Master's degree or equivalent experience in the content area, and 3-5 years teaching experience at the level at which the coach will work. The recruiting and hiring process will include a series of performance requirements, including the requirement that the applicant submit a writing sample and engage in an interview during which he or she will be asked about his or her views on the coach's role, and about a professional article he or she will have received in advance and been given the chance to read. They will also observe and respond to a video clip of a classroom lesson. Successful candidates will be those who demonstrate

the following proficiencies: strong pedagogical content knowledge, a reflective stance as a learner, and collaborative interpersonal skills.

Additionally, LEAs will work to leverage applicable intermediary educational units, statewide professional-development networks, and/or teacher unions to participate in the professional learning.

BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL

New Jersey proposes to develop and implement a nested learning system of classroom and school supports that will include the pedagogical, social, and structural supports that are necessary for teachers to transform their teaching in core content areas. Such a system depends upon expanding forms of human capital (teacher knowledge and skills), social capital (supportive and demanding professional communities of practice), and organizational design (learning organizations characterized by distributed leadership). This practice of school-based inquiry teams -- where grade-level teachers meet regularly to discuss student learning problems, devise solutions, and test solutions in their classrooms -- has been proven to improve student outcomes.[4]

Investing in Social Capital: Building Professional-Learning Communities and Placing Emphasis on Principal Network/Administrative Coaches

Professional-learning communities (PLC) will build relationships across schools within the LEAs, treating school buildings as inter-related units. Accordingly, building and sustaining professional-learning communities will require LEA leadership to provide the

[4] *Gallimore, Ronald, Bradley Ermerling, William Saunders, and Claude Goldenberg (2009). Moving the learning of teaching closer to practice: Teacher education implications of school-based inquiry teams. The Elementary School Journal, 109(5):537-553.*

conditions, resources, infrastructure and accountability system that will be necessary to make the PLCs successful. NJDOE will work with participating LEAs to provide time for teachers and school leaders to collaborate, identify coordinators among supervisors and teacher leaders who are skilled in both content and pedagogy, and set shared expectations for academic rigor.

The PLCs will focus on discipline-based content; therefore, the core group of participants will teach in the same academic area (e.g., English/language arts, mathematics, or science) or grade-level, and relationships among PLCs will be built within content areas. In accordance with their focus on content, PLCs will be centered on the teacher-identified gateway aspects of the grade-level curriculum (as outlined in Section B). Between face-to-face meetings, PLCs will collaborate using virtual tools such as online discussions, blogs, wikis, and shared online resources. Teachers will also engage in organized visits through school Learning Walks, in which participants spend five-to-ten minutes in each of several classrooms looking at student work and classroom artifacts, and observing instruction through the eyes and voices of students. These Learning Walks will be part of the work of a nested learning community, and will support a recursive process of constantly improving and refining instruction through professional-development and study. Such a design -- which builds social capital through professional communities of practice, and supports the collective review of student work -- has been correlated with higher teacher satisfaction and retention, higher student engagement, greater student commitment to learning, and higher student achievement.

LEA Collaborative Networks

Within each participating LEA, teacher leaders will be responsible for leading a core PLC of cross-grade content-area teachers within each school. Depending on the grade level, teachers may be members of one or more content area groups. LEA curriculum specialists and Instructional Coaches will also facilitate the sharing, development, and refinement of evidence-based practice through cross-school content groups. Both teacher

leaders and school leadership teams will engage in an LEA-wide collaborative network to more effectively and efficiently support and grow great teachers by carefully evaluating program-implementation and results.

MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Classroom practice measures, analyzed in combination with interim assessments, will provide relevant and timely information to adapt professional services to meet the specific needs of teachers and students. With classroom-observation protocols and formative and through-course assessment measures to capture student academic growth, we will have schools and LEAs track student performance by classroom teacher, by the quality of instruction, and by the professional development in which the teacher actively participated. Accordingly, we will have the necessary tools to engage in a rigorous review of the impact of professional services on classroom practice, and the effects that practice changes have on student achievement. In the long run, it is the lessons that emerge from this holistic data set that will enable the state and the LEAs to shift attention and resources to the methods and approaches that will best help children succeed.

The NJDOE will provide systems to track the professional development in which teachers and school leaders are engaged, track the fidelity of their participation, and enable evaluations of services. They will also work in collaboration with participating LEAs, teachers, and national leaders to design transparent evaluations of professional services, including professional-learning communities. Participating LEAs will also be expected to use effectiveness information to improve and scale professional-development programs that have proven to be successful in meeting teacher and school-leader needs.

SPECIFIC ACTION STEPS

NJDOE will take each of the following specific action steps:

- Train a cadre of highly-effective supervisors to become more highly-skilled, content-focused instructional coaches to support the collective study of lessons, student work, and students' formative-assessment data.
- Implement a blended professional-development system that couples face-to-face professional development, led by content-focused instructional coaches and teacher leaders, with asynchronous and virtual learning environments.
- By means of virtual and face-to-face environments, provide support for school leaders and teachers to learn from master teachers through real-time video, and to engage in a collaborative analysis of exemplar units' pedagogy and content.
- Provide substantive, content-focused professional-development tools and resources for school leaders and teachers on evidence-based pedagogical routines that have been demonstrated to have a large effect on student achievement.
- Develop a nimble technology platform that will support online Professional Communities of Practice and real-time knowledge-management that is responsive to student and teacher needs.
- Work with schools and LEAs to create the conditions necessary for a robust network of Professional Learning Communities, to allow for the collaboration and sharing of best practices and to grow social capital throughout the LEAs and throughout the state.
- Provide substantive, content-focused professional development to teachers and school leaders on evidence-based pedagogical routines that have been demonstrated to have a large effect on student achievement.
- By means of face-to-face and virtual environments, work with teachers to use instructionally-relevant information to support their students and select high-quality and effective instructional tools and approaches.

The NJDOE will expect participating LEAs to:

- Modify school schedules to provide common planning time by grade-level and/or subject area for lesson study, collective review of student work, and review of students' formative-assessment data.

- Design and support professional-learning communities, with instructional coaches and teacher leaders, focused on disciplinary content and charged with studying, applying, and reflecting on the implementation of content tools, lesson observations, and student work.
- Evaluate professional development based on student results and changes in classroom or leadership practices.
- Create environments in which teachers and school leaders use instructionally-relevant information to alter their instruction, in order to better support their students, and to better select high-quality and effective instructional tools and approaches.

TIMELINES

Section D5: Timeline and Responsible Parties		
Action Steps	**Timeline**	**Responsible Parties**
Review and refine teacher leader criteria	August – September 2010	LEAs, School leaders
Train a cadre of supervisors and teacher leaders to become content-focused instructional coaches	August 2010-Septemer 2010	Office of Professional Induction, Development, Evaluation & Certification
Assign coaches to schools with a priority to low-achieving schools in the LEA and, as necessary, modify schedule to provide common planning time by grade-level and/or subject area for lesson study, collective review of student work, and data-analysis	September 2010	LEA superintendent and schools leaders
Convene PLCs for teachers by grade or content area in participating LEAs	September 2010- ongoing	Teacher Leaders and supervisors (for teachers to whom they are not responsible for formal evaluations), school leaders
Support for PLCs: reviewing student work, examining and refining exemplar lessons, review of content-specific instructional strategies, rubrics to evaluate the quality of PLCs	September 2010-ongoing	Office of Professional Induction, Development, Evaluation & Certification, LEAs
Onsite data-drive workshops to support analysis of formative data and adapt instruction based on student needs	October 2010-ongoing	Instructional coaches, teacher leaders with support form LEA and NJDOE
Implement virtual professional development tools including expanded asynchronous courses	May-June 2010	Office of Professional Induction, Development, Evaluation & Certification, selected contractor
Evaluation of effectiveness of professional development to improve practices and student outcomes, using existing LEA observation protocols and formative assessments	May 2010-ongoing	LEA superintendents, school leaders, instructional coaches with support from the Office of Professional Induction, Development, Evaluation & Certification
Rollout professional development for gateway concepts identified by teacher survey	September 2011	Office of Professional Induction, Development, Evaluation & Certification; Office of Student Learning

		Assessments
Pilot full evaluation system and accompanying professional development	September 2011	Office of Professional Induction, Development, Evaluation & Certification, selected contractor
Measure impact of social capital tools to create environments in which teachers and school leaders use instructionally-relevant information to alter instruction through professional learning environment survey (D(3)); Widely publish and disseminate lessons learned	September 2011 - ongoing	Office of Professional Induction, Development, Evaluation & Certification
Training for highly-effective teachers in evaluation pilot LEAs to become content-focused instruction coaches, teacher leaders, and mentors	July - August 2012	Office of Professional Induction, Development, Evaluation & Certification, selected contractor
Full implementation of the evaluation system and accompanying professional development	September 2012	Office of Professional Induction, Development, Evaluation & Certification
Launch collection of video clips from highly-effective teachers for collaborative review and discussion,	September 2012	Office of Professional Induction, Development, Evaluation & Certification, selected contractor
Launch tools for instructional coaches and teacher leaders to upload actual classroom practice for review by teacher teams and coaches	September 2012	Office of Professional Induction, Development, Evaluation & Certification, selected contractor
Develop online modules to support ongoing learning and collaboration	October 2012	Office of Professional Induction, Development, Evaluation & Certification, selected contractor
Measure effectiveness of professional development to improve classroom and leadership practices using evaluation system metrics in pilot LEAs; Widely publish and disseminate lessons learned/	October 2012 - ongoing	Evaluation system pilot LEA superintendents, school leaders, instructional coaches with support from the Office of Professional Induction, Development, Evaluation & Certification
Recruit and select highly-effective teachers from LEAs to receive additional professional responsibility training and commensurate compensation to serve as teacher leaders/instructional coaches	July-August 2013	Office of Professional Induction, Development, Evaluation & Certification, selected contractor
Teachers and school leaders design professional-development plans on the basis of effectiveness evaluations	July-August 2013	LEA superintendents, supervisors, school leaders, teachers

SECTION E

Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools
(50 total 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.

Recommended maximum response length: One page

INTERVENING IN THE LOWEST-ACHIEVING SCHOOLS AND LEAS

New Jersey has the legal, statutory and regulatory authority to intervene directly in our state's persistently-low-achieving schools and LEAs.

New Jersey has the authority to charter new schools, providing new, high-quality schools for students who are currently assigned to failing schools

In New Jersey, the Department of Education can partially or fully take over a failing school district and its schools. The New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC) system, N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-3 et seq., establishes rules for evaluating and monitoring all public-school districts in the State. NJQSAC is designed to be a single, comprehensive accountability system that consolidates and incorporates the monitoring requirements of applicable State programs and triggers federal monitoring programs. Under NJQSAC, public-school districts are evaluated on five key component areas of school-district effectiveness—instruction and program; personnel; fiscal management; operations; and governance—to determine the extent to which the districts are providing a thorough, efficient education to students. In the past, New Jersey has taken over three districts, two of which (Newark and Paterson) remain under state takeover.

REFORM PLAN CRITERIA

(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

Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

- Implement comprehensive and substantive interventions that address root causes of low performance at the school level in Tiers I and II.
- Build LEA capacity to support direct interventions in Tier I, II, and III persistently-low-achieving schools.
- Build LEA capacity to turn around persistently-low-achieving schools.
- Create a School Renewal Zone for cross-district collaboration, cross-service programs alignment modeled on the Harlem Children's Zone, and new policy flexibility and authority.
- Recruit our best principals and teachers to our lowest-performing schools.
- Closely monitor reform-plan-implementation fidelity against measurable benchmarks, and close schools that do not improve.
- Launch a bold "new schools" strategy using the state's strong chartering authority and the expertise of high-performing-school operators.

(i) Identification of Persistently-Lowest-Achieving Schools

New Jersey has identified its persistently-lowest-achieving schools using the U.S. Department of Education's School Improvement Grant's guidelines. The list of schools, as well as a description of the methodology used to identify these schools, is found at the end of this section. Twenty Title I schools are on the TIER I list and 12 schools are on the TIER II list, for a total of 32 schools. Nearly one-third of these schools are located in Newark, a district that is under state control and that is exploring innovative school models to provide options for students. Additionally, New Jersey has identified 174 Tier III schools in 62 LEAs. Our Turnaround Plan will provide direct services to schools on the Tier I and II list and capacity building services to the 62 LEAs with schools on the Tier III list.

(ii) New Jersey's Turnaround Plan

The 32 persistently-low-achieving schools on our list have been failing to meet the needs of their students for far too long. The fundamental question driving our approach is,

"How do we ensure that the students assigned to persistently-underperforming schools gain access to better education options as soon as possible?" As a result, we are pursuing a two-pronged strategy.

First, we will undertake a wide array of activities, including the strongest interventions possible, to improve our existing set of failing schools. New Jersey will take immediate actions to improve services to students and sustain long-term school transformation. This includes bold steps to dramatically accelerate student achievement in our 32 persistently-low-achieving schools, and to build capacity in our 62 LEAs with Tier III schools. Our state's unique and successful partnership with the highly-successful Harlem Children's Zone has laid the foundation for cross-agency collaboration and a resolute commitment to do whatever it takes to improve the life chances of these students. These activities will primarily adhere to the "turnaround" and "transformation" models.

Second, we will pursue a vigorous "new schools" strategy. While we will do everything in our power to improve our struggling schools, we are mindful of the significant challenges to fix failing schools.[1] We also know that the lagging schools of yesterday need not be the schools of tomorrow; that is, no school has the right to exist in perpetuity if it is failing its children. Finally, we are aware that many of the nation's highest-performing high-poverty schools are newly-started charters. We have firsthand knowledge of this phenomenon: The highest-performing schools in Newark today were started fresh as charters by the widely-recognized organizations KIPP and Uncommon Schools.

Accordingly, we will utilize the state's authority to provide a variety of school options, including achievement academies, charter schools, magnet schools—that will replace a number of those that are in a persistent state of failure. We will make full use of our state's expert nonprofits partners, its store of facilities, its human capital, and its current charter-operators—as well as operators from outside our state borders—to make New

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[1] *Loveless, Tom. (2010). The 2009 Brown Center Report on American Education: How Well Are Students Learning? The Brookings Institution. Washington, D.C.*

Jersey's performance on this second prong of our strategy a success. These activities will primarily adhere to the "closure" and "restart" options.

Building on New Jersey's Lessons Learned

New Jersey has a rich history of experience and achievement in turning around the lowest-achieving schools. Our state monitoring system (NJ QSAC) and our Comprehensive State System of School Support, together with a variety of local and statewide initiatives, have contributed to turning around schools and have improved outcomes for thousands of students who might not otherwise have had the opportunities to succeed in work, college, and life. A chart of the State's historic performance is included later in this section.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Programs must be coupled with **implementation fidelity and specific accountability.**
- Technical assistance through workshops and **modeling is key to creating change**.
- Schools and districts **continue to include ineffective programs,** rather than expanding effective ones.
- **Focusing on school climate** in a systematic manner **stimulates positive change.**
- District decision-makers **should not be permitted to re-circulate principals** among schools.
- Interventions must be developed in **collaboration with district staff**.
- LEAs need information and **assistance on the process to**

For the past several years, the schools on New Jersey's persistently-low-achieving-schools list have implemented a number of specific strategies. These have been attempted with varying degrees of effort and with inconsistent levels of success. Lack of fidelity in implementation and the failure to remove ineffective programs that drain resources have resulted in less-than-favorable results for students. Bold human-capital plans have been proven to be less effective when underperforming teachers and school leaders are re-circulated to other low-performing schools. Methods of coaching that focused on the uses of data, and on literacy intervention and supports, were also implemented, but such methods have not accelerated student learning to acceptable levels. We have learned that, in order to positively affect student achievement, we must strengthen the State's role, provide immediate services to students, and implement a comprehensive, school-wide approach to reform that addresses the root causes of low performance. Interventions must also be paired with data-based accountability that

creates a sense of urgency, and that calls for action when schools do not improve. New Jersey's Turnaround Plan outlines our aggressive approach to support schools and describes the bold actions we will take when schools fail to show improvement.

(ii) Identifying the Root Causes of Low Achievement to Inform Turnaround-Model Selection

We have learned that not all low-performing schools are the same, and that the reasons for consistently-low performance are just as varied. School performance can be affected by many factors including: the learning climate, instructional rigor, quality of instruction, student and staff mobility, school management, alignment of the LEA curriculum, and LEA policy. As a result, the interventions for the persistently low-achieving schools will be designed to address the school-specific root causes.

Needs-Assessment Team

NJDOE will assign a Needs-Assessment Team to identify the root causes of low performance in all 32 persistently low-achieving schools. This state-RTTT-funded team will include outside experts in the areas of academic content, leadership, and school culture, and will be tasked with reviewing past reports and citing specific evidence collected to identify root causes of low performance. Managed by our cross-functional Office of State-District Partnerships within the NJDOE and led by the RTTT officer (see Section A), the Needs-Assessment Team will be assigned within 15 days of the identification of a persistently-low-achieving school.

SELECTING THE RIGHT TURNAROUND MODEL:

- Matching school and LEA needs to model strengths.
- Analyzing the capacity to implement change.
- Inventory of facilities

Responsible Party: Office of State-District Partnerships (reports directly to the Commissioner).

The Needs-Assessment Team will work with the NJDOE to initiate a school-climate study that will evaluate multiple dimensions of school climate, including the instructional staff's

expectations of students, perceptions of students, teachers, and parents; relevant data (e.g., data on attendance; disciplinary referrals, and suspensions); and the results of observations. The climate-survey and data-analysis guide will be available for use by September 2010, as the result of our refining existing New Jersey tools. To ensure strong alignment between the curriculum and the state content standards, the Needs-Assessment Review Team will also conduct a comprehensive curriculum audit in core content areas[2] and will review the fidelity of the implementation of the curriculum in the classroom.

After completing the needs assessment, the team will generate a research-supported recommendation that is designed to answer a straightforward question: Does a new school, a turnaround attempt, or a transformational change offer greater promise for the students who are currently assigned to this persistently-underperforming school?

This determination will be based on several considerations, including: the LEAs' capacity to implement each of the four turnaround models, the current local educator workforce, the human-capital pipeline, the strength of community-based organizations in the underperforming school's community, the availability of alternative school operators, and more. The state will then work with the LEA to design an implementation-and-monitoring plan that is built around the best option available.

Inventory of Available Space

In advance of a decision on the most promising strategy for an underperforming school, the commissioner will conduct an inventory of space in that LEA, in order to identify opportunities for the consolidation and reallocation of space for more efficient use and to determine if space can be made available for charter schools. With declining enrollment in several of our urban centers, numerous facilities are underutilized, providing the opportunity for the creation of new school options, such as charter schools, magnet schools, or specialty academies.

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[2] New Jersey has established core content standards in the following subject areas: Language Arts Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Visual and Performing Arts, Comprehensive Health and Physical Education, Technology, Twenty-First Century Life and Careers, World Languages, and Social Studies.

In New Jersey and across the nation, inadequate access to suitable facilities remains one of the greatest obstacles to the expansion of charter schooling. We are committing to removing this obstacle to the very best of our ability. It is unfair to taxpayers and to families seeking new school options for a district to maintain half-empty facilities when capable charter-operators urgently need usable space.

The Commissioner's facilities review will ultimately enable successful school-management organizations to open new schools and/or expand current schools, consistent with the Charter School Program Act, N.J.S.A. 18A:36A-1 et seq., (for more on the program, see section F(2)). Overall, we believe that the proper management of educational facilities is an essential component of the successful administration of a portfolio of schools, and a necessary condition for the closure and restart options.

Designing Turnaround Plans and Holding Schools Accountable

In persistently-low-achieving schools, high expectations must be established for both the students and the adults in the building, individually and collectively. Immediately following the needs assessment, New Jersey will assign a Network Turnaround Officer to support the school in designing a high-quality and research-supported intervention plan. Intervention plans will be due forty-five days after the Needs Assessment Team identifies root causes of low performance. Specific, incremental measurable and attainable benchmarks will be included in each school's intervention plan, and the school's performance, as compared to these benchmarks, will be closely monitored by the LEA and the NJDOE, to ensure the success of these efforts.

Network-Turnaround Officer (NTO)

The Network Turnaround Officers (NTOs) will work with schools, LEAs, and the State to design and implement customized intervention plans. Taking into account each school's root causes of low performance, its relevant geographic factors and its school context, NJDOE will create networks comprised of two to three schools that are facing

similar challenges, and will assign a NTO with proven experience in turning around schools to lead each school cluster.

This research-supported, cluster-based approach to turnaround has shown significant promise.[3] In some cases, all the schools will be located in one district, while in others, the NTO will serve schools in more than one district and will be responsible for coordinating operations across LEAs. The NTO will support the cross-LEA relationships that are necessary to build a collaborative work group among the LEA superintendents and school leaders.

As a facilitator of reform, the NTO will be responsible for initiating improvements in classroom instruction by helping to incorporate research-based practices in response to problems identified by the Needs-Assessment Team. In collaboration with the school principal, the NTO will set a clear path to distributed leadership within the schools, working with a team to build a cohesive, professional teaching culture. The NTO will also help the principal develop his/her turnaround management skills. As an evaluator, the NTO will monitor the schools' adherence to the intervention plan and their tracking of performance metrics, including metrics of academic achievement, against quantifiable plan objectives.

CLUSTER-BASED TURNAROUND OFFICERS:

- 3-5 schools per network
- National selection process to recruit highly-skilled and exceptional leaders
- Tiered support to build local capacity
- Clear lines of authority directly to NJDOE

Aligns with Title I, SIG programs

Responsible Parties: Office of State-District Partnerships

NJDOE has already begun NTO recruitment efforts by conducting a widely-published selection process to find outstanding candidates, supported by School Improvement Grant award from the U.S. Department of Education. Applicants' submissions are due by June 14, 2010. NJDOE's list of qualifications for an NTO and its recruitment postings can be found in Appendix II. The state will fund 100% of the NTO's compensation in the first two years, 65% in the third year, and 30% in the final year before the LEA takes full responsibility through LEA-directed RTTT funds, SIG funds, or other state and local resources.

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[3] Mass Insight. (2008) The Turnaround Challenge.

NTOs will be evaluated by NJDOE on the basis of each school's success in meeting its goals, the results of the state audit report, and the implementation fidelity of school-improvement interventions. NTOs will be re-assigned to other low-performing schools as the changes begin to take root in the original schools.

Key Considerations for Each Turnaround Model

The NTO will work closely with school and district leaders to design a customized intervention plan that aligns with the U.S. Department of Education turnaround models and that address the following key considerations.

Transformation

In order to facilitate the planning of this critical intervention, schools implementing the turnaround model will identify a new, qualified school leader no later than July for each school year. The school's leadership, in conjunction with the LEA, will also design a comprehensive reform plan, with measurable benchmarks for accelerating academic achievement, supporting the effectiveness of teachers, and improving school climate. The NTO will ensure the integration of federal programs and funding to support the intervention plan.

School Turnaround

Schools implementing the Turnaround Model will remove 50% of teaching staff in accordance with any applicable tenure laws. Schools and the LEAs will design measurable benchmarks to recruit and select high-quality staff with a demonstrated history of success. The NTO and LEA superintendent will actively recruit teachers and school leaders through the NJ Hire[4] site, and the state will provide an RTTT-funded $10,000 "Answering the Call" bonus for highly-effective teachers who are willing to teach in persistently-low-performing schools (see D(3)).

School Restart

4 NJ Hire is web service supporting an online application process for teachers and LEAs. This is a current contract, it is likely that an RFP will be issued on this work in the next six months.

LEAs may choose to restart the school, choosing one of the following options: (1) creating a charter school managed by a CMO consistent with the Charter School Program Act, N.J.S.A 18A:36-1 et seq.; (2) creating a specialized school such as a magnet school, or a small school-within-a school Achievement Academy led by a highly-effective teacher. The NTO and LEA will include specific action steps as part of their intervention plans for the use of existing facilities by the school operator. Furthermore, the NTO will work with the LEA to set academic-achievement benchmarks for the new school. NJDOE will monitor academic achievement annually to ensure that the needs of the students are being met.

School Closure

In some cases, closing a persistently-failing school is in the best interest of students. But this is only the case when those students are immediately provided with access to higher-performing schools. Therefore, any LEA choosing the closure option must develop an implementation plan with two parallel tracks: The first track will fully describe how the school will be closed by, for example, describing the employment consequences for affected teachers, stating the implications for the facility, and noting whether the school will be shuttered completely in one stage or depopulated over several years.

The second track of the implementation plan will describe how the LEA will make higher-performing seats available. For example, if new schools will be started, the plan will describe their status (e.g. charter, Achievement Academy), by whom they will be operated, their access to suitable facilities, their likelihood of offering an improved education, and more. The LEA will address similar and additional issues if it chooses to replicate or expand existing schools or to move affected students into under-enrolled schools.

Setting Measurable Progress Benchmarks

For all turnaround models, the LEAs, in collaboration with the NTO, will be required to develop rigorous, transparent, and measurable benchmarks for school improvement. These targets will be part of the school-intervention plan and therefore will be subject to

review and approval by NJDOE. The school leader, local superintendent, and school board must approve the intervention plan and associated benchmarks prior to the submission. Once approved, the intervention plan will serve as the operating agreement between the school, the LEA, and the state.

To achieve these measureable benchmarks, NTOs will develop short-term action plans in conjunction with the school leader. These short-term action plans will support the school leader and teachers in identifying manageable components of the school-improvement plan to implement with intensity and monitor on a 45-to-60-day basis.

Timeline and Approval Process for Intervention Plans

NJDOE's review of the intervention plans will take into account the evidence base of the intervention programs and the coordination of federal programs. If the plan is approved by NJDOE, it will take effect immediately. If it is not approved, the LEA will be given specific recommendations and feedback, and will continue to work with the NTO for another 15 days to revise the plan. Failure to receive NJDOE approval a second time will result, where appropriate, in the Commissioner of Education's seeking immediate intervention, ranging from LEA-directed interventions to closure.

Holding Schools Accountable for Implementation and Progress

On an annual basis, the NJDOE will conduct an external implementation audit of curriculum, academic growth, school climate, teacher evaluations, and accompanying targeted professional development. The NJDOE audit will also identify issues in the LEA that impact the school's implementation of the plan. The implementation audit will have a precise focus on the persistently low achieving school's implementation plan, similar to the QSAC process used for all schools in the state. The report will explicitly report on progress as measured against the quantifiable benchmarks of the intervention plan. These annual audits of each persistently-low-achieving school will include recommendations for program improvements.

In the absence of sufficient progress, or of implementation fidelity, the audit will include a recommendation for school closure. The results of this audit will be reported publicly and will serve as part of the evaluation of the Network-Turnaround Officer. Finally, these audits will be submitted to the local district and reviewed and discussed locally.

HOLDING SCHOOLS ACCOUNTABLE FOR PROGRESS:

- Measurable within-year benchmarks
- Closure or restart of schools that do not make progress
- Ongoing support for schools that exit PLA status

Responsible Party: Office of State-District Partnerships

Schools implementing the Turnaround and Transformation will have up to three years to demonstrate significant measurable progress in academic achievement. In the absence of such progress, the school will be closed, reconstituted, or restarted by an authorized charter-school provider, consistent with the Charter School Program Act, N.J.S.A. 18A:36A-1 et seq. Schools that are slated for closure based on their failure to demonstrate sufficient progress on incremental measures of school progress will be closed in the following year.

A school that sufficiently improves academic performance and is no longer considered persistently-low-achieving will continue to receive additional support for up to two years and will receive $100,000 to support ongoing improvement efforts. Services to ensure sustained success will include the NTO's working with the principal to design and implement personalized professional-development plans for teachers, continued support from content-focused supervisors, and continued access to cross-service integration supports. NJDOE is committed to ensuring that the positive environment that led to the turnaround continues. Too often, a school that begins to show progress is not able to sustain the acceleration of academic achievement without continued support.

(ii) Comprehensive Interventions to Tier I and II Schools

To support the transformation or turnaround of a school, all elements must support student achievement: standards-based curriculum instruction and assessments; leadership and governance; professional development; a culture and climate focused on student success; and community involvement. New Jersey's plan for RTTT couples immediate

interventions for students with comprehensive and substantive reforms to dramatically improve the school as a whole.

Immediate Services for Students	Comprehensive School Interventions
• Extended learning time • Exemplar lessons designed to engage students in the learning process • Access to highly-effective teachers in the classroom or through virtual classes • Increasing new school options for students	• Transformation authority for principals: staffing, schedule, budget • Turnaround officer to lead and support change • Content-focused instructional coaching coupled with the use of data to inform decision-making • 5% extended time for teacher collaboration • Cross-service integration • Community engagement
New Jersey will close or restart schools that do not meet measurable benchmarks towards improvement.	

Developing Exceptional School Leaders and Teachers

Research suggests that principals and superintendents have a greater impact on student learning than any other factor except the quality of classroom instruction.[5] Principals can profoundly influence student achievement by working with teachers to shape a school environment that is conducive to learning; aligning instruction with a standards-based curriculum; organizing resources to improve classroom instruction and student learning; and making good decisions about hiring, professional learning, and other issues that influence the quality of teaching.

DEVELOPING & RECRUITING TRANSFORMATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERS:

- Three-week intensive Leadership Academy
- Partnering with cutting-edge IHEs to create "turnaround" credentialing program
- Supporting collaborative networks for shared vision and team problem-solving

Aligns with D(3), D(4) D(5)

Responsible Party:

Office of State-District

Recruiting the Best School Leaders and Teachers

[5] Leithwood, Kenneth, Karen Seashore Louis, Stephen Anderson, and Kyla Wahlstrom (2004). How Leadership Influences Student Learning. New York: The Wallace Foundation.

New Jersey's persistently-low-achieving schools deserve our best school leaders and teachers. As part of the SIG-funded Leadership Academy in July 2010, NJDOE -- in collaboration with the district administration and the NTOs -- will develop a list of criteria and skills that LEAs should consider in the selection of school leaders, including demonstrable leadership skills, innovation in school operations, and content and instructional expertise. Participants will be expected to elicit and take into account feedback from institutions of higher education and local stakeholder groups for discussion at the Leadership Academy.

As New Jersey's evaluation system is being developed, NJDOE will actively recruit teachers with National Board Certification to serve in persistently-low-achieving schools starting in the 2011-12 school year. Also in 2011-12, New Jersey will launch an expanded recruitment site that will pair teaching candidates' strengths with schools' identified needs (see D(3)).

Once the evaluation system is implemented in 2012-13, our state's highly-effective teachers and school leaders will also be eligible for a $10,000 "Answering the Call" state-RTTT-funded bonus to teach in persistently-low achieving schools. Highly-effective teachers will receive $5,000 to begin teaching in a persistently-low-achieving school and an additional $5,000 for remaining at the school for three years, so long as they continue to be rated highly effective (see D(3)). For highly-effective teachers who are already teaching in persistently-low-achieving schools, the "Answering the Call" program will provide $5,000 in state-RTTT-funds. Additionally, LEAs with persistently-low-achieving schools will be encouraged to participate in the compensation-systems pilots, thus allowing schools and teachers to receive a financial reward for achieving exceptional student growth among our state's lowest-performing students.

To support highly-effective teachers who are new to persistently-low-achieving schools, New Jersey will build its mentoring and induction pilot with the Equity Assistance Center to provide intensive support for teachers and school leaders in such schools. Currently operating in Paterson, Elizabeth, Camden, and Passaic, the program provides intensive mentoring and training, coupled with rigorous program evaluation to measure changes in leadership practices to support teachers, teacher and administrator professional

conversations, and observable student behaviors. Each LEA will incorporate a mentoring plan for teachers who are new to persistently-low-achieving schools, modeled after the materials found in Appendix II, starting in the 2011-12 school year.

Leadership Academy

Whether the principal is new or retained, substantial on-site, sustained professional development is necessary to develop the new skills that will assist the principal in effecting dramatic change in the school's level of student achievement. Working in conjunction with those cutting-edge institutions of higher education and other educational entities that are breaking the mold to support turnaround, and with transformational school leaders, the NJDOE will expand the SIG-established leadership academy to train new and newly-assigned principals to serve all 32 persistently-low-achieving schools. This academy will deliver training, during a three-week intensive summer program, on such topics as effective use of curriculum and instructional tools, instructional leadership skills, fostering professional-learning communities, motivating staff and students, and using data to inform management decisions. This professional-learning community will also serve as a resource to principals to problem-solve and share successful interventions throughout the school year.

The academy will prepare the school-turnaround principal to leverage this unprecedented operational flexibility (including flexibility regarding staffing, calendars/time, and budgeting) in ways that have been proven to build a school culture that is focused on improving the academic achievement of its students, and, as the culture changes, to fill open positions in the school based on candidates' qualifications. NJDOE will work with our partner institutions of higher education to develop a full practice-based course sequence, offered throughout the year, in which candidates may be credentialed as "turnaround principals."

The training sessions will be integrated with NTOs and LEA superintendents to assure a shared vision and coherent implementation. New Jersey has learned the importance of building and supporting Turnaround Leadership Networks that create a shared vision of reform among school leaders and superintendents. The existing Turnaround Leadership

Network for schools that are identified for Corrective Action under ESEA has drawn over 62 superintendents, 411 principals, and 389 supervisors together to support and foster effective practices in low-performing schools. New Jersey will build on the lessons it has learned from the Turnaround Leadership Network to establish a professional learning community for Tier I and II schools. This formal collaborative network for both principals and superintendents will be reconvened quarterly, to ensure that the network is supported throughout the school year.

Transformational Operating Authority Program

Effective leadership at the school level is essential to accelerating student progress. All principals managing a persistently-low-achieving school will be given Transformational Operating Authority. The principal shall also have the authority to set the schedule and allocate the budget for his/her own school in collaboration with the superintendent and NTO, as long as all federal, state and LEA requirements are met, along with other requirements that are specified in the school-intervention model. Transformational operating authority represents a sea-change in operating procedures for schools and districts.

Human capital has been proven to be key in many communities' turnaround efforts.[6] New Jersey aims to effectively end the practice of assigning our least-effective teachers to our lowest-performing schools. Research has shown that a student who is taught by a succession of less-effective teachers may experience lasting academic challenges.[7] In persistently-low-achieving schools, if a teacher is rated ineffective for three consecutive evaluations, the LEA will take action pursuant to 18A:6-11 to remove the individual for inefficiency. Under this program, principals will make direct recommendations for

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[6] *Mass Insight, Turnaround Challenge.*

[7] *Sanders, William, and June Rivers (1996). Cumulative and residual effects of teachers on future student academic achievement. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Value-Added Research and Assessment Center.*

hiring to the superintendent,[8] as well as recommending that the superintendent seek the reassignment of any teacher who is not performing satisfactorily per the standardized teacher evaluations. To support the recruitment of highly-effective teachers, principals in persistently-low-achieving schools will have a seven-day exclusive access period to recruit and schedule interviews for highly-effective-teacher candidates through the New Jersey Hires site, and will be eligible to provide the equity recruitment and retaining state-RTTT-funded bonus to highly-effective teachers who are willing to teach in schools with a high proportion of students at risk (see D(3)).

[8] Note that local Boards of Educations make hiring and firing decisions in New Jersey -- operating within the context of the existing statute and regulations.

Supporting High-Quality Classroom Instruction

If recommended by the Needs-Assessment Team, persistently-low-achieving schools will adopt the Curriculum and Assessment Spine (discussed in (B)(3)), consisting of exemplar units and lessons that embed the content and pedagogical routines that are necessary to change classroom practice and increase student achievement. Closely aligned with state content standards,[9] this expanded set of exemplar lessons and units will cover much of the school year and will be supported by a formative-assessment system that is designed to assist teachers in the customization of instruction to meet their students' specific academic needs. A team of practicing supervisors and teacher leaders,[10] assigned by the LEA and trained by our partner institutions of higher education, will provide content-focused instructional coaching to assist teachers and school leaders in analyzing formative-assessment data; selecting customized, comprehensive instructional interventions that meet the academic needs of individual students; and continuously monitoring student progress towards proficiency. This team of content-focused instructional leaders, selected from the LEA and trained by state teams, will support and maintain professional-learning communities, and will target and adapt professional development in response to specific teacher needs and the instructional demands of the content, in exemplar lessons throughout the school year. At its heart, this work will drive a data-based culture within the school and foster professional

IMPROVING CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION -- SCHOOL SERVICES

- Curriculum-alignment audit
- Curriculum-embedded formative assessment
- Evidence-based exemplar lessons
- Proven content-focused instructional coaching strategies linking student needs to proven instructional strategies
- Professional Learning Communities

STUDENT SUPPORTS

- Lesson plans proven to raise achievement, engage students, demonstrate real-world knowledge applications

Aligns with B(3), D(5)

Responsible Party:

Office of State-District Partnerships

[9] Exemplar lessons will be offered in Language Arts Literacy, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.

[10] Outlined in section (D)(5)

communities of practice. This focus on a coherent, aligned curriculum with regular opportunities for teachers to continuously improve their instruction has been demonstrated to have the most impact on student achievement.[11]

Extended Teaching and Learning Time

Additional time for learning is a resource that must be found – just as financial support, instructional materials, and teacher expertise are found – because it is essential for learning. One key difference in the use of school time in high-achieving nations, in contrast to its use in the United States, is the amount of in-school time used for teacher planning and professional development. In European and Asian nations with strong student performance, teachers spend about 15 to 25 hours per week—between 40% and 60% of their total work time—collaborating on curriculum development, lesson study, action research on instructional outcomes, and professional development.[12] By contrast, U.S. teachers typically receive only about 3 to 5 hours weekly in which to plan by themselves, with little opportunity to share knowledge or to improve their practice.

The need for collaborative planning time is particularly acute in the persistently-low-achieving schools identified by the state. To address this need, persistently-low-achieving schools in participating LEAs will provide an additional 5% of non-student-contact time for teachers to collaborate, engage in professional development, and review student work with commensurate compensation, as negotiated by the LEA. Time for high-leverage teacher collaboration around curriculum and instruction will translate into improvements in the quality of students' instructional time.

Coupled with this time for teachers, will be an additional 15% of extended learning time for instructional support for students in persistently low achieving schools in participating LEAs. This extended learning time is geared specifically for students, to reinforce

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[11] Schmoker, 2006; Marzano, 2003.

[12] Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). (2008). Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators, 2007. Paris: OECD; Wei, R.C., Andree, A., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2009) How nations invest in teachers. Educational Leadership, 66(5), 22-38.

instructional opportunities that lead to greater academic achievement for them and for the school in the aggregate. Research shows that when additional time is part of an overall strategy for improving school performance that includes significantly better instruction, powerful gains can be made in student achievement.[13] Additionally, this extra time provides an opportunity for students to engage in the types of experiential learning that exemplify successful afterschool programs and provide a direct link to the instruction received during the school day.

School leaders may add 20% of teaching and learning time by extending the school day or working with a community-based program to provide extra instructional time on a daily, weekly, summer and/or annual basis. Teachers will receive additional compensation for the longer school day and school year, as negotiated by the LEA, and funded from LEA-RTTT directed funds. LEAs will also be expected to align RTTT funds with existing funding streams such as 21st Century Community Learning Centers.

If a persistently-low-achieving school has an existing program, NJDOE and the LEA will perform a comprehensive onsite review to ensure that extended learning time for students meets a set of research-based criteria[14] including: alignment with the school curriculum, coordination of activities with the school day, clear strategies for student engagement, and parent involvement. Program staff must have high expectations for all students and set expectations that all kids will succeed. Regular student attendance is particularly important to ensure improved student outcomes, and New Jersey will closely evaluate the

INCREASING INSTRUCTIONAL TIME FOR STUDENTS; PROFESSIONAL-LEARNING TIME FOR TEACHERS

- Building on New Jersey's nationally-recognized, successful programs
- Providing additional compensation for teachers through State-RTTT funds
- Linking the school day to afterschool programs

STUDENT SUPPORTS

- Research-based criteria for extended learning time
- Safe, engaging programs focused on STEM and career awareness.

Aligns with D(3), D(5)

Responsible Party:
Office of State-District

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[13] Berliner, D. (1990). What's all the fuss about instructional time? In M. Ben-Peretz & B. Bromme (Eds.), *Time in schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.

[14] Beckett, Megan, Geoffery Boman, Jeffery Capizzano, Danette Parsley, Steven Ross, Allen Schim, and Jessica Taylor (2009). Structuring Out-of-School Time to Improve Academic Achievement: A Practice Guide (NCEE 2009-012). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Science, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance.

percentage of students who are served by the program and attendance rates. For schools with existing programs that meet these requirements, NJDOE will consider the LEAs' request to maintain these programs or expand them based on the evidence of their demonstrable impact on student achievement.

School Innovation and Renewal Zones

School Innovation and Renewal Zones will be created in order to allow more focused community attention where there are clusters of persistently-low-achieving schools. When such schools are within the School Innovation Renewal Zone, they will receive priority for various federal and state funding sources that are targeted to schools identified for improvement, and they will be given the maximum flexibility in the use of federal, state, and district funds and regulations to implement the turnaround initiative (consistent with the transferability provisions of Title VI of ESEA). With the maximum amount of flexibility allowable, these schools will be able to share and disseminate promising practices across LEA boundaries. Schools will be a central agent for innovation and change in these zones.

INNOVATION AND RENEWAL ZONES

- Builds on NJ's one-of-a-kind partnership with Harlem Children's Zone
- Maximizes flexibility
- Shares promising practices across LEA boundaries
- Unprecedented collaboration with communities and stakeholders

Responsible Party: Office of State-District Partnerships

Under the New Jersey Administrative Code, school districts may petition for waiver or for an equivalency of Education Code mandates or administrative rules. The NJDOE will work with participating districts with persistently-low-achieving schools to use the waiver or equivalency, as necessary and as appropriate, to remove identified barriers to interventions plans. Participating LEAs and their local school boards and teachers' unions will engage in focused efforts to address any limitations on intervention-plan implementation to the maximum extent possible. In every LEA with a persistently-low-achieving school, the NTO will develop or coordinate a process to identify any limitations on invention-plan implementation and take action to address those limitations. Specifically, the LEA and its teachers' union may address the collective-bargaining framework to apply the people, programs, time,

resources, and compensation to support the school's intervention plan. Any LEA barriers to the implementation of intervention plans that are not resolved in year one will be publicly shared as part of the implementation audit that is discussed later in this section.

Building Strong Community-Organization Partnerships

Supporting the engagement of stakeholders from the community is a critical aspect of the School Innovation Renewal Zone, since a school is often the anchor of a community. The School Renewal Zones will build on the work of the High School Graduation Campaign Forging New Jersey's Cradle to College & Workforce Pipeline for All Children[15] and will work to: (1) ensure strong student/adult relationships within the school and community; (2) maximize parent and family engagement; and (3) make schools and classrooms places where children want to be, where they feel safe, and where their minds are fully engaged. As a result of New Jersey's Graduation Campaign efforts, Dr. Pedro Noguera and the Ford Foundation have selected Newark as the first city in which to launch the "Broader Bold Approach" to school reform. The Newark school district has embraced this opportunity and taken the lead to convene key Newark stakeholders, including elected officials, foundations, higher-education institutions, and business and industry representatives. A citywide oversight board, co-chaired by the Mayor and Superintendent, coupled with school-level implementation committees involving principals, educators, parents, community stakeholders, and social-service providers has already begun to make meaningful changes to designs for the 9th-grade academies at Central High School (a Tier II persistently-low-achieving school). LEAs with Tier I and II schools will learn from and build upon the engagement strategies and implementation planning that is currently occurring in Newark. By the 2011-12 school year, NJDOE and NTOs will work with superintendents and school leaders to incorporate lessons learned from Newark into intervention plans for persistently-low-achieving schools.

Each LEA -- in partnership with the NTO, school leader and NJDOE -- will translate these practices into a comprehensive program to create a cadre of organizations,

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[15] The New Jersey High School Graduation Campaign, Forging New Jersey's Cradle to College & Workforce Pipeline for All Children – Year One, Preliminary Findings and Proposed Plan for Action.

individuals, and other interested parties to support the school in its efforts to transform education for its students. Local businesses, higher-education institutions, municipal leaders, community-based organizational resources, and interested stakeholders are vital to changing outcomes for students, as evidenced by the work of the Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) and similar programs around the country. New Jersey is the only state with which HCZ has forged an official partnership – launching comparable programs in Newark and in Camden. An interagency team selected two community-based agencies, one in Newark and one in Camden, to engage in a business-planning process with intensive technical assistance from HCZ. This expansive community-school partnership symbolizes New Jersey's commitment to innovative solutions to urban education and community challenges. Similar programs are under consideration in other New Jersey high-need communities to create "Promise Neighborhoods," modeled on the new federal initiative of the same name. By focusing on the children, we hope to facilitate the development of healthier, more stable neighborhoods and communities, ones that support and nurture children's success.

New Jersey has learned that inter-agency and local partnerships are the key to creating lasting change. NJDOE will coordinate and foster state-level interagency coordination by assigning at least one FTE as part of the cross-functional Office of State-District Partnerships to facilitate the integration of services and help promote local partnerships that maximize local assets to help transform the school and the community. New Jersey State partners also have worked together on several new initiatives, such as the statewide truancy-prevention pilot initiative in Asbury Park, Camden, Newark, Paterson, Trenton and Vineland. New Jersey's Department of Justice, Department of Child and Family Services, and four other statewide agencies have already committed to this collaborative effort. Participating LEAs will be expected to mirror this practice by setting policy and leadership practices to coordinate community involvement, working with school leaders to identify school needs, and matching community and business organizations that are able to fulfill these needs. LEAs will include community engagement and specific goals regarding the number and scope of partnerships in their intervention plans.

Integration Across Services

New Jersey recognizes that struggling schools are part of struggling communities, and that the pathway to a successful intervention in persistently-low-achieving schools often entails cooperation with organizations and agencies outside of the school building. School leaders and NTOs will have access to cross-service data on students in their schools in a manner that maintains student privacy. New Jersey will also roll out cross-service support to school leaders and NTOs. Participating LEAs will be expected to collaborate closely with their municipalities on issues of housing, health services, and job-creation programs. Such collaboration creates its own set of incentives by identifying efficiencies that enable schools to better utilize staff and leverage cross-service resources. New Jersey will pilot this cross-service integration with selected participating LEAs. New Jersey will engage the support of institutions of higher education and national experts in selecting, implementing, and evaluating these reform efforts. New Jersey will also encourage LEAs to engage in broad community participation and support, to ensure a complete integration across services.

THE NEW-SCHOOL STRATEGY

While we are working to improve our struggling schools, we will also undertake a vigorous effort to create new, high-quality schools that meet the needs of their communities. We believe that our ultimate goal is to ensure that students have access to high-performing schools and that often, this goal is best facilitated by starting schools from scratch. Our "New Schools Strategy" will primarily follow two tracks: in-district Achievement Academies, and out-of-district charter schools. We will couple our "New Schools Strategy" with broad outreach through parent-information centers to ensure that parents across the community are aware of all of their school options.

Creating Achievement Academies

NJDOE will work closely with participating LEAs to pilot innovative school models to better serve students at risk. Over four hundred LEAs have agreed to participate in designing and implementing Achievement Academies (316 agreed to participate and 99 agreed to participate conditional on collective bargaining). Created and led by highly-effective or Master Teachers or Principals, each of these schools will operate essentially as a within-district charter.

Achievement Academies will give the very best teachers the ability to create their own school models designed to improve student learning. As attractive professional environments, these schools will help draw other successful educators into disadvantaged areas. As academically-rigorous schools of choice using a wide variety of educational approaches, Achievement Academies will attract families seeking learning environments that best fit their children's needs.

Achievement Academies will be allowed more freedom from LEA control than regular public schools enjoy, but they will remain part of the LEA, and will remain accountable to local school boards. An Achievement Academy will operate within an existing LEA, with the same local board of education. Similar to the transformational operating authority granted to persistently-low-achieving schools, the head of school will have authority over staffing, budgets, curriculum and instructional material, as long as all federal, state and LEA requirements are met. Research supports this approach, which provides greater autonomy, and its associated impact on the school's commitment to local priorities, enhanced teacher influence and engagement, and improved relationships between schools, parents, and their communities.[16]

TEACHER-LED ACHIEVEMENT ACADEMIES:

- Within-school-district innovative school options
- Led by teachers or principals with operational flexibility
- Clear pathways to creation coupled with continuous evaluation of school models

Responsible Party:
Office of State-District Partnerships

[16] Plank, David and Bets Ann Smith (2008). Autonomous Schools: Theory, evidence and policy. In Helen Ladd and Edward Fiske (eds.), Handbook of Research in Education Finance and Policy. New York: Routledge.

NJDOE will also create an appeals process for Achievement Academy proposals from highly-effective teachers when those proposals are denied by the LEA. As part of the appeals process, an independent review committee of representatives from institutions of higher education, highly-effective school leaders, highly-effective teachers, and practicing superintendents will review Achievement Academy proposals.

With its research partner, NJDOE will carefully monitor and evaluate the work of these achievement academies as models for innovative alternate schools that can provide immediate services to students who have long been underserved by persistently-low-achieving schools.

Expanding High-Quality Charter Schooling

A central and highly-promising part of our New Schools Strategy will be the expansion of charter schooling. This will include the creation of new charter schools and the growth and replication of existing high-performing charter schools.

New Jersey's policy environment gives the state the ability to make full use of the chartering process. The state charter law places no caps on charter growth, allows a wide array of school types (including conversions, start-ups, and virtual schools), and gives charters the flexibility they need to succeed. In fact, the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, the nation's leading charter-school organization, gave New Jersey's charter law four out of four stars in these three areas: caps, diversity of options, and autonomy.

We intend to use this authority to grow new schools in the areas that need them the most, particularly our large urban centers. Fortunately, we have numerous additional assets that will help accomplish our goal.

First, New Jersey already has a number of the nation's most prominent, high-performing charter-school operators. Both KIPP and Uncommon Schools operate schools in the state and they have begun replicating their successful model. Each now runs multiple

campuses in the state. We will assist their growth by ensuring that they have access to facilities, additional charter contracts, and other supports.

This expansion effort will be greatly aided by one of New Jersey's unique assets: A nonprofit organization called the Newark Charter School Fund was created by national and local funders committed to rapidly expanding the number of high-quality charter seats available in Newark. The Fund provides a wide variety of supports to new and existing charters to ensure their quality and sustainability. The state will work closely with NCSF and other local partners with the same bold vision.

We are also committed to growing the number of organizations interested in running high-performing charters in the state. So NJDOE will work with partners across the state to seed and develop new charter-operators. The 20-year history of chartering nationwide indicates that new charter-operators bring many assets to the table, including knowledge of their communities, classroom experience, and a commitment to excellence. But they often need assistance in a number of key areas, such as accessing facilities, developing charter contracts, and recruiting boards of directors. NJDOE will become an increasingly active charter-authorizer on this score -- not merely passively receiving and evaluating applications, but also identifying and supporting those who are interested in creating new schools.

The state will also recruit high-quality charter-operators from outside of the state. Some of the nation's very best charter-operators have started and replicated highly-successful schools in areas nearby, including Philadelphia, New York City, and Boston. NJDOE will work to bring these organizations into our state to help start new schools for New Jersey's students. Such excellent school operators choose their target cities based in large part on the location's ability to support school success. NJDOE's chartering authority, the state's strong charter law, this Administration's commitment to chartering, and the strength of the state's nonprofit partners will all, together, make New Jersey a highly-attractive destination.

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR ALL TIERED SCHOOLS

New Jersey will provide support to all LEAs with Tier I, II, or III-identified schools (62 LEAs, including charter LEAs). We recognize that, in order for turnaround efforts to be successful, the unit of analysis cannot be the school in isolation from the LEA. For example, to sustain the turnaround efforts at the identified high school, LEAs must also support improvements at elementary and middle schools that are feeders for the high school.

Superintendents and district staff, along with principals, may participate in an annual two-to-three day Leadership Summit that will be held in conjunction with the Leadership Academy described earlier in this section for Tier I and II schools. The Leadership Summit will focus on problem-solving challenges faced by school leaders and will include topics such as applying leading-edge research, recognizing and developing promising practices, and developing solutions that schools leaders can apply in their districts.

NJDOE will support the organization of LEAs with Tier III schools into small clusters based on geography and similar needs. NJDOE will also support the development of communities of practice among these small groups to maintain connections made during the Leadership Summit. Moreover, NJDOE will support districts with Tier III schools to build a portfolio of approaches to turning around low-achieving schools, including the systemic use of data, the setting of clear performance expectations for schools, and ongoing needs-assessment. A first set of needs-assessment and data-analysis tools will be available immediately following their use and evaluation by the needs-assessment-review team in Fall 2010. This toolkit will be expanded to include promising practices identified through the Tier I and II school implementation audits no later than Summer 2011.

As evidenced by student data, LEAs with tiered schools will need to better coordinate integration of services across agencies, and to foster the engagement of community

organizations, in order to support school reforms. NJDOE will coordinate services within and across state agencies, building linkages across programs to provide a continuum of educational services for students. New Jersey has learned that often, children living in communities of concentrated poverty also experience challenges with mobility that are negatively-associated with academic outcomes[17] and experience limited access to 21st-Century leaning tools.[18.]

NJDOE will work with LEAs with secondary schools to engage in a needs-assessments of their at-risk student populations, and will develop appropriate options to better serve these students. A critical component of this work is the inclusion of alternative programs as part of the continuum of educational services that are provided to students. Another critical component is the improvement of the performance of students with disabilities in all identified schools. At least 32 of the identified LEAs have identification rates for special-education services that are above the state average, and 39 have rates higher than the state average for placement in segregated settings. Therefore, NJDOE will support the training of general-education and special-education teachers to improve instruction to students with disabilities, support professional development on RTI practices, and expand the reach of our IDEA-funded Learning Resource Centers to provide training and technical assistance in areas including: access to the general education curriculum, inclusive education practices, classroom management, and instructional strategies.

By building the capacity of LEAs with Tier III schools, we can support a wider range of schools, improve school climate, enhance professional-learning environments, recruit and retain great teachers and leaders, and serve at-risk students.

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[17] Reynolds, Arthur; Chin-Chih Chen, and Janette Herbers (2009). School mobility and educational success: A research synthesis and evidence on prevention. National Research Council, Washington D.C.

[18] Horrigan,John (2008). Home Broadband Adoption 2008. Washington, D.C: Pew Internet and American Life Project.

CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVING INTERVENTIONS: SCHOOL PERFORMANCE INDEX

Evaluations and data used to improve programs and identify needs are crucial elements to achieve success in turning around schools. New Jersey learned through the QSAC process that focusing on specific and measurable indicators for district success creates meaningful change in district leaders' approach to reform. New Jersey will apply the same precise focus by creating a school-performance index with specific and measurable indicators for school success. The student-learning measures of our school-performance index will align with the student-learning metrics, including the absolute and relative student growth measures. Coupled with student-learning measures, the school-performance index will include a rich set of indicators including school climate, parental involvement, student and teacher attendance, and violence and vandalism, as collected through the Electronic Violence and Vandalism Reporting System (EVVRS).

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE INDEX:

- Assesses absolute and relative student growth
- Employs quantitative measures of school climate, community engagement, and parental involvement
- Developed with school leaders and experts in the field
- Identifies successful interventions and informs closure decisions

Responsible Party: Office of State-District Partnerships

This comprehensive set of evidence and data will support the identification of promising practices, and inform interventions in schools before and after they are identified as persistently-low-achieving. The school-performance index will also be used to inform LEAs' selection of turnaround models and build the capacity of LEAs, and will be closely-evaluated when school closure is considered.

The school-performance index will be developed in concert with our ESEA Advisory Council, the Leaders for Educational Excellence group, and representatives from LEAs and school leaders across the state (see Appendix II for a list of members). A preliminary school-performance index will be complete by November 2010 for public comment and expert feedback, and will be finalized no later than February 2011. The School

Performance Index will be calculated no later than 2011-12 for all schools in the state. For newly identified persistently low performing schools, the school performance index will serve to inform the needs assessment team.

TIMELINE

New Jersey intends to act expediently to implement the provisions in this section of the proposal. Students have been underserved in these schools for far too long, and it's time to take immediate action. NJDOE and participating LEAs will make informed decisions regarding the intervention options under RTTT, select and assign NTOs, submit for approval intervention plans, and begin their enactment by Fall 2010.

Because of the recent School Improvement Grant (SIG) award, New Jersey is well-positioned to act swiftly to use RTTT funds to support any schools that are not awarded a SIG due to financial constraints. Services to non-SIG schools will be immediately implemented following the Race to the Top award. Additionally, all schools will receive additional services under Race to the Top, including access to highly-effective teachers, proven instructional tools, state-RTTT-funded compensation for extended teaching and learning time, and support for the integration of services across the continuum of education.

Section E Action Plan: Timeline and Responsible Parties

Action Steps	Timeline	Responsible Parties
Approval of SIG application for $66.7 million		NJDOE
Needs-Assessment identifies root causes of low performance	May 2010	LEAs
Schools select intervention option under SIG guidance	May 2010	LEAs
LEAs submit SIG applications to SEA for peer review	May 2010	Persistently-low-achieving Schools
Widely publish recruitment for NTO (funded through SIG)	May 2010	NJDOE
Train 5-6 NTOs (funded through SIG)	July 2010	NJDOE
SIG Grantees: Leadership Academy; Defining the Leadership Qualities of a Turnaround Principal	July 2010	NJDOE

Publish Leadership Academy Turnaround Principals Qualifications	August 2010	NJDOE
Race to the Top Award	***September 2010***	
Deploy Needs-Assessment Team to non-funded SIG schools	September 2010	NJDOE Office of State District Partnership
Train 5-6 Additional NTOs for non-funded SIG schools	September 2010	NJDOE Office of State District Partnership
Develop personalized professional-development plans and monitor progress on incremental benchmark	September 2010	NTO, School Leader, Teacher Leaders
Schedule extended-learning and teacher-collaboration time	August – September 2010	School Leader, Superintendent
Non-funded schools design intervention plans with measureable benchmarks	September 2010	Local board of education, Superintendent, NTO, School Leader
Approve or Improve non-funded SIG intervention plans	September 2010	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnership
Training of supervisors and qualified teachers as content-focused coaches and assignment to Tier I and II schools (D(3))	September 2010	NJDOE Office of Professional Excellence, County Offices
Supervisors/coaches convene PLCs for teachers by grade or by content area for collective lesson study, review of student work, and analysis of formative data	September 2010	Superintendent, NTO, School Leader
Implement exemplar lessons and training, as identified by Needs-Assessment Team	October 2010	School Leader, NTO, Teachers
Conduct efficient use of facilities review	October 2010	LEAs, Commissioner of Education
Select Inter-agency coordination Liaison for PLA schools	October 2010	Commissioner of Education
Refine and improve School Climate survey	October-December 2010	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnership
Monitor progress on measurable benchmarks, refine intervention strategy	At least quarterly	NTO, School Leader, Superintendent , teachers
Launch improved school-climate survey and formative tools	January 2011	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnerships
Launch LEA-wide needs assessment for all Tiered Schools	January 2011	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnerships
Municipal-planning guide to respond to student needs	February 2011	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnerships, Inter-agency Liaison
NJ Hires site launched to attract exemplary teachers into high-needs areas and PLA schools in advance of effectiveness evaluations	Spring 2011	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnerships/Office of Professional Excellence
Recruit exceptional teachers to persistently-low-achieving schools	May 2011	Superintendents, School Leaders
Conduct implementation-fidelity audit, make recommendations, and publish report	June 2011	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnerships
NTO evaluation	June 2011	Commissioner of Education
Refine and Improve intervention plans and measurable benchmarks (including lessons learned from the Newark "Broader Bold Approach" to school reform)	June 2011	School leader, NTO, Superintendent, local board of education, NJDOE Inter-agency liaison
Leadership Academy: Tier I and II schools	July 2011	NJDOE Office of State-District

		Partnerships/Office of Professional Excellence
Launch virtual, practice-based turnaround leadership classes	July 2011 - ongoing	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnerships, Partner institutions of Higher Education, Office of Professional Excellence
Weekend Leadership Summit for Tier III school LEAs	July 2011	Superintendents, District Staff, School Leaders
Implement intervention plan and monitor progress on incremental benchmarks	2011-12	School Leader, NTO, Superintendent
Ongoing, intensive content-focused and team-based professional development on instructional practice and acting on formative data	2011-12	School Leader, NTO, Teacher Leaders
Monitor progress on measurable benchmarks, refine intervention strategy	At least quarterly	School Leader, NTO, Superintendent
First round of NBPTS and Exceptional Teacher Opportunity Expansion Incentive placements	August 2011	School leader, Superintendent, board of education
Select pilot LEAs for cross-service integration	October 2011	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnerships
Recruit exemplary teachers into PLA schools through NJ Hires site	May 2012	School leader, NTO
Conduct implementation-fidelity audit, make recommendations, and publish report	June 2012	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnerships
NTO evaluation	June 2012	Commissioner of Education
Refine and Improve intervention plans and measurable benchmarks	June 2012	School leader, NTO, Superintendent
Leadership Academy	July 2012	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnerships
Expand turnaround leadership course offerings through virtual program	July 2013	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnerships, Partner institutions of Higher Education, Office of Professional Excellence
Weekend Leadership Summit for Tier III school LEAs	July 2012	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnerships
Implement intervention plan and monitor progress on incremental benchmarks	2012-13	School leader, NTO
Ongoing intensive content-focused and team-based professional development on instructional practice and acting on formative data	2012-13	School leader, NTO, Teacher leaders
Monitor progress on measurable benchmarks, refine intervention strategy	At least quarterly	School leader, NTO, superintendent
NBPTS and Exceptional Teacher Opportunity Expansion Incentive placements	August 2012	NJDOE Office of Professional Excellence
Full implementation of cross-service integration	October 2012	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnerships
Recruit exemplary teachers into PLA schools through NJ Hires site	May 2013	School leader, NTO, Superintendent
Conduct implementation-fidelity audit, make recommendations, and publish report	June 2013	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnerships

NTO evaluation	June 2013	Commissioner of Education
Refine and improve intervention plans and measurable benchmarks	June 2013	School Leader, NTO, Superintendent, local board of education
Leadership Academy	July 2013	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnerships
Turnaround-Leader-credentialing course graduates first cohort of leaders	July 2013	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnerships, Partner institutions of Higher Education, Office of Professional Excellence
Weekend Leadership Summit for Tier III school LEAs	July 2013	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnerships
Ongoing interventions; monitor progress on incremental benchmarks		School leader, NTO
Award opportunity-expansion bonuses to highly-effective teachers and school leaders	August 2013	NJDOE Office of Professional Excellence
Training for highly-effective teachers in evaluation pilot LEAs to become content-focused instruction coaches, teacher leaders, and mentors	August 2013	NJDOE Office of Professional Excellence, County Offices
Implement intervention plan and monitor progress on incremental benchmarks	2013-14	School leader, NTO
Ongoing intensive content-focused and team-based professional development on instructional practice and acting on formative data	2013-14	School leader, NTO, Teacher leaders
Conduct implementation-fidelity audit, make recommendations, and publish report	2013-14	NJDOE Office of State-District Partnerships

EVIDENCE

This is a report of the 122 schools that have been in restructuring status since 2004-05. Based on the NCLB requirements, these schools were each required to implement one of the federal sanctions, consistent with state law. They implemented one of the following: conversion to charter, replacement of all or most of the staff, or implementation of any major governance restructuring (which could have included replacing the principal). It is worth noting that 83 of the original cohort of identified schools have exited restructuring because of their progress. Another 35 will exit that status this year if they continue to show gains.

Evidence:

Approach Used	# of Schools Since SY2004-05	Results and Lessons Learned
Closure	1	Closure is less likely to occur than a reconfiguration of the grade-spans within the school.
Charter Conversion	0	Districts need information and assistance regarding the steps and process to convert a school to a district-operated charter school.
Major governance restructuring Replace all or most of the staff	120 1	Our key lessons learned from the governance-restructuring model include: • District decision-makers should not be permitted to re-circulate principals among restructured schools. • Programs must be coupled with implementation fidelity and specific accountability to teachers and leaders, and engagement of stakeholders. • Recommendations must be developed in collaboration with district staff, and implemented with fidelity for positive changes. • Technical assistance through workshops and modeling is key to creating change. • Schools and districts continue to add new programs and include numerous ineffective programs in their plans, rather than focusing on strengthening existing programs with the potential for success and discontinuing programs that are clearly ineffective. • Focusing on school climate in a systematic manner in a school stimulates positive change in conduct policies, staff and student climate, evaluation of existing efforts, and access to partnerships with community agencies for funding opportunities.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The 27 schools for which the LEA submitted a SIG application have identified a Turnaround option to be implemented in the 2010-11 school year. However, the NJDOE does not know, as of June, the intervention strategy that will be selected by the remaining five schools. Based on our experience over the past five years, we are predicting the following distribution of turnaround models:

Model	End of SY 2010-2011[1]	End of SY 2011-2012[3]	End of SY 2012-2013[4]	End of SY 2013-2014
Closure	3	2	2	1
Restart	2	2	4	4
Transformation	19	19	14	11
Turnaround	8	8	5	5
Exit in need of improvement status	0[2]	0[2]	2	2

[1] Ten LEAs applied on behalf of 27 schools for the New Jersey SIG competition: Two selected closure; one, restart; 16, transformation; and eight, turnaround. The remaining schools will select one of the U.S. Department of Education's four intervention models. We expect one closure, one restart, and three transformations.

[2]In order to exit "in need of improvement status," schools must make AYP for two consecutive years. We expect two-to-five schools to make AYP in the 2010-11 school year for the first time, and, of these, we expect at least two to make AYP for a second consecutive year in 2011-12 and thus to exit from improvement status. While this is a small number of schools, we fully expect the remaining 30 to show dramatic increases in student achievement.

[3] The three closed schools will be monitored by NJDOE, but have been removed from the list of interventions.

[4] Teachers rated as highly-effective in pilot LEAs will be able to start Achievement Academies.

Our plan includes the requirements that a school must determine its intervention model, and present the plan to the state, after the visit and findings from the Needs-Assessment Team. We will follow this cohort of schools throughout the four years, but will adjust the projection for intervention strategies as schools exit, show improvement, and require fewer interventions. As new schools are identified, they will be included, and the intervention strategies will be reported in our annual report the U.S. Department of Education.

Alignment with School-Improvement Grants

The U.S. Department of Education chose New Jersey as one of the first states to be awarded a $66,672,258 School Improvement Grant under Title I of ESEA to support comprehensive and substantive interventions in persistently-low-achieving schools. Notably, the New Jersey School Improvement Grant application aligns fully with the activities proposed under Race to the Top. Ten LEAs have submitted applications on behalf of 27 schools. One district did not apply, and one district did not apply on behalf of all its schools. Regrettably, New Jersey will not be able to award SIG grants to all 27 schools in LEA applications. Through RTTT funding, New Jersey will build the capacity of LEAs to turn around Tier I, II, and III schools and to take bold actions to intervene in all 32 of the persistently-low-achieving schools.

DEFINITIONS OF TIER I, TIER II, AND TIER III SCHOOLS

TIER I Schools

In Appendix I is the list, by LEA, of each of the 20 Tier I schools that are Title I schools in need of improvement. The Tier I schools include one school that was added due to NJ's "graduation rate."

TIER II Schools

In Appendix I is the list of 12 Tier II secondary schools. (Five are Title-I-eligible and not served, and seven are Title I "newly eligible schools"). For Tier II, the NJDOE used the "newly eligible schools" provision afforded to states in the January 2010 new interim final SIG requirements. No schools were added to the Tier II list as a result of NJ's "graduation rate." A secondary school is a school that provides "secondary education, as determined under State law, except that the term does not include any education beyond grade 12." ESEA section 9101(38). Schools serving grades 9-12 are identified as secondary schools in New Jersey. A Title-I-eligible secondary school that is not served by Title I is included if its poverty percentage is above the district-wide poverty average, above the appropriate grade-span poverty average, or 35 percent or more.

TIER III Schools

The NJDOE selected Tier III schools to be eligible for SIG funds, contingent upon availability of funds for this Tier. The full list of these schools (174) is in Appendix I. Title I schools in need of improvement in the bottom 12th percentile were selected. Depending on the available funds, the NJDOE will give priority to the 14 high schools highlighted on this list through a competitive application process.

Title I High School Priority: The NJDOE's focus is on our struggling high schools. These 12 Title I high schools were selected using the list of ranking performance and growth based on the persistently-lowest-achieving methodology. For Tier II, the NJDOE identified 12 high schools. For Tier III, additional high schools were selected, going down the list. LEAs may apply for the SIG grant for these schools using the same competitive process for Tier I and Tier II schools, except that selection of the four models will be optional. LEA commitment and capacity will be considered in the context of the Tier I and Tier II schools that are being served as a result of this NGO.

TIER III
The list of Tier III schools, included in Appendix I.

Method to Identify Tier I, II and III Schools

New Jersey ranked each set of schools -- (a) Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring and (b) secondary schools eligible for, but that do not receive, Title I funds—from highest to lowest, in terms of proficiency of the "all students" group on the State's reading/language arts and mathematics assessments combined. One school was excluded from the list for Tier I, as it is an adult school. No schools were excluded from the Tier II or the Tier III lists.

Adding Ranks Method

Step 1: Calculated the percent proficient for reading/language arts for every school in the relevant set of schools, using the most recent assessment data available. (Used the same data that the State reports on its report card under section 1111(h)(1)(C)(i) of the ESEA for the "all students" group.)

Step 2: Calculated the percent proficient for mathematics for every school in the relevant set of schools, using the most recent assessment data available. (Used the same data that the State reports on its report card under section 1111(h)(1)(C)(i) of the ESEA for the "all students" group.)

Step 3: Rank-ordered schools based on the percent of students deemed proficient for reading/language arts, from the highest-percent proficient to the lowest-percent proficient. The highest-percent proficient received a rank of one.

Step 4: Rank-ordered schools based on the percent proficient for mathematics from the highest-percent proficient to the lowest-percent proficient. The highest-percent proficient received a rank of one.

Step 5: Added the numerical ranks for reading/language arts and mathematics for each school.

Step 6: Rank-ordered schools in each set of schools based on the **combined** reading/language arts and mathematics ranks for each school. The school with the lowest combined rank (*e.g.*, 2, based on a rank of 1 for both reading/language arts and mathematics) was the highest-achieving school within the set of schools, and the school with the highest combined rate was the lowest-achieving school within the set of schools.

To determine whether a school has demonstrated a "lack of progress" on the State's assessment, New Jersey applied, as specified in the guidance, **the Lowest-Achieving Over Multiple Years** method to identify the lowest achieving five percent of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. (Tier I)

Lowest-Achieving Over Multiple Years
The state repeated the steps in the Adding Ranks Method for two previous years for each school. Then, it selected five percent of schools with the lowest combined percent proficient or highest numerical rank based on three years of data to define the persistently-lowest-achieving schools in the State.

The same process was used to rank the secondary schools that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds from highest to lowest, based on the academic achievement of the "all students "group. (See the description of the Adding Ranks Method above). After applying the **Lowest- Achieving Over Multiple Years** method, the lowest-achieving five secondary schools were selected. Since the initial Tier II list included secondary schools that are significantly higher- achieving than the many Title I-participating secondary schools that are not among the persistently lowest-achieving schools in Tier I, NJDOE used the "newly eligible schools" provision, and added the next lowest 10% of the Title I participating secondary schools to the Tier II list. The secondary schools on the Tier III list were the Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that are not in Tier I.

High-School Graduation Rates

New Jersey recognizes the need to address high schools that do not adequately prepare students to graduate with the skills that are needed for college and employment. In compliance with 34 C.F.R. Section 200.19(b), New Jersey will be using the graduation rate, which currently is a leaver rate, to identify schools that have a graduation rate of less than 60% over two years. The leaver rate will be used until the four-year cohort is utilized next year. This is consistent with the federal requirement of using such a rate until the 2010-2011 school year. Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, New Jersey will utilize the four-year cohort model to identify the high schools with graduation rates of less than 60%.

SECTION F

General
(55 total 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.

Recommended maximum response length: Three pages

(i) EDUCATION SPENDING AS A PERCENTAGE OF STATE SPENDING

In fiscal year 2011, despite huge budget strains, the Governor is proposing an increase in state revenue-based support for education by 2.2% ($238 million). As proposed, preschool-12 education spending as a percentage of the state budget will be 35.4%. Federal ARRA funding will not be available to school districts in FY 2011, but the Governor and the executive team remain committed to funding education even as state revenue-based support for most other areas of state spending has been cut. This demonstrates that, despite severe fiscal challenges, the leadership in the state of New Jersey remains committed to education.

(ii) EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF STATE FUNDS

The School Funding Reform Act of 2008 (SFRA) represents the first comprehensive New Jersey school-funding system in decades to receive judicial approval as an equitable-funding mechanism. The new formula provides the most generous resources in the nation for children at risk.

For more than 30 years, New Jersey's school funding was comprised of piecemeal legislative efforts and numerous court directives in an effort to distribute state funds equitably to local school LEAs. The SFRA is the culmination of, and answer to, funding-equity questions that have surrounded the state since the 1970's. Conditions in the state have led to funding proposals in the Governor's budget in the amount of $10.311 billion, with no district, except those experiencing enrollment decline, seeing a reduction of state aid equal to more than 4.99% of its adopted 2009-2010 general-fund budget.

The SFRA includes two types of state aid: wealth-equalized and categorical. Wealth-equalized aid is allocated according to each LEA's ability to raise enough local revenue to support its adequacy budget (as defined below). The equalization formula used in

New Jersey considers both a community's property wealth (measured by equalized property valuation) and its aggregate income, to determine the local ability to pay. This formula ensures that those LEAs with less ability to raise a local tax levy will receive more state support, and vice-versa. In contrast, categorical aid is allocated regardless of an LEA's wealth. Categorical amounts are generally determined by multiplying the cost factor for a particular category by the number of students who qualify for the aid. This has lead to the receipt of more state aid where the need is the greatest.

Adequacy Budget

The adequacy budget is the State's estimate of the cost for providing a thorough and efficient education to all students in each LEA, given individual student and LEA characteristics. The costs are based on a model LEA that was developed by panelists who were drawn predominantly from school LEAs, and that was extensively reviewed by stakeholders and experts in education finance. The adequacy budget is primarily funded through equalization aid. As noted above, there are additional streams of funds made available to LEAs through categorical funding.

Weighting for Student Needs

The calculation of the adequacy budget begins with a base cost that is applied to all students, and incorporates additional costs for resources associated with higher grade levels and students' special needs. For FY 2010, the base cost per elementary pupil (grades K-5) is $9,971 and all weights are relative to this amount. Students in grades 6-8 generate a cost that is 4% higher than the base cost, while students in grades 9-12 and county vocational LEAs generate costs that are 17% and 31% higher, respectively. There is also a weight for students who are at-risk, defined as those who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches according to federal guidelines (which require family income

below 185% of the federal poverty level). Every at-risk student receives an additional weight of at least 0.47 (47% more than the base cost), but the weight increases for these students as the LEA's at-risk-student concentration increases. The weight ranges from 0.47 (for LEAs with an at-risk-student concentration of 20% or less) up to a maximum of 0.57 (at-risk-student concentration at or above 60%). Finally, the weight for limited-English-proficient (LEP) students is 0.5, except where the student is also at-risk. For these "combination students" (LEP and at-risk), an LEP weight of 0.125 is added to the at-risk weight. The LEP weight is reduced, in these cases, to account for the overlap in the resources that are specified for at-risk and LEP students, respectively, such as afterschool and summer-school programs. The application of these additional weights in the calculation of the adequacy budget ensures that LEAs with higher concentrations of low-income and LEP students receive additional state aid.

Special Education

A portion of special education is also included in the adequacy budget. Rather than applying a weight to each classified student, special education is funded through a "census-based" method. Using this approach, special-education costs are estimated by multiplying the State's average "excess cost" for special-education students by the State's average classification rate, which is then multiplied by the LEA's total enrollment.

For FY 2010, the excess cost used for special-education students is $11,262 and the average classification rate used is 14.69%. Two-thirds of the census funding is included in the LEA's adequacy budget (to be distributed through equalization aid), while the remaining one-third is distributed as categorical aid. The adequacy budget also includes the entire census-based cost for speech. For FY 2010, the excess cost used for speech is $1,118, and the average classification rate is 1.897%.

(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

Charter schooling has had a presence in New Jersey for 15 years. The state passed a charter law in 1995, becoming one of the first states to embrace this critically-important education-reform tool.

In 2009-10, the state had 68 charter schools on 72 campuses, serving more than 22,000 students.[1] Importantly, these schools are predominantly serving the state's most disadvantaged students in the most distressed communities.

With this strong foundation, New Jersey plans to significantly advance charter schooling in the years to come. This effort will be given energy and direction by the state's

1 http://www.publiccharters.org/charterlaws/state/NJ

education leadership. Governor Chris Christie is a strong and vocal proponent of charter schooling. Education Commissioner Bret Schundler was an early and active proponent of choice, and he has made charter schooling a priority for the department.

Charter schools in New Jersey are dedicated to serving the most needy students. The reorganization of the NJDOE reflects New Jersey's increased commitment to expanding quality charter-choice options in the State, and the strategic role that the most highly-effective charters can have in scaling up quality schools in our most challenged communities.

As the state's charter-authorizer, NJDOE is committed to not only growing the number of high-quality charter schools statewide, but also improving its own capacity for reviewing applications and monitoring charter schools. Accordingly, the NJDOE has partnered with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) to facilitate the adoption of the highest standards and the implementation of best practices in charter-authorizing.

Working with NACSA, New Jersey will strengthen the charter-school-accountability measures to include performance contracts and effective monitoring and technical assistance. A charter-specific version of the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC) instrument is also under consideration, in consultation with charter-school operators. NJQSAC is the monitoring-and-evaluation system for public schools, and it shifts the focus from compliance to improvement and capacity-building.

New Jersey is exceptionally well-positioned to reach its bold charter-schools goals because of the strong web of external charter-school supporters across the state. NJDOE will work closely with those providing technical assistance to charters, such as the state charter-school association and the Charter School Resource Center; and those running extraordinary charters, such as KIPP and Uncommon Schools. The State will also develop new partnerships with highly-regarded CMOs and related entities.

(i) LAWS REGARDING LIMITS ON THE NUMBER OF CHARTER SCHOOLS

New Jersey places no caps on the number of charter schools in the state, or on the size of any individual charter school.

As of December 31, 2009, there were 68 charter schools opened and operating in New Jersey, categorized by grade ranges as follows:

Elementary	Middle	High	K-12	Total
46	8	8	6	68

(ii) CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZATION AND MONITORING

The State has always been a conscientious authorizer, demanding quality from those hoping to run schools. Since charter legislation was adopted by New Jersey in 1995, the NJDOE has received 365 charter-school applications, of which 111 were approved and five were never granted their final charter. From the 111 charters approved, 105 schools were opened.

The state has also been a tough monitor of school quality. Thirty-eight charters have been closed by charter-revocation, charter surrenders, withdrawal, or non-renewal.

The table below summarizes New Jersey's charter-school activity over the past five years:

New Jersey Charter-School Activity Since 2005-2006 School Year

Academic Year	Applications	Approvals	Denials	Opened[2]	Closed
2005-2006	25	6	0	4	2
2006-2007	30	6	0	6	7
2007-2008	24	1	0	6	3
2008-2009	25	6	0	6	0
2009-2010	40	11	0	6	1

The number of charter-school applications under consideration for the Fall openings has increased from last year. Thirty-seven new applications have been submitted for 2011-12 as of May 25, bringing the total number of applications submitted to 402. The expedited application process will allow for additional applications to be submitted for consideration as to whether they may become operational in the 2011-2012 school year.

The large number of unsuccessful applications in earlier years is also attributable to the relative inexperience of applicants, local resistance (which included zoning and related red tape), limited access to facilities, and tight timelines. The NJDOE recognized the importance of increasing both the number of potential applicants and the preparedness of the applicants to open and operate charter schools. NJDOE introduced numerous initiatives to increase the number of applications, including extending the duration of the planning-year option and the enhanced technical assistance to support quality applications.

Among the most effective efforts have been dissemination grants to highly-effective charter schools, which are designed to address the most daunting issues facing charter applicants and operators: the need to secure facilities, the need to provide special

2 The Opened category applies to both new schools and campuses. Existing charter schools with clear evidence of success can open an additional campus without reapplying for a new charter. The Opened category applies to both new schools and campuses.

education, governance issues, and issues regarding staff recruitment and retention. The grants have also promoted the identification and sharing of best practices, including by offering workshops to prospective applicants.

The regulations have been amended twice, to foster growth in the quality and quantity of charter schools. The authorization of a charter school in New Jersey is a three-step process: Interested parties must (1) submit a complete, comprehensive application that addresses curriculum and instruction, assessment, governance and administration, fiscal management and operations; (2) complete the interview process if qualified; and (3) satisfy the terms of the preparedness process, which includes a site visit with the board and leadership team to review the essential readiness of staffing, student recruitment and enrollment, equipment and supplies, fiscal and operational matters, policy development, board training and board training. These requirements, as well as the requirements of a walk-through of the facility and the submission of requisite, essential documentation, must be fulfilled before the charter may be granted.

In more recent years, as charter-school applicants were provided with extended time and support, including contact with experienced and effective charter operators, applicants were much better-prepared to open within 12-18 months of approval, resulting in a closer match between the number of approvals and the number of openings in a given year, after adjusting for the typical 12-month lag between the two.

The number of approvals dropped from an average of six per year to one in 2007-2008, but this was because several experienced charter-operators were permitted to open schools as expansions under existing charters. Therefore, charter growth is not fully reflected in the number of new charters approved in that year. Six schools opened the following year (2008-2009), five of which were expansions.

The number of approvals during the 2009-2010 school year increased to eleven, with eight meeting the September 30th approval deadline, and an additional three under the new Early Action process, which promises approval by January 15th for applications received before October 15th of the prior year. Early Action provides an additional application opportunity, and is designed to shorten the application-and-approval timeline

for new charter schools, while maintaining the rigorous review by NJDOE. It is anticipated that this will also increase the number of quality charter schools, by employing two timelines for the same operational year.

The current administration is fully committed to helping increase the number of high-quality charter-applicants, approving promising proposals, and assiduously monitoring charters for academic, financial, and operational quality.

Legislation for a rolling application process, Bill # A-2142, introduced February 11, 2010, has been drafted and referred to committee. This legislation offers multiple times for application submissions throughout the year, and a shorter time for application review. NJDOE anticipates that a bill will be introduced to allow a higher-education organization to authorize charters. If enacted, this should expedite the authorization process and the increasing the number of successful applicants that are opening high-quality charter schools in New Jersey.

Under section 18A:36A-16 of New Jersey state law, the Commissioner must conduct an annual review of every charter school to determine whether it is meeting its goals, and must conduct a more comprehensive review prior to granting the renewal of the charter. The county superintendent is granted ongoing access to the records and facilities of the charter schools within the county, to ensure that each school is in compliance with its charter, and that each is meeting all of the state- and federally-mandated requirements.

To facilitate the annual review, the charter school must submit an annual report to the Commissioner. These reports must also be distributed to the parents of each student who is enrolled in the school, and the district or districts of residence. The Commissioner may revoke a school's charter if the school either has not fulfilled the conditions required by its charter, or has violated any such condition. The legislature granted the Commissioner full authority to develop procedures and guidelines for the revocation and renewal of a school's charter.

According to NJDOE administrative code, 6A:11-2.2, each charter school must include in its annual report a review of its assessment program results to date, relative to its goals. The review must show the results on state-test data for grades 3-8 and/or 11, as well as

setting forth any and all criteria that are used to determine the school's AYP status under ESEA. Schools were required to present current baseline data and/or current cohort data in reading/language arts, writing, and mathematics. Although baseline data may come from both state assessments and standardized tests, cohort data must come from standardized tests.

Gains are expected in the achievement of student cohorts over time, and will evidence that a school is exhibiting AYP. In the absence of the expected levels of achievement, the NJDOE expects to see problem areas being identified and changes in curriculum and/or instruction being proposed, in order to address the issues relating to achievement. Schools that serve students through eighth or twelfth grade must list the high schools or colleges that the students will be attending, and in the case of twelfth-grade students, must also include the percentage of students going on to college.

The annual review also includes an evaluation of progress along several dimensions other than test scores. For example, the school must demonstrate that the delivery of its curriculum is in compliance with New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards. It must also show that it is providing the supplementary services to at-risk students that are necessary to ensure their success.

According to sections 18A:36A-7 and 18A:36A-8 of New Jersey law, charter schools in New Jersey must be open to all students on a space-available basis. Their admission policies are subject to the same anti-discrimination requirements as apply to public schools, with the exception that the charter school may limit admission to students interested in specific areas of concentration such as mathematics, science, or arts, as outlined in the school's charter. Preference for enrollment is granted to students who reside in the LEA where the charter school is located. In instances where there are more applicants than available spaces, the charter school must select students using a random-selection process. To the maximum extent possible, charter schools are required to seek the enrollment of a representative cross-section of the community's school-age population, including racial and academic factors in its determination of what selection of students would be representative.

(iii) EQUITABLE FUNDING OF CHARTER SCHOOLS

Charter schools in New Jersey receive funding on the same basis as traditional public schools.

For funding purposes, all charter school students are included in the resident-enrollment count on the school registers of the traditional public school. In other words, school funding for the school LEA is calculated based on the total resident student population, which includes charter students. Charter school state aid flows from the school LEA to the charter school.

Charter-school aid is calculated pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36A-12b, which stipulates that the school LEA must pay directly to the charter school, for each student enrolled in the charter school, an amount equal to 90% of the sum of the budget-year wealth-equalized state aid per pupil and the pre-budget-year general-fund local tax levy per pupil inflated by the corresponding CPI rate.

The remaining 10% is retained by the school LEA to help cover the cost of administering the charter-school program, including the student-registration-and-verification process. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36A-13 and N.J.A.C. 6A:27-3.1, the school LEA also provides transportation, or aid in lieu of transportation, to charter-school students in K-12 on the same terms and conditions that apply when it provides transportation, or aid in lieu of transportation, to students attending the traditional public schools. The charter school is not responsible for the funding of any mandated student transportation.

Additionally, the school LEA is required to pay to the charter school 100% of the categorical state aids (that is, those determined on a per-pupil basis) attributable to the student, and a percentage of the LEA's special-education categorical aid equal to the percentage of the LEA's special-education students that are enrolled in the charter school. If applicable, the school LEA is required to pay to the charter school 100% of preschool education aid.

Charter schools apply directly for, and receive 100% of, all federal entitlement and discretionary funds for which they qualify, pursuant to N.J.A.C 6A:11-4.1. Some minor state-aid categories not discussed above are not required to be passed on to charter schools. These aid categories represent the phase-in portion of New Jersey's school funding law, and will be eliminated when the law is fully implemented.

(iv) CHARTER SCHOOLS' FACILITIES

In order to facilitate the acquisition of a safe and viable facility, charter schools are granted flexibility in regard to the type of facility in which they are permitted to locate. They are exempt from NJDOE public-schools facility regulations, except those pertaining to the health or safety of students. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36A-10, charter schools are permitted to locate their facilities in part of an existing public-school building, in space provided on a public work-site, in a public building, or in any other suitable location.

Charter schools are permitted to use local and state sources of revenue for facility costs, including lease payments and mortgage payments. They also have access to any discretionary federal grants that are available for facility expenditures.

In 2002, New Jersey charter schools received millions of dollars under the School Renovation Grant. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36A-6, charter schools are permitted to acquire real property from public or private sources by purchase, lease, or lease with an option to purchase, or by gift, for use as a school facility. The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (EDA) currently has flexible, affordable loan funds available to charter schools through its Main Street Program.

In addition, charter schools have access to tax-exempt bonds from the EDA and local-improvement-authority bonds. In more recent years, credit-enhancement grants have been available for charters through New Jersey Community Capital. The NJDOE worked in partnership with NJCC to make this program available.

Under section 18A:7F-60 of the state statute, the Commissioner "shall be authorized to take any affirmative action as is necessary to ensure the effective and efficient

expenditure of funds by school district [LEAs]…" The Commissioner can use this authority to free up underutilized school-building space in some urban LEAs that have experienced recent declines in school-age population. Because of these declines, the NJDOE has initiated a space-utilization survey in over a dozen districts.

The study is identifying underutilized space for takeover within major urban centers. This space will be made available first for charter schools. There are other instances where urban schools are overcrowded, and traditional routes will not produce additional space. In these instances, creative solutions will be sought to find space for charter schools.

The facilities analysis examines the following key questions:

- What is the maximum capacity of all existing district-owned and -leased facilities, based on existing school grade-assignments?
- Does the district have deficient or surplus capacity based on existing enrollments? Will there be deficient or surplus capacity based on projected enrollments?
- Are there opportunities to more efficiently utilize available capacity, and possibly consolidate district functions in fewer buildings, should the district be willing to change school sending areas or school grade configurations?
- What are the short- and long-term capacity implications of pending and proposed school-construction projects?

Based on the answers to the above questions, options are developed that explore opportunities to use available capacity. These options may explore changes to school grade alignments and the subdivision of existing building(s) to allow different schools to independently function within one building.

In addition, the NJDOE requires all public school districts in the state to maintain and update Long Range Facilities Plans (LRFP) at least once every five years on a web-based

reporting system. This system provides a powerful tool to both the district and the NJDOE in assessing efficiency, adequacy, and utilization. In particular, the LRFP data allows the State to quickly evaluate instances where a district can consolidate its operations in fewer buildings without sacrificing program-delivery. The LRFP provides a routine mechanism for assessing the availability of space for charter use statewide.

In the 31 districts that are part of the court-mandated, State-funded facilities-improvement program, the reuse of swing space that is required to accommodate students off-site during construction is being evaluated for charter-school use. The NJDOE is working with the Schools Development Authority to identify appropriate space after it is no longer needed for district purposes. This repurposing of swing space could provide charter schools with recently-renovated instructional space in "move-in" condition that meets State standards. There are other instances where urban schools are overcrowded and traditional routes will not produce additional space. In these instances, creative solutions will be sought to find space for charter schools. For example, READS, an active partner, assists charter schools by providing pre-development loan funds and has enacted a new development model which ensures quality schools, expedites development projects, reduces costs, and builds on equity for the school.

(v) SUPPORT FOR INNOVATIVE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

In 1999, New Jersey's legislature adopted the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program (IPSCP) to allow LEAs to open enrollment of specified public schools to students from outside the LEA. IPSCP was adopted to provide greater school choice to students whose home LEAs may be limited in either the variety or quality of their academic programs.

Applications for designating a school as an Interdistrict Public School were evaluated on, among other criteria, the basis of the quality and variety of academic programs that are offered within the LEA, and the impact on student-population diversity in the LEA. Admission policies for students from outside the LEA are subject to the same federal and

State anti-discrimination laws as apply to admission policies affecting students inside the LEA.

Due to the program's success, the State is preparing to expand interdistrict school choice. A bill, S1073, that makes interdistrict school choice permanent was introduced on February 4, 2010 and passed both the Education Committees and the full Assembly. It is currently awaiting Senate Budget Committee and full Senate approval before becoming law.

(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

Other significant reform conditions

There are many significant reform conditions of which New Jersey is proud. Three of these (providing alternative pathways for teaching certification, emphasizing STEM, and charter-school program conditions) have been described extensively in other portions of this proposal.

The next three reform conditions are in the areas of Equitable Funding, Early Childhood Education, and the State's commitment to history and cultural heritage.

The first additional condition is the development of a new equitable-funding strategy through a formula supported by the relevant New Jersey Supreme Court decision; the second is our early-childhood-education transformation initiative; the third is our emphasis on the role of history in culture. All three conditions are briefly described below:

Equitable Funding Formula

As described briefly in (F)(1), since the early 1990's there has been a series of decisions in the Abbott v. Burke matter that resulted in a specific group of poor urban districts receiving significant levels of State aid along with Court-mandated programs. These decisions were followed by years of court-driven, ad-hoc approaches to school expenditures. In December 2007, the NJDOE proposed a new funding formula designed to ensure that all children in all communities within the State have the opportunity to succeed. The proposal is a culmination of five years of work by the NJDOE to develop an equitable and predictable way to distribute State aid for education. In 2009, in a landmark decision, the new formula was approved by the state Supreme Court. The new formula provides the most generous resources in the nation for children at risk. In Education Week's recently-released report *Quality Counts*, New Jersey received among the highest grades in the nation for its school-funding formula.

Methodology

The State retained three school-finance experts to analyze existing conditions and to make recommendations based upon their research. A model was created through their work and vetted through an Advisory Panel. Stakeholder and legislator meetings were held to encourage stakeholder buy-in. As a result of public feedback, the model was adjusted and implemented.

The model includes two types of aid: wealth-equalized and categorical. Wealth-equalized aid is allocated according to each LEA's ability to raise enough local revenue to support its adequacy budget. The equalization formula used in New Jersey considers both a community's property wealth (measured by equalized property-valuation) and its aggregate income to determine the local ability to pay. Both measures are considered equally and indexed by the statewide wealth-multipliers. The multipliers ensure equalization of the local tax effort, and are similar to applying a local property-tax rate equally to all districts. The wealth-equalized portion of the funding formula is applied

uniformly to all districts, distributing state aid equitably, based on each community's ability to pay relative to that of all others in the state. Categorical aid is allocated regardless of a district's ability to raise local revenue.

Results

The result is a formula that directs funds toward serving poor **children**, rather than poor LEAs.

After thirty years of strife relating to inequitable services, the funding formula is now in place, and its acceptance in LEAs is increasing. Most importantly, the high-poverty children of New Jersey are being served more equitably across the state.

Early-Childhood-Education Initiative

Methodology

Early Childhood education has been a strong priority in New Jersey for the past ten years. New Jersey offers every child in high-poverty districts the opportunity to attend a high-quality preschool program.

The New Jersey PK3 work is organized within a framework that includes structural components (administration, class-size, teacher-child ratio, etc.), process components (quality of classroom environments, teacher-child interactions, etc), and alignment components (standards, curriculum, assessment) that are associated with children's social and academic outcomes.

Results

Considerable resources have been directed at this work. As a result of this emphasis, preschool enrollments in high-need districts have gone from 5,000 to 45,000 children.[3]

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3 The Apples Blossom: Abbott Preschools Longitudinal Effects Study, June 2009.

The impact of this work is demonstrated in the improvement in NAEP scores for students in grade 4, as discussed in Section (A)(3).

The result is a set of positive impacts upon children's learning in oral focus, early literacy and mathematics and kindergarten entry. More information is available in Appendix II (F).

Commitment to History and Heritage

New Jersey has deep roots in American and world history. Great inventors like Edison, great thinkers like Einstein, great leaders like Wilson, and great poets like Joyce Kilmer, all called New Jersey home. While we celebrate the contributions to America that these and others from our state have made, we contend that the children of New Jersey will be more compassionate, engaged members of society by truly understanding the past. We want to produce college- and career-ready students who are able to master challenging content and succeed in work and life. We also want to produce citizens who are well-informed and compassionate on matters involving humankind. The two following examples of instances in which New Jersey has led in creating such an understanding are included to provide evidence as to precisely how deep our commitment to teaching and understanding history and cultural context is.

New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education

Coordinated Holocaust Education efforts began in New Jersey in 1974. Prior to that date, some teachers, a few Jewish Federations, a small number of college professors, survivors, and others were educating students and the public, in their own area of expertise, and within their scope of responsibility and geographic area. The International Gathering of Holocaust Survivors and the inception of a coordinated effort in New Jersey occurred at about the same time (1973/74).

Individuals from two school districts, one in Northern New Jersey (Teaneck) and one in Southern New Jersey (Vineland), met at a school conference and discovered that each was exploring efforts in the area of Holocaust Education. They approached the State of New Jersey Department of Education and were able to obtain a few thousand dollars of Federal money (Title III, Innovative Grants) to develop a curriculum. Their task, which was to develop curriculum materials and training programs, was completed in about four months and a series of State-wide workshops were organized to present the material. The curriculum, which was field-tested and ultimately published and distributed nationally in 1983 by the Anti-Defamation League, was entitled "The Holocaust and Genocide: A Search for Conscience."

The core mission of the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education is to promote Holocaust education in the State of New Jersey. On a continual basis, the Commission surveys the status of Holocaust Education; designs, encourages and promotes the implementation of Holocaust and genocide education and awareness; provides programs in New Jersey; and coordinates designated events that will provide appropriate memorialization of the Holocaust on a regular basis throughout the state. The Commission provides assistance and advice to both public and private schools, and will meet with county and local school officials, and other interested public and private organizations, to assist with planning courses of study on the Holocaust.

Extensive curriculum guides have been developed for grades K-12 and include discussion of the role of compassion, studies on genocide, terrorism, slavery, and a range of related historical events.

Amistad Commission

On August 27, 2002, the governor of New Jersey signed into law the "Amistad Bill" (A1301). The bill created an "Amistad Commission" in honor of the enslaved Africans who gained their freedom after overthrowing the crew of the Amistad ship in 1839. The Commission's mandate was to promote a wider implementation of educational awareness programs regarding the African slave trade, slavery in America, and the many contributions Africans and African-Americans have made to American society.

The Amistad Bill created historic legislation that not only affected the teaching of history in the State of New Jersey, but also opened a revolutionary new chapter in the teaching of our nation's history across the country. The New Jersey legislation was, and remains, an important national landmark event.

When the Amistad legislation was introduced and passed, the public, as well as many K-12 educators and even many of the Commissioners, presumed that the goal would be to introduce African-American history into the K-12 curriculum, and to develop public programs on African-American history for children, families, and communities. However, instead of following this more obvious strategy, New Jersey took on a more complex challenge. The Amistad Commission's goal is to change the landscape for the study of United States and world history by placing Africans and African-Americans at the center of the narrative as agents, rather than reaffirming historical narratives that had painted them as bystanders or victims who lived, or live, on the margins of the United States and the world.

Thus, our mandate has shifted from one of inclusion to one of infusion. Our goals are revolutionary because they challenge the "either-or" notion that if you study African-Americans, then you have to leave out the important events and people in our national narrative. The New Jersey Amistad Commission's revolutionary goal is to demonstrate that while everyone on the national stage plays a major role, the lives of the powerful and the less powerful are intertwined and sometimes interdependent, and sometimes, these roles are reversed when "the meek inherit the earth." In the case of Supreme Court Justice John Marshall, for example, if students truly understand the significance of judicial review as established by *Marbury v. Madison*, then they will also understand the significance of judicial power in the lives of black people, whether the case is *Dred Scott v. Sandford* or *Brown v. Board of Education*. We do not exclude the traditional historical narrative or its players. Rather, the Commission's curriculum committee asserts that African-Americans, and all others who have traditionally been excluded from the national narrative, shaped this nation's trajectory in important ways. The primary work of this Commission is to provide an inclusive Social Studies curriculum, especially in United

States and world history. The Commission's curriculum committee approached its work with a sense of thoughtful urgency.

The Amistad Commission supports teacher professional-development activities and curriculum development. The Amistad Commission exists to be a resource and support for New Jersey classroom teachers who provide our children with an exemplary educational experience that not only imparts knowledge, but also teaches them to think critically and never to stop asking "Why?" Such an approach, on the part of their instructors, teaches them to be good citizens who care for their families, communities, and nation and who recognize their deep connections to all humanity, of whatever gender, nationality, religion, or ethnicity. This approach teaches them to be unafraid to search for their own truths.

COMPETITIVE PRIORITY

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)
(15 total points)

Priority 2: Competitive Preference Priority -- Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). *(15 points, all or nothing)*

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

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)

This proposal integrates and expands upon the most innovative STEM work currently underway in New Jersey and proposes additional initiatives, as outlined in Section (D)(3). Our goals are to improve the delivery of higher-level content in the classroom, to provide more students in high-needs districts with access to challenging STEM coursework, to recruit more alternative-route qualified math and science teachers, and to subsequently provide more STEM career options for the students of New Jersey. We will measure the student-level impact of our STEM initiatives as an increase in the number and diversity of students taking STEM classes and taking AP exams in STEM subjects. We will measure the human capital impact of our STEM initiatives as an increase in the number of STEM teachers in the state, and the measured effectiveness of those teachers.

One of our priorities has been providing our classroom teachers with high-quality materials to support the teaching of STEM subjects. New Jersey revised Science and

Technology standards when they revised their core curriculum content standards released in February 2010. There are brief excerpts of standards and lesson plans available in Appendix II to illustrate the resources that we have created. Mathematics will be revised as a result of New Jersey's participation in the Common Core. A key tenant of this work involves an effort to make these standards reflective of 21st Century Skill sets. The lesson plans will be improved and expanded upon as we develop the curriculum spine described in (B)(3).

To integrate the STEM work that is contained in the assurances, and to develop a statewide collaboration for STEM, we intend to create and convene a STEM Council. The Council will be responsible for refining the strategic vision for STEM work and planning for additional resources to support teachers and students. We envision a committee that contains representatives from higher education, research, industry, education, affiliated education groups, other state agencies, and decision-makers. This council will create and support a unified vision for STEM work in the State of New Jersey.

As described in (D)(3), New Jersey is home to many industries that employ STEM graduates; there is therefore keen competition for the best minds who may be interested in STEM-related careers; and New Jersey has proposed the following measures to build interest and understanding in teaching STEM:

- We will expand and adapt the successful Progressive Science Initiative—currently teaching algebra-based physics to 1,200 children in Newark, Jersey City, and Paterson—to biology and chemistry.
- We will expand and adapt the successful Traders to Teachers program to include a broader recruitment effort, and to continue exploration of alternative routes to certification under this legislation in order to meet the high demand for STEM-certified teachers in high-needs districts.
- We will expand access to online STEM coursework in high-needs LEAs. Challenging STEM content that is delivered virtually will allow a much broader range of students to gain access to the content, without requiring a

highly-effective STEM-certified teacher to be physically present in the classroom.

- We will give students access to hands-on STEM experiences through summer programs with a STEM teaching focus, and offer students a greater understanding of STEM-related careers, both in education and beyond.

- We will continue to expand our collaborations on STEM issues in the areas of CTE, and in order to better prepare students to work within state industries. We are providing professional-development seminars for academic and CTE teachers; and offering CTE courses that count for academic credit using both the Math-In-CTE model and the creation of courses such as construction geometry; and the creation and use of AP courses in CTE programs of study. All of these strategies support our goal of providing access to higher-level STEM content and solid STEM instruction. We will find ways to strengthen the skill-development of New Jersey's high-school students even further to prepare them to work in New Jersey's STEM career pathways.

Finally, to prepare more students for advanced study and careers in mathematics, we will build broader real-world STEM experiences for teachers and students, both in the classroom and beyond brick-and-mortar settings.

There is copious evidence to support the work that we have done to date on STEM, but it could only be briefly excerpted for purposes of this proposal. New Jersey is truly a leader in STEM activities, has strong partnerships with organizations promoting STEM education in the state, and works with teachers to ensure that strong STEM content is available in the classroom.

The initiatives that are proposed within this document will only make us stronger as we endeavor to equip a larger proportion of our students with a confidence and love for STEM-related work.