Race to the Top Program
Executive Summary

U.S. Department of Education
Washington, D.C. 20202

November 2009

> "It's time to stop just talking about education reform and start actually doing it. It's time to make education America's national mission."
> – President Barack Obama, November 4, 2009

BACKGROUND

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), historic legislation designed to stimulate the economy, support job creation, and invest in critical sectors, including education. The ARRA lays the foundation for education reform by supporting investments in innovative strategies that are most likely to lead to improved results for students, long-term gains in school and school system capacity, and increased productivity and effectiveness.

The ARRA provides $4.35 billion for the Race to the Top Fund, a competitive grant program designed to encourage and reward States that are creating the conditions for education innovation and reform; achieving significant improvement in student outcomes, including making substantial gains in student achievement, closing achievement gaps, improving high school graduation rates, and ensuring student preparation for success in college and careers; and implementing ambitious plans in four core education reform areas:

- Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy;
- Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction;
- Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and
- Turning around our lowest-achieving schools.

Race to the Top will reward States that have demonstrated success in raising student achievement and have the best plans to accelerate their reforms in the future. These States will offer models for others to follow and will spread the best reform ideas across their States, and across the country.

KEY TIMING

The Department plans to make Race to the Top grants in two phases. States that are ready to apply now may do so in Phase 1; States that need more time may apply in Phase 2. States that apply in Phase 1 but are not awarded grants may reapply for funding in Phase 2, together with States that are applying for the first time in Phase 2. Phase 1 grantees may not apply for additional funding in Phase 2.

Notices Published:	November 2009
Technical Assistance:	
Informational Conference Calls:	November and December 2009
Technical Assistance Workshops:	December 3 in Denver, CO; December 10 in Washington, D.C.
Other Events	TBD
Applications:	
Phase 1 Applications Due:	January 19, 2010
Phase 1 Awards Announced:	April 2010
Phase 2 Applications Due:	June 1, 2010
Phase 2 Awards Announced:	September 2010

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM AND POINTS

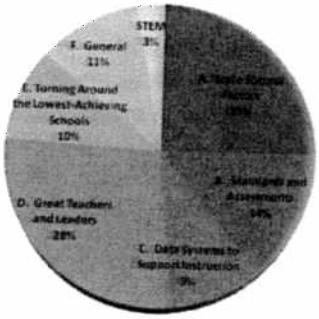
Selection Criteria

A. State Success Factors *(125 points)*
(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEAs' participation in it *(65 points)*
(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans *(30 points)*
(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps *(30 points)*
B. Standards and Assessments *(70 points)*
(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards *(40 points)*
(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments *(10 points)*
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments *(20 points)*
C. Data Systems to Support Instruction *(47 points)*
(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system *(24 points)*
(C)(2) Accessing and using State data *(5 points)*
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction *(18 points)*
D. Great Teachers and Leaders *(138 points)*
(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals *(21 points)*
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance *(58 points)*
(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals *(25 points)*
(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs *(14 points)*
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals *(20 points)*
E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools *(50 points)*
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs *(10 points)*
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest- achieving schools *(40 points)*
F. General Selection Criteria *(55 points)*
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority *(10 points)*
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charters and other innovative schools *(40 points)*
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions *(5 points)*

Priorities

Priority 1: Absolute Priority – Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform
Priority 2: Competitive Preference Priority – Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) *(15 points, all or nothing)*
Priority 3: Invitational Priority – Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes
Priority 4: Invitational Priority – Expansion and Adaptation of Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems
Priority 5: Invitational Priority – P-20 Coordination, Vertical and Horizontal Alignment
Priority 6: Invitational Priority – School-Level Conditions for Reform, Innovation, and Learning

Race to the Top Points



ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A State must meet the following requirements in order to be eligible to receive funds under this program.

(a) The State's applications for funding under Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund program must be approved by the Department prior to the State being awarded a Race to the Top grant.

(b) At the time the State submits its application, there must not be 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.

PRIORITIES

Priority 1: Absolute Priority -- Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

To meet this priority, the State's application must comprehensively and coherently address all of the four education reform areas specified in the ARRA as well as the State Success Factors Criteria in order to demonstrate that the State and its participating LEAs are taking a systemic approach to education reform. The State must demonstrate in its application sufficient LEA participation and commitment to successfully implement and achieve the goals in its plans; and it must describe how the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs, will use Race to the Top and other funds to increase student achievement, decrease the achievement gaps across student subgroups, and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.

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.

Priority 3: Invitational Priority – Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes.

The Secretary is particularly interested in applications that include practices, strategies, or programs to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (pre-kindergarten through third grade) by enhancing the quality of preschool programs. Of particular interest are proposals that support practices that (i) improve school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive); and (ii) improve the transition between preschool and kindergarten.

Priority 4: Invitational Priority – Expansion and Adaptation of Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems.

The Secretary is particularly interested in applications in which the State plans to expand statewide longitudinal data systems to include or integrate data from special education programs, English language learner programs,[1] early childhood programs, at-risk and dropout prevention programs, and school climate and culture programs, as well as information on student mobility, human resources (*i.e.*, information on teachers, principals, and other staff), school finance, student health, postsecondary education, and other

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[1] The term English language learner, as used in this notice, is synonymous with the term limited English proficient, as defined in section 9101 of the ESEA.

relevant areas, with the purpose of connecting and coordinating all parts of the system to allow important questions related to policy, practice, or overall effectiveness to be asked, answered, and incorporated into effective continuous improvement practices.

The Secretary is also particularly interested in applications in which States propose working together to adapt one State's statewide longitudinal data system so that it may be used, in whole or in part, by one or more other States, rather than having each State build or continue building such systems independently.

Priority 5: Invitational Priority -- P-20 Coordination, Vertical and Horizontal Alignment.

The Secretary is particularly interested in applications in which the State plans to address how early childhood programs, K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions, workforce development organizations, and other State agencies and community partners (*e.g.*, child welfare, juvenile justice, and criminal justice agencies) will coordinate to improve all parts of the education system and create a more seamless preschool-through-graduate school (P-20) route for students. Vertical alignment across P-20 is particularly critical at each point where a transition occurs (*e.g.*, between early childhood and K-12, or between K-12 and postsecondary/careers) to ensure that students exiting one level are prepared for success, without remediation, in the next. Horizontal alignment, that is, coordination of services across schools, State agencies, and community partners, is also important in ensuring that high-need students (as defined in this notice) have access to the broad array of opportunities and services they need and that are beyond the capacity of a school itself to provide.

Priority 6: Invitational Priority -- School-Level Conditions for Reform, Innovation, and Learning.

The Secretary is particularly interested in applications in which the State's participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) seek to create the conditions for reform and innovation as well as the conditions for learning by providing schools with flexibility and autonomy in such areas as--

(i) Selecting staff;

(ii) Implementing new structures and formats for the school day or year that result in increased learning time (as defined in this notice);

(iii) Controlling the school's budget;

(iv) Awarding credit to students based on student performance instead of instructional time;

(v) Providing comprehensive services to high-need students (as defined in this notice) (*e.g.*, by mentors and other caring adults; through local partnerships with community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and other providers);

(vi) Creating school climates and cultures that remove obstacles to, and actively support, student engagement and achievement; and

(vii) Implementing strategies to effectively engage families and communities in supporting the academic success of their students.

SELECTION CRITERIA

A. State Success Factors *(125 points)*

(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEAs' participation in it *(65 points)*

The extent to which—

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

(ii) The participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) are strongly committed to the State's plans and to effective implementation of reform in the four education areas, as evidenced by Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) (as set forth in Appendix D)[2] 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

(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.

(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;

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

(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 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.

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps *(30 points)*

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

(i) Make progress over the past several years in each of the four education reform areas, and used its ARRA and other Federal and State funding to pursue such reforms; *(5 points)*

(ii) Improve student outcomes overall and by student subgroup since at least 2003, and explain the connections between the data and the actions that have contributed to— *(25 points)*

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

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

(c) Increasing high school graduation rates.

B. Standards and Assessments *(70 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.[3]

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[3] 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.

(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.

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).

C. Data Systems to Support Instruction *(47 points)*

State Reform Conditions Criteria

(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system *(24 points)*

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).

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.[4]

(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,

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[4] 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.

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).

D. Great Teachers and Leaders *(138 points)*

State Reform Conditions Criteria

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

The extent to which the State has—

(i) Legal, statutory, or regulatory provisions that allow alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) for teachers and principals, particularly routes that allow for providers in addition to institutions of higher education;

(ii) Alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) that are in use; and

(iii) A process for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage and for preparing teachers and principals to fill these areas of shortage.

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; and *(10 points)*

(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.

(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; and *(15 points)*

(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.

(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).

(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).

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools *(50 points)*

State Reform Conditions Criteria

(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs *(10 points)*

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

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)*

F. General *(55 points)*

State Reform Conditions Criteria

(F)(1) Making education funding a priority *(10 points)*

The extent to which—

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

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

(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.

(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.

DEFINITIONS

Alternative routes to certification means pathways to certification that are authorized under the State's laws or regulations, that allow the establishment and operation of teacher and administrator preparation programs in the State, and that have the following characteristics (in addition to standard features such as demonstration of subject-matter mastery, and high-quality instruction in pedagogy and in addressing the needs of all students in the classroom including English language learners and student with disabilities): (a) can be provided by various types of qualified providers, including both institutions of higher education and other providers operating independently from institutions of higher education; (b) are selective in accepting candidates; (c) provide supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support such as effective

mentoring and coaching; (d) significantly limit the amount of coursework required or have options to test out of courses; and (e) upon completion, award the same level of certification that traditional preparation programs award upon completion.

College enrollment refers to the enrollment of students who graduate from high school consistent with 34 CFR 200.19(b)(1) and who enroll in an institution of higher education (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act, P.L. 105-244, 20 U.S.C. 1001) within 16 months of graduation.

Common set of K-12 standards means a set of content standards that define what students must know and be able to do and that are substantially identical across all States in a consortium. A State may supplement the common standards with additional standards, provided that the additional standards do not exceed 15 percent of the State's total standards for that content area.

Effective principal means a principal whose students, overall and for each subgroup, achieve acceptable rates (*e.g.*, at least one grade level in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in this notice). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that principal effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in this notice). Supplemental measures may include, for example, high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates, as well as evidence of providing supportive teaching and learning conditions, strong instructional leadership, and positive family and community engagement.

Effective teacher means a teacher whose students achieve acceptable rates (*e.g.*, at least one grade level in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in this notice). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in this notice). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple observation-based assessments of teacher performance.

Formative assessment means assessment questions, tools, and processes that are embedded in instruction and are used by teachers and students to provide timely feedback for purposes of adjusting instruction to improve learning.

Graduation rate means the four-year or extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate as defined by 34 CFR 200.19(b)(1).

Highly effective principal means a principal whose students, overall and for each subgroup, achieve high rates (*e.g.*, one and one-half grade levels in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in this notice). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that principal effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in this notice). Supplemental measures may include, for example, high school graduation rates; college enrollment rates; evidence of providing supportive teaching and learning conditions, strong instructional leadership, and positive family and community engagement; or evidence of attracting, developing, and retaining high numbers of effective teachers.

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

High-minority school is defined by the State in a manner consistent with its Teacher Equity Plan. The State should provide, in its Race to the Top application, the definition used.

High-need LEA means an LEA (a) that serves not fewer than 10,000 children from families with incomes below the poverty line; or (b) for which not less than 20 percent of the children served by the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line.

High-need students means students at risk of educational failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, such as students who are living in poverty, who attend high-minority schools (as defined in this notice), who are far below grade level, who have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma, who are at risk of not graduating with a diploma on time, who are homeless, who are in foster care, who have been incarcerated, who have disabilities, or who are English language learners.

High-performing charter school means a charter school that has been in operation for at least three consecutive years and has demonstrated overall success, including (a) substantial progress in improving student achievement (as defined in this notice); and (b) the management and leadership necessary to overcome initial start-up problems and establish a thriving, financially viable charter school.

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

High-quality assessment means an assessment designed to measure a student's knowledge, understanding of, and ability to apply, critical concepts through the use of a variety of item types and formats (*e.g.*, open-ended responses, performance-based tasks). Such assessments should enable measurement of student achievement (as defined in this notice) and student growth (as defined in this notice); be of high technical quality (*e.g.*, be valid, reliable, fair, and aligned to standards); incorporate technology where appropriate; include the assessment of students with disabilities and English language learners; and to the extent feasible, use universal design principles (as defined in section 3 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended, 29 U.S.C. 3002) in development and administration.

Increased learning time means using a longer school day, week, or year schedule to significantly increase the total number of school hours to include additional time for (a) instruction in core academic subjects, including English; reading or language arts; mathematics; science; foreign languages; civics and government; economics; arts; history; and geography; (b) instruction in other subjects and enrichment activities that contribute to a well-rounded education, including, for example, physical education, service learning, and experiential and work-based learning opportunities that are provided by partnering, as appropriate, with other organizations; and (c) teachers to collaborate, plan, and engage in professional development within and across grades and subjects.[5]

Innovative, autonomous public schools means open enrollment public schools that, in return for increased accountability for student achievement (as defined in this notice), have the flexibility and authority to define their instructional models and associated curriculum; select and replace staff; implement new structures and formats for the school day or year; and control their budgets.

Instructional improvement systems means technology-based tools and other strategies that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with meaningful support and actionable data to systemically manage continuous instructional improvement, including such activities as: instructional planning; gathering information (*e.g.*, through formative assessments (as defined in this notice), interim assessments (as defined in this notice), summative assessments, and looking at student work and other student data); analyzing information with the support of rapid-time (as defined in this notice) reporting; using this information to inform decisions on appropriate next instructional steps; and evaluating the effectiveness of the actions taken. Such systems promote collaborative problem-solving and action planning; they may also integrate instructional data with student-level data such as attendance, discipline, grades, credit accumulation, and student survey results to provide early warning indicators of a student's risk of educational failure.

Interim assessment means an assessment that is given at regular and specified intervals throughout the school year, is designed to evaluate students' knowledge and skills relative to a specific set of academic

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

standards, and produces results that can be aggregated (*e.g.*, by course, grade level, school, or LEA) in order to inform teachers and administrators at the student, classroom, school, and LEA levels.

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

Low-minority school is defined by the State in a manner consistent with its Teacher Equity Plan. The State should provide, in its Race to the Top application, the definition used.

Low-poverty school means, consistent with section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii) of the ESEA, a school in the lowest quartile of schools in the State with respect to poverty level, using a measure of poverty determined by the State.

Participating LEAs means LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement all or significant portions of the State's Race to the Top plan, as specified in each LEA's agreement with the State. Each participating LEA that receives funding under Title I, Part A will receive a share of the 50 percent of a State's grant award that the State must subgrant to LEAs, based on the LEA's relative share of Title I, Part A allocations in the most recent year, in accordance with section 14006(c) of the ARRA. Any participating LEA that does not receive funding under Title I, Part A (as well as one that does) may receive funding from the State's other 50 percent of the grant award, in accordance with the State's plan.

Persistently lowest-achieving schools means, as determined by the State: (i) Any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that (a) Is among the lowest-achieving five percent of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring or the lowest-achieving five Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in the State, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) Is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years; and (ii) Any secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that (a) Is among the lowest-achieving five percent of secondary schools or the lowest-achieving five secondary schools in the State that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) Is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years.

To identify the lowest-achieving schools, a State must take into account both (i) The academic achievement of the "all students" group in a school in terms of proficiency on the State's assessments under section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA in reading/language arts and mathematics combined; and (ii) The school's lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in the "all students" group.

Rapid-time, in reference to reporting and availability of locally-collected school- and LEA-level data, means that data are available quickly enough to inform current lessons, instruction, and related supports.

Student achievement means—

(a) For tested grades and subjects: (1) a student's score on the State's assessments under the ESEA; and, as appropriate, (2) other measures of student learning, such as those described in paragraph (b) of this definition, provided they are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

(b) For non-tested grades and subjects: alternative measures of student learning and performance such as student scores on pre-tests and end-of-course tests; student performance on English language proficiency assessments; and other measures of student achievement that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

Student growth means the change in student achievement (as defined in this notice) for an individual student between two or more points in time. A State may also include other measures that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

Total revenues available to the State means either (a) projected or actual total State revenues for education and other purposes for the relevant year; or (b) projected or actual total State appropriations for education and other purposes for the relevant year.

America COMPETES Act elements means (as specified in section 6401(e)(2)(D) of that Act): (1) a unique statewide student identifier that does not permit a student to be individually identified by users of the

system; (2) student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information; (3) student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out, or complete P–16 education programs; (4) the capacity to communicate with higher education data systems; (5) a State data audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability; (6) yearly test records of individual students with respect to assessments under section 1111(b) of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)); (7) information on students not tested by grade and subject; (8) a teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students; (9) student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned; (10) student-level college readiness test scores; (11) information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from secondary school to postsecondary education, including whether students enroll in remedial coursework; and (12) other information determined necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education.