

Idaho has analyzed each initiative, program and supports provided to determine if each approach has had the intended outcomes. In each area, Idaho has demonstrated its success in achieving its goals and how to improve upon their success. Idaho seeks to continue to work with the LEAs with lowest-achieving schools and support LEAs by considering the transformation model within their systemic reform projects. Idaho presents strategies they will continue to use to bring about improvement in LEAs. Idaho provides support to each LEA and its superintendent. Idaho made reference to working and supporting lowest-achieving schools however did not list nor identified which schools and how many currently fall under this category other than to include reference to 27% of district in the "Rapid Improvement" category and 66% in the continuous improvement trajectory. Idaho did not clearly established a plan with timelines and activities for continuous improvement of schools. Idaho is using a building capacity model however there is no clear explanation on how they will use a reform model within their current approach. Section E2ii was not specifically addressed.

Total	50	10
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The percent of total revenues available to the state increases from FY2008 to FY 2009 by 1.1 percent. Idaho's system for funding education is explained as being fully equitable. While there seems to be equitable distribution to each LEA, however within each specific LEA, there is no indication of how there will be an equitable distribution based on each school's needs.</p>		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	24
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: Idaho has a law that allows for the creation of charter schools with no cap on the percent of schools that may be charters and no artificial cap on the percent or amount of funding a charter school may receive however it limits the number of new charter schools that may begin in a given year. This limitation may be considered mildly inhibiting. The State has provisions that guides the creation of public charters, but establishes limited educational standards for holding them accountable. Charter schools are to meet the same student achievement requirements as those expected of the district public schools and serve all students as is required of district schools. The state provides funding for maintenance of charter schools as it does for district schools however it does not provide specific funding for charter school facility acquisition. The State supports numerous of public school "choice" options to exist within the district such as alternative schools, dual enrollment, magnet programs, use of innovative educational approaches however the operation of autonomous public schools as with all schools continue to be under the oversight of the district and their school boards. There is no clear indication as to the option of establishing autonomous public schools.</p>		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: Under the leadership of the governor and the superintendent, a group of educational stakeholders was given the charge to meet and agree upon a vision, mission and goals for the educational system of Idaho that will foster the innovation and reform needed to create a system that meets the needs of all students and ensures that they graduate high school prepared to enter college and the workforce ready to compete in a global society. As a result of their collaborative efforts, Idaho put together a comprehensive plan to reform education. Focused on raising the achievement of all students, Idaho has implemented numerous initiatives designed to improve teacher and principal effectiveness, create differentiated instructional models, link student data with teachers and principals, provide for the</p>		

individual needs of teachers through professional development, mentoring and supports and build each LEAs capacity for reform that brings about continuous instructional improvement. When Idaho began their reform efforts, 26% of Idaho schools met AYP, currently 66% of schools are meeting AYP. To further advance Idaho's reform agenda, Idaho has formed a Division of Innovation and School Choice, designated coordinators to address the traditionally underrepresented populations and the various subgroups and parents, and will use a data driven approach to support instruction. Idaho has a strategic, measured plan to improve instruction and continue to raise student achievement.

Total		55	37
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Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
Competitive Reviewer Comments: Idaho has addressed Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) as a specific component of some of their initiatives. As part of their Math Initiative, Idaho will provide training and supports to teachers and will offer teachers the opportunity to take college courses. Idaho works with LEAs to support and train in the use and analysis of data to evaluate student achievement, to create quality assessments and to create advanced opportunities for students. Idaho will integrate STEM areas into the Common Core Curriculum and Assessment initiative; will create programs to bring together teachers and students with higher education programs and with experts in the STEM. Idaho will create a coordinator to guide the process and initiatives and will support LEAs and schools in addressing STEM. Idaho will create targeted support programs to attract and motivate students from underrepresented groups, promote their interest in participating and prepare them for careers in a STEM area. Idaho will work to prepare prospective teacher candidates and use the alternative routes to certification to address teacher shortage in STEM area. Through regional STEM Centers, Idaho will provide professional development, mentoring, coaching to teachers in working in a STEM area. Idaho will make funds available to pay for coursework leading to certification and offer bonus as incentives. Idaho will partner with universities to expand the opportunities for teachers to develop skill and competencies and increase their effectiveness. Idaho requires administrators and teachers to expand their content knowledge by taking college courses and has a mentor program to support educators in this area. Idaho will expand opportunities for students to have college experiences in a STEM area beginning in the middle grades. Idaho is committed to expanding opportunities for students and preparing them to enter a field in one of the STEM areas upon graduating from high school.		
Total	15	15

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
Absolute Reviewer Comments: Idaho has established a comprehensive and coherent plan that addresses each of the four areas in ARRA, as well as the State Success Factors Criteria with goals and timelines defining each target area that includes supports and guidance along with the collaboration and involvement of all educators and relevant stakeholders interested in the continuous improvement of the PK-20 educational system. Idaho demonstrates great sensitivity to the community at large and works to develop their understanding and gain their support for reform efforts. The learning management system with its capability to connect to the PK-20 longitudinal data system and the instructional improvement data system will help to ensure that instructional practices are meeting the needs of all students. Initiatives		

focus on increasing student achievement, decreasing the achievement gap, and increasing the graduation rate with the ultimate goal of all students graduating high school prepared for college and careers.

Total		0
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Grand Total	500	344
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	6
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The percentage of total revenues allocated to Idaho's public education system increased from 62.7% in FY08 to 63.8% in FY09. The application indicates that the State's system is "fully equitable regardless of high-need LEA status." The application further states that "[u]nder this formula, two districts of identical size, staff composition and student grade composition will receive identical sums of money, regardless of variations in each district's wealth or demographic composition." This suggests that the State's formula does not equalize funding between high poverty and other districts or high poverty and other school schools.</p>		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	21
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The State limits the number of new charter schools to no more than six per year. At this rate of growth, 5% of the State's schools are charters. The application states that schools can be closed if they fail to meet the standards established by Sections 33-5209, but does not specify what these standards are. The State did not discuss whether there is a renewal process for charters or if they can be closed for poor student performance. The State has a high degree of application approval and a low rate of school closure (2 since 2005-06). These factors suggest that the State does not have high accountability standards in place to identify and close poor performing charter schools. The average charter school receives 92% of the per-pupil funding of the average school district which puts the State in the "high" points category for this indicator. The State does not have a separate funding initiative for charter school facilities. These additional funds assist charters in building and leasing facilities. Idaho offers additional school choice programs such as interdistrict open enrollment and magnet schools.</p>		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	4
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The State reiterated several of the reforms discussed throughout its application and how they would be coordinated with the Race to the Top efforts. In addition, several new positions have been created within the SDE to support the needs of traditionally underserved populations including Indian Education, Limited English Proficient, Response-to-Intervention, and Parent Involvement coordinators. Establishing these positions makes clear that the SDE is reinforcing its commitment to improving the educational conditions and achievement of underserved populations.</p>		
Total	55	31

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
<p>Competitive Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Idaho addressed its commitment to STEM throughout its application. It demonstrated the need for improving student achievement in math and graduating more students in STEM-related subjects. The Math Initiative requires every teacher to take a three-credit Mathematical Thinking Instruction course. It has undertaken several initiatives to strengthen STEM curriculum to ensure high school graduates have the skills they need to succeed in college. The eGirls program specifically addresses the need to</p>		

enroll and graduate more girls in STEM subjects. Working in partnership with BSU, the State has implemented a program designed to attract effective math and science teachers into the profession.

Total	15	15
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Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		No

Absolute Reviewer Comments:

Idaho's application demonstrates its willingness to implement most of the Race to the Top reforms. It has strong cabinet level support within the SEA and broad stakeholder support from teachers, administrators, and community members. The State has secured the participation of 79 LEAs that are eager and willing to implement Race to the Top. The State has articulated its commitment to improving the achievement of all students including those who live in poverty. The State is especially committed to educating students in the many rural communities throughout Idaho who face special challenges related to remoteness and isolation. While the State is lagging behind on building the IT infrastructure it needs to carry out many of the Race to the Top provisions, it is intent on securing the funds and making the needed investments in overhauling its technology capabilities. However, there is concern that the State is not committed to supporting the reforms related to turning around the lowest-achieving schools in accordance with the Race to the Top guidelines. The Race to the Top application clearly states that the purpose of the initiative is to advance reforms in each of the four areas. Furthermore, the application provided States with specific guidance on the four intervention models to be used in turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools. None of the interventions listed in Idaho's application appear to fully meet the requirements of the guidance.

Total		0
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Grand Total	500	266
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(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	0
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: While Idaho referenced identifying the bottom 5%, it is not clear how Idaho defines persistently low achieving schools. The Idaho application narrative described a comprehensive plan for supporting general school improvement efforts but did not include the elements for a high quality plan which include goals, activities, a timeline, and persons responsible. The various support systems don't seem to specifically target persistently low-achieving schools but are offered generally to all schools, though some schools may be required to participate. It is not clear that Idaho intends to implement one of the four school intervention models described in Race to the Top for use with persistently low-achieving schools. In fact Idaho did not include a section E(2)(ii) in the narrative. It appears that Idaho plans to use general capacity-building or school improvement strategies with its low performing schools rather than the more reform-oriented school turnaround models.</p>		
Total	50	2

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	10
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: From fiscal 08 to fiscal 09, Idaho slightly increased the percentage of state funds allocated to education. Idaho has laws to ensure equity of funding across all LEAs.</p>		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	25
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: According to the Idaho application, the state does have a charter law which does not place any troublesome restrictions on the number or percentage of charter schools in the state. The Idaho application did not directly address whether or not student achievement is a significant factor in authorization for renewal of charter schools. Idaho does not provide charter schools with funds for facilities and the application did not provide any information regarding Idaho provisions for autonomous public schools other than charter schools.</p>		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: Idaho's application described wide ranging school improvement efforts which appear to have had a positive impact on student achievement.</p>		
Total	55	40

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
<p>Competitive Reviewer Comments: Idaho's application included significant attention to STEM including the creation of regional STEM centers and the hiring of STEM staff to provide support in each of those regions.</p>		
Total	15	15

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
<p>Absolute Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Idaho's application presented a comprehensive and coherent approach to supporting the four key education reform areas of ARRA/RTTT. Idaho has secured participation from over half of the state's LEAs and strategically determined that the unit of participation would be LEA rather than the school. Idaho will build upon successful experiences with reform efforts and improving achievement gained through the Idaho Reading and Math Initiatives and will engage in substantial partnerships with institutions of higher education to provide support to LEAs on a regional basis. Idaho included a broad array of stakeholders in strategic planning processes used to develop their RTTT plans.</p>		
Total		0
Grand Total	500	333

each principal. 7. Total Instructional Alignment – Teachers work together to establish the most effective ways to deliver content and assess students' mastery. 8. Incentive Funds for Recruitment and Retention of Leaders – Each participating district will receive funds for an instructional coach, tuition for teacher leaders to expand areas of endorsement, loan forgiveness if they agree to work in the district for five years or housing subsidies if they move into a high-need community. 9. Expanded opportunities for students to participate in college/career ready experiences – These would include one-week middle school camps for students and teachers at the nearest community college emphasizing STEM and dual credit opportunities in STEM subjects. 10. Research-based curricular materials and expansion of engineer/science labs – funds to provide these. 11. Expanding Early Childhood Services – Providing guidance to participating LEA's in creating a plan to expand pre-K programs and provide training to parents related to adult literacy and parenting. 12. Support for Rapid Process Improvement Schools and Schools in Continuous Improvement – The 27% of LEA's that are Rapid Improvement Districts – can elect to participate in 6 of the above programs and the 66% of Continuous Improvement LEA's can participate in all of them. Idaho has obviously given this criterion serious thought and developed a wide-range of credible programs that are aimed at successfully turning around persistently lowest-achieving schools.

Total	50	39
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	10

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

F 1 i Idaho reports that the percentage of total revenues for public education increased from 62.7% in 2008 to 63.8% in 2009. F 1 ii Idaho's funding system no longer depends on property values. The state repealed the operating levies in 2006 and replaced them with funds from a state General Fund appropriation. Now districts of identical size, staff composition and student grade composition receive identical sums of money regardless of a district's wealth or demographic composition. Local voters may still authorize a supplemental levy, but that is not limited or driven by the level of property values in the district.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools

40 29

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

F 2 i Idaho has had a law allowing charter schools since 1998. The number has grown to 36, representing 5% of the total public schools. There is no cap and no artificial cap on the percent or amount of funding charter schools can receive. Pursuant to Section 33-5208, Idaho Code, charter schools are funded by the same state formula as school districts with very few exceptions, receiving almost the exact same level of per-pupil funding as school districts. Also, charter schools do not have any geographic limitation on which students may attend. While Idaho does not determine that there can be only a certain number of charter schools in the state, region or district or limit any particular kind, it does allow only six new ones a year to be able to provide adequate technical assistance and whatever the reason, this limitation does constitute a cap. This restriction does not seem to present a hindrance as since 1998, only three schools have been delayed in opening and just by one year, but it could be that more schools have not been delayed because more schools did not apply as they are aware of the limited number allowed to start up each year and did not attempt to seek authorization. One could conjecture that if the demand would increase greatly, so could the capability to provide technical assistance, thus not preventing growth. Charter schools may be authorized by local school boards or by the Public Charter School Commission which consists of three individuals with a school district background, three with a charter school background and one outside education – all appointed by the Governor. In 2009-2010, 22 charter schools that are independent LEA's were authorized by the

Charter School Commission and 14 by the local school boards. Those wishing to start a new charter school may transfer their petition to the state Commission if the local school board has not agreed to accept it within 60 days of submittal. Virtual charter schools are under the Commission. The only type of charter school that the Commission can not authorize is a conversion of an existing public school into a charter school. Only the local district can do that. F 2 ii Under Idaho Code provisions, public charter schools can be created with any of these goals: 1. Improve student learning. 2. Increase learning opportunities for all students. 3. Include the use of different and innovative teaching methods. 4. Utilize virtual distance learning and online learning. 5. Create new professional opportunities for teachers. 6. Provide parents and students with expanded choices of learning opportunities. 7. Hold the schools established accountable for meeting measurable student educational standards. Also charter schools must meet the same AYP goals as all Idaho schools do. If a charter school is oversubscribed as often happens, students are selected by lottery. A charter school that fails to meet standards established in the Idaho Code will be issued a Notice of Defect by its authorizer and if it fails to correct the defect within the time prescribed in the notice, it will be closed. Since 1998, 4 schools have closed. Idaho provides funding for facilities' maintenance but not acquisition. However, since these schools spend less on administration and have larger class sizes, they are able to use the difference to pay for leases or mortgages. The State enables LEAs to operate autonomous public schools, e.g., magnet programs organized around a particular area of interest such as the Renaissance High School which has three tracks – law, medical and international studies - and alternative schools for students at-risk of dropping out.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: F 3 In 2007, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna secured \$20 million in ongoing annual funding specifically for textbooks, remediation and classroom supplies and materials and for each teacher to receive \$300 a year to spend on necessary classroom supplies. To better serve traditionally underserved populations he created with the State Department an Indian Education Coordinator, a Limited English Proficient Coordinator and coordinators for Response to Intervention and Parent Involvement. He also formed a Division of Innovation and School Choice to expand choices within public education in Idaho. In addition, he secured funding for a variety of task forces to collaborate and create significant reforms.		
Total	55	44

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
Competitive Reviewer Comments: Idaho has strongly addressed all three aspects of the STEM Priority.		
Total	15	15

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
Absolute Reviewer Comments: Idaho has met this priority.		
Total		0

Grand Total	500	375
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school, restarting a school and dispersing students, restarting a school as a charter, or dismissing half the staff. It is stated in the application that the State Department of Education is not afraid of intervening in the best interest of children when it has statutory or regulatory authority to do so and then provides the example of having withheld federal funds and imposed sanctions on several LEA's when the SDE believed that the LEA's were not meeting their responsibilities. It also reports that Idaho has led the nation in the increased percentage of schools meeting AYP for the past two years. The tone and vagueness of the wording around whether the SDE would intervene directly in schools and LEA's that are in improvement or corrective action is not a strong response to the criterion. In addition, the response indicates that the state, should it intervene, would probably not intervene in a school but work through the LEA.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	5
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	0
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>i. The state receives full score points for identifying the 5% lowest performing Title I schools, as well as non-eligible Title I schools which are predominantly secondary schools. ii. According to the state plan, none of the four "systemic" turnaround models has been used in the past. The application states that the state plans to use a transformative model that it has found success with, but the state does not state clearly that this is the "transformation model" included in the RTTT school intervention models. The fact that the state does not state clearly which of the four RTTT turn around models it intends to use, results in the loss of points for E2 (ii).</p>		
Total	50	5

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	9
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The percent of total state revenues that were used to support public education increased from 62.7% to 63.8% from 2008 to 2009, a strong showing in a tough economy in a rural state with a high poverty rate. The state application indicates that two school districts of the same size, staff composition, and student grade composition receive the same funding from the state. Local voters may authorize a supplement levy. A voter-approved levy is not limited or driven by property values in the district. The application does not address equity in funding "within" LEA's between high-poverty schools and other schools, a critical factor in determining equity in educational opportunity. Had the state addressed this, full points might have been awarded in this section.</p>		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	25
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>i. The state application indicates that there is no cap on the number or percent of charter schools in the state. There is a limit, however, as to how many charter schools can be started within a school year. The limit is six. The state claims this is to ensure that the start-ups are successful. The state allows two routes to becoming a charter school: 1) authorization by a district school board; and 2) authorization by a state Charter School Commission. The later route strengthens the state's response to this criterion by allowing for alternative routes to becoming a charter school. The state receives full points for the part of this criterion that addresses having no state legal cap to the number of charters the state may have. ii. The state does not gain many points for F2 (ii), because (while not having a legal cap to the number of charters possible in the state) the state limits how many charters may be started each year.</p>		

There are presently 36 charter schools which total 5% of the all public schools in the state. This number expands in the 2010-2011 school year to 41 when there will be 25 independent LEA charter schools and 16 districts authorized charter schools. Three schools have been delayed one year as a result of Idaho's charter school law and four schools have been closed. Charter schools are held to the same goals pertaining to AYP as all state schools. The state leaves the ultimate responsibility for closing a charter school to parents – customer satisfaction. It appears that the state only closes a school when it fails to correct a code violation. iii. The state provides the same funding for facilities, transportation, etc., for charter schools as it does for other public schools. Idaho also appears to provide strong funding support for its charter schools with the average charter school receiving 92.1% per pupil funding from the state. Charter schools would receive 96.1% of state/local funding if the federal funds were eliminated. iv. The state also funds charter school facilities maintenance as it does for other public schools. However, the state does not appear to provide funding for leasing facilities, purchasing facilities, or making tenant improvements. Charters can use savings from small administration costs plus possible additional funding for per-student funding that smaller schools receive on facilities. The state receives less than the full amount of scores for this criterion, as funding for facilities does not appear to be equal in relation to costs that charters have that other schools would not. v. The environment for operating charter schools seems fairly strong in Idaho. Although accountability appears a little weak as it does not seem to be dependent upon student achievement. Instead, whether a charter school is closed or not is dependent upon "customer satisfaction," with the exception of legal or code violations in which case the state would step in. The state's score would be stronger in this area if the state took a more active roll in determining whether a charter school closed using student achievement criteria rather than leaving this entirely up to the "customers," and if it had provided some analysis as to the effect the state annual limit for opening schools may have on charter school growth.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: The state application indicates that the state allows other public school choice options, including alternative secondary schools for students at risk of dropping out, open enrollment, dual enrollment, magnet schools, and others. The state seems to provide strong support for innovative and autonomous public schools.		
Total	55	39

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
Competitive Reviewer Comments: The state's plan reflects an emphasis on STEM careers with strategies for increasing the number of math and science teachers with the aim being to provide highly effective STEM teachers, resulting in higher student achievement in the STEM subjects. The state's plan includes STEM Regional Specialists who will lead k-12 STEM education programs to provide professional development to teachers. In addition, the state plans to contract with STEM professionals for an adopt-a-school program in which the STEM professionals collaborate with teachers to support strong instructional practices in the STEM areas. Professional development to be provided through the RTTT plan provides a consistent focus on STEM subject areas.		
Total	15	15

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
<p>Absolute Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The state's plan comprehensively and coherently addresses all of the four education reform areas and appears to have strong LEA participation and commitment to successfully implement and reach its goals. The state has committed to implementing the new Common Core Standards and two assessment systems aligned to the new standards - one a summative assessment and one a formative assessment. The implementation of a Learning Management System could greatly increase the state's chances to succeed if done in a timely and user-friendly way. The LMS has great potential for providing teachers and students with a tool that will greatly increase access to data, access and use of aligned instruction and formative assessments, as well as be a vehicle for connecting teachers to professional development offered anywhere in the state and beyond. While the goals of the RTTT plan are aggressive in light of the rural nature of the state, the roll-out plan is promising and there appears to be significant support from the state's various educational, political, business, and other constituencies.</p>		
Total		0
Grand Total	500	337