

doesn't want to overextend, this raises issues around sustainability and accountability. This section is particularly tight in that it ties together many of the components from other sections of the proposal. For example, Strategy Three: Build District Capacity, includes MA's commitment to wrap-around services and access to additional elements of the enhanced Data System. Rather than outsource everything or decide to keep everything "inhouse," there really is a menu of options that can be used thoughtfully to meet the particular needs of specific schools. MA's comprehensive, multi-pronged approach reflects the work of a state that knows how hard it is to improve schools that have not improved for many years.

Total	50	45	45
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	10	10	

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

(F)(1)(i)-(ii): MA gets full points for its commitment to funding education. The percent of the State's budget dedicated to education increased 4% between SY 2008 and SY 2009 from 32% to 36%. It will remain the at the 36% level for SY 2010. MA takes a progressive approach to funding education. When all state and federal monies are considers, \$2,151 more per FTE is spent on low-income students than on high-income students.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	20	20
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

MA has 55 charter school entities, each of which may be a single school or a group of schools. These exist outside collective bargaining units. (F)(2)(i): MA earns less than full points for this element. Although charter schools are permitted, their expansion is limited by number (120 maximum) and by capping the total amount of public dollars that can be allocated to charters (9% of the State's net school spending). However, in addition to charter schools, other innovative schools can and do exist as described in (iv). Since there doesn't appear to be a cap on this secondary type of school, high points are awarded. (6 of 8 pts.) (F)(2)(ii): MA earns full points (8 of 8 pts.) related to charter school oversight. The Charter School Office of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education oversees all charter schools, which are held accountable for: • Faithfulness to charter, • Academic success, and • Organizational viability. (F)(2)(iii): MA's funding for charter schools matches the funding for the surrounding district, but there is a huge amount of variance (\$9,000 to \$20,000) between districts, suggesting discrepancies in funding between some charter schools and some public schools. Other funding aspects are more equitable, but this remains a concern and so medium points for this component are awarded. (6 of 8 pts.) (F)(2)(iv): MA has a funding formula for charter schools based on a per pupil allocation. It has recent legislation that incentivizes districts to offer unused space. (8 of 8 pts.) (F)(2)(v): Recent legislation permits a wide variety of entities to (e.g., parents, school committees, and colleges) are now permitted to operate autonomous schools other than charter schools. These Innovation Schools are Intended to promote high levels of achievement and offer an indistrict alternative to charter schools. Local school committees have final approval over the authorization of these schools. (8 of 8 pts.)

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

(F)(3): These points are awarded because of MA unwavering commitment to high student achievement as evidenced on both national and international assessments.

Total	55	35	35
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Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15	15	
Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)				
The story line is "all students to and through the door to college. Help students learn by giving them great teachers and supporting wrap-around services. Help teachers teach with all of the curriculum, student information, and professional development they need. Hold everyone accountable." That said there is enough STEM reference embedded in the form of the engineering, STEM advisory council, and attention to TIMSS to warrant STEM points.				
Total	15	15	15	

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes	Yes	
Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)				
MA comprehensively addresses each of the four assurances. It is a state that has been working on these issues for a long time.				
Total		0	0	
Grand Total	500	389	412	

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

MA has the authority to intervene directly in persistently low-achieving LEAs and schools. The number is capped at the lowest 20% of schools and 10% of districts but the intervention authority is substantial.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	36	36
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	31	31

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

MA will use a multiple measures methodology for identifying underperforming schools that looks at absolute achievement levels and student progress. The methodology builds on preexisting MA district accountability measures and dovetails with R2T definitions of under-performing. MA has a Center for Targeted Assistance and tools like the District Framework for Accountability and Assistance. However their history with turnaround schools has been average at best. MA has learned lessons from past attempts, including the overwhelming need to have clear criteria for district and school status, to have a clearly defined role for ESE when it comes to impacting governance in low-performing districts, the necessity of focusing on district systems as a key lever for successful school turnaround (including the LEA role in determining which model to use), and the need for long-term support. In response to past experiences, MA has four interconnected strategies for building state and district capacity to turn around low-achieving schools in the future that touch on developing specially qualified teacher and leader teams, building the capacity of proven partners, building district capacity to intervene and developing/attracting more turnaround operators and partners. The first strategy seems to build on the earlier plan to do a better job recruiting and developing teachers and principals for MA's under-resourced districts. This plan talks about building pools of proven teachers and leaders and supplying teachers and leaders in these schools with incentives and additional training and support. The second strategy is to scale-up proven partners that provide social-emotional supports, expanded learning opportunities and support in using data effectively to support instruction. The state will assess partners and manage the process of bringing them on through a Priority Providers initiative. Third, MA plans to pour a lot of time and effort into building district capacity in leadership, HR, community/family engagement (instituting their version of the wraparound service model for some schools), and a focus on dropout prevention and recovery. Finally MA, is looking to build up their pool of qualified turnaround operators to give schools good, proven options. Overall MA's past efforts in this area have been average (though so has this effort almost everywhere). But, they have a cogent, well-thought out plan for addressing this issue in the future and its set of interconnected strategies is the right one.

Total	50	46	46
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	10	10	

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

Education expenditure increased from 2008 – 2009 and is projected to increase in 2010. MA employs a foundation formula for providing school funding. The end result is that schools serving large numbers of at-risk students receive the most funding. MA's progressive approach to funding has equity at its core. Between the foundation formula and other funding sources like grants and federal aid, the poorest students receive the greatest funding in MA.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	32	32
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

MA has two laws that effectively limit the number of charter schools they can have. One hard caps the number at 120 or approximately 7% of all schools. The other is a funding cap that says that districts can't spend more than 9% of their school spending on charters. New smart cap laws could make it possible that more than 7% of schools are charters, and they loosen the funding limits, but that has not happened at this point. MA has one charter authorizing authority and it has been recognized nationally for its rigor and success in promoting charter excellence through authorizing. They have clear standards for charter accountability and a rigorous application process. There is a thoughtful process for reviewing charter success over time and MA has options for conditionally allowing charters to remain open if their performance does not warrant a straight renewal or non-renewal. MA has closed 3 schools in the past five years with academic achievement driving two of those closures. In that same time 10 of 21 final applications were approved. MA has a thoughtful process for calculating charter tuition rates that strives for equity. When all is said and done, regular public school teachers average around \$1800 more than charter students on average. But, this is largely due to costs charters do not bear such as sending students to private schools for special education (SPED) services and the higher average teacher salary in public schools. The initial calculation relies on foundation formula adjusted for demographics and the sending district's per pupil expenditure average and then a facilities adjustment. MA does provide a facilities component in its charter funding formula on a per pupil basis. It also has a quasi-public agency that issues tax exempt bonds for charter school facilities development. There are also newly-enacted incentives for districts to help charters get into unused district facilities. Through pilot schools and recent legislation that allows for the creation of Innovations schools, MA enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools other than charters. There are 23 current pilot schools and 20 planned innovation schools for fall 2010.

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

MA has other significant reform conditions as evidenced by the expanded learning time initiative, programs that support targeted 8th graders in successfully completing the high school MCAS. MA also has various funding initiatives targeting STEM, early childhood and literacy.

Total	55	47	47
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Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15	15	

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The State's application has a high-quality plan to address the need to offer a rigorous course of study in mathematics, the sciences, technology, and engineering; cooperate with 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 prepare more students for advanced study and careers in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Investment in STEM is a critical component of Massachusetts' overall reform agenda and is integrated throughout their R2T proposal. They have made a rigorous commitment to high standards in STEM, leading the fact that their fourth- and eighth-grade students lead the nation in mathematics achievement and are ranked internationally in both science and mathematics. MA plans to use R2T funds to make targeted STEM investments that address key challenges. Massachusetts will incorporate STEM subjects into all aspects of the PreK-12 teaching and learning system, and will prioritize formative and interim assessments for mathematics and science. Educators will have access to high-quality curriculum materials, model units, and lesson plans, designed to model what an effective STEM classroom looks like, what engages and excites

students in STEM, and how to better integrate courses. MA plans to scale up intensive recruitment and preparation programs and invest in retention efforts as well as provide additional induction and coaching for new STEM educators. In addition the State will provide opportunities to participate in proven professional development networks for science and K-8 mathematics instruction (e.g. Massachusetts Intel Mathematics Initiative). The state will continue to emphasize STEM in what will be the required high school curriculum, which will include a minimum of four years of mathematics and three years of lab-based science. It will also provide supplemental funding to LEAs to scale proven programs that embed rigorous STEM curricula in lower-performing schools, including six new early college high schools. In October 2009, the governor established a STEM Advisory Council that will serve as a central advisory body, convening public and private sector stakeholders to increase student interest in and preparation for careers in STEM fields. This Council, along with several related channels, will be leveraged to achieve rapid and effective implementation by our Race to the Top investments to promote STEM education.

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

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

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The State's application comprehensively and coherently addresses all of the four education reform areas specified in the ARRA. It also meets the State Success Factors Criteria. The State has sufficient LEA participation and commitment to successfully implement and achieve the goals in its plans. The application adequately describes 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. MA's application builds on the significant successes of its 15+ year education reform efforts and it proposes ways to address weaknesses that still remain. Their contention that addressing these weaknesses and building on their strengths as they address the four assurance areas will lead to continued increases in student achievement and narrowing of the achievement gap is convincing.

Total		0	0
Grand Total	500	399	402

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals	20	15	15
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(D)(5) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

MA has an impressive array of professional development activities with six different modes and has tied participation to induction and certification. It proposes to concentrate support on low performing schools but does not set performance measures for either delivery or take up in high poverty schools, for example, or to teachers facing difficulties. (7/10) ii. MA has an adequate plan for evaluating professional development but its goals for the end of 4 years leave 20% of districts untouched by this activity. Yet it is an area where total coverage is possible and desirable. (8/10). (15/20)

Total	138	87	95
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E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

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

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

MA has legal authority to intervene at the school and district level. (10/10)

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

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

i. MA has a good plan and a process to identify schools "most in need of intervention" using performance data and the measures of student growth that will be developed. This aligns with the criteria. (5/5) ii. MA has solid – 5 years at least - experience intervening in low performing schools and providing support to schools and districts. Its strategies are well thought out and coherent and include at least one of the 4 intervention models. (35/35)

Total	50	50	50
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	10	10	

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

i. Table F1 shows that MA expended more in terms of % of state revenue in 2009 than it did in 2008- even though total expenditures were down in simple dollar terms. ii. Table F2 shows that the progressive financing formulas that the State uses result in more per capita funds for high need students – in the order of 18%.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	31	31	
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

1. There are limits on the overall # of charters (120) and barriers that will inhibit growth. (0/8) ii. MA's policies and laws require charter schools to serve populations similar to local populations or to serve greater concentrations of need and the need to consider student academic performance in renewing charters. The quality of proposed academic instruction is assessed in consideration of initial charter approvals. (8/8) iii. The MA funding formula for charter schools gives them a commensurate share and is essentially "equitable." It is a little complex as the amount a charter school student attracts is determined by the student's sending district, making it difficult for a charter to plan its budget because the amount each student brings is not constant. There are good reasons for the approach MA has taken but the impact on fiscal planning is regrettable. (7/8) iv. There are no significant restrictions on capital or facilities funds for charters and there are laws giving charters access to unused state facilities. MA also gives charters access to bond and loan facilities that are favorable. (8/8) v. MA has a profusion of alternative innovative or autonomous public schools. (8/8)

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

MA's narrative through out the document shows a history of reform and innovation beginning with the Education Reform Act of 1993 referenced in Part A. In addition the State fosters and finances other reforms that reinforce the likelihood of young people improving academic performance - the expanded learning time program for example,- and college preparedness. (5/5)

Total	55	46	46
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Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15	15	

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

MA's commitment to STEM priorities is evident at numerous points in the plan and is reinforced by statements of support from business leaders and seven STEM specific groups. Its attention to teacher supply could be stronger and more creative.

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 2)

There was confirmation of the state's commitment to STEM priorities. For example they have strategies to recruit mid career professionals as science teachers.

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

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

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Overall the MA proposal meets the basics – solid LEA participation, very good stakeholder support, a commitment to implement, and a near 20 year history of implementation to draw on and guide action. There is an impressive array of professional development, sophisticated progressive financing formulas and good strategies for dealing with underperforming schools and narrowing academic outcomes gaps. On the

converse, the assumption in the plan that a net increase in the number of effective teachers will result in a more equitable distribution of that valuable resource is ill advised. But overall, there is a commitment to action and comprehensive reform.

Total			0	0
Grand Total	500	407	415	

will link this new approach to the measures of effectiveness, evaluation, licensure and career ladders. This approach should be powerful and highly effective.

Total	138	103
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E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	10
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: Massachusetts recently passed a law that empowers the commissioner to intervene in underperforming and chronically underperforming schools and districts.		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	40
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	35
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: The state has a process to identify those schools most in need of improvement, based on achievement and growth. Early in February they will announce the 36 lowest achieving schools which will be the target of their initial turnaround work. Massachusetts' strategy for turning around schools not only looks at building the state's capacity to support the schools and the capacity of schools that are persistently low performing, but also the strategy looks to prevent others from falling into that category in the future. The state plans to develop a specialized corps of turnaround teacher and leader teams, build the capacity of proven partners, build districts' capacity to intervene in struggling schools, and develop, attract and manage lead partners and turnaround operators. The state has a strong plan to build programs to develop teachers and principals and to support them and to retain them, including incentives such as loan forgiveness, career ladder opportunities, and compensation. After the life of the grant, they will rely on philanthropy and Title I grants to fund continued efforts. The state also will create a process to vet possible partners in turnaround efforts, especially those who work with socio-emotional supports, expanded school day and year, and using data effectively. The state will use this process to find partners who can help districts gain capacity in effective governance and leadership, human resource management and development systems, enhanced family and community engagement and support, and improved dropout prevention and recovery. The state has identified these four areas as crucial to turning around schools and the state has clear and viable tactics for each of the four areas. This approach is intended to help districts work with the lowest performing schools, and it also should provide capacity to keep others from falling into that status. All these strategies, informed by a sometimes painfully honest assessment of what has worked and not worked regarding turnaround efforts in Massachusetts schools, should build district and state capacity to turn around schools. The state has learned that a "light touch" does not work, and its plans indicate both a willingness and knowledge to turn around the lowest performing schools. As a further and highly commendable initiative, the state intends to initiate a competitive process to attract Level 3 schools (Levels 4 and 5 – the worst – will be addressed in the process described above) to volunteer to implement the turnaround, transformation or restart models. The intent is to prevent additional schools from declining to Levels 4 and 5.		
Total	50	50

F. General

	Available	Tier 1

(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The education share of total state revenue increased in Massachusetts from 32% in 2008 to 36% in 2009 and is expected to stay at 36% in 2010. K-12 education's share of total state revenue also increased over that time span. The state's policies lead to equitable funding between high-need LEAs and other LEAs. Within LEAs is not addressed. The proposal states that districts in Massachusetts are small by national standards, enrolling an average of about 3000 students. The state does, however, have some large districts where inequitable funding among schools could be possible. These situations are not mentioned in the proposal.</p>		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	32
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: The state's very complicated charter schools law has two limits on charters – the first limits the number of charters to approximately 7% of the total number of schools, and the second limits the amount of any district's net school spending that can be reallocated to charters to 9%. The law (and new modifications to the law) has other components that favor charters in low-performing schools. The state has regulations and guidelines regarding how authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize and close charter schools. A newly passed law strongly encourages recruitment and retention plans to ensure that there is a comparable academic and demographic profile to students from which the charter is drawing. The state has closed or not renewed ineffective charter schools for various reasons, including lack of student achievement. The state's charter schools receive equitable funding compared to traditional public schools and a commensurate share of other funds. The state does provide charter schools with funding for facilities and has established other mechanisms for funding such as various bonds, loans and loan guarantees, as well as authorization to spend some ARRA Qualified School Construction Bonds on charters. These are all positive efforts. The state has taken large strides in supporting innovative, autonomous public schools through pilot schools and especially through Innovation Schools. These present an in-district alternative to charter schools and can be established by superintendents, school committees, teachers, parents, charter schools or others. Local school committees, not the state, have final approval over these schools, but the state is responsible for overall monitoring of the Innovation Schools Initiative. Twenty schools are poised to open over the next two years under this admirable initiative.</p>		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: The state has created a number of initiatives favorable to school reform. The primary emphasis is in the area of funding for additional time. While these programs have not caused much change on scores on MCAS in the first two years, they are expected to yield more positive results as the programs become further institutionalized. Other older programs have generated very positive results, including increases of 12 to 34 points in the share of students earning a Competency Determination. The state also has funding for the transition from half day to full day kindergarten. Since 2000, the share of the state's students attending full day kindergarten has moved from 29 to 77 percent. All these efforts provide firm support for school reform in Massachusetts.</p>		
Total	55	45

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
Competitive Reviewer Comments:		

Massachusetts imbedded STEM throughout many areas of its proposal. The state has made a commitment to high standards in science and mathematics, although engineering and technology were directly not addressed in the summary part of the proposal. The state's ranking in NAEP and in international assessments in science and math indicates that they are doing something well, and standards are a key. They will prioritize STEM in the Pre-K – 12 teaching and learning system to provide formative assessments and instructional materials, ratchet up their efforts in recruitment and retention of STEM teachers, and emphasize STEM in lower performing schools. Possibly most promising in this strong array of efforts is the Governor's STEM Advisory Council which will leverage a number of existing innovations. The state did not directly address the needs of women and girls in the STEM part of the proposal, but again, the results on NAEP and other measures indicates the state is headed in the right direction.

Total	15	15
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Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

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

Absolute Reviewer Comments:

Massachusetts has created a very strong, coherent, and far-reaching proposal. It addresses all the areas of school reform with clear, well thought out plans and initiatives that hold great promise to increase student achievement, decrease achievement gaps across student subgroups and graduation rates. The commitment from LEAs is strong and includes the unions in all the participating LEAs. A particularly laudable component of the Massachusetts proposal is the numerous times it alluded to sustaining the efforts after the time of the grant. Clearly the state has thought about this and is planning for it. Massachusetts has a strong history in school reform and its students do very well compared with other states. Yet, the state clearly understands its problems and its plan address the problems fully.

Total		0
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Grand Total	500	418
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has partnered with the National Institute for School Leaders (NISL) to customize its two-year program for school leaders focused on strategic instructional leadership.

Total	138	96	100
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E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

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

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

The State has provisions for designating underperforming (Level 4) or chronically underperforming (Level 5) schools based on student performance data and school or district reviews and can directly intervene in failing schools and LEAs.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	36	36	
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5	5	
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	31	31	

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

The State has only recently identified the 36 persistently lowest-achieving schools that will be the focus of turnaround efforts. The basis for identifying low-performing schools includes student scores on state tests and new measures of student growth. The strategies for turning around these schools includes building a corps of turnaround teachers and school leaders, building capacity through partnerships, building capacity to intervene in struggling schools and working with turnaround operators. It is not clear which turnaround models might be used or how the decision will be made. Previous experiences with working with chronically underperforming schools have been met with mixed results.

Total	50	46	46
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	10	10	

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

The trend of the percentage of state revenues supporting public schools appears to be increasing over the past three years. A progressive funding formula is used by the State to distribute education aid to school districts in order to ensure that every district reaches equitable spending goals through a combination of state aid and local resources. The formula has produced a progressive distribution of state aid with the most state aid per pupil going to districts that have the highest percentage of low income students. Grant funding was also provided as additional support to high poverty districts including for providing for expanded learning time, academic support programs, and full-day kindergarten.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	32	32	
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

State statute provides for two types of charter schools. There are limits on the number of charters allowable overall and in any given year. There is a recently passed "smart cap" law that will increase the number of proven charter providers allowable in low-performing districts serving high-needs students. State statute delineates the application and approval processes for charters and defines accountability requirements that include faithful implementation of the charter plan, academic success and organizational visibility. The statute clearly provides guidelines for charter approvals, monitoring, accountability and reauthorization. Funding amounts and supplements for charters are comparable to funding in the area schools. Differences in average amounts spent per student in charters was around \$1,800 and was attributed to lower salaries of teachers in charters. This may suggest an inequity in staffing that needs to be addressed. Assistance with facilities is provided by the State and provisions for autonomous and other innovative schools are made. The Smart Cap law is designed to flexibly increase the number of proven providers operating in low performing districts and serving high-needs students.

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

The State provides funds for statewide expanded learning programs and after-school or out-of-school programs. Funds have also been provided to support full-day kindergarten resulting in an increase from 29% to 77% participation. The State has a history of establishing innovative conditions, policies, and programs favorable to education reform. State legislature's funding priorities include supporting programs that increase time for academics, supporting after-school and out-of-school grants to improve the quality of after-school and summer programs, and supporting enrichment and professional development programs to increase instructional effectiveness. The State has also supported reforms that address school-career readiness and provisions for second-language learners and students with disabilities.

Total	55	47	47
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Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1	Tier 2	Init
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15	15	

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The State has made a commitment to rigorous standards in STEM. Students perform well on national and international comparisons. There has also been an innovative inclusion of engineering concepts in the state curriculum. Plans are underway to recruit, retain and support effective STEM teachers and tangible goals are in place to increase the STEM readiness, especially among under-represented groups.

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

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

Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

The state has a history of success and leadership in the areas of curriculum and high academic standards. The State has a clear plan to build on existing structures to engage stakeholders at all levels in significant and fundamental reform. There is wide scale support for educational reform within the State and a variety of strategies have been used to reach a wide range of stakeholders during the planning process.

Total			0	0
Grand Total	500	406	410	