

focuses not just on the individual schools but on the district as a whole. In addition to relying on the intervention authority, particularly the additional rights given to the Commissioner to exercise in any district which includes schools in the lowest 5%, the State plans to develop a core team of leaders to coordinate and provide support around state and federal improvement requirements. In addition to hiring a State Turnaround Director and five turnaround specialists who will oversee efforts and provide on-the-ground support around key areas of needed improvement (as well as areas targeted for professional development under the definition of the "transformation" model of turning around a school), the core team will be made up people with a broad range of expertise and responsibility, designed to ensure that improvement efforts are inclusive of all students and the full school community. Although the particular expertise of outside organizations that will be called upon to support the implementation of the turnaround models is not specified, this support is an important aspect of the plan.

The State's plan to support its LEAs to turnaround its persistently lowest achieving schools also includes other community-based strategies, such as the WINS for Children program. The application provides evidence of the purpose and the strategies that are used in this program to build a healthier community including its schools.

The State has determined that four of the first twelve schools slated for turnaround will use the "closure" model. The plan does not include detail regarding reassignment of the students currently attending these schools, an important focus of the model, especially given the state's learning from its experience having previously closed 23 schools.

It should be noted that the state's plan to identify persistently lowest achieving schools and double the number of schools in which the four school intervention models will be used each year during the first three years of the grant is very aggressive, and it is unclear that those responsible for supporting the efforts of the first schools will be sufficiently far along, and have learned enough, to keep adding so many schools to their portfolios each year.

Total	50	46
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	10
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	5
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	5
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)		
The percentage of available revenues used to support elementary, secondary and public higher education for FY 2009 was slightly greater than the percentage of available revenues used to support elementary, secondary and public higher education for FY 2008.		
The State's policies, as well as the interpretation of its constitution, support equitable funding between high-need LEAs and other LEAs and High Poverty Schools and other Schools.		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	24
(i) Enabling high-performing charter schools "(caps)"	8	8
(ii) Authorizing and holding charters accountable for outcomes	8	5
(iii) Equitably funding charter schools	8	4

(iv) Providing charter schools with equitable access to facilities	8	4
(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools	8	3

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

There is no cap on the number of charter schools that can be established in the State, or the number of children who can be served by charter schools. Chartering authority has been progressively extended over the years and now is held by colleges and universities, regional educational authorities and the Common Council of the City of Milwaukee.

State statutes delineate required items that must be in each petition to open a charter school, and included among the items is a description of the school's educational program, the methods by which the school will help students achieve educational goals, the governance structure for the school, and methods to ensure parental involvement. All of the items must similarly be included in the contract between the authorizer and the person who seeks to establish the school. All chartering entities must give preference to applicants who seek to establish schools to serve at-risk students and contracts must describe how the school will achieve a racial and ethnic balance reflective of the school district as a whole. The State laws regarding charter school accountability focus on the chartering entity (not the State) revoking the charter if the school is found to have violated its contract, which includes its plans for the educational program, among others. There is no sense that the State is playing a large leadership role with respect to the accountability of charter schools. While anecdotal evidence is presented regarding the closure of 67 charter schools over the past five years, including a report from the Wisconsin Charter School Association, suggesting that failure to make adequate student academic progress is among the reasons for closure, there is no specific evidence provided regarding the identification of the charter schools or the specific reasons for which they were closed. Many reasons are suggested, and it does not appear that failure to make adequate progress is among the primary reasons. In addition, the application does not make clear whether student achievement, as defined in Race to the Top, is the same criterion as is used in its decisions regarding charter school authorization, renewal and/or closure.

Charter schools are funded differently depending on whether they are authorized by districts or other chartering entities. In some districts charter school funding follows students and the schools receive the same funding as traditional schools. However, this is not required - and because the district and charter school negotiate the specific level of funding, in some the schools may not be receiving their commensurate level of financial support. The charter schools authorized by non-district chartering organizations are funded from a proportionate reduction in State school aid from all of the State's school districts. Thus, individual comparisons for the non-board charter schools were not provided. It is noteworthy that the Center for Education Reform has found that Wisconsin is among the states providing the highest rate of funding for its charter schools.

The State does not impose any facilities-related requirements on charter schools that it does not impose on traditional public schools. The State does not provide facilities aid to schools; this support is provided by the LEA. Therefore, facilities aid does not distinguished between charter schools and traditional schools. However, facilities funding is a matter of negotiation between the charter school and its authorizer, so there is no way to know the extent to which such funding will be equitable or not. The application does not suggest that the State provides any assistance with respect to facilities acquisition; it does, however, state that some charter schools may share district facilities. It is not clear whether charter schools have the ability to share in bonds, mill levies, etc.

While State Statute (Section 118.38) allows school boards to apply for a waiver to be exempt from any education related district requirement except those that concern the health and safety of pupils, pupil discrimination, the assessment program, teacher licensure, pupil records, data collection, and financial audits, there is no evidence provided that these waivers are equivalent to statutory authority to operate innovative, autonomous public schools as defined in Race to the Top.

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

The application describes several significant conditions favorable to reform or innovation that have positive and important outcomes. They include the following:

- Fully funding a community-based four-year old kindergarten program
- Establishing Model Early Learning Standards
- Restructuring the educator licensing system
- Repeal of the Qualified Economic Offer law
- Open enrollment for students throughout the state
- Wisconsin Covenant Program

Total	55	39
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Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

While the State has a number of initiatives aimed at improving STEM education and making it more broadly available, the overall plan does not meet the requirements of Race to the Top. While there are many important and well-planned initiatives, including the creation of the statewide STEM Advisory Committee, establishment of the STEM Academies, financial support for district innovations in STEM, increasing science and math course offerings, training to enable more teachers to teach AP STEM-related courses, expanding teacher preparation programs focused on STEM teachers, the overall plan suffers from the fact that in the majority of districts students are required only to take two science and two mathematics courses in high school. Only six urban districts have signed addenda to their MOUs which commit them to requiring three years of math and three years of science for high school graduation. This seriously undermines the likelihood that many students will be prepared for STEM-related further study, including AP courses, or careers. In addition, while the State proposes that the additional math and science credits can be earned in creative ways and through integrated and applied methods, it is not clear that they will be rigorous. There is also no effort described to addressing the needs of underrepresented groups and, in particular, women and girls - it appears only in the designation of districts participating in the effort to prepare more teachers to teach AP courses. While the districts have high minority population, there is no mention of how particularly to address the students' needs or addressing girls or women at all.

Total	15	0
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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: (Tier 1)

The State's application provides evidence of a comprehensive approach to education reform. The State is well on its way to adopting high quality, internationally benchmarked Common Core standards and benchmarked assessments and has a plan for rolling them out and supporting LEAs to implement them. It

is also well on its way to meeting all of the requirements of America COMPETES and has plans to support LEAs to use the data that will be made available to improve teaching and instruction. Data will also be made available to parents, community members and researchers. Teacher and principal licensing is tied to performance, and evaluations will be created that include student growth as a significant factor. While most unions have not agreed to the broadest use of new evaluation systems, the state is moving forward and creating model evaluations. The State is also already deeply engaged in efforts to turnaround the lowest achieving schools and has set out a comprehensive and robust plan to increase staff to be able to provide significant support to the schools in turnaround status.

Total		0
Grand Total	500	354

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	6
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	3
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	3
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)		
<p>(i) State funding for education increased very slightly (1%) from 07-08 to 08-09.</p> <p>(ii) State statute and policy lead to equitable funding across districts. Among its policies are equating formulas between high and low property values and a cap on how much districts are able to increase spending. Per pupil spending in districts with 20% or more students below the poverty line was \$11,600 in 07-08; districts with less that 20% students below the poverty line was \$10,100. Equitable funding within LEAs was not addressed.</p>		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	26
(i) Enabling high-performing charter schools "(caps)"	8	8
(ii) Authorizing and holding charters accountable for outcomes	8	4
(iii) Equitably funding charter schools	8	4
(iv) Providing charter schools with equitable access to facilities	8	4
(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools	8	6
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)		
<p>(i) Wisconsin has a long history of supporting charter schools. There are no restrictions on the number of charters nor the enrollment.</p> <p>(ii) Chartering authority rests mainly with local districts. Milwaukee has additional chartering authority with the University of Milwaukee, Area Technical College and the City Common Council. State statute sets guidelines for what needs to be included in the petition including student performance measures, parental involvement, as well as teacher qualifications. The state monitors charter schools with an annual survey at the district level.</p> <p>At this time 206 charter schools are operating in WI. Over the past five years, authorizers have closed 67 schools which the state believes is an indication of increased accountability at the local level and the support of the SEA. Because the state does not collect data on charter school closures it is difficult to know the precise reasons.</p> <p>(iii) Funding decisions are made at the local level with the district and charter school negotiating the specific level of funding. WI does not provide evidence to indicate equitable funding for charter schools but does cite a Center for Education Reform statement indicating "Wisconsin funds its charter schools at a slightly higher rate than most other states." This is not adequate to fully measure whether or not the state's charter schools receive equitable funding.</p> <p>(iv) These decisions are made at the local level. The state does not provide facilities funding for public schools nor for charter schools.</p> <p>(v) Virtual schools seem to be the most used innovative school in WI. It is not clear if the statutory waiver authority discussed in the RTT application meets the requirements of the RTT definition.</p>		

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	5
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)		
<p>WI has created a number of important reform conditions of which it is justifiably proud, from early childhood education, open enrollment policies, progressive licensing for teachers, and college readiness.</p> <p>The outcome measures included in the discussion of the early childhood initiative are impressive. Data indicate that WI pre-K children are above the national average on three of the four academic skills assessed.</p>		
Total	55	37

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0
Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)		
<p>WI has articulated a coordinated approach to STEM from the benchmarking of its standards to teacher development programs. The state also intends to establish four STEM Academies for high school juniors and seniors that will increase the students opportunities for enriched coursework and provide teachers with unique professional development experiences.</p> <p>However, WI does not address the specific requirement to address the needs of women and girls in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The state's use of the terms "all" students and "underrepresented" students does not meet the positive requirement to address the needs of women and girls.</p>		
Total	15	0

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
Absolute Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)		
<p>In many areas WI has a very impressive RTT application. They have been a lead state on the Common Core of Standards and aligned assessments with an ambitious plan to use technology to improve implementation at the local level. Their data system, including GOALS, could be a lighthouse for other states to combine all aspects of a reform system into a technology based tracking system.</p> <p>On the other hand, the achievement disparities in the state are wide and persistent. While the turn around effort in Milwaukee is targeted and designed to focus all the state's efforts on this one district, it raises the question of why did it take so long to provide this level of assistance.</p> <p>There is also a lack of participation in key areas of the plan - rewarding teachers and principals - that needs further explanation.</p>		
Total		0

Grand Total	500	351
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would expect that at least a few of the feeder schools to these high schools are low-achieving schools as well.

(ii) Since all of the identified schools are part of the Milwaukee Public School system, this section concentrates on the state's efforts to work closely with MPS to turn around the entire district and these schools in particular. Almost \$4 million in RttT funds will be set aside for this purpose, to include six new WDPI positions (Turnaround Director and Turnaround Specialists) to monitor and support MPS's efforts. A well-conceived table of organization for new district leadership (Appendix 25) that includes direct involvement of the Turnaround Director demonstrates careful planning to create structures that should improve chances for success of these turnaround projects. The state will also integrate \$45 million from a federal School Improvement Grant to support the re-structuring of the district and the improvement of the 12 identified schools, six of which will implement the transformation model, one the restart model, and four closures. Also, expansion of WINS for Children will focus on creating quality of life improvements in the most challenged sections of the city; these "holistic educational and family supports" should translate into greater success for Milwaukee's most troubled schools. Other than a lack of details about why specific turnaround methods for selected for particular schools and the need for more information about how these turnarounds will be implemented in the persistently lowest-achieving schools, this is an overall strong effort and is rated in the high range.

Total	50	45
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	8
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	4
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	4
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)		
(i) The percentage of revenues available to the state that were used to support public education slightly increased from 2007-08 to 2008-09. This criterion, therefore, is rated in the high range.		
(ii) The state has excellent policies and practices in place, especially funding formulas based on per pupil-property values, SAGE and High Poverty Aid, to ensure equitable funding between high- and low-need districts and, therefore, earns a high rating for this criterion. Only because of no apparent policies regarding equitable distribution of aid within LEAs did the applicant receive a 4 instead of a 5.		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	29
(i) Enabling high-performing charter schools "(caps)"	8	8
(ii) Authorizing and holding charters accountable for outcomes	8	5
(iii) Equitably funding charter schools	8	8
(iv) Providing charter schools with equitable access to facilities	8	5
(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools	8	3

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

(i) The WI's charter school law contains no caps in the number of charter schools that can be in operation in the state; thus a high score for this criterion.

(ii) WI charter schools may be granted terms no longer than five years. The applications must include methods by which student progress will be assessed. Their contracts must include a description of how the charter schools will achieve a "racial and ethnic balance among its pupils that reflects the balance in the school district as a whole." (A noteworthy omission is balance based on numbers of LEP students, students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged students.) However, no data is provided as evidence that the state's charter schools have, in fact, achieved even ethnic/racial balance. A report by the Wisconsin Charter School Association is quoted as stating that six charter schools were closed last year for "poor performance," but no details on this were provided.

(iii) Specific details are provided to explain why the Center for Education Reform estimates that only ten other states fund their charter schools at a higher rate than WI.

(iv) While the state does not provide charter schools with special funds for facilities, none are provided to non-charter public schools either. However, the fact that charter schools must negotiate with their authorizers, usually a local Board of Education, for facility access might potentially lead to difficulty in identifying appropriate facilities for charter schools.

(v) The proposal does not fully address Wisconsin's approval of LEAs' operation of *innovative, autonomous public schools* (as defined in the notice). The applicant does state that WI law allows LEAs to apply for a waiver from WDPI to operate a non-charter public school that is exempt from any "education related district requirement," but there are no such examples offered by the applicant. The virtual charter schools that served 4,000 students in the 2009-10 school year are charter schools, not non-charter public schools.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	4
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)		
The applicant identifies a number of important reforms implemented in the past decade but does not provide clear evidence that they have led to increased student achievement.		
Total	55	41

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

This section of the proposal offered a number of strong endeavors that will occur in Wisconsin to emphasize science, technology, engineering and mathematics instruction (STEM). Among them are the following:

- The State Superintendent will create a STEM Advisory Council representing schools, business partners and IHEs.

- Four STEM Academies will be created in four different regions of the state.
- Funding through competitive grants will be provided to districts to implement innovative STEM education projects.
- Project Lead the Way will be expanded through matching funds to LEAs that wish to implement the program.

Preventing the proposal from fully meeting this competitive preference priority are the following:

- failing to ensure that a rigorous STEM course of study will be offered throughout the state; and
- lack of specific strategies to ensure that female students have equal access to and demonstrate success in high level STEM courses.

It is especially perplexing that if the applicant feels that graduation requirements for math and science should be increased to at least three years of study in each subject, only the six urban school districts that will be receiving extra RttT funds will be required to increase the rigor of math and science requirements. No discussion is included as to why a minimum of two years of high school math and science in the rest of the state is sufficient.

Total	15	0
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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: (Tier 1)

Wisconsin's RttT proposal reflects careful thought and planning to address all four education reform areas of ARRA. A sufficient percentage of participating LEAs should assist the state in increasing student achievement, narrowing achievement gaps and increasing graduation rates and preparation for college and careers.

Total		0
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Grand Total	500	342
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MPS has established school governance councils that must include parental, student, and community member support. MSP must also conduct a parental survey for feedback about parental involvement and or school improvement plans, and provide parenting classes and resource centers for parents. Including the Wisconsin Initiative for Neighborhood and Schools that Work for Children (WINS) – the State supports a community based approach to engaging schools in managing effective academic and social environments.

State Support

The State will award over \$45 million in School Improvement Grants (SIG) for the 12 lowest schools identified. The State will assist the MPS in developing a plan for the allocation of these resources in a way that targets student growth using the key areas of the reform platform mentioned above. Included in the plan are benchmarks and outcome goals, use of evidence based practices, quality indicators and staffing needs. State support will also include the dedication of staff to manage the reform and coach district and school personnel through the reform process. Included are a Director of School and District Reform, Director of Community Relations, Special education specialist and a Title 1 coordinator. Also being hired to work statewide will be State Turnaround Director and five turnaround specialists. The MOU with MPS details very aggressive goals for reform, showing mutual commitment to educational reform.

Of the 12 lowest performing schools identified, 4 will close, 1 will not be served (per federal guidelines), 1 will restructure, 6 will transform (6 is 50% of the 12 schools, therefore they did not exceed the 50% threshold).

2 major research partners are engaged in the MPS reform to assist with data analysis, best practice recommendations, and providing direct technical assistance with the reform plan implementation. The State projects that over the next 4 years the number of schools identified as persistently low achieving will grow from 12 to 24 (2010-2011), 48 (2011-2012), 66 (2012-2013), and 80 (2013-2014).

Total	50	42
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	9
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	4
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	5

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

The State reports that although total revenues for elementary, secondary, and public higher education was decreased the actual percentage of total revenue increased by 1% (51% to 52%). State law dictates that the State must provide school financial assistance on a per pupil funding basis. The supreme court concluded that this per pupil funding formula provides for sufficient support to provide a sound education for all students. Over 87% of state aid to local schools is distributed on per pupil basis using a formula associate with per pupil property values. Greater share being allocated to in schools lower property values - equalizing rich and poor districts based on tax assessments of property values. The State also issues a statewide mandate on the amount any district can increase per pupil funding. For school year 2009-2010 - the supplemental increase was \$200, again stabilizing equity across the state.

Quality Counts report (2009) ranked Wisconsin 8th for overall quality of school finance system. Wisconsin was ranked 3rd in per pupil sending equity using coefficient variable calculation. In per pupil spending weighted by measure to which districts meet or near national averages for expenditures the State ranked 10th. All evidence for equitable funding system for all students statewide.

2007-2008 spending for 37 school districts with more than 20% of 5-17 year olds living below poverty level, funding was \$11,600 per student compared to \$10,100 for 389 districts with poverty levels below 20%.

Wisconsin has a variety of supplant funding initiatives to provide equitable support for high risk students enabling schools to provide the additional in school and community services in place to close achievement gaps and to prepare children for teaching and learning.

Student Achievement Guarantee in Education (SAGE), a voluntary program awarding an additional \$2,250 per student eligible for Free and Reduce Lunch (FRL). Funding must be used for reducing class size to 18 through the 3rd grade. 475 schools in 206 districts (about 40% of all elementary schools) use SAGE. 86% of elementary schools with poverty rates over 20% engage in SAGE.

High Poverty Aid: provides additional \$112 per students in districts with more than 50% of students eligible for FRL. 34% of districts with child poverty rates above 20% benefit from this funding.

Preschool to Grade 5 Grants: funding provided directly to schools to improve education in preschool through 5th grade with high concentrations of poverty and low achieving students. 38 schools all from urban districts engage in this funding.

Sparsity Aid: Additional state funding for \$150 per student to districts with between 20%-50% of pupils eligible for FRL, and \$300 per pupil for districts with over 50% FRL and less than 725 students in district and population density of less than 10 students per square mile. 37 school districts meet the criteria, 25 districts (68%) receive the aid.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	28
(i) Enabling high-performing charter schools "(caps)"	8	8
(ii) Authorizing and holding charters accountable for outcomes	8	6
(iii) Equitably funding charter schools	8	6
(iv) Providing charter schools with equitable access to facilities	8	4
(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools	8	4

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

The state charter school law does not have any limitations on the number or type of charter schools that can be opened. There is no restriction on the number of students or the student demographics that can be served by a charter school or be served in all charter schools. The Wisconsin Charter Program was established in 1993, which empowered 10 districts to open 2 charter schools each for a total of 20. 13 schools were created. In 1995 revisions were made to the charter school law granting authority to the local school boards and eliminating the cap on total number of charter schools. In 1997 the State extended chartering authoring to two institutes of higher education and one city council in Milwaukee. In 1998, Cooperative Education Service Agreements (CESA) were authorize as charter operators in agreements with the local district. The state clearly supports the growth of diverse charter schools.

The State outlines the laws that dictate how charter schools are approved, monitored, held accountable, are reauthorized and are reviewed for closure. Charter schools authorization cannot exceed 5 years with renewal status for additional terms to not exceed 5 years. State statutes outline required items for application submission. The charter operators must detail the school education program, how they will measure student growth and progress, supports for student achievements, the school organizational structures. State law states that chartering entities must give preference to applicants who desire to serve an at risk population. Charter applicants must also describe how they will ensure a balance of student demographics in comparison to the district as a whole. Applicants must detail safety and security,

disciplinary procedures, staffing patterns and qualifications, and finally financial transparency and audit procedures.

The State was awarded \$52 million from the federal Public Charter Schools program Grant (2005-2008). The State awarded 72 planning grants, 100 initial implantation grants, 115 renewal implementation grants, 21 dissemination grants and dissemination grant renewals. 91% of charter schools met highly qualified standards of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). State Superintendent created an advisory council of 22 members to assist with the development and support for highly qualified charter schools, including best practices and supports necessary to maintain existing charter schools and create new innovative charter schools. Over a 5 year period, 143 charter schools have opened, and 67 have been closed.

The State describes that funding processes do not treat charter schools differently from traditional public schools. There are two funding strategies. One is the per pupil funding follows the student, so per pupil funding for any child in the district follows the student regardless of traditional or charter school. The second strategy is a decreased per pupil funding based upon the services that a charter may contract for with the district (special education, general services, food service, facilities' and or maintenance). It is unclear that if a charter contracts for services, and a fee is assessed, would the same fee be assessed of the traditional school for central office services. All charters are provided funding in accordance with Title 1, Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ensuring equal shares of state and federal funds. Charters are paid directly the per pupil funding amount, and for 2009-2010 that amount was \$7,775 per pupil.

Charter schools in the state receive equal funding as a traditional charter school. The state does not provide separate facilities funds for traditional or charter schools. Schools have autonomy to negotiate facility funding from their authorizing school districts. The State does not detail any support for charter schools in acquiring facilities in any way other than the per pupil funding.

The State law allows maximum flexibility for local school systems to operate innovative and autonomous schools that are not charter schools.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions

5

4

(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

State presents examples of other significant reform conditions that support student achievement. The State has funded Kindergarten for 4-year-olds (4K), through only state aid. This initiative sets the stage for the preparation for future success as children transition through the public school system. 80% of all districts offer the 4K program. The state has also established the Model Early Learning Standards for early childhood education to prepare students from birth through 1st grade in academic readiness and success.

The National Center for Early Development and Learning study of State Wide Early Education Programs (SWEEP) reports that of 5 state studies, Wisconsin showed 4K students achieved higher than the national average in 3 out of four academic skills. Students of poverty and non poverty benefited from the 4K – gaining academic, language and literacy, and social skills.

The State also supports the SAGE program. Participating schools agree to limit class size to 18 students in grades K-3, in exchange for an additional per pupil compensation of \$2,250. Evidence based research demonstrates that this intervention has a positive impact on student outcomes. 475 schools participated. No data on the amount of funding earned through this initiative.

The State is also committed to reform for the system of educator training and certification. The State has revised teacher certification, preparation and professional development. Through the Quality Educator Initiative – teachers progress through a 3 tiered system of certification, requiring staff to demonstrate proficiency in critical areas using a multiple rating factor including student growth, instructional delivery and measured changes in student learning. Financial incentives are provided for critical content areas and for Master Teachers.

The State has also established the Urban Schools Leadership Project to prepare a cadre of high quality principals prepared for and committed to serving in the 5 urban districts of the state. State law repealed caps on teacher compensation in 2009, allowing for development of innovative compensation systems to reward high quality teachers. Wisconsin is also a leader in student choice – establishing a system for a student to be enrolled and attend any public school of their choice across the state.

Other reform innovations focus on rural education and supporting rural school systems financially and through regional networks for training, academic interventions and college and career readiness. STEM initiatives are of high priority across the state, using Project Lead the Way as a model example of successful STEM programs. Finally the state established the Wisconsin Covenant Scholars program that rewards 8th grade students who pledge to maintain above average grades and demonstrate citizenship throughout high school, by offering financial aid to them upon graduation.

Total	55	41
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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: (Tier 1)

The State proposes to develop a STEM advisory council, consisting of representatives from regional economic development organizations, institutes of higher education, technology based business partners. The advisory council will be the central coordination hub of statewide efforts for STEM programs. This council will advise on standards, projects, partners, and workforce development needs. The advisory council will ensure that consistency and sustainability are fostered across the state ensuring equal access for all students. The council will also formalize the work already completed with current partners around STEM education. The State has developed partnerships with STEM supporters like the state Technology Council, Engineers and Scientists of Milwaukee, STEM Equity Pipeline State Leadership team, and Charter School Association.

The State has committed to the creation of four STEM academies regionally located across the state. The academies will provide a coordinated center for STEM learning, serving assigned regional areas. The centers will create projects, coursework, experiences and research capstones connecting science, technology, engineering and math. Virtual learning will be available for students in remote sites or who can't access transportation to the centers. The academies will also serve as professional development centers promoting best practices in STEM instruction and project development. Faculty in schools can access the academy staff and resources to extend the STEM experiences to school sites, expanding access for all students.

Each Academy will be linked to local businesses, industries and workforce development systems to coordinate efforts to prepare students for career and college entry. Each Academy will link to the University of Wisconsin Systems Research to Jobs Initiative. Universities will be important partners providing professional development to school staff around teaching research strategies and models.

LEAs will be encouraged to participate for competitive grants to bring STEM related programs to their district to enhance STEM opportunities. The State will expand dual credit (equivalency) earning for students in STEM – providing them opportunities to earn content and STEM credit. AP course work will be expanded in STEM programs. To increase reform movement, the state hopes to increase by 5% the number of AP STEM course completed by targeted populations traditionally underrepresented.

The State will also target undergraduate majors in STEM subjects to enter into teaching in the STEM field – increasing talent development in critical shortage areas and ensuring that higher percentage of teachers are competent in the content areas.

The State did not specifically mention targeting specific sub groups of students traditionally unexposed or denied access to AP and STEM courses. No mention was made of supporting exposure to STEM for young women and girls or for special education.

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: (Tier 1)		
<p>The State has met the absolute priority. Reform plan integrates all required components and links them together building a system for educational change focused on student achievement; human capital recruitment, retention and growth; involvement of community based partners and stakeholders; attention to teacher and principal induction, support and growth; academic, behavioral and social student supports, STEM expansion, performance evaluation plans; curriculum, standards, instruction, and assessments; school turnaround and support; and finally fiscal accountability, transparency and logical funding mechanisms to ensure the reform is far reaching, of high quality and impacts across the state.</p> <p>The state has set priorities in math, literacy, STEM, special education as well as closing achievement gaps across grades, subjects, demographics, and regions. Graduation and career and college readiness are common themes across all major reform areas.</p> <p>The state has addressed sustainability for reform beyond 2014 and has paid attention to capacity building starting at the teacher level and progressing through the state level. Attention has been paid to staffing needs at the state and regional levels to keep reform momentum active, accurate and relevant to the needs of each student, class, school and district.</p>		
Total		0

Grand Total	500	408
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Total	50	50
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	10
(i) Allocating a consistent percentage of State revenue to education	5	5
(ii) Equitably funding high-poverty schools	5	5
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)		
<p>(F)(1)(i) Wisconsin earned five points because Wisconsin increased the percentage (51% to 52%) of the total state revenues used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for FY 2009 than the percentage of the total revenues available to the state that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for FY 2008. However because of very severe reductions in revenues, the total amount of actual dollars was down \$350 million dollars.</p> <p>(F)(1)(ii) Wisconsin earned the maximum five points because 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. Actually, Wisconsin provides an additional 15% to LEAs with high percentage (20%) of poverty students.</p>		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	38
(i) Enabling high-performing charter schools "(caps)"	8	8
(ii) Authorizing and holding charters accountable for outcomes	8	8
(iii) Equitably funding charter schools	8	8
(iv) Providing charter schools with equitable access to facilities	8	8
(v) Enabling LEAs to operate other innovative, autonomous public schools	8	6
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)		
<p>(F)(2) (i) Wisconsin received the maximum eight points because it has a charter school law that does not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of high-performing charter schools. Most charter schools are authorized by local boards of education but there are other authorizers. Charter school petitioners have the right to appeal to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction if their charter school request is denied. Wisconsin had 206 charter schools operating in school year 2009-2010.</p> <p>(F)(2) (ii) Wisconsin received the maximum eight points because it has laws, statutes, regulations, or guidelines regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools. Charter schools are assessed in the same manner as traditional public schools and students. Charter school renewals are largely driven by success in fiscal management, student enrollment and achievement.</p> <p>(F)(2) (iii) Wisconsin received the maximum eight points because charter schools receive equitable funding compared to traditional public schools, and a commensurate share of local, state, and federal revenues. Board authorized charter schools (92%) receive identical funding and in the other 8% funding is equivalent when facilities, transportation and other costs are considered.</p> <p>(F)(2) (iv) Wisconsin received the maximum eight points because it treats charter schools with similar per-pupil funding for facilities as it does other public schools. The State of Wisconsin does not provide separate</p>		

facilities funds for either traditional public schools or public charter schools as Wisconsin uses a per pupil funding formula. Educational entities, whether traditional or charter, use per-pupil expenditures for appropriate facilities. Traditional schools and charter schools must meet similar requirements for health and educational needs.

(F)(2) (v) Wisconsin received six points because it enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools other than charter schools. The proposal did not provide sufficient detail or examples of how this authority was being used. The two examples were of virtual schools but the proposal did not provide information about how these schools met the expectations of (F)(2)(v).

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

(F)(3) Wisconsin earned the maximum five points because it has a long history and numerous examples of having 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.

The Wisconsin RTTT proposal provided the following examples:

- Numerous programs focused on early childhood education.
- Student Achievement Guarantee in Education (SAGE) program. The program requires participating schools to ensure class sizes of 18 to 1 in grades kindergarten through 3 in exchange for an additional \$2,250 per income-eligible student.
- Project Lead the Way enhances STEM opportunities.
- Wisconsin Covenant Program promises a spot in a Wisconsin post-secondary institution and a financial aid package to 8th grade students who pledge to maintain above average grades and demonstrate good citizenship throughout their high school careers.

Total	55	53
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Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0

Competitive Reviewer Comments: (Tier 1)

Wisconsin did not meet all the conditions necessary to earn the 15 points associated with emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). Wisconsin did not address the "needs of underrepresented groups and of women and girls in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics." Wisconsin did have positives in the area of STEM. Some of the STEM-related efforts of special note were:

- Creating a working group to coordinate STEM efforts around the state, strengthen ties with regional economic development partners and higher education stakeholders to align with workforce needs and promote best practices within Wisconsin schools.
- Establish four STEM academies.
- Contracting with educational institutions, professional organizations and/or non-profit organizations to provide STEM teacher on site and via virtual learning opportunities throughout the state.
- Working with educational institutions, professional organizations and/or non-profit organizations to develop and provide STEM resources and partnerships that inform best practices through support of

pilot projects, teacher development, and STEM instructional materials. These efforts will be coordinated with the STEM academies.

Total	15	0
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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: (Tier 1)

The Wisconsin Proposal meets all the conditions of the "Absolute Priority." The State's application comprehensively and coherently addresses 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 had high participation and therefore demonstrated in its application sufficient LEA participation and commitment to successfully implement and achieve the goals in its plans. It described 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. The proposal had all the required and optional charts filled out. The appendices were well organized and helped in understanding the proposal. The budgets, with the exceptions noted, were well thought-out and provided additional insight. Wisconsin should be commended for its intent to issue contracts through "Request For Proposals."

Total		0
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Grand Total	500	402
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