

**E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools**

|  | Available | Tier 1    |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>5</b>  |
| <p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:<br/>                     The State has the legal authority to intervene directly in LEAs with one or more of the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools. It is unclear if the State has the legal authority to intervene directly in its lowest-achieving schools</p>  |           |           |
| <b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>  | <b>40</b> | <b>33</b> |
| (i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools  | 5         | 5         |
| (ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools  | 35        | 28        |
| <p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:<br/>                     The State includes a robust plan for turning around its lowest-performing schools. The plan illustrates the State's commitment via the Iowa Support System for Schools and Districts in Need of Assistance to improving education outcomes in poor performing schools and resourcing said schools with proven teams capable of turning them around. The State's decision to develop this section in tandem with its School Improvement Grant will ensure dollars are concentrated and maximized for impact. The Center for Collaborative Inquiry on Intensive School Support provides a clear and compelling plan for transforming schools, closing achievement gaps within schools, and overcoming racial disparity. This is smart and shows a level of sophistication within the State to use lessons learned from previous turnaround efforts to improve results among newly identified schools. The State's reservations about using the Department's turnaround models are informed and understandable as well as its decision to pilot the models during the upcoming academic year.</p> |           |           |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>50</b> | <b>38</b> |

**F. General**

|  | Available | Tier 1    |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>5</b>  |
| <p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:<br/>                     Education saw a small increase in funding from FY2008 to FY2009. The State asserts its funding formula is "one of the most equitable in the nation," and it supports its claim by citing failed attempts by third-parties to successfully challenge the formula's equity. While the formula does establish through Iowa Chapter Code 257 a per pupil funding amount that is consistent to all schools and provides additional funding that favors low-income schools, the presence of court challenges may reflect a dissatisfaction among certain stakeholders with the formula. Further, the narrative does not describe how its formula has led to equitable funding (a) between high-need LEAs and other LEAs and (b) within LEAs, between high-poverty schools and other schools. The State's inability to describe the impact of its funding formula undermines its assertion that its formula is "one of the most equitable in the nation."</p> |           |           |
| <b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>  | <b>40</b> | <b>13</b> |
| <p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:<br/>                     The State does not have a charter school cap. The State has guidelines regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools. The guidelines do not explicitly address whether authorizers require that student achievement be one significant</p>   |           |           |

factor, among others, in authorization or renewal. Rather the guidelines describe holding charters accountable to the "education goals" in their charter, which presumably could include student achievement. The law is silent regarding the encouragement of charter schools that serve student populations that are similar to local district student populations. Regarding accountability, charter schools receive an assessment each year and it is shared with the legislature. It is unclear how these reports are used to drive reform within the school or inform practices regarding opening new school or reauthorizing current schools. The State's plan does not address: (iii) The State's charter schools receive (as set forth in Appendix B) equitable funding compared to traditional public schools, and a commensurate share of local, State, and Federal revenues; (iv) The State provides charter schools with funding for facilities (for leasing facilities, purchasing facilities, or making tenant improvements), assistance with facilities acquisition, access to public facilities, the ability to share in bonds and mill levies, or other supports; and the extent to which the State does not impose any facility-related requirements on charter schools that are stricter than those applied to traditional public schools; and (v) The State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools (as defined in this notice) other than charter schools.

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| <b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>   | <b>5</b>  | <b>0</b>  |
| <b>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b><br>The State does not answer (F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions. |           |           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>55</b> | <b>18</b> |

**Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM**

|  | Available | Tier 1    |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM</b>   | <b>15</b> | <b>15</b> |
| <b>Competitive Reviewer Comments:</b><br>The State through is recently launched STEM Initiative and the Iowa Core places a meaningful and measurable emphasis on STEM towards offering a rigorous course of study in mathematics, the sciences, technology, and engineering; cooperating with STEM-capable community partners to prepare and assist teachers in integrating STEM content across grades and disciplines; and preparing more students for advanced study and careers in the STEM fields. |           |           |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>15</b> | <b>15</b> |

**Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform**

|   | Available | Tier 1     |
|---|-----------|------------|
| <b>Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform</b>   |           | <b>Yes</b> |
| <b>Absolute Reviewer Comments:</b><br>The State's application comprehensively and coherently address all of the four education reform areas specified in the ARRA as well as the State Success Factors Criteria. The State's application demonstrates it is taking a systemic approach to education reform. |           |            |
| <b>Total</b>  |           | <b>0</b>   |

|                    |            |            |
|--------------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>500</b> | <b>339</b> |
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mentoring and supports to administrators. Iowa's plan did not mention differentiation for diverse learners, providing common time for teachers and principals to collaborate, and how it will measure, assess and improve program effectiveness to ensure that it may further advance professional growth and advance learning for all students.

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|--------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Total</b> | <b>138</b> | <b>111</b> |
|--------------|------------|------------|

### E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

|   | Available | Tier 1    |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>5</b>  |
| <p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:<br/>           Recently the State Legislature enacted legislation granting the state the authority to intervene in LEAs and implement interventions in an LEA with 1 or more schools identified as a persistently lowest-achieving schools. Reference to intervening directly in schools was not evident. It was not clear if they have the authority to intervene directly in schools.</p>  |           |           |
| <b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>   | <b>40</b> | <b>40</b> |
| (i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools   | 5         | 5         |
| (ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools   | 35        | 35        |
| <p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:<br/>           The state plans to identify the persistently lowest-achieving schools and make a list available to the public beginning in 2010. Iowa is in the process of developing additional supports for persistently lowest-achieving schools and will continue to utilize the Center for Collaborative Inquiry on Intensive School Supports to support LEAs with schools with significant achievement gaps. Schools are required to develop a two-year school improvement plan which includes an audit phase, diagnosis phase, implementation phase, and evaluation phase. Iowa follows a six step process for each phase. Iowa has developed a systematic process to identify, determine and address the factors contributing to a school's low performance. Iowa also looks at the involvement of the principal, teachers and parents, analyzes each area of concern such as achievement gap, graduation rate, the performance of students by subgroup, curriculum, assessment and instructional practices. Since its inception, this school improvement process has resulted in improved student achievement in 36 schools. Each LEA will be required to select one or the four school intervention models and will work with a team of support personnel as they implement the school improvement plan. Iowa has a plan with goals, timelines, activities and person(s) responsible. Iowa's goals and timelines are based on their past experiences that support their comprehensive proven approach designed to address the lowest-achieving schools and their plan to expand the supports schools need to meet success. Iowa plans to build upon this process.</p> |           |           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>50</b> | <b>45</b> |

### F. General

|  | Available | Tier 1    |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>10</b> |
| <p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:<br/>           The percentage of the total revenues available to the State was greater for FY 2009. Iowa funding formula as established through Iowa Code provides for equitable funding and includes provisions to</p> |           |           |

ensure that additional funds are available to populations in need and for which programming costs are higher than for general student population.

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|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>   | <b>40</b> | <b>14</b> |
| <p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:<br/>         As of 2010 the state's charter school law removed the cap and limits on the number of charter schools that are allowed to operate and establish up to a specific number of innovation zones. Iowa has established regulations on the approval, monitoring, accountability, reauthorization and closing of charter schools and establishes expectations on creating learning environments that are different and innovative and specifies measures of student outcomes. While Iowa can close or not renew an ineffective charter, Iowa did not provide data on closing or non renewal of charter schools. Reference and evidence to equitability in funding, data on number of applications/denials, high-need populations were not addressed. Funding for facilities as compared to traditional public schools was not addressed. No mention of a provision about whether or not the State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools other than charter schools was made.</p> |           |           |
| <b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>   | <b>5</b>  | <b>0</b>  |
| <p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:<br/>         Demonstrating other significant reform conditions was not addressed.</p>  |           |           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>55</b> | <b>24</b> |

### Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

|   | Available | Tier 1    |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM</b>  | <b>15</b> | <b>15</b> |
| <p>Competitive Reviewer Comments:<br/>         Iowa has addressed STEM through a series of programs designed to meet the needs of all students. In partnership with higher education, Iowa focuses on creating a PK-12 project-based learning curriculum and recruiting prospective teaching candidates and supporting existing teachers. Iowa works collaboratively with business, industry, agencies, and other community members to develop programs, secure funding and develop rigorous course content while addressing the learner differences and gender equity. Iowa's mission is to inspire students at each level to explore and develop interest and skills in a STEM area that will lead to well-rounded life capabilities as they graduate high school and enter college or the workforce.</p> |           |           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>15</b> | <b>15</b> |

### Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

|   | Available | Tier 1     |
|---|-----------|------------|
| <b>Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform</b>   |           | <b>Yes</b> |
| <p>Absolute Reviewer Comments:<br/>         Through the Iowa Core, Iowa established a foundation for their reform efforts. Iowa presents a comprehensive and coherent plan that addresses the 4 reform areas in ARRA. The states and participating LEAs in partnership with relevant stakeholders have started to address school improvement and to create a student centered learning environment with appropriate supports for teachers, administrators and students. Iowa has designed a statewide implementation model to support education innovations, build capacity, and facilitate organization change. Iowa is taking a</p> |           |            |

systemic approach to reform with the ultimate goal of creating a system that prepares and equips students with the skills and attributes needed to enter college and the workforce.

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| Total |  | 0 |
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| Grand Total | 500 | 381 |
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without any justification for why the State expects such a long timeframe to accomplish this, does not suggest an ambitious reform agenda in this regard.

**(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals**

**20**

**18**

**(D)(5) Reviewer Comments:**

(i) The application is detailed and comprehensive in articulating a strong, thoughtful support system of a variety of approaches linked to teachers and principals. The State's emphasis in the area of professional development is strong and supported by evidence in the Iowa Professional Development Model. The State also envisions further enhancements to its support system for teachers and principals as part of its overall plan through the expansion of Assessment for Learning among other initiatives like the Teacher Work Sample Project, Iowa Leadership Academy, Principals Center and the Superintendent Network. In the aggregate, this is a very strong component of the application. (ii) The application meets the requirement of this criterion through its emphasis on continuously measuring and evaluating each of the State's professional development programs for teachers and principals.

**Total**

**138**

**86**

**E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools**

|   | Available | Tier 1    |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b><br>The application is not clear, nor is the statute language provided in the appendix specific, with regard to evidence that the State can intervene directly in the lowest-achieving schools. The narrative does provide evidence of the State's ability to intervene with LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action status.  |           |           |
| <b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>   | <b>40</b> | <b>35</b> |
| (i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools   | 5         | 5         |
| (ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools   | 35        | 30        |
| <b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b><br>(i) The State has a clear plan and specific metrics for annual publication of those schools identified as persistently lowest-achieving, both for Title-I eligible and non-Title I eligible, that meets the criterion. (ii) The application presents evidence that the State has recently enacted legislation to require LEAs to select one of the four turnaround strategies to address the issues within its lowest-achieving schools. The plans described for implementing these strategies going forward are thoughtful, coherent and credible. The application also speaks to the challenges of rural states where removal of 50% of the school staff in a turnaround would be detrimental to a small community. In addition, the application indicates that a waiver request has been made to allow the state additional discretion in determining when to remove a principal. While the State's concerns in these two areas is understandable, it is equally important that the State present evidence that school leadership will be removed when it is necessary as these turnaround strategies are implemented and to provide details as to the circumstances in which this would occur. The application provides evidence of a high-quality plan to support LEAs in their implementation of one of the four intervention models. |           |           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>50</b> | <b>40</b> |

**F. General**

|  | Available | Tier 1 |
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|  |           |           |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>8</b>  |
| <p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:<br/>                 (i) The application presents the required evidence of increased funding for public education from FY 08 to FY 09 and FY 10. (ii) The narrative is not specific as the criterion requires in explaining how the State's budget policies are organized to lead to equitable funding specifically between high-need LEAs and other LEAs as well as within LEAs between high-poverty schools and other schools. The appendix contains the statutory funding formula but does not address the specific requirements of this criterion.</p>  |           |           |
| <b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>  | <b>40</b> | <b>10</b> |
| <p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:<br/>                 (i) The application fully meets the criterion. (ii) While evidence is provided that the State has laws in place regarding how authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize and close charter schools, the application does not sufficiently emphasize the importance of student achievement as a significant factor, as the criterion requires. The application is also completely silent in providing evidence with regard to the State's strategies for encouraging charter schools that serve student populations that are similar to local district student populations, especially relative to high-need students. The application provides no evidence for examples of a charter school that has been closed or been denied a renewal. (iii) The application is completely silent in addressing this criterion. (iv) The application ignores this criterion. (v) The application provides thin evidence of the State's enabling capacity for LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools other than charter schools. The statute provided in the appendix covers innovation schools as linked to charter schools but the narrative makes no attempt to address this criterion directly.</p> |           |           |
| <b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>  | <b>5</b>  | <b>0</b>  |
| <p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:<br/>                 The application does not address this criterion.</p>   |           |           |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>55</b> | <b>18</b> |

**Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM**

|  | Available | Tier 1    |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM</b>   | <b>15</b> | <b>15</b> |
| <p>Competitive Reviewer Comments:<br/>                 The application meets the elements required of this criterion through evidence of the Iowa Mathematics and Science Education Partnership specifically in that the IMSEP is focused on rigor in the teaching of science and mathematics, increasing the number of students studying these disciplines, and encouraging improvements across the full range of the curriculum in collaboration with a broad array of stakeholders.</p> |           |           |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>15</b> | <b>15</b> |

**Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform**

|   | Available | Tier 1     |
|---|-----------|------------|
| <b>Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform</b> |           | <b>Yes</b> |
| <p>Absolute Reviewer Comments:</p>                                    |           |            |

While the application is weak in a number of areas and even completely silent with regard to several of the criteria, the State's application does present a sufficiently comprehensive and coherent plan to address all of the four education reform areas specified in ARRA as well as the State Success Factors Criteria. The State is clearly undertaking a systemic approach to education reform. The number of participating LEAs is 61% of total LEAs in the State therefore indicating the capacity for statewide reform. The MOU is broad and encompassing with specific, detailed requirements on the part of LEAs as a condition of their participation. One challenge is that the recourse language in the MOU for noncompliance of LEAs is weaker than the guideline language. It will be important for the State to monitor LEA compliance carefully to ensure maximum success. A final comment. The application contains numerous typos, incomplete sentences, and several missing graphics. This greatly distracts from the overall quality of the application.

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| Total |  | 0 |
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|-------------|-----|-----|
| Grand Total | 500 | 311 |
|-------------|-----|-----|

**E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools**

|   | Available | Tier 1    |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>5</b>  |
| <p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:<br/>                     The state has legal authority to intervene in LEAs in improvement or corrective action. It is unclear that they can intervene in schools. This should be clarified to raise this score.</p>   |           |           |
| <b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>   | <b>40</b> | <b>34</b> |
| (i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools   | 5         | 4         |
| (ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools   | 35        | 30        |
| <p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:<br/>                     Appendix E shows a clear model for the identification of low-achieving schools in both categories. The proposal outlines a thoughtful, holistic plan for the lowest-achieving schools. It offers support for both the lowest achieving schools and the LEAs with achievement gaps building on support systems in place for schools and districts in need of assistance (SINA and DINA) since 2003. Of those schools identified as low-achieving since 2003, the proposal states in one place that 36 have made it off the list and in the chart at the end of the section, that 27 have made significant enough gains to be removed from the list. This difference in reporting is addressed at the end of the section, but it would be helpful to understand better what sounds like a revolving door on and off the list for some schools and how the 36 were named separately. In addition, given that there were 136 schools on the list in 2008 (appendix E, pp 19-20) this section would be strengthened by addressing the status/expectations of the other 100 schools and why so many more have been identified each year since the program started. There are multiple supports/actions for schools in persistent low-achieving status and a clear intervention model has been identified with the caveat that districts "were not prepared to commit to adopting one of the four intervention models." It cites concerns about giving principals sufficient time to develop and links its concern to other rural states, saying that this model doesn't work for their conditions. The state requests "delayed implementation" of the intervention models and a waiver from the provision requiring principal removal, with the conditions that schools with relatively new principals will only adopt RTTT intervention models if they have not shown improvement after two years. This supports the shared values of the state and its local partners. More detail on how the state sees other appropriate ways to both uphold RTTT expectations and to integrate with the needs and values of the state, would raise the score for (E)(2)(ii.) There is specific and thoughtful attention paid to the connection of racial equity issues and reform, especially for low-achieving schools, as the state increasingly deals with racial achievement gaps.</p> |           |           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>50</b> | <b>39</b> |

**F. General**

|   | Available | Tier 1   |
|---|-----------|----------|
| <b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>7</b> |
| <p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:<br/>                     The percentage of total revenues from 08 to 09 increased. The application states that the school funding formula "is one of the most equitable in the nation." While there are no data provided on the impact of this equalization formula, court cases test its equity have all failed, so there is some evidence for its effectiveness. Points were not granted for all of (ii) because the application does not indicate whether this formula ensures that there is equitable funding between high-need LEAs and other LEAs and within LEAs, between high-poverty schools and other schools as well.</p> |           |          |

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|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>   | <b>40</b> | <b>12</b> |
| (F)(2) Reviewer Comments:<br>As of January 15, there is no cap, nor any restrictions on charter schools. The application details the history and explains the low number of operating charters well - there was a cap of 10 and then 20 (2008) statewide so there are only seven in operation currently. F2(ii) is partially addressed under the description of (i). The parts missing concern the requirement of student achievement as a significant factor, the encouragement of charter schools that serve student populations that are similar to local district populations and the closure or non-renewal of ineffective charter schools. F2 (iii) to (v) are omitted from this section with no mention of them or why they are not included. This significantly reduces the score for this section and leaves unanswered questions around ensuring successful conditions for charters and other innovative schools. |           |           |
| <b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>   | <b>5</b>  | <b>0</b>  |
| (F)(3) Reviewer Comments:<br>There is no narrative here.  |           |           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>55</b> | <b>19</b> |

**Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM**

|  |                  |               |
|--|------------------|---------------|
|  | <b>Available</b> | <b>Tier 1</b> |
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM</b>   | <b>15</b>        | <b>15</b>     |
| Competitive Reviewer Comments:<br>The STEM approach outlined here, and supported by narrative in other sections, is coherent and forward thinking, moving education outside the classroom and including critical partners in business, universities, learning centers and community colleges, among others. There are numerous projects underway and in development. |                  |               |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>15</b>        | <b>15</b>     |

**Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform**

|   |                  |               |
|---|------------------|---------------|
|   | <b>Available</b> | <b>Tier 1</b> |
| <b>Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform</b>   |                  | <b>Yes</b>    |
| Absolute Reviewer Comments:<br>Iowa presents a clear, thoughtful, researched strategy for reform grounded in a nuanced understanding of root-causes. They address all four education reform areas as well as State Success Factors Criteria. Their theory of action is woven into the range of interventions articulated throughout the application. In addition, learning is evident and is well communicated -- learning from failures as well as successes. Overall, the application honestly identifies its adaptive challenges - based in shifting its values, habits and beliefs around education and how to make it powerful for adults and students - and offers approaches to include stakeholders in addressing their challenges. It respects the wisdom and knowledge of those who make schools work - or not work. It also offers some clear technical "fixes" to issues. In some places (identified in those sections,) there is a need to tie this learning into the state's intended outcomes for students and to explain why progress may not have resulted - yet - to changes the state has effected. The data doesn't always follow from the reforms that sound like they should already have impact. There are also sections that have been completely omitted. In several areas, such as translating LEA participation into statewide impact, the three sub-points under charters |                  |               |

and the other conditions for reform, there is no narrative without any explanation. In otherwise strong sections this raised still unanswered questions and lowered scores.

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|-------------|-----|-----|
| Total       |     | 0   |
| Grand Total | 500 | 361 |

professional learning communities. The state's "cascade" model for dissemination of professional development appears to be well thought out and hold promise. Timely evaluation will be important to ensure that successful professional development is advanced and less successful professional development is eliminated or improved. The state earns additional points for this criterion by setting requirements for LEA's to provide data-based professional development plans that provide differentiation to meet the needs of career teachers and principals as well as new ones and to approach professional development for both individual and group growth. ii. The state has a plan for working collaboratively with LEA's to evaluate professional development programs and providers. The state will work with LEA's to collect data on the quality of professional development programs and providers rather than just tracking the expenditures and to include this data in its longitudinal data system. The state earns points for this criterion but not the full points, as the evaluation plan and subsequent follow-up is not discussed in detail.

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| Total | 138 | 89 |
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### E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

|  | Available | Tier 1    |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>5</b>  |
| (E)(1) Reviewer Comments:<br>The state earns some points for this criterion but not all, as it appears that the state has the legal authority to intervene in LEA's, but it is not clear that the state can intervene directly in schools.   |           |           |
| <b>(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools</b>  | <b>40</b> | <b>25</b> |
| (i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools  | 5         | 5         |
| (ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools  | 35        | 20        |
| (E)(2) Reviewer Comments:<br>i. and ii. The state plan receives medium points for the following: 1) Identifying lessons learned in past experiences with turning around schools; 2) the proposed plan to work with the Center for Collaborative Inquiry on Intensive School Support, and the targets and timelines set for implementing one of the four RTTT Intervention Models (Performance Measures Chart). |           |           |
| Total  | 50        | 30        |

### F. General

|   | Available | Tier 1   |
|---|-----------|----------|
| <b>(F)(1) Making education funding a priority</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>8</b> |
| (F)(1) Reviewer Comments:<br>i. The percent of the state budget that went to Iowa public education increased last year (over 2008) from 53.73% to 54.51%. It appears that Iowa legislation provides for increased funding for a range of variables including at-risk students (high poverty included in this definition). Iowa receives a "medium" score for the percent of increase in funding as it is very close to the same as in 2008. ii. Iowa receives full points for equitable funding between high-need LEA's (as defined in the RTTT notice) and other LEA's, and for schools within LEA's. The fact that several court cases have been filed to test the equitability of the formula in court and all have failed, provides a level of credibility regarding the equitability of the state's funding. |           |          |

|   |           |           |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools</b>   | <b>40</b> | <b>20</b> |
| <p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>i. The state receives high points for this criterion, as there is no cap on the number of charter schools allowed in the state. Only one half of one percent of Iowa schools are charter schools. This may be partly due to caps that existed earlier and were removed legislatively in 2010. Iowa's open enrollment law provides options for other innovative schools. ii. Iowa receives a few points for having charter schools but only has 7 such schools which represents only one half of one percent of the state's schools. The state provides minimal information about how charter schools are approved and monitored. iii. and iv. The state did not earn any points for "iii" and "iv," as it did not provide a response to these criteria.</p> |           |           |
| <b>(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions</b>   | <b>5</b>  | <b>0</b>  |
| <p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>No response to this criterion was provided in the application.</p>  |           |           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>55</b> | <b>28</b> |

### Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

|  | Available | Tier 1    |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM</b>   | <b>15</b> | <b>15</b> |
| <p>Competitive Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The plan addresses the three aspects of the STEM priority. The state plans to adopt the new Common Core Standards with an emphasis on rigorous study in STEM subjects and is cooperating with community partners to advance their STEM efforts and prepare students for advanced study in STEM related careers. The application began with a story about an at-risk student (potential drop-out) who was turned around by an opportunity to set up a virtual reality lab in his school - the first school in the nation to have one. Now Iowa has eight virtual reality labs around the state. The focus on STEM was threaded throughout the application.</p> |           |           |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>15</b> | <b>15</b> |

### Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

|   | Available | Tier 1     |
|---|-----------|------------|
| <b>Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform</b>   |           | <b>Yes</b> |
| <p>Absolute Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application addressed all four ARRA reform areas comprehensively and coherently. Groundwork already laid by the state and significant LEA participation and commitment to implementing the state's RTTT plan is evident. At the heart of the state's plan are five Centers of Inquiry (CCI's) that embed the four ARRA reform areas. 1) CCI for Competency-Based Education Systems (new Common Core Standards and instruction based upon competency rather than seat time) 2) CCI for Balanced Assessment Systems (multiple and more authentic assessment systems that embed 21 Century skills) 3) CCI for Responsive Data Platforms (data to inform student achievement and instructional improvement) 4) CCI for Teacher and Administrator Evaluation and Support (evaluation and development of highly effective teachers/principals); and 5) CCI for Intensive School Support (assistance to LEA's and schools to turnaround low performing schools and districts). The state's theory of action revolves around data collection and analysis to inform instruction and professional growth that feeds effective strategies into these Centers for Inquiry that, in turn, use a cascading model</p> |           |            |

that provides assistance to schools and LEA's. All parts are connected in the plan. The challenge for the state, should it be granted RTTT funds, is to see that all connections work effectively to produce the kind of reform the state envisions.

|       |  |   |
|-------|--|---|
| Total |  | 0 |
|-------|--|---|

|             |     |     |
|-------------|-----|-----|
| Grand Total | 500 | 338 |
|-------------|-----|-----|