

fairness while also allowing for recognition of progress which potentially could be masked by strict adherence to test data. Turning around the persistently lowest achieving schools As evidenced in this section, Missouri has had a long standing tradition of working in school improvement at the local level. Over the years the state has employed a variety of strategies to turn around low performing schools. The application describes 7 interventions and approaches that have been operative in the past focused on low performance. This listing includes important lessons learned as a result of these interventions. Two key strategies are included in the state's RtT application: • Development of a statewide network of support through newly established regional service centers (RESLTs) • Initiation of a state Turnaround model to train teachers and school leaders Required evidence for (E)(2) does not address the following: • The total number of persistently low achieving schools (The Missouri School Improvement Program references 59 districts not individual schools) • Clarification on whether the programs listed overlap in their list of identified schools • Specific results of the program interventions based on the predetermined measures • Breakdown of the number of schools that will implement specific turnaround models by 2014 • How lessons learned from existing interventions will be applied to the in state Turnaround Model and RESLTs Over all performance measures are weak for this criterion and do not include documentation of specific need nor monitoring for effectiveness (e.g. value added evaluations of the RESLTs). The application indicates that an evaluation design is under development for the Turnaround Model. Further, the 2 strategies identified seemed to be substantially under developed as compared to the associated project budget requests (53.5 million) and the dramatic changes that are required to close the state's achievement gap. Plans for sustainability of key plan elements are only minimally addressed, e.g. the "braided" system of support for early learners.

Total	50	20
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	7
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The percentage of total revenues available to support elementary, secondary and public higher education for FY 2009 was 4.3% greater than the total revenues available in FY 2008. Fiscal equity is addressed through a weighting formula assigned to LEAs that have a certain concentration of students who qualify for free and reduced price lunches. The state's funding formula (foundation aid) also includes in its calculation a student measure that takes into account other high need areas, i.e. Special Education students and Limited English Proficient students. School districts that have less local wealth get more state aid. The application narrative does not address Criterion (F)(1)ii-- how fiscal resources are distributed equitably within LEAs.</p>		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	15
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: Using the Reviewer Guidance described under (F) (1)(i) the state is assigned low points for this criterion. Missouri has 2334 total traditional buildings in operation (2000-2010). For the 2009-2010 school year, there are 33 approved charters with 47 campuses in operation. Charter schools represent approximately 2% of the total public school buildings in the state. In accordance with the Reviewers Guidance for this criterion, applying 5% (116) to the total schools in the state would translate into a "low" cap calculation on the number of charter schools. Missouri's charter school law is restrictive in that it limits the establishment of charter schools to locales with populations greater than 350,000 residents. Only 2 LEAs meet this criteria namely, Kansas City 33 School District and St. Louis City School District. Students enrolled in the Kansas City charter schools represent 30.95% of the overall student population during 2009-2010. Students enrolled in St. Louis charter schools represent 26.08% of the overall student population during 2009-2010. There is no cap on the number of charter schools</p>		

that may operate in these two urban areas. The geographic restriction for charter operations imposed by state law, has the effect of establishing a low cap on the opportunities for more charter school operations. Charter School Standard Application provides detailed guidance regarding how charter authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize and close schools. Additionally, clear expectations are set forth in these documents pertaining to student achievement as a key factor in determining charter school reauthorization or renewal as well as ensuring that charter school student enrollments are similar to local district populations. The application indicates that designated authorizers will have taken action to close 5 charter schools over the period 2004-2005 through-2008-2009. Allowable charter school sponsors in addition to LEAs and school boards include: 4 yr and 2 year public higher education institutions, and mayors of a city not within a county. In Missouri, one charter is sponsored by an LEA and 33 one by universities or colleges. Missouri state law outlines provides general direction regarding how charter authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize and close schools. Additionally, with funding from the private sector and in collaboration with representatives of the charter school community, the state has developed a set of more detailed model procedures to guide sponsors in the work they do to approve, authorize, monitor and close charter schools. These procedures have received full endorsement of the State Board of Education. The Model Documents lay out clear expectations pertaining to student achievement as a key factor in determining charter school reauthorization and give priority to applicants that propose a school oriented to high risk students or re-entry of drop outs. Several important concerns suggest the need for further explanation and justification from Missouri pertaining to Plan criterion F (2): 1)The percentage of "at risk" students currently enrolled in the states 33 charter schools and the numbers of schools and students that participate in the statewide system of assesements, 2)The option given to charter schools to participate in the statewide assessment,if applicablé, and 3)Expectations regarding use and encouragement by charter sponsors related to the benchmark/formative assessments that are under development as part of Missouri's participation in the MOSAIC Consortium. Allowing at risk or alternative sponsors to determine performance standards which do not conform to those at a minimum required by traditional schools is judged to problematic. There needs to be an assurance that flexible timeframe permission allowed to charter schools for achieving performance standards aligns with the ambitious targets for overall student achievement set forth in the state's reform agenda. Based on the application narrative, Missouri's charter schools receive equitable funding similar to traditional public schools along with a commensurate share of local, state and Federal revenues. Substantiation of this provision, referenced as Chapter 160.415 Section 2 (1-2) should be provided. Missouri does not provide facilities assistance for any public schools including charter schools. The state therefore does not impose facility related requirements that are stricter than traditional public schools. There are no statutory provisions or rules that would prohibit Missouri from creating innovative autonomous schools. The state does not have a track record in this area. In the RttT application/Section E #5 of the Scope of Work, the state sets forth a willingness to pursue changes in state law create expansion and development both of charter and innovative schools. Additionally, in the application narrative (F)(2)v of the RttT application, the state expresses a willingness of the state to establish conditions and assistance to LEAs in the creation of innovative autonomous schools. The ideas presented are described at a general level and seem substantially underdeveloped. Aside from an expression of general intent, noticeably absent are specific goals and performance measures, budgetary or personnel resources assigned to this area.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	0
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: The state's application presents only general information on its intent to create new models of innovation. It does not effectively address this criterion from the perspective of specific legislative or policy actions. There is no evidence of how the reference past innovations have impacted student achievement or resulted in other important outcomes.</p>		
Total	55	22

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0
Competitive Reviewer Comments: Emphasis regarding STEM is included throughout the state's proposal ranging from identification of teaching shortages in critical subject areas to emphasis on math and science in the common core standards and aligned assessments to inclusion of STEM focused activities embedded in the state's 3 tiered intervention structure. The RtT application builds on prior STEM program initiatives that are firmly established through existing partnerships and the use of funding from state, federal and private sources. To the extent that additional STEM enhancements can be effectively achieved they are largely dependent on the strength of the overall application as well as specific plan components. In many instances, the states proposed activities as presented are considerably underdeveloped thus raising a concern about overall impact on projected outcomes in addition to STEM specific elements.		
Total	15	0

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
Absolute Reviewer Comments: The application fully conforms to the requirements specified both in the narrative and evidence provided in the Appendices.		
Total		0
Grand Total	500	298

(E)(1) Missouri does have the authority to intervene in the State's lowest performing schools and LEAs. State law grants the State Board of Education the authority. However, the reasons Missouri provides don't mention low academic achievement as a reason the State could give for intervening in a low performing school. Because of his lack of clarity, some points were withheld.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	17
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	12
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (E)(2)(1) Missouri outlines a 7-step process for identifying low performing schools. Missouri projected the process would be approved in late January 2010. The State ultimately will select its lowest 5% of low performing schools and define them as "persistently low performing schools." Missouri says at its discretion, it may identify other schools that are not in the lowest 5% for intervention as well. (E)(2)(ii) Missouri presents a plan for turning around its lowest performing schools. However, it is not a high quality plan as it is clear from the limited details provided that they Missouri is not as close as it reports, to being ready to turnaround its low performing schools. There are good processes outlined but the process is focused more on what Missouri must do to be in a position to turnaround schools than to begin turning them around any time soon. The application also lacks evidence of a high quality and ambitious plan to support LEAs in turning-around the lowest performing schools.		
Total	50	22

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	7
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (F)(1)(i) Missouri spent 32.64% of its budget on education in FY2008 and 36.98% in FY2009. This information is backed up by documents available in the appendix. (F)(1)(ii) Missouri uses an equalization aid program where LEAs that are less wealthy get more in state aid than LEAs that are wealthy. Missouri also adds additional aid to schools based on the number of students they serve who are in poverty, have a special need, are at risk or speak English as a Second Language. There is nothing mentioned about similar types of aid programs between schools within an LEA.		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	15
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (F)(2)(i) Missouri limits charter schools to the Kansas City and St. Louis school districts. However, within these districts, there is no limit to the number of charter schools that can be created. In the 2009 -10 school year, there are 33 charter schools operating on 47 campuses. Charter school students represent 31% of the students in Kansas City and 26% of the total student body in St. Louis. (F)(2)(ii) Charters in St. Louis and Kansas City can be "sponsored" by the school board of a district, a four year public or private university in the county where the district is located, a community college located in the district, or the mayor can request the opportunity to establish a workplace charter school, which is a school that serves families within a particular business district. Charter schools have been closed in Missouri; however, no reasons are given for why they were closed. A handful of charter applications have been denied, and for various reasons. Also, Missouri presents a track record where the majority of charter school applications that have been received have been approved. (F)(2)(iii) Charter schools in Missouri receive the same level of aid as traditional public schools. They receive local, state, and federal funds in the same manner that traditional schools do. (F)(2)(iv) Missouri does not provide facilities funding to charter schools. Charters must use their operating budgets to pay for their facility,		

or they can raise private funds. (F)(2)(v) There are no laws in Missouri that prohibit an LEA from establishing an innovative or autonomous school. Missouri's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) stressed a significant interests in helping LEAs establish such schools should they choose to do so. However, there are also no assurances provided that demonstrate how or what LEAs can do to establish autonomous schools.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	0
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments: (F)(3) Missouri does not adequately answer this question. It states in a 3 1/2 line paragrah that Missouri LEAs operate special education cooperatives, alternative schools and technical programs. However, Missouri does not explain in its application how these programs are reforms or innovations that have increased student achievement or graduation rates, narrowed achievement gaps, or have produced other favorable outcomes. As a result, all points were withheld.		
Total	55	22

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0
Competitive Reviewer Comments: Missouri presents examples of areas where it says it is addressing and supporting STEM education now. They then go on to explain reasons why the State must focus on STEM education; however, they never get to the point of mapping out a plan for offering a rigorous course of study in mathematics, science, engineering and technology; they don't express partnerships they are attempting to create to support students or teachers in STEM; and they don't define how they plan to prepare students for advanced study and careers in STEM fields.		
Total	15	0

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
Absolute Reviewer Comments: Missouri presented some very solid plans in for reorganizing its Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, adopting standards and assessments, creating regional centers to serve teachers, establishing strong evaluation systems for teachers and principals, strengthening teacher and principal preparation in the state, and providing technical support and curricular materials to educators that are aligned with the new curriculum Missouri is set to adopt. Missouri's application was not as strong on the issue of charter schools and turning around low performing schools. Nevertheless, given where Missouri is - planning to start over and modify its approach - it demonstrated a great deal of promise in this proposal that it has the right plan to succeed.		
Total		0
Grand Total	500	287

E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

	Available	Tier 1
(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs	10	10
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: (E)(1) MO has historically had legal authority to intervene in failing schools and has revised its definitions to align with RTTT. Its rather complicated, comprehensive definition indicates it is familiar clearly defining problems in defensible and measurable ways.</p>		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	13
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	3
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	10
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: (E)(2)(i): MO is in its first year of implementing a program focused specifically on turning around the lowest achieving schools. It has identified twenty-nine schools in fifteen LEAs. With DESE providing oversight, the Darden/Curry Model is in use and a 2-year coaching process is in place. This model is not in complete alignment with RTTT requirements and MO earn medium points. (E)(2)(ii): MO will support LEAs in their efforts by developing a MO Turnaround Model that provides: • Quick intervention • A tiered system of technical assistance and accountability monitoring • Training and technical assistance to teachers and administrators in the Data System • Individualized professional development and data team training, including STEM expert network • Helping set up a braided system of support for students To manage resources, MO will use a three-tiered approach to provide support. Over the years MO has employed a variety of approaches to help failing schools. It identifies eight of the most promising models and shares both the lessons learned about those models and those models worthy of further study with MO's increased capacity. That MO is reflecting on and applying forward the lessons it has learned, is an excellent example of using data to scale efforts. However, there are concerns about MO's approach to Turnaround Schools that can't be overlooked. First, is how little this element impacts the overall State budget. It is not clear how MO can hope to support ambitious work without investing resources. Second, MO depends on replicating the model it currently uses and yet has little evidence that model is effective. Third, the RTTT RFP is quite specific on types of models that earn full points and its model is not completely compliant. MO earns low points.</p>		
Total	50	23

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (F)(1)(i): Even though MO per pupil spending is among the lowest in the country, MO appears to meet all legal requirements related to funding. The state has not cut funding and 2009 allocations exceed 2008 allocations both in terms of real dollars and percent of total revenue. (3 of 5 pts.) (F)(1)(ii): MO uses a weighted funding formula that gives extra weight to students who qualify for free and reduced price lunches, leading to more equitable funding. The funding formula held up in the State's Supreme Court in 2009, but no information is provided regarding how money is actually distributed, so less than full points are earned rated to (ii).</p>		

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	15
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(F)(2)(i): MO earns partial points (3 of 5 pts.) for allowing charter schools to exist in some LEAs. Although MO does not limit the number or type of charter schools, they limit the location and the governance. Charter schools can only be established in Kansas City 33 School District and in St. Louis School District (cities with population over 350,000). The schools must be run by the school board or by a college or university. With one or two exceptions, all charters are associated with a university. There are concerns about why charter schools are limited to two urban school districts, both of which are high-minority, high-poverty districts. The jaded reader might interpret this as a lack of concern for and willingness to experiment on the most vulnerable students. (F)(2)(ii): MO earns almost full points here (4 of 5 pts.). There is accountability for charter schools with renewal denied for between one and three charter schools every year since school year 2004-2005. However, it is not clear that student achievement is a consideration when a charter is denied or when this might become a consideration. The proposal describes the following changes to increase the accountability of charter schools: • Developing and implementing standards for charter sponsorship; • Developing and implementing a process for evaluating charter school sponsors; • Developing and implement guidelines for charter school sponsors that hold them accountable for closing poor performing charter schools; and • Working toward legislative changes that, generally, will bring more accountability to charter schools. Very troubling is MO's widening achievement gap. It is not possible to tell (and it should be) how charter schools are contributing to the trends discussed in section (A)(1). (F)(2)(iii)-(iv): Charters remain a part of the public school system but operate with a high degree of independence. The student's home district "passes through" each student's state funding using a complicated formula heavily dependent on average attendance at the charter school. Additionally each charter school receives all of its student's entitlement monies. Money related to facilities is not as clearly explained as it might be, but Charters do not receive the same level of support as other public schools. While MO does not receive all of the points, it receives most of them. The concern here is more around adequacy than equity since is the State of MO funds education at very low levels for both regular and charter schools. (8 of 10 pts.) (F)(2)(v): It is legal for LEAs to start their own charter schools, although none have done so. MO will offer funding incentives to encourage this practice. (5 of 5 pts.)</p>		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	0
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(F)(3): After reading the proposal and considering how much of the proposal is really plans for the future, based on RTTT, there were no other initiatives, programs, or considerations that hadn't been included and accounted for somewhere in the proposal. It has a history of implementing standards and has built a good data system. These were considered.</p>		
Total	55	23

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	0
<p>Competitive Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>MO is absolutely engaged in activities related to STEM, which it lists in its proposal. But those activities are outside of the RTTT proposal (NSF grants, science camp), rather than a core or integral aspect of its RTTT approach. MO's proposal does not tell a compelling story of a state, strategically engaged in increasing the number of students headed toward careers in STEM fields. Still, the activities are included and MO deserves credit for them.</p>		

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: The proposal and DESE's work is clearly organized around the four assurances and MO has addressed all four.		
Total		0

Grand Total	500	261
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considerations are the most important: (1) The school's proficiency rates on state reading/language arts and mathematics assessments, and (2) Their recent progress on those assessments. The State does use additional information to rank schools, such as sample size, to determine if there are specific factors that would exclude individual schools from being included in the list of lowest-achieving schools. (E)(2) (ii) This section did not have sufficient detail on how its plan tied to the four school intervention models and thus received medium points. The Missouri plan has many elements of the turnaround and transformational model but in its plan did not designate specific school model interventions for the schools it is now working with. Medium rather than no points were given because Missouri intends to use the school intervention models noted in the notice in the future even if it did not provide details on how specific information on how the model designation would impact those schools already identified. From descriptions and statements in the proposal, Missouri seems to have not had great success in turning schools around. It has valuable lessons learned but seems to be still seeking viable approaches that would work in Missouri. Medium rather than no points were given because reviewer guidance indicated that "schools may continue or implement the intervention being implemented." In regards to the historic performance, the proposal noted that the State of Missouri first established standards for the classification and accreditation of Missouri's school districts in 1950. Since then, various efforts have been made at both the building and LEA level to improve education in the State. The proposal noted that "More discrete measures of change in performance, collected more frequently than our annual statewide assessment, are needed to assess." Relative to lessons learned, they indicated that: (1) In order to generate change at the building level, there must be systemic change throughout the district. For this reason, building-level improvement efforts will encompass systemic improvement from the local board of education level to the classroom level, (2) Even in the highest-achieving districts, there are individual students and student populations who are not succeeding. (3) Sustained high-quality leadership is a critical element for continued improvement. Missouri has seven schools that are in intervention status and the state claimed it was working around these schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models (as described in Appendix C). There was no data on what specific interventions they would use or the criteria for success. Instead Missouri indicated it was currently in the first year of implementing a program focused specifically on turning around the lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) in the State. The program involves twenty-nine schools in fifteen LEAs, central office administrators, regional coaches and support teams with State direction and support. This program uses a common training and coaching model. The proposal does have a high-quality plan for future work that has details on timelines, activities and persons responsible. The primary emphasis is on using programs that use data to identify emerging problems and that then use data to determine professional development priorities and solutions. Much of the delivery or professional development and services would be through newly established RESLTs Centers. Strategies in the plan include: "A tiered system of technical assistance and accountability monitoring to drive school improvement in every classroom, grade, sub-group, school and district; Training and technical assistance to building and district-level teachers and administrators in the use of the Missouri Comprehensive Data System; Individualized professional development and data team training for teachers and leaders including a STEM expert network" Attention also will be given to "technical assistance and structure in developing a sound educational foundation for every child through a braided system of integrated services to children and families in early learning programs."

Total	50	30
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	9

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(F)(1) (i) High points were given to this subsection because even with a troubled economy, the State of Missouri has not cut funding to public schools. There was \$2,941,969,738 appropriated for the basic

formula in FY09 and \$3,004,388,410 in FY10. The percentage of the total revenues used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for FY 2009 was 4.34% greater than for FY 2008. For FY 2008, 32.64% were available and in FY 2009, 36.98%. (F)(1) (ii) High points were given to this subsection because Missouri does have policies that 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 Missouri school districts that have a certain concentration of students, qualify for free and reduced price lunches, and receive an extra weighting for those students. The Missouri foundation aid includes in its calculation a student measure that takes into account "the district's percentage of Free or Reduced Lunch eligible students, Special Education students and Limited English Proficient students." School districts that have less local wealth receive more state aid. There was no information about the actual range of funding between the wealthiest LEAs and Poorest LEAs.

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	27
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(F)(2) Low points were given to subsection F2i because the Missouri charter school law has geographic and sponsor limitations. The remaining subsections F2ii through F2v were given high points because they provided successful conditions for high-performing charter schools (F)(2) (i) Low points are given to the Missouri proposal on this subsection concerned with charter law because the Missouri charter school law has limits on both geography and sponsors. Missouri's charter school law limits the establishment of charter schools geographically to the Kansas City 33 School District and St. There is no limit to the number of charter schools that may be established within the boundaries of Kansas City and St. Louis City School Districts. However, only the districts and Missouri IHEs may establish charter schools. For the 2008-09 school year, there were 28 approved charters with 41 campuses in operation. One charter was sponsored by the local school district, one charter is sponsored by a community college and the remaining 26 are sponsored by universities and colleges. The total number of traditional buildings in operation was 2,277. Charter schools represented approximately 2% of the total public school buildings in operation during the 2008-09 school year. (F)(2) (ii) Missouri has detailed and stringent procedures and expectations regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools; in particular, whether authorizers require that student achievement (as defined in this notice) be one significant factor, among others, in authorization or renewal; encourage charter schools that serve student populations that are similar to local district student populations, especially relative to high-need students (as defined in this notice); and have closed or not renewed ineffective charter schools. Missouri has denied charter to some applicants, closed and refused renewal to those that do not meet standards. Missouri gives priority to charter school applicants that propose a school oriented to high-risk students and to the reentry of dropouts into the school system. If an applicant has more than three requests, at least one-third must be targeted to students-at-risk. In 2009, eleven charter school applications were submitted and nine were approved. One existing chartered school was closed down. (F)(2) (iii) Missouri charter schools receive the same per-pupil funding that the student would have earned in the district of residence. (F)(2) (iv) Missouri does not provide facilities assistance for any public schools, including charter schools. Instead facilities are seen as part of general operations paid out of the per-pupil allocation. This means that charter schools are not treated differently from other schools. (F)(2) (v) Missouri has no state laws or rules that would prohibit an LEA from creating an innovative, autonomous school. Missouri intends to offer incentives such as start-up funds to districts that charter schools that meet special needs such as STEM schools.

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	2
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(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(F)(3) Missouri proposal writers must have misunderstood this question as they put information related only to charter schools. However in other sections concerned with Invitational priorities, Missouri did list several programs that would have been appropriate for this section. The two most significant reforms mentioned were the P-20 and early childhood programs. Two points were given on that basis.

Total	55	38
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Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
<p>Competitive Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Though not as exemplary as some other components of the proposal, the Missouri proposal does meet the STEM priority competitive requirements. The proposal was strong in providing assistance to teachers needing to develop content expertise. The proposal also was strong on continuing and developing State and LEA partnerships with businesses and various IHE entities. The proposal noted numerous special programs focused on STEM concerns that they intend to continue and expand. The proposal in Project 16 does propose a \$5 million dollar for incentive programs that would increase interest of teachers for STEM related areas. There were lesser amounts of attention given to building career tracks, especially for women and minorities.. Because reviewers are required to give all or no points, this proposal will be given 15 points.</p>		
Total	15	15

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		Yes
<p>Absolute Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Missouri RTTT proposal was exemplary in many ways. In fact some of the early sections could be used by other states as models for writing their RTTT proposal The proposal was especially strong in designing plans of action with clear expectations about timelines, activities and persons responsible. The Missouri proposal does comprehensively and coherently address all of the four education reform areas specified in the ARRA as well as the State Success This proposal meets all conditions required for the absolute priority. One exemplary factor for this proposal was its nearly 100% participation by LEAs participation and the complete commitment by all LEAs to successfully implement and achieve all the goals in Missouri's plans. The proposal also had strengths in its emphasis on increasing student achievement, decreasing the achievement gaps across student subgroups, and increasing the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers. The Missouri RTTT proposal is given a yes for meeting the requirements of this section.</p>		
Total		0

Grand Total	500	384
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identify any such professional development programs that have been proven effective to this point in the state or other settings. Moreover, despite stating that it will do so, it is not clear that the state has a high-quality plan for evaluating the effect of professional development activities that are implemented in the future.

Total	138	69
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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: It appears that the state can intervene both in failing districts and schools.		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	10
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	5
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	5
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: Applicant has an acceptable plan to identify the persistently lowest-achieving schools using state assessments. (ii) The applicant cites the fact that the state is currently implementing a plan to support the turnaround efforts for the lowest-performing schools, but the extent to which the state is supporting one of the four approved models is not strong. The described existing turnaround model, in collaboration with the Darden/Curry program, and efforts moving forward appear to focus on extensive training programs. Thus, it is unclear that this means that the principals of these failing schools are in fact being replaced; rather it appears that they are just being trained. In the RTTT turnaround model and the transformation model, the principal must be replaced. The applicant does go on to describe how it plans to have a localized turnaround strategy, whereby "the necessary turnaround needed in these buildings will be achieved through implementing one of the four turn around models where appropriate in the LEA." However, the applicant does not appear to understand the urgency of instituting dramatic turnaround efforts immediately to offer students in chronically failing schools equitable opportunities to succeed. The historical performance in directing turnaround efforts is lackluster and the targets set for the next four years of schools for which one of the four school intervention models will be initiated each year are not ambitious or aggressive.		
Total	50	20

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	7
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (i) Applicant reports that the percentage of total revenues used to support elementary, secondary and public education in FY 2009 was greater than the percentage of total revenues available for FY 2008. The percentage increased 4.34 percent. (5/5) (ii) The applicant provides a description of the state funding formula and evidence from a recent court case that upheld the constitutionality of the state funding system as evidence that the policies lead to equitable funding between high-need LEAs and other LEAs. Applicant does not provide standard equity statistics, however, nor does the applicant provide evidence that the state's policies lead to equity within LEAs. (2/5)		

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	17
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(i)The State has a charter school law that only allows charter schools to operate in Kansas City and St. Louis. Although a considerable percentage of students in these locations are in charter schools, the effect of this law limits the educational choices available to students who do not live in these cities. (2/8) (ii)The State has a partnership with NACSA to improve guidelines regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools. The recommendations of this partnership are not binding on authorizers, however. The law for authorizers requires them to give preference to schools that will serve high-risk populations. The charter school approval process has led to the denial of several applicants over the past five years and the non-renewal of some operators. These figures and the accompanying explanation for these decisions provide some evidence that the authorizer function is operating somewhat according to plan with regard to promoting quality in this sector. (5/8)(iii) Applicant asserts that state's charter schools receive equitable funding compared to traditional public schools, and a commensurate share of local, State, and Federal revenues. Applicant fails to provide per pupil funding figures as evidence that the result of these policies is in fact equitable funding. (4/8) (iv) Applicant reports that no public schools, including charter schools, in Missouri receive state assistance for facilities. Though this may be true, applicant does not provide evidence that charter schools are not at a disadvantage in the procurement of high-quality facilities, or that the state is providing support for high quality charter operators to obtain facilities. (4/8) (v) Applicant indicates that there are no laws that would prohibit an LEA from creating an innovative, autonomous school; however, there are not laws that encourage such schools nor that provide for autonomy of such schools that would, for example, provide them will considerable autonomy over their workforce, even in districts where collective bargaining exists. That said, Missouri intends to offer funding incentives, such as start-up grants, to LEAs to develop and implement independent innovative schools including alternative schools, STEM-related schools or others to meet identified needs. (2/8)</p>		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	0
<p>(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant makes almost no effort in this section of the application to describe the extent to which the State, in addition to information provided under other State Reform Conditions Criteria, has created, through law, regulation, or policy, other conditions favorable to education reform or innovation that have increased student achievement or graduation rates, narrowed achievement gaps, or resulted in other important outcomes. The criteria state: "The extent to which the State, in addition to information provided under other State Reform Conditions Criteria, has created, through law, regulation, or policy, other conditions favorable to education reform or innovation that have increased student achievement or graduation rates, narrowed achievement gaps, or resulted in other important outcomes" and call for the following: "A description of the State's other applicable key education laws, statutes, regulations, or relevant legal documents." The only thing the applicant wrote was: "There are no state laws or rules that prohibit Missouri LEAs from creating innovative and autonomous schools. Missouri LEAs currently operate special education cooperatives, alternative schools, and technical programs. The State will collaborate with LEAs to continue to develop innovative school models and provide assistance with the implementation of these models through regional systems of support to meet the needs of local school districts."</p>		
Total	55	24

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

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

Competitive Reviewer Comments:

(i) Applicant is working to improve its ability to offer a rigorous course of study in mathematics, the sciences, technology, and engineering. Applicant has a good plan to approach STEM content as a curriculum priority. (ii) Applicant is currently working with IHEs, stakeholders, industry experts, and other STEM-capable community partners to prepare and assist teachers in integrating STEM content across grades and disciplines, in promoting effective and relevant instruction, and in offering applied learning opportunities for students; and (iii) Applicant describes goals around preparing more students for advanced study and careers in the sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including by addressing the needs of underrepresented groups and of women and girls in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Applicant reports that "one of the key projected outcomes of Missouri's reform plan is for the percent of minority and female students graduating from high school with a concentration in STEM related coursework to increase by 7% each year as measured by the Missouri Comprehensive Data System."

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:

The state's application, to a sufficient extent, comprehensively and coherently addresses all of the four education reform areas specified in the ARRA. Not all portions of the plan are equally strong. The stronger sections involve the improvement of data systems, standards, and assessments. The less compelling sections involve reforms to improve teacher effectiveness and to turnaround failing schools in an aggressive and ambitious manner. Notwithstanding various weaknesses, the applicant does meet this priority.

Total		0
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Grand Total	500	307
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