

The proposal did not offer information on how they would receive support, advice, and counsel from the State DOE or others regarding which reform models might be most appropriate, given the school's circumstances and history. Regarding past history in school intervention models, it primarily states that 3 schools were restructured so that it was divided into 2 schools, each with its own principal, resembling a restart model.

Total	50	7
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	0
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
The table provided in the proposal was difficult to decipher, with no prose provided that explicitly declared whether or not the percentage of total revenues available to the state used to support K-12 and higher education for FY 2009 was greater than or equal to those comparable figures used in FY 2008. The proposal also simply states that the state's policies lead to equitable funding between high-need LEAS and other LEAS, with no explanation or supporting information.		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	0
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
South Dakota does not have a law or state that specifically charters schools. Legislation is being proposed in this current session to put charter schools into being. While the proposal describes schools that fall outside the South Dakota public school system (those run by the BIS/BIE Indian reservations), and school districts that have applied for waivers, there was insufficient evidence as to whether these "waiver schools" would qualify as "innovative autonomous public schools", as defined in the Notice.		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	0
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
The proposal mainly posits the vision of the AIII, without providing sufficient evidence for the state's actual demonstration of other significant reform conditions.		
Total	55	0

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
Competitive Reviewer Comments:		
As noted above, a major focus of South Dakota's reform plan is the establishment of a residential, grades 9-14 STEM and health academy. It is designed to serve as an exemplar for how to "close the gap on student achievement through transdisciplinary, project-based, STEM teaching and learning." The proposal also describes work of a STEM team from the SD DOE to work with PreK-20 Education system.		
Total	15	15

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		No
Absolute Reviewer Comments:		
<p>A major focus of South Dakota's reform plan is the establishment of a residential, grades 9-14 STEM and health academy - The American Indian Institute for Innovation (AIII). It is designed to serve as an exemplar for how to "close the gap on student achievement through transdisciplinary, project-based, STEM teaching and learning." While the proposal also describes work of the SD DOE, focus on the SDDOE often appears ancillary in the proposal, and not well-coordinated or integrated with the AIII. Despite the merits of the vision and purpose of the AIII, the proposal does not comprehensively nor coherently address all of the four education reform areas specified in the ARRA to demonstrate that the State and its participating LEAs are taking a systemic, state-wide approach to education reform. The proposal generally lacked substantive, detailed information, timelines and tasks pertaining to four education reform areas, necessary for a well-developed, effective reform effort.</p>		
Total		0
Grand Total	500	148

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	0
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
The application does not provide evidence of the percentage of total revenues that was used to support elementary, secondary and higher education in FY 2008 or FY 2009. Only the total dollars are provided. While it appears that there may have been an increase in total dollars from FY 2008, even that is not clear as there are two amounts listed for FY 2009, one of which is larger than 2008 and one of which is smaller. The funding formula does not appear to have any distinctions based on poverty status of the students; thus, the state's policies do not seem to lead to equitable funding between high-need LEAs and other LEAs. Nor is there any evidence presented to suggest that policies lead to equitable funding within LEAs, between high-poverty schools and other schools.		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	0
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
The state does not have a law authorizing charter schools. Legislation authorizing charter schools has been proposed by the South Dakota Department of Education. The state allows school districts to apply for waivers from compliance with state administrative rules for a period of four years, but there is no evidence that the resulting waivers would result in innovative, autonomous public schools as defined in the notice. It may be that the AIII is an innovative autonomous school, as defined in RTTT, but there is no evidence presented as to whether it meets the defintion.		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	0
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
The state makes an impassioned, well-reasoned and convincing plea for understanding of how and why they have created the AIII and how it will support the Native Americans who have not benefitted from the types of reform that have come before and some of which are targeted by this application. As described, the AIII is both innovative and based on a solid record of success. It is not, however, in addition to what has already been presented in the application.		
Total	55	0

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
Competitive Reviewer Comments:		
The application presents a comprehensive, high quality plan to address the need to offer a rigorous course of study in mathematics, health sciences, technology and engineering; to cooperate with industry experts, museums, universities, etc. to prepare and assist teachers in integrating STEM content across grades and discipline, and in offering applied learning opportunities for students; and to prepare more students for advanced study and career in the sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics, including by addressing the needs of underrepresented groups. The work begins with a state-wide STEM team, involves many partners, is connected to the regional Educational Services Agencies, to LEAs and to individual administrators and teachers. This work will provide state-wide expertise and training, and will make use of the expertise and data coming from the well-planned AIII for STEM and Health. The AIII will provide teachers with expertise, enable the provision of professional development and provide powerful STEM learning opportunities for the students in the residential		

school, as well as those in participating LEAs. In addition, research and evaluation built around STEM will ensure both continuous improvement and dissemination of lessons learned around practices that should lead to the success of a population that until now has been served very poorly by our education 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		No

Absolute Reviewer Comments:

Although South Dakota's application is compelling and provides what appears to be not only much-needed but very likely successful path toward vastly improving the education of Native Americans throughout the state - to improve their student achievement, decrease the achievement gaps between the Native Americans and other groups, and increase the rate at which they graduate from high school prepared for college and careers - it is not targeted toward providing those same improvements to all students, state-wide. Even if the plan were targeted to these improvements state-wide, the extremely low level of LEA commitment will likely doom the effort. It is notable that South Dakota is willing to make the kinds of reforms that run counter to a very strong belief in individualization and context specific strategies -- particularly because it appears the willingness is in response to the opportunity to put significant resources toward the most under-served and at-risk population. Unfortunately, the same commitment to all students throughout the state and to all pieces of the application is not demonstrated.

Total		0
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Grand Total	500	163
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AIII team will develop a professional development protocol that could be adopted statewide. It is not clear if the SDE is supporting this model for statewide use or if it is expecting the AIII to deliver training across the State through the ESAs. The application does not sufficiently address how the applicant will evaluate its delivery of professional development supports on an ongoing basis to ensure that they are employing the most effective interventions to improve student achievement.

Total	138	30
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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	0
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
The application provided several pages of legal citations governing the SEA's oversight authority for schools and LEAs. In reviewing these citations, it does not appear that the State has the authority to directly intervene in the State's persistently lowest-achievement schools or in LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action status. ARSD 24:42:04 does address the consequences for school districts who fail to make annual yearly progress. For those districts in Level 3 (4 years of not making AYP) the SDE will establish a monitoring plan with the district, but this does not appear to constitute direct intervention.		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	5
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	1
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	4
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
While the State has begun to develop a process for identifying its persistently lowest-achieving schools, it may not have completed the process. The timeline provided in the application indicated that the final definition was to be in place by January 2010, after the Race to the Top application was submitted. The application did not discuss the State's plan for supporting LEAs in turning around persistently low-performing schools by implementing the intervention models describe in the Race to the Top application. Furthermore, it does not appear that the State intends to use Race to the Top funds to support turnaround efforts, nor did it describe State resources devoted to these interventions.		
Total	50	5

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	0
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
While the State provided information on total expenditures for public education for FY08 and FY09, it did not provide the total State budget. Therefore, it is not possible to determine the directional change in the percentage of total revenues available to the State to support elementary, secondary and public higher education from FY08 to FY09. The State did not provide information on its funding formula or if it contained adjustments that would lead to equitable funding between high-need LEAs and other LEAs or between high poverty schools and other schools.		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	0

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:	The State does not have a law that allows for the authorization or operation of charter schools. The State did not provide evidence that it operated any additional innovative, autonomous public schools.	
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	0
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:	<p>In this Section, the applicant provided an overview of how the American education system has failed Native American students and how the AIII Academy could improve conditions for the Native American community. However, the applicant did not discuss other State reform conditions that could help it accomplish its goals in improving educational access, services, and achievement for the State's Native American population.</p>	
Total	55	0

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
Competitive Reviewer Comments:	<p>The State is proposing to use the majority of its Race to the Top funds to establish a year-round residential Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) based program for American Indian students in South Dakota. The school—the American Indian Institute for Innovation (AIII)—would support students from the beginning of high school through their first two years of college. This demonstrates the State's commitment to improving student achievement in the STEM-related fields and to increase the college attendance and completion rates in math and science for Native Americans.</p>	
Total	15	15

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		No
Absolute Reviewer Comments:	<p>American Indians are by far the largest subgroup in terms of race/ethnicity in South Dakota and the State has made a compelling argument on how it and the nation have consistently failed these children and youth in terms of education, health and social supports. The application provided indisputable evidence that Native America students have the lowest achievement rates of any racial/ethnic subgroup as well as low graduation and college attendance rates. The State is proposing to use over \$73 million in Race to the Top funds to build and develop a year-round residential Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) based program for American Indian students in South Dakota. The school—the American Indian Institute for Innovation (AIII)—would support students from the beginning of high school through their first two years of college. While the State articulated its vision for an innovative program to improve educational experiences and academic achievement for the State's highest-need students, it did not provide a framework for implementing systemic and comprehensive statewide reforms across the four Race to the Top areas. The application did not enjoy widespread support from LEAs or stakeholders. Only 9 percent of the State's LEAs agreed to participate in the Race to the Top competition. The Race to the Top reforms would reach less than one-third of the State's students living in poverty. Most of the funds would support the students enrolled in the AIII Academy; however, the applicant did not provide enrollment projections for the Academy.</p>	

Furthermore, 45% of school board presidents and 86% percent of local teacher union leaders did not sign the MOUs committing their support of initiative and letters of support were not provided for critical stakeholders such as organizations representing teachers, administrators, and school boards. The application did not provide a management plan or organizational structure for accomplishing the State's plan or the fiscal oversight of grant funds. The applicant did not provide enough budget detail to determine if it is an accurate reflection of the work proposed.

Total			0
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Grand Total	500	111	
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Total	50	5
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F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	1
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
The state did not provide information on total state appropriations. It appears that total education funding (before Education Stabilization Funds) decreased. No evidence that the state's policies lead to equitable funding is provided for criterion (ii).		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	1
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
The state has not passed a charter school law at the time of application. There is only one example provided of an LEA that operates an innovative school, but there is insufficient evidence it meets the definition of an innovative, autonomous public school as defined in the notice.		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	0
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
The state's response does not address the criterion.		
Total	55	2

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM

	Available	Tier 1
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM	15	15
Competitive Reviewer Comments:		
The state's proposal for an All Academy for STEM, and to create a statewide STEM team, meets the criterion. The proposal would likely increase the rigor of STEM education through curriculum development and enhancement, engage private sector and community partners in the program and obtain their support, and increase the number of students (including underrepresented students) that are prepared for future study and careers in STEM.		
Total	15	15

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		No
Absolute Reviewer Comments:		
The state's proposal does not meet the absolute priority. The proposal is not comprehensive -- the strongest commitment to reform is evidenced by its participation in the Common Core Standards consortium, but there is significantly less commitment to reform in all of the other areas. The state proposes a very low level of commitment to improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance, to turning around the lowest-achieving schools, and in general to creating conditions conducive to education reform. The proposal tries to fuse the implementation of the reform criteria with		

the STEM model and the American Indian curriculum, but the result is a confusing plan with a low probability of statewide success. It appears from the proposed budget that the funding requested is not clearly aligned with the Race to the Top Goals -- approximately \$66 million of the proposed \$74 million total budget request would flow to AIII, of which \$33 million would be spent on dorm renovations, classroom renovations, and physical plant renovations. And it is not clear what is the organizational status of AIII (e.g., is it a non-profit organization and does it have 501(c)(3) status). The proposal is not well-written and contains a lot of extraneous narrative.

Total			0
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Grand Total		500	136
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(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: It was not possible to tell from the eight pages of laws whether the state has intervention power or not.		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	40	6
(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools	5	3
(ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools	35	3
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
(i) The response in this section begins by describing a process that will take place to identify persistently lowest-achieving schools that will be completed by February 8, 2010 for ESEA. No evidence was provided that this timeline was followed. (ii) Upon identification, the state will enquire as to the approach that is being taken to turn schools around. It therefore appears that the state provides no support to its LEAs for this activity. However, later in the section, data are provided for Level 4 and Level 5 schools that are implementing restructuring plans. The state goes on to say it has been successful in keeping schools off the list for consecutive years, but does not describe how this was done. But the application also says the SEA has little experience in this area, and indeed is learning from the districts, not providing support. The examples of restart models at the end of the section are not restart models using the RttT definition. The schools were simply divided into two schools with no other accompanying changes - which the state itself reports was an important lesson learned. In a box that was difficult to notice after the box for performance measures, the state explains that it will begin its effort to turn around its struggling schools after it has gathered information from schools in support of the goal of its School Improvement Grant. The goals for that grant for the years 2010-2014 will be developed by S.D. DOE personnel working together with LEAs across the state and other stakeholders. No targets are provided for implementation.		
Total	50	6

F. General

	Available	Tier 1
(F)(1) Making education funding a priority	10	0
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The application does not state whether the state provided more or less funding and the data provided are not clear. For example, a star says 'prior enacted' which is not explained. It appears that without stabilization funding, funds went down. The statement that follows, that the state's policies lead to equitable funding, is unsubstantiated.		
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools	40	3
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: The state has proposed charter legislation, but has no current law or statute. South Dakota does allow LEAs to operate innovative public schools but it is not clear whether they are autonomous or not. For example, schools can apply for waivers from administrative rules, and Alli is an example of a public innovative school. The proposal did not provide information as to whether Alli was embedded in an LEA or not.		
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions	5	0
(F)(3) Reviewer Comments:		

While the idea of the AIII is intriguing, it is troubling that this one approach is presented as South Dakota's singular solution to the learning needs of all its children, and the improvement of all of its teachers, as called for in the Race to the Top.

Total	55	3
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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:		
The AIII Academy, as a demonstration school, would focus on a 9-14 STEM and health curriculum. The plan to implement the AIII Academy and its teacher professional development could provide a model for addressing the learning needs of American Indian high school students in South Dakota and in other states.		
Total	15	15

Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

	Available	Tier 1
Absolute Priority - Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform		No
Absolute Reviewer Comments:		
South Dakota's application focussed almost exclusively on requesting support for building a residential grade 9-14 school for Native American students - it did not address all four education reform areas and the State Success Factors criteria as explained throughout this review. If the innovative school had been embedded in a wider vision for the state, with wider support from LEAs, and wider concern for non AIII children and children in lower grades, there may have been some opportunity for a more positive review.		
Total		0
Grand Total	500	121