

**Summary of Race To The Top (RTTT)  
Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) State Plan Goals  
by RTTT Selection Criteria and Points Awarded**

This summary provides the Race to the Top (RTTT) selection criteria for the six areas specified in the application: State Success Factors, Standards and Assessments, Data Systems to Support Instruction, Great Teachers and Leaders, Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools, and General areas. States acquire a maximum of 52% of the points for *past state accomplishments* that are most demonstrably represented in the State Success Factors, but are interspersed throughout all six areas. A maximum of 48% of total points are acquired for the *quality of the RTTT plan*. Among all areas, the single largest category for acquiring points is the area of Great Teachers and Leaders (28%).

**It should be noted that the most prominent among all subcategories of points awarded is the criteria under State Success Factors that awards 45 points for "securing LEA commitment."** For the four areas for which LEA commitment is required (Standards and Assessments, Data Systems to Support Instruction, Great Teachers and Leaders, and Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools), evidence of past success for Kansas is provided, followed by bulleted goals and activities for the State RTTT Plan.

**A. State Success Factors (125 points or 25% of total score)**

- (A) (1) *Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEAs' participation in it (65 pts.)*
  - (i) *Articulating comprehensive, coherent reform agenda*
  - (ii) *Securing LEA commitment*
  - (iii) *Translating LEA participation into statewide impact*
- (A) (2) *Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans (30 pts.)*
  - (i) *Ensuring the capacity to implement*
  - (ii) *Using broad stakeholder support*
- (A) (3) *Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps (30 pts.)*
  - (i) *Making progress in each reform area*
  - (ii) *Improving student outcomes*

The State Plan will contain evidence to demonstrate the State's past success for each of the above factors.

**B. Standards and Assessments (70 points or 14% of total score)**

- (B) (1) *Developing and adopting common standards (40 pts.)*
  - (i) *Participating in consortium developing high-quality standards*
  - (ii) *Adopting standards*
- (B) (2) *Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments (10 pts.)*
- (B) (3) *Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments (20 pts.)*

**Evidence of past success:**

The KSDE has made significant progress and continues its plans for developing and adopting common standards. The KSDE is committed to developing/adopting a common core of standards that, while respecting the traditional role of district decision-making in developing local curriculum and adopting local textbooks, are internationally benchmarked, aligned with work and post-secondary education,

inclusive of higher order skills, based on research and evidence, and inclusive of rigorous content and skills. The development/adoption of a common core of internationally benchmarked standards for Kansas is facilitated by the fact that the current Kansas standards are already based on national standards developed by reputable professional organizations such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the International Reading Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the National Science Foundation.

**The State Plan will allow the KSDE to:**

- Continue its participation in the work of 49 states and territories under its signed MOA to develop a common core set of standards.
- Gain support and approval of stakeholders in the developed common core standards and career-readiness standards by the August 1, 2010 deadline.
- Provide support to its LEAs in the implementation of the standards statewide through a variety of strategies that include meetings and professional development opportunities.
- Participate in a consortium of states to develop and implement common, high quality assessments.
- Create instructional reports and other database resources to link formative, summative and benchmark assessments with classroom instruction.
- Reduce the “footprint” of the assessments on students to increase instructional time.
- Create a flexible system that enables the KSDE to reformat rather than reinvent new assessments every few years.
- Create opportunities to use additional innovative assessment models, such as growth models, computer adaptive assessments, and performance items.
- Integrate with other areas of accountability, including career and technical education, teacher education, English language learners and special education.
- Align K-12 and higher education standards and assessment by using results of a gap analysis that identifies proficiency at K-12 and college readiness at postsecondary levels.
- Continue its participation in the American Diploma Project Network to:
  - Align high school standards with the demands of postsecondary education and the workplace
  - Require students to complete a college- and career-ready curriculum to earn a high school diploma
  - Build college- and career-ready measures into statewide high school assessment systems
  - Hold high schools and postsecondary institutions accountable for student preparation and success
- Develop systems for delivery of dynamic student data and targeted instructional resources to Kansas educators (i.e., creation of a database that links all academic standards to the Career and Technical Education clusters, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learner Profiles; and linking the standards databases to student achievement data, instructional resources and student demographics.
- Add additional informational databases, such as ACT scores, Early Childhood Standards, and IEP data.
- Develop formats for data reporting and information processing to meet the needs of various levels of educators from superintendents to classroom teachers
- Develop professional development modules to support the data and assessment tools.

### **C. Data Systems to Support Instruction (47 pts. or 9% of total)**

*(C) (1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system*

*(C) (2) Accessing and using State data*

*(C) (3) Using data to improve instruction*

#### **Evidence of past success:**

The KSDE is a leader in the initiative to establish national common standards for the collection and reporting of educational data. The KSDE has mentored and provided information to many states and the federal government in areas of data governance, data quality certification, master data management and the data request review process.

The KSDE works with the National Forum on Educational Statistics, the Data Quality Campaign (DQC), and the Education Information Management Advisory Consortium (EIMAC) and, at the regional level, the KSDE works with the Midwest Education Information Consortium (MEIC) on initiatives to standardize data collection and reporting, increase collaboration between the federal government and state education agencies as well as the state education agencies themselves, and to develop guidance on best practice for improving quality and improving efficiency for data collection, reporting and use.

The KSDE is working with state agencies to enable data users to have access to the full spectrum of student information from pre-kindergarten to adulthood. The Kansas Connected Systems group, comprised of representatives from the KSDE, Kansas Department of Revenue, Kansas Department of Administration, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Kansas Social and Rehabilitative Services, Kansas Board of Regents, Kansas Department of Corrections, and the Kansas Department of Commerce, is exploring ways of sharing data across agencies in order to increase the data available to each agency without an increase in reporting requirements for the reporting entities.

The KSDE is working with the Kansas Board of Regents to increase the connectivity between K-12 and post-secondary data for Kansas students. It is working with the Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services and the Department of Health and Environment to increase the connectivity between K-12 and early childhood or pre-kindergarten data for Kansas students.

The KSDE has eight of the DQC's essential data elements: a unique student identifier; student-level enrollment, demographic and program participation information; the ability to match individual students' test records from year to year to measure academic growth; information on untested students; student-level college readiness test scores; student-level graduation and dropout data; the ability to match student records between the P-12 and postsecondary systems; and a state data audit system assessing data quality, validity and reliability.

#### **The State Plan will allow the KSDE to:**

- Fully implement a statewide longitudinal data system, including an expedited connection between the teacher identifier system, the student identifier system, and various student databases, the further development of student-level transcript information on courses completed and grades earned; and student-level college readiness test scores.
- Enhance the extent to which the State has a high-quality plan to ensure that data are accessible to key stakeholders.

- Use of K-12 standard state course codes by postsecondary and labor for admissions and job qualification determination.
- Continue to streamline FERPA-compliant methods for sharing data with other agencies via electronic access.
- Refine standards for documenting metadata for the information collected.
- Use data to assist principals and teachers to improve instruction and to make data available to researchers.

#### **D. Great Teachers and Leaders (138 pts. or 28% of total)**

*(D) (1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals (21 pts.)*

*(D) (2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance (58 pts.)*

*(i) Measuring student growth*

*(ii) Developing evaluation systems*

*(iii) Conducting annual evaluations*

*(iv) Using evaluations to inform key decisions*

*(D) (3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals (25 pts.)*

*(i) Ensuring equitable distribution in high-poverty or high-minority schools*

*(ii) Ensuring equitable distribution in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas*

*(D) (4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs (14 pts.)*

*(D) (5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals (20 pts.)*

#### **Evidence of past success:**

The KSDE is a leader in allowing alternative routes to certification for teachers and administrators as demonstrated by the following accomplishments. The KSDE has successfully:

- Supported the development of an on-line alternative curriculum used collaboratively to assure an accessible and quality preparation program regardless of geographic challenges.
- Monitored and evaluated the academic progress for alternative candidates to ensure quality indicators were met.
- Designed and implemented state-wide licensure fairs to ensure access and opportunity for candidates; included ample encouragement for local community members to attend representing numerous ethnic and cultural groups.
- Sustained the development of an alternative program after the start-up federal grant ended and
  - Increased enrollment from forty-eight to over seven hundred participants
  - Increased the number of participating institutions.

To meet the State's objective of providing an effective educator in each classroom and an effective leader in each school, the KSDE formed two separate Commissions: The Teaching in Kansas Commission and the Kansas Educational Leadership Commission. The Teaching in Kansas Commission was formed to evaluate and identify areas of teacher and principal shortage, including the preparation, recruitment, retention and licensure of Kansas teachers and generated recommendations for three states of implementation. The Kansas Educational Leadership Commission was formed to study and make recommendations about the critical role leadership plays in the success of student learning and achievement. The Commission made 12 strategic recommendations to the Kansas State Board of Education related to leadership in Kansas schools.

The KSDE was successful in their application and gained membership in the National Governor's Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices Policy Academy on Creating New Models of Teacher Compensation That Enhance Teacher Effectiveness. Through this membership the KSDE has engaged stakeholders across the state and nation in discussing new models of teacher compensation to recruit new talent to the teaching profession, to retain existing talent, to provide incentives for teachers to work in hard-to-fill content areas and geographical locations, and to pay teachers for their contributions to improved student achievement.

**The State Plan will allow the KSDE to:**

*D1: Provide high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals by:*

- Expanding efforts to provide high quality and accessible alternatives to certification.
- Implementing action recommendations of the Teaching in Kansas Commission to decrease teacher shortage and improve teacher retention through changes targeted to five areas: teacher preparation, working conditions, salary and benefits, image and promotion, and regulations and teacher leadership.
- Implementing the strategic recommendations of the Kansas Educational Leadership Commission to meet the State Board of Education's goal of "ensuring a visionary and effective leader in every school."
- Continuing the study of teacher compensation models that enhance teacher effectiveness, develop a plan for implementation of new models in Kansas, hold discussions with stakeholders regarding the proposed models, utilize new models as the foundation to raise teacher compensation to be more competitive with other states and with comparable professions, seek state funding of the new models, and implement the new teacher compensation models.

*D2: Improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance by*

- Establishing clear approaches to measuring student growth for each individual student that will assist LEAs in acquiring the means to use these approaches in their local data driven decision making. Working with key stakeholders, the KSDE will fully develop a high-quality plan and annual targets to differentiate the effectiveness of teachers and principals using multiple rating categories, to provide these data and ratings to each teacher and principal, and to use this information in a rigorous, transparent and fair system for evaluating, annually compensating, promoting, granting tenure or dismissing staff.
- Promoting and supporting the use of teacher and principal effectiveness data to evaluate staff on an annual basis, to use data for constructive feedback, and to provide information on student growth to principals and individual teachers.
- Promoting and supporting the use of teacher and principal effectiveness data to design and deliver professional development; to compensate, promote and retain teachers and principals; to grant tenure and full certification; and to remove ineffective teachers or principals after they have had ample opportunities to improve.

*D3: Ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals by:*

- Increasing opportunities for the selection and availability of highly effective teachers in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools and in difficult- to-staff content areas.

*D4: Improve the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs by:*

- Initiating discussions with a six-state consortium addressing teacher/leader career continuum beginning with preparation through the first years in the profession. Also involved in this work is the Educational Testing Services (ETS) and the National Staff Development Council (NSDC).

- A revision schedule has been accepted by the Kansas State Board of Education to revise all licensure standards which are the underpinnings for all preparation programs that result in a Kansas license or endorsement. Twenty-first Century, Career and Technical Education work will be embedded in the standards as well as ELL and Special Education.

D4: *Provide effective support to teachers and principals by:*

- Participating in a statewide professional development audit by the National Staff Development Council (NSDC). The NSDC will conduct an audit of policy, law, needs, current practices, and regulations related to professional development that supports both teachers and leaders. Kansas anticipates a significant change in statewide professional development as a result of the NSDC audit.
- Offering statewide teacher and leader mentoring pilots to teachers and leaders from selected low-performing districts. Three pilots were chosen for leaders: The Santa Cruz model, the New York model, and the Southern Region Educational Board (SREB) model. Two models were selected for teachers: Santa Cruz and Pathwise which is based on the Danielson framework.

## **E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools (50 pts or 10%)**

*(E) (1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs*

*(E) (2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools*

- (i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools*
- (ii) Turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools*

### **Evidence of past success:**

The KSDE created the Kansas System of School and District Support to provide assistance to schools and districts that failed to meet the State's academic performance expectations for two consecutive years. The KSDE created the Kansas Learning Network, which consists of three cohorts comprised of 17 districts statewide which are on improvement, in corrective action, or have schools that are so designated. Key stakeholders are represented on the cohorts, including the Kansas National Education Association (KNEA), the North Central Accreditation (NCA), and Educational Service Centers across Kansas.

The KSDE also developed and implemented the Kansas System of District and School Support Framework for districts with schools that are actively engaged in continuous school improvement. The framework is based on research and best practices to develop transparent policy and agency procedures that can be used to drive improvement across the state. It provides strategies that leverage resources and consequences to allow districts to act independently to make improvements prior to state intervention to restructure.

The KSDE formed the Kansas Learning Network (KLN) with the five districts that contain the largest percentages of students that experience an achievement gap—high poverty, racial/and ethnic minority, and ELL students. The KLN was expanded in the 2009-10 school year and mandates participation of the 17 districts that are on improvement or have schools so designated. The Network was designed to develop regional and collaborative structures to create expertise and share resources that expand capacity to scale effective practices and strategies. The KSDE provided staff development for root cause analysis to inform the school improvement process and assigned Implementation Coaches with extensive experience in school improvement, school turnaround, and school leadership coaching for each identified building. A website was created for sharing information and school resources.

**The State Plan will allow the KSDE to:**

- Identify the lowest 5% of schools in Kansas that are currently on the school improvement list and receiving Title I funds in order to direct them to an appropriate school improvement model.
- Identify the lowest 5% of secondary schools, that are eligible for but do not receive, Title I funds in order to direct them to the appropriate school improvement model.
- Provide resources and support to all high schools to increase graduation rate and decrease dropout rate, especially in subgroups.
- Assist the LEA/school in identifying one of four models most appropriate for the school: the Turnaround Model, Restart Model, Close/Consolidate Model, or the Transformation Model.
- Continue the development of its Multi-Tier System of Support (MTSS) Transformational Model, a comprehensive and systemic model designed to ensure academic and behavioral success for all students.
- Provide resources and support required to turnaround identified schools.
- Monitor and evaluate the success of LEA/schools in turning around low-achieving schools.

**F. General (55 pts. or 11%)**

*(F) (1) Making education funding a priority*

*(F) (2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovations*

*(F) (3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions*

**Competitive Preference Priority 2: Emphasis on STEM (15 pts. or 3%)**

**Total: 500 points**