

## SUMMARY OF RACE TO THE TOP REVIEWERS' COMMENTS

Reviewer #1	
Positive Comments	Room for Improvement
Qualified and respected staff (IT and assessment mentioned specifically)	Union clause may limit implementation
Kansas Learning Network (KLN) novel approach to providing technical assistance	No student performance growth targets
Anticipated adoption of Common Core Standards (CCS) by August 2, 2010	Letter from union ambiguous
10 of the 12 America COMPETES Act have been met	Narrative difficult to follow
Partnership with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC)	Data buried in the appendices
Nearly 100% Local Education Agency (LEA) participation	No clear way of implementing the CCS
	No evidence new assessments will be implemented
	No vision of how to use data to improve instruction
	Who has access to the data
	Much data being collected but for what
	Not clear on alternative pathways for teacher licensure
	No approach to measure individual student growth
	Several years before the state has a teacher evaluation instrument
	No performance measures or timeline for equitable distribution of teachers
	No plan, timelines or performance measures for teacher preparation
	No mention of how to sustain the reform efforts
	No apparent authority to intervene with lowest performing schools
	Too much reliance on guidebooks and handbooks and not enough direct support
	No data to support that increased funding has lead to equitable funding
	Charter schools
	Funding increased in 2005 but no evidence this resulted in increased student achievement, graduation rates or narrowed achievement gaps
	Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) is not addressed
	Great Teachers & Leaders section is weak
	No commitment on using student growth data
No targets for improvement	

Reviewer #2	
Positive Comments	Room for Improvement
LEA participation	Adapted MOU by union diminished voice of support from LEAs
KLN work proactive	Scope of work minimal
Teacher leader license	No new organizational structure to carry out RTTT reform agenda
Mentoring programs	No timeline for replacing the Interim Commissioner
Alternate advisory committee	Little data on increasing graduation rates
CCS adoption expected	Little information about relationship between student achievement data and actions contributing toward it
MOUs with assessment consortia	Not enough detail on unified standards database or collaborative workspace
10 of 12 elements for the longitudinal data system (America COMPETES Act)	Limited articulation of how data will be used by teachers
Some evidence of making education a priority	No sufficient laws and regulations to offer alternative teacher preparation routes independent of institutes of higher education (IHEs)
	Difficult to determine the extent of a clear process for monitoring, evaluation and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortages
	How student growth measured
	Lack of definition for scenarios and models for professional development
	Not focused on highly effective teachers—more on highly qualified
	Prioritize strategy for implementation of teacher preparation and credentialing
	Not a well-integrated, well-conceptualized, strong strategic approach
	Not clear if state has the legal authority to intervene directly with lowest achieving LEAs and schools
	Lacked substantive detail to convey a well-conceptualized, integrated and carefully considered plan for turning around lowest-achieving schools
	Not enough specifics on charters (funding, facilities, etc.)
	Not enough on STEM

Reviewer #3	
Positive Comments	Room for Improvement
Thorough job of describing reform agenda in the four reform areas	Union clause puts the spirit intended at risk
Strong statewide participation	No revised structure at KSDE to incorporate responsibilities of RTTT
Anticipated adoption of CCS by August 2, 2010	Lacking details on how support will be provided to LEAs
Participation in assessment consortia	No new thinking on reform agenda
Impressive and robust; coherent plan for assessments	How will local, state or federal funds be allocated
10 of 12 America COMPETES Act	No support from business leaders, employers or university presidents, local foundations or community-based organizations
Data to improve instruction is visionary and credibly presented	Does not address high school graduation rates
UKanTeach expansion	Not clear on whether state has statutory authority to create alternative paths for principals
Professional development with NSDC	Need to allow for providers of alternate pathways in addition to IHEs (for both teachers and principals)
School Administrator Management Program (SAMs) project	Weak commitment to utilize evaluations to inform key decisions
Thoughtful, detailed explanation of the four reform models	No authority to intervene with lowest-achieving schools
Evidence of increased funding for education from 2008 to 2009	Charter school funding, facilities, innovative and autonomous
Overwhelming flashes of brilliance sprinkled throughout suggest real promise	Little emphasis on STEM

Reviewer #4	
Positive Comments	Room for Improvement
Nationally recognized staff – director of IT and assessments	Nothing new or innovative with turning around lowest-achieving schools
13 letters of support	Escape clause for union makes union support questionable
Participating with 48 other states on the adoption of the CCS	Non-participating districts have greater percentage of students in poverty
P20 Council	No details on how the agency will be restructured to handle RTTT
Gap analysis work with Achieve, Inc.	Interim Commissioner and no timeline for hiring
Participating with three assessment consortia	Letter from KNEA president only partially supportive
10 of 12 elements for the longitudinal data system (America COMPETES Act)	No progress mentioned on the gap analysis work
Interesting concept of the Unified Standards Management and Reporting Systems (USMRS)	Lack of specificity in application
University of Kansas Center for Science Education project	No timeline for sharing of data between agencies and organizations
Improving effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs by establishing the Kansas Teacher Residency Program at Emporia State University (ESU)	Alternate teacher education programs cannot operate independently of IHEs
State funding increase from 2008 to 2009	Restricted teaching license alternative pathways more of a non-traditional route as opposed to an alternate route
	No statutory authority to intervene with lowest-achieving schools
	No discussion or evidence presented for school improvement prior to 2004-05 school year
	No autonomy of charter schools; funding; facilities
	No discussion of programs, strategies, practices, etc. that were supported by increased funding
	No high-quality plan for addressing STEM

Reviewer #5	
Positive Comments	Room for Improvement
Thoughtful, well-articulated plan	Union clause could undermine state's ability to implement human capital reform
Undertaken authentic reform thus far	Interim commissioner
Strong connection and collaboration between State Board and Kansas Board of Regents	Union letter about concerns of human capital
P20 Council	Gaps in student achievement with subgroups
Widespread participation with LEAs	No theories or reasons as to why gains in student achievement since 2003
IT director on management team for RTTT	IT structure not in place to meet reforms that are data-dependent
Participation with CCSO/NGA on the CCS	Only one alternative route and only through IHEs
Plan adoption of CCS by August 2, 2010	No details on how state currently monitoring or reporting on shortage areas by subject, geography and high-needs schools
Participation in three assessment consortia	Mechanisms not in place to link student and teacher databases
Fairly seamless and transparent transition to new standards and assessments especially given long-term history of providing students with a standards-based education	No growth model in a timely manner
10 of 12 elements for the longitudinal data system (America COMPETES Act)	Did not present a coherent plan on using evaluations for personnel decisions
Collaborative workspace planned	Little discussion devoted to equitable distribution of principals
Technology an integral part of the agency and not siloed	Did not provide legislative and regulatory citations on authority to intervene directly with LEAs and schools
State has legal authority to operate alternative routes	No proven record of implementing reform models for lowest-achieving schools
Clearly articulated plans for developing student growth model	Does not appear state conducts rigorous reviews of charter schools based on academic achievement
MOU with experienced vendor (ETS) to create teacher and principal evaluations	No evidence of equitable funding for charter schools
Partnership with KU on preparation for new math and science teachers	No additional funding for charter school facilities
Leadership at KSDE and KBOR committed to joint accountability for data	No evidence that state operates innovative, autonomous public schools other than charters
Participating with consortium of states for redesigning pre-service education and early careers of teachers	Not enough emphasis on STEM
Residency program at ESU	
School finance formula makes some attempt at equalizing funding for high-need districts	