Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0960AZ-2 for Cartwright Elementary School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The vision is coherent and compelling as it specifically addresses the goal of accelerating student achievement and enhancing and personalizing learning for all students.

1. The applicant, is working with the state in implementing the Common Core standards and assessments. It is also part of the AIMS which is a statewide system to assess students. Programs such as College and Career Readiness promote the preparation of students for post-12 life. The district will use the Common Core standards and principles to guide curricular and program elements of the plan, teacher (educator) capacity will be built and supported to increase effectiveness, RTI will be used and college and career ready advisors will be funded. Furthermore, the high quality plan articulated in this application indicates a commitment to closing achievement gaps.
2. The applicant is currently using data systems, including AIMS, to track student academic progress and provide data to educators and parents in order to make decisions that will improve instruction. The applicant has plans to upgrade the processing of data by using the Data Warehouse system.
3. A rigorous professional development approach includes collaboration with Arizona State University and experts such as Kagan and Schmoker. The evaluation system is and will continue to be the source for determining teacher effectiveness and areas where professional development is needed. Each year the district hires an estimated 120 new teachers and these new instructors will be supported and retained to increase the effectiveness of current teachers. The principals "walk-through" program will provide immediate information about the effectiveness of instructors.
4. All 20 schools in the district will participate and achievement data that is disaggregated by sub -groups are part of the plan. The number of schools achieving AYP has fluctuated over the past several years indicating the "lowest achieving schools" are not constant; thus the reason for including all schools in the plan.

Other major elements/activities include building data systems that measure student growth and success, recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, and “turning around the lowest-achieving schools.” By identifying and including all schools, the grant includes the lowest archieving schools. A clear focus on the continued development of quality instructors and educational leaders to implement the project is articulated through the project and in various iterations of the quality plan. That plan exists in tables, charts, and narratives with each addressing the goal to be addressed, the activities to realize the goal or outcome, the measurable outcomes/deliverables, the timeline for the completion the tasks, and the person or group who/is responsible.

This is a strength, as a clear vision exists that serves as the foundation for the project.

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

All 20 schools in the district will participate (K-8 schools) which serve 18,816 students, and all schools are listed in the application.

This is a poverty school district with low-income families (94% on free or reduced lunch), high needs (include non-English speakers, special education eligible), and there is 14.5% unemployment.

There was no need to select schools because all are participating. All schools meet the eligibility requirements which include low academic performance, low socio-economic status, etc. Implementing this reform proposal will support the goal of college and career readiness for all students.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- The elements of a high-quality plan are in place and presented in Appendix D that articulates: goals(e.g., LEARNING – Improve student achievement by providing personalized learning and support), Learning Activities (sustaining or continuing activities that will be funded using LEA funds as distinct from those funds from the RTTT-D), Timelines, Deliverables, and Responsible Parties. The overall credibility of the plan is sound as evident from the collaboration with local and state government, institutions such as ASU, and involving teachers in planning and delivering personalized learning for all students. The district's Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) promotes ambitious reform and this grant will accelerate and expand the effort.
- Because the applicant is a k-8 school district and that all schools in the district will be participating in the project there is no scale-up.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	6

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- There is not a convincing rationale for how the strategies presented in the high quality plan will specifically address and improve student learning and achievement. The applicant provided ambitious goals but they were not always achievable. In reading, for example, 5th grade students are projected to increase summative scores from 25% to 75% thus meeting the state standard.
- The applicant does provide goals in the area of decreasing achievement gaps based on state standards.
- Though the applicant does not have graduating students it does plan to work with the high school district to create and support a smooth transition from the K-8 to the 9-12 learning environment and on to college and careers. This will be facilitated by the work of the Assistance Director for College and Career Ready programs in the applicant's district.

Some of the goals are ambitious, i.e., decreasing achievement gaps; some were ambitious but not achievable, e.g., increasing performance on state tests

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	8

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a clear record of success over recent years, such as on Arizona LEARNS there has been an increase of schools identified as "Performing Plus." However, while that applicant provided some evidence of decreasing achievement gaps at the district level as compared with the state, this data was not disaggregated by sub-groups.

The applicant identified one persistently low achieving school that has recently failed "to show student growth." A "significant" reform for this school is underway that includes a restructuring plan though the reassignment of personnel and assigning specialists such as interventionists and promoting principal walk throughs. It is therefore clear, the applicant is addressing all schools as low performing but will focus on particular schools if student achievement is lagging.

Though PLCs exist there is no information to indicate they use data to analyze and promote improved instruction. The project intends to increase the availability of data to instructors, leaders, and parents to maintain regular communication channels and to make learning-teaching adjustments as needed. The use of the Data Warehouse will facilitate increased access to timely and pertinent data regarding student achievement.

Because the applicant is a K-8 school district there are no graduation, college, or career outcomes. Still the applicant will work with the Union High School District to help 8th graders make the transition to high school. Student achievement goals, therefore, address long- as well as short-term outcomes.

While the applicant demonstrated improvement on a few Arizona LEARNS, AIMs, measures overall there is not clear or persistently successful record of improving student learning.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides, on its website, financial information that includes the annual proposed budget, the annual financial report, the audited financial report, and other general financial information.

There is no indication the applicant has historically and specifically shared school level expenditures, including, salaries by school.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- Arizona has adopted the Common Core State Standards thus providing one contextual element for the district to implement the RTTT-D project
- The district will use the resources of Regional Centers for Innovation and Reform and the University Research Center for Innovation and Reform.
- The state is also developing a statewide sustainable data system to make all data available to educators, etc. The district will participate in this effort…it will be required.
- The district is participating in the Arizona Framework for Measuring Educator Effectiveness.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	6

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- The superintendent, director of federal programs, director of educational services, principals, school staffs, and community were involved in deciding to seek RTTD-D funds. Each of these directors facilitated meetings about the development of the proposal. The discussion included but was not limited to personalizing learning for all students, parent outreach, and increasing LEA transparency.
- Community agencies represented included the mayor of Phoenix, the state Superintendent of Public Instruction, and letters of support from “key stakeholders” including the Cartwright Education Association, local police departments, Target, Family Literacy Program at ASU, and others.
- The Director of Federal Programs met with the President of the Cartwright Education Association (CEA) who "was very supportive of moving forward with the proposal."
- The Director of Educational Support Services met with teachers "representing all schools" to review the RTTT opportunity and to "solicit input."
- Revisions were minimal but the president of the CEA objected to summer training of teachers, which was removed from the proposal.

There is no direct evidence of how parents and families have been involved.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

A high quality plan does exist by goal, achievement gaps, learning activities, teaching/LEA support, process measures, and performance measures. For example:

Goal: Learning-Improve student achievement by providing personalized learning and support

Needs & Gaps: Achievement gaps between the 20 schools (the applicant articulates those gaps).

Learning Activities: Introduction to becoming College and Career Ready curriculum will be implemented.

Teaching and LEA Support: The hiring of College and Career Advisors (CCRAs)

Process Measures: Curriculum in place, CCRA reports, PLC logs, Annual student surveys

Performance Measures: Increased achievement.

No timeline or responsible individuals or groups were identified.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	19

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- Because this is a K-8 district the college – career ready stipulation does not seem pertinent however, as noted the district is actively participating in Arizona's tracking of students program to learn how they migrate through the state's school districts. This program provides information for all districts, including this one, regarding how they are doing in post-12 endeavors.
- The RTTT Logic Model in Appendix D depicts the Management Plan designed to address he key areas of the grant and of the district's focus. These areas include (1) students understanding what they are learning and how that is key/important to their success: initiatives include increasing student engagement, Kid at Hope (a program); (2) Students understanding and identification of goals linked to project and district standards and structure their learning to achieve those outcomes: initiatives include personalized learning goals and education and career action plans for each child: and (3) All students will have "deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest: the district transition to the Common Core and the integration of technology throughout the system.
- Various programs are presented in the narratives that are designed to achieve this criterion. The programs include Kids at Hope (in all schools) and Hispanic Mother Daughters/ASU partnership.
- Student engagement, college and career learning goals and plans are critical to this plan. This element of the plan will be supported by a "cadre of Kagan trainers."
- Professional Learning Communities, Enhanced Response to Intervention, online software programs to enhance differentiated and individualized learning, and personal student support by college and career ready advisors contribute to a highly personalized learning environment.
- Instructional approaches will be individualized, personalized, and commensurate with the Common Core. Furthermore, educators will receive sustained and as needed professional development to support the program in general as well as its finite elements.
- Students will receive training to help them understand and use the district tools (technology) to track and manage their learning.
- The RTTT Logic Model includes activities in this application and beyond funding that increase the "capacity" of educators to develop and implement personalized learning communities. The RTTT Logic Model is the core of the quality plan specifically including targets, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties. There was no evidence, however, the applicant will empower all students.
- The district will build on the professional learning communities in each school, work with ADE trainers to conduct Common Core professional development, conduct professional development in the Kagan Structures to increase student engagement, and embed professional development through coaching. These are a few of the training and support programs.
- Professional development experiences will address such areas as implementing and sustaining personalized learning environments, adapting instruction and lessons to meet and address varied student needs, how to use, read, and implement the results of data – at the district and particularly the school site – to improve instruction, learning, and student achievement.
- Teacher and administrator evaluation system are in place in accordance with the Arizona Framework for Measuring Educator Effectiveness.
- Using walk through concepts of Dr. Schmoker principals will be trained to provide "right now" feedback to teachers.
- There is a plan to recruit, retain, and support quality teaching and all of that will be transparent in the district and to the community.
- Through feedback via classroom instructors, interventionists, and parents, students will have access to information about their academic progress.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	20

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- Through the principal classroom walk-throughs, teacher meetings, and the resources such as Schmoker, Hall, Hord, and Kagan educators identified in the project will be well supported.
- The RTTT Logic Model includes activities in this application and beyond funding that increase the “capacity” of educators to develop and implement personalized learning communities. The Logic Model includes the elements of a high quality plan.
- The district will build on the professional learning communities in each school, work with ADE trainers to conduct Common Core professional development, conduct professional development in the Kagan Structures to increase student engagement, and embed professional development through coaching. These are a few of the training and support programs.
- Professional development experiences will address such areas as implementing and sustaining personalized learning environments, adapting instruction and lessons to meet and address varied student needs, how to use, read, and implement the results of data – at the district and particularly the school site – to improve instruction, learning, and student achievement.
- Teacher and administrator evaluation system are in place in accordance with the Arizona Framework for Measuring Educator Effectiveness.
- Using walk through concepts of Dr. Schmoker principals will be trained to provide “now” feedback to teachers.
- There is a plan to recruit, retain, train, and support quality teaching and all of that will be transparent in the district and to the community. Support will exist in form of coaches, STEM, for example, who will work in each school. This is part of the high quality plan and a core element of the project. For example, specific evidence of instructor and leader training is provided and part of the high quality plan.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	12

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- The Logic Model and Management Plan iterates the commitment to the plan: both short and long-term. Additionally the district has committed its resources to sustain the project.
- The Mayor of Phoenix recommended the superintendent establish a Race to the Top Advisory Committee comprised of representatives of stakeholder and district partners to maintain the focus on the community at large and to maintain widespread support for the project.
- The district will provide existing technical support, a staff person dedicated to the implementation and tracking of the RTTTD funded project, and other support systems systemic to the district.
- School sites will have operational flexibility, they will develop “school improvement plans,” and the HR department will work with principals during staffing to ensuring high quality/effective teachers are in place to instruct in the core academic areas.
- A “not-in-class time” program is planned to help students with special needs (sped) and situations (low income) to take high school courses for credit and/or to receive tutoring.
- Assessments for “demonstrating mastery, using AIMS to determine mastery, an interdisciplinary-cross the curriculum writing system will be in place to help students develop and refine writing skills, and a performance or product demonstration of outcome/standard mastery.
- Technology and organizational systems, e.g., communication, site committees, etc. will monitor and assure that all students have access to resources.

While the applicant realizes the importance of allowing students to achieve mastery, e.g. taking computer-based classes, it is not clear how and when that would occur. This element was not fully described. Overall there was not a detailed plan to acknowledge student success through credits earned based on the mastery of standards in multiple ways and at various times. The Logic Model contains the elements of a high quality plan.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	10

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Currently the district funds one-to-one technology, a district website, access to the data warehouse, the Truenorthlogic Performance Management Solution System, and the district will continue to support technology equipped classrooms using some RTTT funding to enhance this area. Through the use and availability of information via technology, e.g., websites, and via committees and groups, such site based councils-school improvement teams, parents and the community will have has much access to school and district activities and information as they need and desire. Schools will also have computers available for parents and other community members. Students (7th and 8th graders) will be provided tablets to check out and use at home which will allow students to work on assignments and it will give parents access to websites and that will provide information about the plan. For example, schools will have a Parent/Family Resource Center to support parent involvement and promote two-way communication.

The applicant plans to hire more technology experts and advisors to facilitate increasing access to technology by all stakeholders. This hiring goal is part of the high quality plan designed to increase the emphasis and support for technology as a learning tool and as a means for tracking student data, keeping stakeholders, and educators informed about project status and progress. Additionally this system will increase LEA transparency of budget expenditures including but not limited to salaries.

The LEA uses the Synergy Student Information System and will purchase a Data Warehouse that will be interoperable with existing information systems such and human resources, student information, financial, and staff evaluations.

These are included in the Logic Model that is the hub of the high quality plan.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- An overall goal is to provide systems for tracking and reporting data related to the project. This goal is addressed in a high quality plan.
- Existing is the Continuous Improvement Plans (CIPs) which will be the management vehicle to monitor, coordinate, assure integration of project and current programs, and to make knowledgeable adjustments.
- The Evaluation Logic Model provides the framework for assessing the project: formatively and summatively.
- Quarterly reviews of project and high quality plans will occur and the applicant will communicate project progress internally via school administrators and to the community through the Community Relations Department.
- School leadership teams will incorporate the project into the Continuous Improvement Plans (CIPs).
- The applicant will communicate with the public and staff. School site leaders will have a major role in this effort as well the LEA Community Relations Department, the Family Resource Centers at each school, and the Parent Advisory Committee.
- Continuous Improvement Maps will be used to take the pulse of the status of the project by comparing goals in the high quality plan. They will also assist leadership and stakeholders to continuously improve the project.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- Based on the request of the Mayor of Phoenix and the initiative of the superintendent a Race to the Top Advisory Council will “maintain open dialog with stakeholders.” The district is committed to working closely with community agencies such as the Abrazos School-Based Health Clinic, St. Mary’s Food Bank, Arizona State University, the Phoenix Police Department, and the YMCA, etc.
- The district Parent Advisory Committee, site councils, and the communication mechanisms embedded in the plan provide ample communication of information and access to data. Additionally, this communication is two-way, i.e., stakeholders can ask questions and offer ideas as well as learning about the status of the initiative.
- The Parent Resource Centers will also be places where continuing communication about the project can occur and feedback can happen.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant indicated 11 rather than the 12-15 performance measures, all of which are ambitious, but some are not achievable, e.g., Eight grade ELL students going from 7% to 65%. The performance measures are for all students including the sub-groups.
- The applicant's intent to increase student summative test peformance is fine. It is appropriate to use the Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) and the Data Warehouse upgrades.
- The district will continue to use Galileo to pretest and provide quarterly progress reports. This is aligned with and complementary to AIMS.
- Teachers and principals will be evaluated using “refined” instruments and processes to assure the quality of the professional staff.
- The Logic Model, has the elements of the high quality plan, links the performance measures to the goals allowing feedback to stay the course or adjust the project.
- Feedback about the project can be gathered in the Parent Resource Centers in school.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Based on the Evaluation Logic Model the district will continuously assess the project with an evaluation portfolio for each of the elements of the project. The Evaluation Logic Model provides a framework for continuing assessment. This is a detailed action plan that addresses the various elements of the project including but not limited to the use of technology, parent and community outreach, and professional development. As mentioned LEA and school site staff will facilitate discussions through CIPs, the Family Resource Center, etc. to assess the project.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- The application clearly identifies the specific funds needed to support the project. Each budget expenditure item is supported with a sound rationale that explains the exact use of the funds. The budget is reasonable and sufficient.
- Based on the support of agencies and government leaders the district will clearly be able to track expenditures that are tied to specific elements of the project.

Example

Project Name: 20 College and Career Ready Advisors (will be hired)

Sustainability Plans: The district will build capacity of teachers at each school during the RTT project. The District will pick up the cost of sustaining 5 College and Career Ready Specialists. Here are the budget figures for this expenditure, i.e.., college and career ready specialists.

Grant Funds Requested: 4,246,000.80

Total Budget: 5,271,600.80This information is provided for the 15 sub-elements of the project.

There is a description/rationale that describes the funds and if this is a one time or continuing "investment."

Expenditures are mostly focused on personnel, including salaries, benefits, laptops, etc. Instructional resources and tools for students and teachers was a small part of the budget.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	6

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- The sustainability plan meets this criterion by referencing possible community, e.g., Abrazos School-Based Health Clinic, business, e.g., Target, government, e.g., the City of Phoenix, and other agencies such as Arizona State University.
- The district will assume the costs of the grant beyond the life of the project and cover the costs, e.g., of interventionists and content specialists while other positions will be phased out.
- Though the district has indicated it will assume the costs of the project once the grant is finished, there was no evidence of direct or in-kind financial support from community organizations.
- There was no budget for the three years after the grant.
- The Logic Model includes the fiscal plans and management elements of the project. This is further evidence of the existence of a high quality plan.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	8

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

- Partnerships that will be sustained through the Project are described and include government, business, community agencies, universities, and research.
- Through such initiatives as the RTTTD Advisory Committee the project would be tracked/monitored by the in district and those in the larger educational community.
- The Project will be transparent as information will be shared with stakeholders in a variety of ways, including but not limited to web sites, district and community publications, school site groups, etc.
- A high quality plan is in place to leverage RTTTD funds with additional funds - actual or in-kind - to sustain the Project, the sources of which have not been identified.
- Each parent will be part of the Project
- Teachers, principals, and other build and district staff will be focused on the attainment of the RTTTD goals and priorities. This will occur through the hiring of specialists such as the College and Career Ready Advisors.

1. There is a clear and sustainable partnership of public and private groups. The Mayor of Phoenix and the support from Target are examples. This partnership demonstrates the commitment of the applicant to the short- and long-term success of the project. This partnership also includes service groups, e.g.., Abrazo.
2. The applicant identified and committed to the high quality plan including 11 performance measures that address needs for all students with special emphasis on students experiencing an achievement gap. Addressing the socio-economic variable that influences the education system is part of the project as an unstated outcome that is planned to be addressed through such efforts as Kagan, professional development for teachers, and parent involvement.
3. Through existing and planned means the applicant intends to track the results of data such as the aggregate scores for all students and those of particular focus and need. AIMSWeb and the Data Warehouse are two example of technology systems that are and will be used to achieve this outcome.
4. The integration of services to children is stated and implied throughout the application. The reference to Abrazo is an example.
5. Through Professional Learning Communities and School Councils there are continuing opportunities to assess the needs of children, make decisions about how best to approach and address those needs, continue to meet the individual needs of each child, to engage parents through the Parent Resource Center and school councils, and assess student progress.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not	Met

	Met	

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided a strong implementation plan in which the Logic Model is the hub. The applicant has a high quality plan that incorporates a sound project evaluation design. There is clear evidence the applicant is organized and has a keen eye on the future. The personnel to be hired the first year, such as the College and Career Advisors, interventionists, and technology experts will contribute to the development of personalized learning for each child. PLCs and continuous, real-time training will create a dynamic learning and teaching environment that engages teachers as well as students. It is important to note the applicant provided ways to particularly work with special education and ELL children in personalizing their learning.

The project is focused on adopting standards and assessments that are reflective of current knowledge about learning and teaching. The Common Core, STEM, and the increased use of technology to enhance learning and teaching are examples. Attention to standards increases the opportunities for all students to realize personal and academic success and furthers their opportunities to graduate, attend college, and have satisfying careers.

Using AIMS, a Data Warehouse, and the web, the high quality plan focuses on two-way communication. Technology will provide right-now information and data about test scores, student needs, and other information that will assist teachers and educational leaders in making decisions which will enhance learning and teaching.

Professional development based on instructor and/or school need identifies and validates the importance of the teacher-student dynamic. Increasing teacher effectivness is a clear outcome of this project. Effective teachers willl be retained and assigned to where they are needed the most. The applicant identifies several professional activities for teachers and school leaders. This too is a major element of the Logic Model and high quality plan.

From the data presented all schools are low achieving though at different degrees. The Logic Plan addresses the entire school system yet provides latitude for individual school leaders, staffs, and parent councils to make decisions relative to their school.

Total	210	178

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0960AZ-3 for Cartwright Elementary School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	5

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents a reform vision that builds on its work in four core education assurance areas. With the adoption of the Common Core college- and career-ready state standards, the LEA has already begun to prepare students to succeed in college, the workplace and the global economy. This adoption justifies the applicant's work in the core education assurance area of aligning to college and career ready curriculum standards.

With the development of a statewide sustainable data system, the participating teachers and principals will soon receive easy access to appropriate student data to assist them in improving instruction. The proposed design of the new data system

seems appropriate for providing "just in time" data to teachers and support staff as they develop individual learning plans for participating students.

The applicant presents evidence of a continuous improvement plan to provide for an equitable distribution of effective teachers and for content specialists and mentors to develop teachers. Notable is the applicant's proposal to fund (with RTTD) additional content specialists that will coach teachers to increase effectiveness. Teachers and principals will also be rewarded for effective performance via incentives. However, the applicant does not provide sufficient evidence of plan to recruit effective teachers.

The applicant asserts that it only has one school who is currently in need of intervention. However, on page 29 in the application, the applicant states that in 2007, only five of its twenty schools made AYP and in 2011 only eleven made AYP. It is unclear if any of the remaining nine schools have improved in student performance or if they are in need of intervention as low achieving schools. Furthermore, it is unclear if the applicant has experienced success in turning around low performing schools.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes to serve with this grant all twenty of its K-8 schools (18,816 students). Since the applicant is a district that only contains K-8 schools, it is apparent that the proposed reform model will span district-wide.

The applicant provides sufficient evidence that the participating schools collectively meet the competition's eligibility requirements. The applicant asserts that 94% of its students are eligible for free/reduced meals.

The applicant provides a list of schools that will participate in the grant activities.

The applicant provides sufficient data regarding each of the twenty participating schools including the percent of participating students from low-income families. Notable is the fact that this percent is greater than 80% for each of the participating schools.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents sufficient evidence of a scaled up plan for meaningful district-wide reform in that all of the district's schools will be participating in the proposed reform. Many of the action steps of the proposed reform goal have already begun to be implemented in the district. The applicant plans to use the RTTT-D grant to "accelerate the depth and breadth of change". The applicant is likely to meet its outcome goals because it has a high quality plan to shore up resources to support these goals via the RTTT-D grant.

The applicant provides a detailed logic model that includes components of a high-quality plan (such as goals, timing, and credibility) that will likely help the applicant reach its outcome goals. Notable is the "First Best Instruction" program for teachers engaged in PLCs. This instruction will likely increase the effectiveness of teachers and provide opportunity to translate best practices from teacher to teacher.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	6

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant is likely to increase performance on summative assessments and decrease achievement gaps by employing twenty math interventionists, fifteen reading interventionists, twenty highly qualified instructional assistants, and ten content specialists. This personnel will be deployed to the schools to assist students needing interventions and to develop capacity in teachers to address the individual needs of students.

Although the LEA is composed of K-8 schools only (as such graduation rates and college enrollment is not a valid performance measure for this district), the applicant proposes to shore up the pipeline for success with these performance measures by employing "College and Career Ready Advisors" to create a climate for setting college and career goals.

The applicant provides sufficient evidence of its targets for performance on summative assessments throughout the grant period. The target performance goals for Hispanic students (who represent 89% of the participating students) seem reasonable as ambitious yet achievable annual goals. However, the target performance goals for Black students (who only represent 4% of the participating students) do not seem to follow a similar methodology for determining growth as the Hispanic students.

The projected performance measures do not achieve ESEA targets for all subgroups (ex: ELL, SPED) by the end of the grant term.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	11

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents evidence of an adequate record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement. As evident by the presented data table for the Arizona LEARNS Evaluations, the applicant has significantly decreased its number of schools "underperforming" (from 11 to 0) and increased its number of schools "performing plus" (from 6 to 18) over the past four years. This is evidence of some success at the school level.

Although, the applicant presents evidence of success in AIMS performance results in Reading, the presented 2008 - 2012 AIMS results indicates no significant improvement in mathematics achievement (meets and exceeds) for all grades 3-8. The applicant does not provide evidence of achievement gains in science or social studies.

Although the applicant asserts that it does not have a persistently lowest-achieving school, the applicant identifies one school in need of intervention based on this school's recent failure to show student growth. The applicant has launched a significant reform for this "focused" school in that it plans to restructure the administration and teachers beginning in the 2013-2014 school year. By providing highly effective personnel at the school and assigning interventionist specialists to the school, this "focused" school is likely to show improved results.

However, the applicant does not present evidence of an ambitious and significant reform to address the achievement of AYP for all of its schools. The applicant states that in 2007 only five of its twenty schools made AYP and that in 2011 only eleven of the schools met AYP. It is unclear if the applicant is currently implementing or plans to implement an ambitious reform (besides the reliance on the potential RTTD funding) to turn around the remaining nine schools that need to achieve AYP.

The applicant provides sufficient evidence of a comprehensive system for the dissemination of student performance data to students, educators, and parents. Notable is the use of a standards-based report card. Parents receiving such a report card is more likely to receive meaningful feedback of their child's performance based on the established learning goals.

The applicant proposes to utilize grant funding to purchase a data warehouse which will facilitate better access to student performance data by all relevant stakeholders.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents sufficient evidence of a consistent practice of transparency of district level financial information. Notable is the applicant's traditional practice to provide access through its website to the "auditor general performance result".

However, the applicant asserts that it currently does not provide access to school level financial information (such as personnel salaries), expenditures, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has already begun implementing some steps related to personalized learning environments such as adopting Common Core college and career state standards and using a data system. As evident by the support letters from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the district's proposed reform model aligns with the State's reform initiatives(such as the State's Common Core Standards adoption and PARRC assessment alignment) and hence complies with State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements.

The applicant proposes to use the comprehensive centers put in place by the State to support efforts of the proposed reform goals. This further provides evidence of the applicant's alignment with State's vision for personalized learning environments.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	7

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents evidence of meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal. Notable are the meetings held with stakeholders such as the Citizen's Advisory Council, president of the Cartwright Education Association, and Parent Resource Center. Feedback was received and was used to inform modifications to the proposed reform model. Notable was the feedback received from the president of the Cartwright Education Association who stated that she could not "support mandatory summer training" for teachers. Based on this feedback, voluntary PD will be offered in the summer.

Letters of support are provided in the application. Notable are the letters of support from the State Department of Education, the mayor of the city of Phoenix, and the executive director of educational outreach at Arizona State University.

As evident by the thoughtful letter of support from the Teacher's Union president, it is apparent that the district has support from the collective bargaining organization for the proposed reform model. This representative was engaged during the development of the proposal.

The applicant does not provide sufficient evidence of support from parents and students

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a high quality plan (including needs & gaps, learning activities, timing, persons responsible) for an analysis of the applicant's current status in implementing personalized learning environments. The applicant asserts that it is in need of highly qualified math and reading interventionists, college and career ready advisors, and a data warehouse. The applicant also identifies a need to provide additional professional development for its teachers. These gaps are reasonable and align nicely with the development of a personalized learning environments.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	18

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents sufficient evidence of a high-quality plan that includes activities, deliverables, identified responsible persons, and timeline for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready.

The proposed "Education and Career Action Plans" (ECAPs) which will be used to guide students in developing the academic and life skills they need to be college and career ready is likely to help students understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals and to identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college- and career-ready standards.

The applicant's proposed implementation of STEM-Humanities programs which will be rooted in project-based learning is likely to engage students and provide opportunities for deep learning experiences.

The applicant provides sufficient evidence of its plan to utilize Kagan's 6 Cooperative Domains to engage students in academic content. Pedagogical strategies derived from Kagan's domains will likely help students master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving.

The plan to utilize the Parent Resource Center to train for and provide access to student performance data is appropriate and reasonable as a method for parent outreach and information sharing. However, it is not evident that this outreach would directly assist with the development of personal learning environment components such as the Education and Career Action Plans.

The applicant presents sufficient evidence of a variety of means of providing personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development. Notable is the proposed establishment of PLCs where teams of teachers who will monitor the progress and ensure appropriate interventions are in placed for all students. Also notable is the Response to Intervention plan which will ensure that every student receiving intervention has an individual learning plan.

The applicant asserts that students, teachers, and parents currently have access to student performance data. The applicant

proposes to enhance this data system by creating a data warehouse through the use of grant funding.

The applicant identifies high need students based on results from the State AIMS test. For example, gaps are identified for SPED eighth grade students of 34% to 55% in math and 42% to 55% in reading. The applicant asserts that interventionists specialist will define strategies that will be helpful to assist these students. However, the applicant does not identify if the interventionists specialist will be highly skilled in strategies for students with special needs.

The applicant proposes to provide technical training to teachers and students on accessing the student portal via the employment of technology integration specialists.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	20

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents a comprehensive plan to provide relevant professional development to its participating teachers. This professional development which includes training in Common Core curriculum and its related strategies and in Kagan's Structures will support the effective implementation of personalized learning environments and assist teachers in adapting content and instruction. The applicant's proposal to embed professional development in the schools will likely prove to be very effective in providing the much needed just-in-time professional development for teachers.

The applicant provides a reasonable plan to frequently measure student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards. Notable are the highly qualified instructional assistants who will be hired to form full-time assessment teams to conduct formative and benchmark testing, manage student assessment data, and provide actionable reports to teachers and administrators. By employing a team to manage these tasks, teachers are more likely to have additional time to analyze the data reports and identify optimal learning approaches that respond to individual student academic needs and interests.

The applicant provides evidence of means to provide frequent feedback on teacher effectiveness, as well as by providing recommendations, supports, and interventions as needed for improvement. The plan to implement an enhanced teacher evaluation system, principal evaluation system, and walk-throughs is reasonable and likely to result in improved teaching and learning.

The district presents a high-quality plan (including activities and timing) for increasing the number of effective and highly effective teachers and principals. The district has developed a framework for teacher and principal evaluations that is linked with data on student performance. This tool will provide useful information on the effectiveness of the educators to improve student performance.

Effective recruiting strategies are proposed in the application that includes incentives to recruit qualified teachers for hard to fill positions. These strategies will likely increase the number of student who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	13

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents a high quality plan to support project implementation. The applicant indicates credible activities and persons responsible for each activity in its plan to provide support to stakeholders during project implementation.

The applicant asserts that the district is currently organized to provide support and services to its twenty schools and all staff. The applicant proposes to allocate the grant funds to further strengthen this support. It is apparent that the applicant will provide all of the necessary support from the central office to ensure implementation of the proposed reform is successful. Notable is the planned employment of additional interventionists and content coaches who will assist in developing the individual learning plans for all students.

Although the district provides policy and legislature that must be adhered to by all schools, the applicant asserts that all principals have authority over the schedules and calendars, personnel and staffing models (unless the school is in an intervention status of which only one currently is), budgets and programs. This level of autonomy is necessary for the implementation of the proposed reform model in that the school leadership team needs to ensure common planning time (schedules) for PLC collaboration. Also, the principal needs to have this level of autonomy to ensure that the most highly qualified teachers are hired.

The applicant proposes a vision for giving students the opportunity to earn credit based on demonstrated mastery. It is difficult to ascertain the extent to which this vision will likely be successful lack of details regarding the implementation of the plan to allow students in grades 4-8 to take extra courses to earn credit based on mastery. One concern (that was not mitigated in the discussion presented) with the implementation of this vision is the likelihood to adjust the school schedule to allow for certain students to take extra credit.

The applicant presents sufficient evidence of a plan to give students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways on summative assessments. However, the applicant did not present a plan to address multiple comparable means of formative (classroom) assessments.

The applicant provides sufficient evidence of its plan to ensure all learners, especially those with special needs and ELL, have access to learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable. Of note is the proven structured English immersion model used to address the special needs of English Language Learners. It is apparent that this model has been successful for this subgroup of students since their summative performance measures have been on par or exceeded expectation in the past four years. This is of particular note in that Hispanic students represent 89% of the total student population in the district. Therefore, it is most likely that the participating students will continue to receive adaptable and appropriate resources and instructional practices throughout the grant period and beyond.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	10

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes a high quality plan (including persons responsible and timing) to ensure that all participating students, parents, and educators, regardless of income, have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of the applicant's proposal. Notable is the applicant's plan to allow students in grades 7 and 8 to check out tablets to take home and work at home. The proposed extended learning time is another effective strategy for students to access learning materials outside of the school day. Via the Parent Resource Center, parents will have adequate access to resources for supporting effective parental involvement.

The applicant provides sufficient evidence of the effectiveness of the current level of technical support for students and teachers. The applicant proposes to enhance this support through the grant period with the employment of technical integration specialists. Parents will continue to receive technical assistance via the Parent Resource Center.

Currently the district maintains an up-to-date website for communicating information to stakeholders. The applicant proposes to enhance its outreach to students, parents, and educators via their own portal with the proposed data warehouse access plan.

The applicant provides evidence that the current data system in place, Synergy Student Information System (formerly GENESIS) is interoperable with the State's longitudinal data system. Therefore, it is likely the proposed upgraded data warehouse will follow similar protocol for interoperability.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents an innovative plan for continuous improvement throughout the implementation phases of the grant period. School leadership teams will "wrap" its annual Continuous Improvement Plans (CIPs) around the goals of the proposed reform model. This will encourage accountability at the school level.

The applicant asserts that the continuous improvement process incorporates monitoring and continuous feedback to accomplish the program activities, objectives, and outcomes.

An external evaluator and project director will be employed to ensure project goals are progressing on schedule and to target. With staff dedicated to the monitoring and managing of the proposed reform goals, school leadership teams will receive the necessary encouragement to set plans for continuous improvement at their schools.

Most notable is the applicants plan to incorporate systemic models of continuous improvement. The applicant proposes to use Innovation Configuration Maps (ICs) to assist in the analysis of the status of project implementation as it compares to the

acceptable goals of the project. ICs are proven system management tools that will likely assist the project leader and school leadership in planning for unbiased continuous improvement.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	2

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides sufficient evidence of established avenues of communication at the district level. Through the Community Relations Department, grant communication will be disseminated to relevant stakeholders. Through established meetings (Parent Advisory Committee, district Executive Leadership Team), the district's superintendent will report the status of the implementation of the proposed reform projects.

The applicant does not provide sufficient evidence of a plan to solicit ongoing feedback from teachers and school administrators. For a continuous improvement plan to be considered credible, a reasonable plan to solicit ongoing feedback form participating educators at the school level is important.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's proposed performance measures are appropriate for assessing student performance on summative tests. The applicant provides an appropriate rationale for selecting the performance measures. It is reasonable for the applicant to continue to use the Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) until the full integration of the common core standards is complete and the PARCC assessments have been piloted and fully implemented.

The applicant does not provide evidence of 12 performance measures.

The identified performance measures may not be ambitious and achievable for all participating students. For an example, the grade 7 ELL Mathematics (as measured by AIMS) targeted performance measure for the last year of the grant term (2015 - 2016) is 43% which is far below the State's benchmark average of 65% over the past five years (as presented in the application). Therefore, it is not evident the proposed reform model is ambitious and achievable enough to close the gap for this subgroup of students.

The applicant provides a reasonable plan to review and improve the measure over time if it is insufficient to gauge implementation progress. Notable is the applicant's plan to transition to the research based PARRC assessments. The PARRC assessments will be piloted across the nation. Therefore, it is likely to be a reliable assessment for measuring performance based on the adopted Common Core standards.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents a detailed evaluation plan that includes project level evaluations. As evident by the identification of reasonable process measures for each proposed subproject, the applicant is more likely to ensure that each project is effective in meeting its goal of creating personalized learning environments. Notable is that the evaluation method for determining teacher and principal effectiveness is predicated on the results of the educator evaluation system. This linkage is appropriate and will encourage educator accountability of the proposed project

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	5

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents a budget plan which includes the identification of funds that will support the proposed reform model. There is appropriate allocation of funds for the highly qualified instructional assistants and for the technology integration specialists.

However, the proposed budget is unreasonable in that approximately 58% of the total grant funds requested is allocated to personnel and personnel travel. The applicant does not provide a clear rationale for the allocation of budget funding.

The applicant asserts that $17,660,352 required additional funding for the proposed reform model will by funded from "other" sources. However, the applicant does not identify the "other" sources.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents all elements of a high quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals. The district will assume the cost of project staff such as interventionists and content specialists at the conclusion of the grant period. Other staff positions will be gradually phased out as capacity is built in current staff and systems throughout the grant period. This planned realignment of the district's staffing and general budget after the grant term is evident of the likelihood of district's ability to sustain the proposed reform initiative.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	5

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides sufficient evidence of established partnerships with community organizations (ex: St. Mary's Food Bank and ASU Family and Early Literacy Program) that provide additional services to its participating students and families. Due to the fact that 94% of participating students are eligible for free/reduced meals, the applicant's partnership with the St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance is most appropriate. By providing access to food outside of school, students (and their families) are more prepared to meet the challenges of a rigorous common core curriculum and plan goals for college and career.

The applicant only identifies three population level desired results (family health, family nutrition, and early childhood education) that align with and support the applicant’s broader Race to the Top – District proposal.

The applicant provides baseline and reasonable targets for the three population level desired results.

The applicant presents a plan to track the identified performance measures of the three population level desired results. However, the applicant does not provide sufficient evidence of how it plans to improve the population level desired results over time.

Notable is the assertion from the applicant that the partners will be members of the Race-to-the-Top Advisory Council and the applications description of how these partners will be engaged during the grant term. Through membership on this Council, the partners will "formulate recommendations and offer supports" that will be considered during decision making processes for the improvement of the proposed reform. However, it is not evident if these partners will continue to be engaged after the grant term.

The applicant does not provide sufficient evidence as to how the partnership would integrate education and other services to each participating student and their family.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents a reform vision that builds on its work in four core education assurance areas. With the adoption of the Common Core college- and career-ready state standards, the LEA has already begun to prepare students to succeed in college, the workplace and the global economy. This adoption justifies the applicant's work in the core education assurance area of aligning to college and career ready curriculum standards.

With the development of a statewide sustainable data system, the participating teachers and principals will soon receive easy access to appropriate student data to assist them in improving instruction. The proposed design of the new data system seems appropriate for providing "just in time" data to teachers and support staff as they develop individual learning plans for participating students. The applicant presents evidence of system inoperability of the current data system which supports the likelihood of inoperability of the proposed upgraded data warehouse.

The applicant presents evidence of a continuous improvement plan to provide for an equitable distribution of effective teachers and for content specialists and mentors to develop teachers. Notable is the applicant's proposal to fund (with RTTD) additional content specialists that will coach teachers to increase effectiveness. Teachers and principals will be evaluated via a newly developed performance evaluation system which is based in student performance. This will likely inform areas of professional development needs to improve educator effectiveness.

The applicant provided limited evidence of a plan to turn around one low performing school.

Total	210	171

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0960AZ-4 for Cartwright Elementary School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	7

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proved that the district has already been doing work in the four core educational assurance areas. For example, the applicant articulated goals guiding the district: increase student achievement, provide exceptional customer service, and provide opportunities for innovation. The district provided some activities for reaching these goals: PLCs, RTI, College and Career Advisors, teacher and principal evaluation system for improving instruction, 21st Century technology, STEM instruction. The district adopted Common Core State Standards to prepare students for college and career. The district provided goals to create a Data Warehouse to inform instruction. The district also provided a strong vision to recruit, develop, reward and retain effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most. The applicant outlined a plan to assist in one low performing building in the district; the applicant stated that there are no persistently low-achieving schools in the district and they have not implemented a plan to assist schools of that nature in the past. Through these goals and activities, the applicant set forth a comprehensive reform vision.

The applicant presented several strategies to address the reform vision that were appropriate for elementary level students. For the goal of personalized student support, the applicant stated that progress will be monitored through the data warehouse, there will be College and Career Advisors, and 7th and 8th grade students would have access to a 1 to 1 computing scenario. Goal setting and work with College and Career Advisors were part of the applicant's plan, but this idea was not fully developed. The applicant only somewhat addressed student academic interests and how the district would leverage those interests to improve instruction, primarily through the College and Career Advisors. The applicant lacked a clear and credible approach to personalizing student learning.

The applicant provided some evidence of increasing equity through personalized student support through the use of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), interventionists, support for students in Tier II or III of the RTI model, support for ELL students, and College and Career Advisors to work with students on setting and monitoring goals. While special education students and ELL students were specifically named, the applicant did not illustrate what support might be provided for high-achieving students or those in the middle.

A1 received a mid-range score of 7. The applicant provided a comprehensive reform vision; however, it was not always clear how all parts worked together for the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support for all students in the district.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant delineated a clear approach to LEA-level implementation, including a timeline and parties responsible for implementation. The activities were prioritized; however, the applicant did not phase the activities to ensure effective implementation. The applicant proposed to commence most of the activities during 2013 in all 20 schools in the district. The district did not plan to pilot activities before large scale implementation. The applicant did not prove that this rapid approach to implementation would be high-quality.

The applicant included signatures of district administrators and the teacher's union indicating support to school-level implementation. The applicant provided letters from various people in the district to show support of the plan.

The applicant chose every school in the district to participate, and the applicant proved a high need in the community that could benefit from assistance.

The applicant provided detailed demographics for all schools identified in the plan.

A2 received a low high-range score of 8 because the applicant provided a plan that addressed LEA-level and school-level implementation of the proposal; however, the applicant did not prove that implementing multiple activities in all buildings simultaneously would support high-quality implementation.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	6

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's plan included all 20 schools in the district. The district did not demonstrate strong support from school administrators or teachers in adopting the plan district-wide. The applicant did not provide a high-quality plan describing how the reform proposal will be scaled-up and translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change. The applicant did not provide a timeline for roll out of the plan to ensure effective implementation.

The applicant proved that the strategies in this plan are in-line with initiatives that the district was already working on (transition to Common Core, Professional Learning Communities, etc.).

The applicant provided a high-quality logic model that included Teaching/LEA support for each goal/initiative and process and performance measures for each.

A3 received a mid-range score of 6. The applicant provided a strong logic model to tie all components together into a viable plan that the district can support and monitor; however, support for the district-wide change was not evident.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	3

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not provide a convincing rationale as to how the strategies in the plan are likely to result in improved student learning and performance.

The applicant provided ambitious goals in the area of performance on summative assessments, but they did not always seem achievable. The goals were based on the percent of students meeting and exceeding the standards on the state tests. For example, in reading, grade 5, ELL students go from 25% to 75% meeting the standard. Likewise, in reading, grade 8, SPED go from 15% to 55% and ELL go from 7% to 65%. The applicant included implementation strategies for individual learning plans for RTI and ELL students, which would help raise SPED and ELL scores. However, these goals do not seem achievable based on the present level of performance and the track record of success.

It was difficult to determine if the applicant created ambitious yet achievable goals in the area of reducing achievement gaps because the applicant did not provide evidence that they had made progress reducing the achievement gaps over the past four years. Instead, the applicant described the progress they have been making toward reducing gaps in achievement between their district and state assessment scores.

The applicant did not provide goals or data in the area of graduation rates, and they stated that since they are an elementary school district, these are not applicable. The applicant stated that they work with their high school district, which indicated that some data regarding graduation and college enrollment would be available. It was difficult to assess progress toward

standards of college and career readiness without data from the high school district to track students through to graduation and beyond.

College enrollment was similarly not addressed. The applicant will not be able to assess college and career readiness without examining the current graduation or college enrollment rates and projecting how the applicant's plan will improve these rates.

The applicant received a low mid-range score of 3. Some of the goals were ambitious and achievable (i.e. decreasing achievement gaps); some of the goals were ambitious but not proven achievable (i.e. performance on summative assessments for some subgroups); and graduation rates and college enrollment were not addressed.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	7

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proved some track record of success. One example of this is that on Arizona LEARNS evaluations, the applicant has increased the number of Performing Plus schools from 6 to 18.

The applicant did not provide evidence to support decreasing achievement gaps between sub-populations; the applicant only provided data comparing the district's assessment scores with those of the state. The applicant did not provide assessment data disaggregated by subgroup. There was no evidence regarding graduation rates or college enrollment. The district stated that since they were a K-8 district, graduation rates and college enrollment data were not applicable. However, a major emphasis of the plan was preparing students for college and career, and this data would inform the applicant's plan and help them monitor their progress.

The applicant showed an increase in reading scores from 2007-2012 at most grade levels (grades 4-8). The applicant also showed a decrease in "falls far below" in most areas (math and reading, all grade levels) from 2007 to 2012. This may be due in part to the RTI plans that the district implemented to help struggling students. However, the applicant did not establish a consistent increase in student performance over four years for math; performance either fluctuated or decreased at all grade levels. The applicant did not provide assessment scores of any type for students below grade 3, even though the district serves students in K-8th grade.

The applicant stated that there was only one low performing school, and they have developed a plan to support the school. The plan has not been implemented, so it was not evident that the applicant was able to achieve ambitious or significant reforms in that school.

The applicant described PLCs being utilized to analyze student data; however, there was no evidence to support that PLC groups are effectively using data to move instruction forward. The applicant proved that data was available to students, educators, and parents, and part of their plan was to make the data more available to improve instruction.

B1 received a mid-range score of 7. The applicant demonstrated improvement on a few measures (i.e. Arizona LEARNS), but there was not an overall track record of success established. The data regarding performance on summative assessment was not disaggregated by subgroup, which does not prove a track record of success in decreasing achievement gaps. The performance on summative assessment indicated some improvement in reading assessments grades 4-8, but there was not consistent improvement overall (i.e. math Grade 8, fluctuated over 4 years and ended 7% lower than the start). High school graduation rates and college enrollment were not addressed.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

B2 received a mid-range score of 3 because the district provided some discussion of transparency, namely a website that contains most of the required materials. The applicant did not provide evidence of a high level of transparency in processes and practices. The applicant stated that in 2012-13, they will start posting school-level expenditures in the four categories. The applicant stated that they will comply with RTTT requirements, but there was not a demonstrated history of transparency throughout the district.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	6

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant stated that the state supports and has even mandated similar initiatives to the plan (i.e. building data systems). The applicant stated that their plan was aligned with state initiatives; the applicant made it sound like the state was already doing most of the elements of the plan, and therefore, the plan may not be necessary. The applicant included a letter from the State Superintendent echoing alignment of the applicant's plan with the state's initiatives.

The applicant did not address state regulations regarding seat time requirements. There was not enough evidence to conclude that the LEA has sufficient autonomy to implement a reform plan that has elements of mastery based on concept attainment and multiple standards at one time.

B3 received a mid-range score of 6. The applicant described successful conditions--the state was working on similar goals to the plan, but it did not fully prove sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environment in the plan.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	6

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrated support of stakeholders for the plan, but they did not demonstrate involvement.

The applicant met with the Citizen's Advisory Council; however it was not clear who was on the council, what feedback was received from the council, or how the feedback was received. It was not clear how many parents or other community members were included in the process of developing the plan.

The applicant provided a letter from the president of the education association indicating support of the plan. However, the extent to which teachers or administrators were involved in the development of the plan was not clearly addressed.

There was some evidence of revision based on some of the feedback. For example, the President of the Cartwright Education Association could not support mandatory summer training, so the applicant revised the training to voluntary PD in the summer.

There were 15 letters of support written; most were form letters from district personnel. There was a thoughtful letter from the mayor that provided original commentary about the plan. The applicant also provided a letter from the store Target, which shows some wider community outreach.

B4 received a mid-range score of 6. The applicant demonstrated stakeholder support for the proposal. The applicant did not include much information about the groups consulted or how their feedback was implemented into the plan.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant included a partial plan for an analysis of the applicant's current status in implementing personalized learning environments; activities, parties responsible, timelines, and some deliverables were identified. The applicant identified needs and gaps, and the applicant used the needs and gaps as part of the logic model for the activities of the plan.

B5 received a 3 because the applicant identified needs and gaps, but there was not a high-quality plan to illustrate how the needs and gaps were analyzed.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	14

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided a plan with all required elements (activities, rationales, deliverables, timelines and parties responsible). The applicant's plan was presented as a logic model with the need or gap identified at the left side, the activities to address the need/gap in the middle, and a process and a performance measure at the right.

The applicant did not demonstrate that the learning will engage and empower all learners. The applicant detailed the following strategies to improve teaching and learning: Kagan engagement strategies, move to Common Core, College and Career Advisors who help with goal development and help students monitor progress, integration of technology, and RTI. The applicant provided research in support of each of these initiatives. What the applicant did not provide was a clear link between

these separate initiatives and restructuring classes to better engage and empower all learners. Kagan engagement strategies were presented as an effective strategy, but it was not evident what these would look like for students and teachers in the applicant's school district.

Parents will be trained, through the Parent Resource Center, regarding how to access/use student data; however, it was not evident that parents will be involved in informing their student's personalized education.

The College and Career Advisors will provide additional support to students. It was not evident how often students will get to meet with these advisors in order to keep them on track. The strategies the applicant included will help students will such skills as goal-setting and teamwork, but there was not evidence that it would be deep learning of academic interest. However, the applicant also provided other avenues to provide personalized support to students (through interventionists and PLCs).

The applicant provided some exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives for students through Kids at Hope and Hispanic Mother Daughters/ASU partnership; however, this exposure directly connected with motivating and deepening individual student learning.

The applicant provided a strategy to address each of the points below:

- a sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable the student to achieve his or her individual learning goals (College and Career advisors)
- high-quality instructional approaches and environments (Kagan, Common Core, technology)
- high-quality content, including digital learning content (1 to 1 for 7th and 8th graders; online and software instructional programs)
- some feedback (College and Career advisors): individual student data (Data Warehouse)
- accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students (RTI)

However, the applicant did not ensure access to all of the above elements for all students. The personalized learning recommendation and students pursuing their own academic interests were not evident. The applicant tied those responsibilities into the College and Career Advisor, but it was not evident how much contact or influence they would have with students. While all students are provided Tier 1 intervention in RTI, the students in Tier II and III receive better support.

The applicant stated that some training and support for students to understand how to manage their learning will come from the College and Career Advisors and from Technology Integration Specialists, but the extent of the training was not detailed.

C1 received a mid-range score of 14. The applicant provided a plan to improve student learning. The applicant provided a variety of approaches to improve learning and teaching; it was not fully evident that the activities would reach all students (including the high performing and middle students). Personalized learning, based on students' interests, was not fully developed.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	16

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant explained a strong teacher mentoring program to support those new to the profession.

The applicant provided specific examples of training that will be provided to teachers; the training will be ongoing, and coaches and evaluators will ensure that teachers are implementing the training in their classes. The applicant included the College and Career Readiness Advisors in the Professional Learning Communities to provide communication opportunities regarding personalized learning. The applicant did not provide sufficient evidence to prepare teachers to meet each student's academic needs and help ensure all students can graduate on time college- and career- ready. The applicant will train teachers in Kagan engagement strategies, but it was not clear how teachers will be able to adapt content and instruction based on students' academic needs and interests.

The applicant will provide data to parents, students and educators to improve instruction; however, other than personnel, it was not clear what access educators would have to tools and resources to accelerate student progress toward meeting college- and career- ready graduation requirements.

The applicant provided evidence that school leaders have training, policies, tools, data, and resources. For example, Michael Schmoker will come to the district to lead principals through developing a common protocol for classroom walk-through evaluations. Like teachers, new principals will also have access to Leadership Coaches, which was an innovative idea to assist school leaders.

The applicant presented a plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals including providing sign-on bonuses for hard-to-fill positions and the teacher induction/mentoring program. The plan had activities, deliverables, and some parties responsible; there were also rationales for most activities. The plan lacked clear time and some credibility, as there was not evidence of the effectiveness of the plan.

The applicant provided copies of the teacher and leader evaluations. The evaluations were based on multiple strong criteria. The applicant described a cooperative system of evaluation between evaluator and teacher that is completed early in the year to help shape instruction.

C2 received a low high-range score of 16. The applicant provided evidence of support to increased access to resources, training and data to improve the capacity of teachers and leaders within the district. The applicant provided evidence of on-going training and support in order to increase the capacity of teachers and leaders. The applicant did not demonstrate fully adaptable resources and tools available to teachers, and the plan for increasing effective and highly effective teachers lacked some credibility.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	12

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided a high-quality management plan which illustrated the support that will be provided to schools for implementing the plan. The plan included activities, deliverables, parties responsible, and timelines for ensuring effective management of the plan.

The applicant listed some elements that school's have flexibility and autonomy over, including the development of school improvement plans. The applicant included the hiring of several support personnel to assist individual schools with plan implementation.

The applicant did not present opportunities for students to progress based on mastery. The applicant stated that they would work on this element during RTTT implementation. There were some examples of how students could demonstrate mastery in multiple ways (performance or product); however, the applicant did not fully develop this element.

The applicant provided evidence of some adaptable and accessible learning resources through RTI and technology.

D1 received a low high-range score of 12. The applicant demonstrated some practices, policies and rules to facilitate the plan. The applicant did not present a detailed plan to award students credit based on mastery or to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presented a high-quality plan with activities, deliverables, parties responsible, timelines addressing the management of the plan.

The applicant provided some evidence that stakeholders, regardless of income, will have access to necessary content, tools and other learning resources. For example, two computers will be placed at each school's office for parents to use, if they don't have technology at home. 7th and 8th grade students will be provided with tablets that they can check out when they need to take them home.

The applicant plans to hire more technology advisors in the district who would help with technical support. The applicant provided evidence that teachers and students would have technical support at school. The applicant also described a family resource center with support for parents; however technical support was not evident in the family resource center.

Part of the applicant's plan was to create a Data Warehouse that will provide exports and be an interoperable system. The family resource center and parent liaisons will be helpful in communicating information home to parents and teaching what data might be available.

D2 received a low high range score of 8 because the applicant demonstrated that they are trying to create systems of support to increase access to resources that support learning; however, access for all was not fully developed.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	13

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided a strategy, Innovation Configuration Maps, to assist with quarterly reviews of the applicant's plan. The Innovation Configuration Maps (which contain a rubric rating performance and are evidence-based to prove level of mastery) will be a strong tool to assist with rigorous continuous improvement.

The applicant also provided an evaluation plan including performance measures, evaluation methods, parties responsible, and timeline. The evaluation will help monitor progress of the plan. The feedback will be timely and regular, and the frequency varies based on the measure. The logic model also included process and performance measures.

The applicant will communicate about the progress of the plan internally, primarily through district administrators, and to the community through a Community Relations Department, the Family Resource Center, and the Parent Advisory Committee. The applicant did not fully develop the communication to ensure that it will be effective.

E1 received a high-range score of 13 because the applicant presented a solid plan and tool to implement rigorous continuous improvement. The applicant provided multiple means of public communication, but it lacked full development to ensure effective communication.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

E2 received a mid-range score of 3. The applicant listed some venues for communication externally, but they did not detail what information would be shared. The venues for communication provided were specific groups, and it was not evident how this would be translated to the broader community. Likewise, the internal communication will be to groups who will then share the information (i.e. building leaders). The applicant stated that classified personnel will need to understand the plan and progress, but the applicant did not provide a clear way to provide the information to classified staff. There was no evidence of soliciting ongoing input from teachers and administrators.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided 11 performance measures. Some of the performance measures are ambitious but not achievable, as noted in an earlier sections. For example, Reading, 8th grade, ELL students go from 7% to 65%.

The applicant provided some rationale for the performance measures chosen; some evidence that the performance measures will provide rigorous, timely and formative feedback. The applicant did not address how it will review and improve the measure over time.

Through the evaluation plan and the logic model, the applicant provided sufficient evidence to link performance measures into the goals of the plan and to provide reflection and revision for continuous improvement.

E3 received a mid-range score of 3 because the applicant thoroughly wove effective performance measures into the plan; however, there were only 11 performance measures, and some do not seem achievable.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

E4 received a 5 because the applicant provided a high-quality evaluation plan that addressed plans to evaluate the effectiveness of such activities as professional development and activities that employ technology.

The evaluation plan included goals, performance measures, evaluation methods, parties responsible, and timelines. The evaluation plan also included the Innovation Configuration Map tool to assess current performance of goals and support the assessment with evidence.

The evaluation plan addressed such activities as performance on summative assessments, students' social/emotional wellbeing (as assessed by a student survey), effectiveness of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), effectiveness of the teachers'

induction and retention program, etc. Each of these activities had a means by which to evaluate the activity (i.e. review logs for collaboration). The Innovation Configuration Maps included a space for ehancement/corrective action/next steps for the parties responsible to discuss based on the findings.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	7

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided a budget that primarily supports salaries and benefits, laptops, supplies, and travel for personnel. Instructional resources and tools for students and teachers were a small portion of the budget. Almost each personnel position included a laptop for the person and travel to professional conferences, which are not always a worthwhile expense.

The budget identified extra expenses that needed to be considered (i.e. charging carts for the tablets).

Some state and district funds are identified as being included in the budget; the total budget was $47,500,637.90, and the grant funds requested were $29,840,285.90.

The applicant provided a rationale including:

- Description of funds
- One-time or ongoing investments

F1 received a mid-range score of 7. The overwhelming expense for personnel and the extra expenses attached to each new position, diminished the reasonableness of the budget.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not provide a high-quality plan for sustainability. The applicant provided a table of sustainability that was not convincing; it included the project name, sustainability plans, grant funds requested, and total budget. The applicant did not identify other external sources of funds : either the district will cover the cost or cut the position/activities.

The applicant provided a letter from the store Target that contained evidence of one community business contributing to the district. There was not evidence of financial support from State and local government leaders.

F2 received a mid-range score of 5. The applicant proved that they considered sustainability, but they did not prove that they have the sufficient resources and financial support to fully sustain the project. The applicant did not provide a fully-developed high-quality plan.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	3

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided a description of three coherent and sustainable partnerships: Abrazos School-Based Health Clinics, St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance, and Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College.

The applicant identified 3 population-level desired results.

The applicant superficially described how the partnership would

- Track selected indicators
- Use the data to target its resources
- Improve results over time

The applicant stated that all students would have access to the programs from year one, but there was not evidence to show that all students will be able to participate in receiving medical care, food and literacy assistance. The applicant did not provide evidence of the presence of these resources for all students. There was not a plan provided to scale the model.

The applicant did not provide evidence that the partnerships would be expanded in order to build the capacity of staff to help with implementation. The applicant stated that the Race to the Top Advisory Council will examine the needs of participating schools and explore actions to improve success.

The applicant identified performance measures, but there was not a clear plan for reaching those performance measures.

Competitive Preference received a 3. The applicant described three current partnerships, but the applicant did not outline a high-quality plan to expand those partnerships to reach more students and improve academics.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided a well-developed logic model and a sound evaluation plan. These artifacts demonstrated that the applicant was organized and prepared to present a plan.

The applicant provided evidence that they have been working on the core assurance areas, and they will continue to build on these areas by: adopting Common Core State Standards to prepare students to succeed; building a Data Warehouse to inform instruction; developing a plan for recruiting, developing, rewarding and retaining effective teachers and principals (including sign-on bonuses for hard-to-staff areas); and working to improve the one low performing school in their district (through improving staffing).

The applicant provided personnel to personalize learning: interventionists, technology support, College and Career Advisors. The applicant also proved that teachers will be prepared to personalize learning through their PLCs, on-going training, and even through the evaluation process with their school leader. While the amount of contact College and Career Advisors will have with students was not clear, it was evident that at least one school staff member would know each student and be qualified to assist him/her with their learning needs.

The applicant provided avenues for special education students and ELL students to receive personalized instruction to meet their learning needs.

A personalized curriculum with options for content mastery was more evident in the 7th and 8th grade years. For example, students had options to enroll in high school classes during 0 hour, and students will create education and career action plans to guide them through high school. The 1 to 1 tablet plan for 7th and 8th graders was another way learning was personalized, at least for these two grade levels. Through "First best instruction" and goal-setting starting in 1st grade, it was demonstrated that younger elementary students will also receive some personalized learning.

The applicant focused more on teachers and leaders and improving their capacity; however, they demonstrated that personalized learning environments will be created to build on the core educational assurance areas that the applicant has already been working toward.

Total	210	138