



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0236CO-3 for Denver Public Schools

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>

**(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant presents a comprehensive and coherent reform model, "Each Student's Pathway", that is based on five pillars of personalized learning. Notable is the second pillar in which students will link their learning to relevant college and career goals.

It is evident that the district has adopted the vision of personalized learning for all of its schools. The proposed grant includes thirty-eight participating schools. However, another twenty-five district schools are currently undergoing independent efforts to create personalized learning environments and an additional sixty-five schools will roll out personalized learning through parallel and supportive work over the next five years. The applicant asserts that by 2020, 100% of all district students will be served in personalized learning environments. This speaks to the comprehensiveness of the applicant's vision which is not solely dependent on this grant's funding.

The applicant presents sufficient evidence of a vision that builds on its work in four core educational assurance areas. For example:

- Core assurance 1: Integration of the Common Core State Standards; Development of formative and summative assessments aligned with CCSS; Transitioning to the PARCC assessments in 2015; Standards based grading and report cards
- Core assurance 2: School Performance Framework (SPF) that includes student growth and achievement
- Core assurance 3: ProComp - performance-based compensation and leadership development models such as Lead in Denver, Leading Effective Academic Practice (LEAP)
- Core Assurance 4: Tiered Support Framework for assessing school effectiveness; Since 2005, DPS has opened and/or turnaround nearly fifty schools in order to provide students better performing options

The applicant sufficiently describes classroom experiences where participating students will link their learning to relevant college and career goals and will accelerate at their individual pace. In addition, the applicant's assertion regarding the implementation of flexible schedules to permit interdisciplinary learning is evident of a credible approach for deepening student learning and accelerating student achievement.

The applicant clearly provides evidence of a vision to increase equity through personalized learning in that it acknowledges the gap in proficiency and graduation rates in ethnic minority subgroups, ELLs, and high-need students. The proposed personalized plan which provides resources and support to students where they most need will likely decrease the identified achievement gap.

<b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
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**(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant presents a well thought out process for implementing the reform proposal. Notable is

the applicant's "not one model fits all" approach and that via the incorporation of a pool of approved partners, schools can choose the appropriate resources needed to implement the proposed model.

The district wide vision for personalized learning for all students will be implemented either via this grant or district funding. Therefore, it was appropriate for the applicant to solicit participation of interested schools and for selection of these schools to be based on their readiness to implement. Although, evaluation of the effectiveness of the reform model will be limited in the assessment of scope and scale due to this selection bias because the scale-up will be based on results from schools that were identified as "ready."

The applicant indicates that thirty-eight of the listed schools will be selected via a rigorous selection process to participate in the proposed reform model. It is clear that all students from the selected participating schools will be included in the reform plan. Student populations are identified by subgroup to include high-need and ELL students.

<b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
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**(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant presents a well thought out high quality plan that includes key goals, activities, dates, deliverables, persons responsible, and rationale. Notable is the link to the core assurance areas for each proposed goal and activity.

The applicant consistently shares its vision that every student across all schools in the LEA will have access to a personalized learning environment by 2020. The applicant has demonstrated effective implementation strategies to meet this goal including establishing current partnerships. The development of teacher professional growth plans to include goals that directly support personalized learning will be a systemic change to teacher evaluation and support district-wide reform. Due to this systemic approach to ensure all students have access to a personalized learning environment, the applicant is likely to reach its outcome goals. Therefore, the applicant presents clear evidence of its plan to scale up and translate the proposed reform model into meaningful district-wide reform beyond the participating schools.

<b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
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**(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant presents sufficient performance assessments of improved student learning in mathematics and reading. Notable is the applicant's parsing of summative mathematics and reading goals per grade level from third to tenth grade. By analyzing per grade level goals, the applicant is likely to acknowledge areas of improvement of the reform model throughout its grade level progression.

The applicant presents ambitious yet achievable math and reading proficiency goals that will result in at least a 50% increase by post grant for each subgroup.

The applicant asserts that the goal for high school graduation rate is to reach 80% in five years. However, the applicant does not provide 2017-2018 graduation goals. Furthermore, the proposed graduation rate for 2016-2017 does not indicate an 80% graduation rate for each subgroup. Therefore, it is unclear if the applicant expects each listed subgroup to reach 80% graduation rate in five years.

The applicant presents ambitious yet achievable goals for college enrollment in that all subgroups will experience a 20% increase in college enrollment by the end of the grant period.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant presents evidence of a clear record of success by its assertion that the district has gone from having the lowest rate of growth among large districts in 2005 to the highest rate of growth in both 2012 and 2013. However, the extent to which this success is evidence of advancement of all student subgroups learning and achievement is difficult to ascertain given that the applicant does not specify what constitutes a "high rate of growth" among large districts. In addition, the applicant provides limited details regarding specific performance measures, high school graduation rates, and college enrollment rates per subgroup.</p> <p>The applicant presents evidence of ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools in that it has transformed over forty underperforming schools since 2005, and opened over thirty-five high-performing schools.</p> <p>The applicant proposes to use an established data system platform, Pearson's Schoolnet, to make student performance data available to students, educators, and parents. Notable is the Teacher Student Data Link (TSDL) which will provide accurate student data for all students in their classroom for the purpose of improving instruction.</p>		
<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<p><b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant acknowledges that it is fully compliant with financial transparency required by law. However, the applicant does not provide sufficient evidence of the accessibility to actual personnel salaries for the general public.</p> <p>Sufficient evidence is presented regarding the accessibility of non-personnel expenditures via the DPS website. The applicant reports that all accounts payable transactions are searchable via the website which provides user-friendly public access.</p>		
<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant presents sufficient evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, regulatory requirements to implement the proposed reform model. Notable is the current legislation, Colorado Constitution Article IX, Section 15 that ensures districts have local autonomy over curriculum decisions, institutional structures, and the accreditation of schools. In addition, the state's <i>Educator Effectiveness Act</i> provides sufficient balance between state mandated educator evaluation (such as, 50% of a teacher's evaluation be determined by academic growth) and the allowance for autonomy over delivery of education per each district. Therefore, the applicant will be able to modify curriculum and institutional structures in an effort to deepen student learning and provide personalize learning environments.</p>		

<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>
<p><b>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Success of the applicant's proposed reform model is highly dependent on partnership agreements that will provide the necessary services to the participating schools for the implementation of the "Each Student Pathway" program. As evident of initial partnership engagement, the applicant presents support letters from partners such as "Colorado Succeeds" and the "National Center on Time &amp; Learning."</p> <p>Although the applicant asserts that the Denver Classroom Teachers Association is supportive of the proposed reform model, it is unclear of the extent of this support since evidence such as a letter of support was not presented in the application. Similarly, the extent to which district principals support the proposed reform model is unclear since form letters (i.e. letters generated from a template) were presented as principal support letters.</p> <p>The applicant presents sufficient evidence of meaningful engagement with and feedback from parents via a parent survey and community meetings.</p> <p>The applicant asserts that all feedback and input received from such internal and external partners as teacher, parents, and the state department of education were incorporated in the proposed reform plan.</p> <p>The applicant provides evidence of engagement with students via the DPS Student Board of Education. Students were given the opportunity to provide input on the propose personalized learning vision and strategy.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>
<p><b>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant presents a plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment which includes outcomes/goals and persons participating. However, the proposed plan does not indicate persons responsible and sufficient detail timelines for each component of the plan. For example, although a plan is presented regarding the incorporation of Daniel Pink's work on motivation for the development of students' skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving, the applicant does not indicate who (i.e. teachers, counselors, principals) will be responsible for such integration of this model into the curriculum.</p> <p>Via partnerships with vendors and community organizations, the applicant proposes that schools will receive the appropriate resources to design personalized learning environments for all participating students. Included in the applicant's plan is the increase of CTE courses which are designed to prepare students for future careers. Therefore, it is likely that students will understand what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals via the newly developed personalized learning environments and access to additional CTE courses .</p> <p>Via the proposed interdisciplinary courses, internships, and concurrent enrollment, some participating students will have opportunities to deepen learning in areas of academic interests. The applicant asserts that all students will deepen learning via a variety of instructional approaches such as learning stations and flexible frameworks .</p>		

Although the applicant asserts that via approved partners' tools, teachers will be able to personalize sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable the student to achieve his or her individual learning goals and ensure he or she can graduate on time and college- and career-ready, the extent to which this task will be successful is unclear given that limited details regarding the proposed tools and a plan for accounting for the complication in student scheduling this will present is not provided.

The applicant presents sufficient evidence of participating students' access to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives via technology, community partnership and outreach, and project based tasks that engage local partners.

The applicant presents sufficient evidence of a plan for ongoing and regular student performance feedback via authentic and performance based assessment. All assessments will be standards based and will provide appropriate information to teachers to improve instruction. However, it is unclear how the applicant will manage its assertion that students will be able to "opt to demonstrate mastery when they feel they are ready." It is unclear how this could be managed based on the necessary timely analysis of student performance data required to improve instruction.

The applicant provides sufficient evidence of high quality content including digital learning that is aligned with college and career ready standards including common core learning trajectories assessments, leveled readers, and science applications.

The applicant provides sufficient evidence of mechanisms to provide training and support to students that will ensure that they understand how to use the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning. For example, support partners will serve as "informal educators" to support and engage students in the classroom. Also, the district will allocate funding for parent training in personalized learning and technology.

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

**20**

**20**

**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant presents a high quality plan for an approach to teaching and leading that helps educators improve instruction and increase their capacity to support student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards. This plan includes goals/strategies, identified personnel, and an appropriate timeline. The applicant plans to leverage and refine existing teacher/leader effectiveness programs and develop new staff who are added to support the proposed reform model. Adequate funding is appropriated to allow for six days of professional development annually for staff. In addition, common planning time will be designed into the school structure to allow for collaboration on actionable information that helps educators identify optimal learning approaches that respond to individual student academic needs and interests.

The applicant presents a high quality plan for for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals. Via a variety of educator pipeline programs (e.g. Ritchie Program for School Leaders, and Denver Teacher Fellows) that currently exist in the district, the applicant demonstrates a robust system for increasing its capacity of highly effective teachers and principals.

The applicant presents sufficient evidence of a robust teacher evaluation system that includes student growth, particularly via personalized learning environments, as a component of evaluation. This indicates a systemic modification to the teacher evaluation system that the applicant has currently implemented. Along with the evidence of district and school autonomy presented in this application, it is likely the school leaders and school leadership teams can take data-driven steps to improve,

individual and collective educator effectiveness and school culture and climate, for the purpose of continuous school improvement.

The applicant provides sufficient evidence of how teachers will incorporate ongoing authentic assessment aligned with the adopted college readiness curriculum to inform student progress and practice of educators. The applicant clearly identifies appropriate tools to assist with this goal of frequently measuring student progress, such as LEAP and the Teacher Student Data Link (TSDL). Furthermore, teachers will be trained on how to use this student evaluation data as a feedback loop to inform their "personal growth goals" to improve practice.

**D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)**

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant presents a high-quality plan (including goals/strategies, persons responsible, and timeline) to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, and educator with the support and resources they need. The proposed governance structure for the proposed reform model is appropriate in that it is led by a Steering Committee which is composed of a variety of stakeholders. Notable is the inclusion of the union representation on the Steering Committee.</p> <p>The applicant presents a rigorous selection process for the selection of approved partners. This will allow for sufficient shopping of partner resources by the individual schools based on identified need.</p> <p>It is evident that as the applicant implements the proposed reform model in accordance with Colorado Constitution Article IX, Section 15 and Colorado's Educator Effectiveness Act, the participating school leadership teams will have sufficient flexibility and autonomy to structure the delivery of education appropriately to allow students opportunity to earn credit based on demonstrated mastery.</p> <p>The applicant has clear strategies for providing high school students with the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways. Notable is the proposed Ecosystem Redesign initiative which will align state and local policies to support mastery based learning. In addition, the director of Ecosystem Redesign will lead cross-functional teams for the implementation of mastery based learning strategies. However, it is unclear if the proposed mastery based learning strategies will be implemented in other levels (i.e. middle school) of education than high school.</p> <p>The applicant presents sufficient evidence of the abundance of services it plans to provide to ensure learning resources and instructional practices are adaptable and fully accessible to all students. Notable is the applicant's plan to address the needs of the ELL and Special Education students.</p>		
<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant presents a high-quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student and educator with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed. The applicant provides sufficient evidence of an existing rigorous technology structure that will support the technology demand (such as bandwidth and data and information management structure) to deliver the proposed reform model.</p>		

The applicant presents a detailed plans as to how it will ensure that all participating students, parents, 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. Learning resources will be accessible via iPads, iPods, and smartphones. Therefore, student, parents, and educators will be able to access these resources via a variety of personal technical devices. Via an established partnership with Comcast, participating families will have the opportunity to purchase low cost computers and internet access for home use. This will level the technical accessibility for all students, regardless of income.

The applicant presents a robust and established technical infrastructure that will ensure students, parents and educators receive the necessary technical support. Notable is the free computer training classes that are offered for parents.

It is apparent from the application that the technical investments outlined in this proposal will be sustained after the grant period because voters have already approved a district initiative to allocate funds for classroom technology investment.

The applicant presents a sufficient plan for ensuring schools use interoperable data systems in that the rigorous selection process for approved vendors will include a criteria to meet the standards of interoperable for all technical data systems. Participating schools will only be allowed to select from these approved vendors.

**E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)**

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	15	15
<b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant presents a high quality plan for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals. Notable is the applicant's plan to create school cohort communities of practice to share best practices across participating schools. It is likely that participating educators will have sufficient opportunities to receive regular and timely feedback on best practices for the implementation of the proposed reform model via established communities of practice.</p> <p>The proposed quarterly meetings with key initiatives' personnel is appropriately timed to allow for critical assessment of program progress and modifications. During these quarterly meetings, the quality of investments will be measured by harnessing the data collection and support structures of the Tiered Support Framework, the School Performance Framework, and the planning mechanism of the Unified Improvement Plan.</p>		
<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	5	5
<b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant clearly identifies critical stakeholders including parents, DCTA leadership, and community partners of which it plans to maintain ongoing communication and engagement with throughout the grant period. Notable is the applicant's plan to employ a full time Community Engagement Manager per team whose primary responsibility will be to manage this process of communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. Also, notable is the applicant's timeliness of a feedback loop between the Community Engagement Manager and the stakeholders throughout the grant period. Therefore, the applicant clearly presents a high quality plan for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders.</p>		

<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<p><b>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Although the applicant presents a clear approach to continuously improve its plans, not all of the performance measures presented are ambitious. The percentages for highly effective teachers/principals to students for the math and reading performance measures are too low particularly with the proposed intense professional development for teachers.</p> <p>The applicant presents clear and reasonable rationales for the use of the selected performance measures. Notable is the use of the Student Perception Survey (SPS) to assess a student's classroom experience and teacher effectiveness. Since the overall goal of the proposed reform model is to provide personalized learning environments for participating students, the SPS performance measure will likely provide useful data for evaluating program effectiveness.</p> <p>The applicant's Theory of Action is comprehensive and research based. It is likely to facilitate the desired results.</p>		

<b>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant presents a high quality plan to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of grant funded activities. The applicant will identify a third party contractor to conduct annual evaluation of grant funded activities. Notable is the applicant's detailed description of the qualifications of the evaluator. The plan for evaluation is comprehensive and will include analysis of feedback from multiple stakeholders. Notable is the applicant's plan to monitor the effectiveness of the approved partners to ensure continued effective delivery of program resources.</p>		

**F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)**

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
<p><b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant presents the required components of a project budget including a narrative and supporting tables. Funding for project 1 are appropriate and reasonable. The applicant provides reasonable and sufficient evidence to support the rationale for funding in all sub-project. Notable is the rationale indicated for approved partners' funding given that the establishment of partnerships is a critical component of the proposed reform model.</p> <p>Sufficient evidence is presented throughout the application of the applicant's plan to sustain appropriate budget funding after the grant period. The applicant clearly identifies in the budget charts those funds (e.g. RttT-D Director and Field Research Managers) that will be allocated during the grant period only.</p>		

<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant presents a high quality plan for sustainability in that it identifies persons responsible such as district leadership and timeliness of actionable steps after the grant period. The applicant has</p>		

identified funding for the other non-participating schools to develop and implement personalized learning environments. The applicant asserts that by 2020 all students in the district, regardless if they are identified as participating students for this grant, will experience personalized learning environments. Therefore, it is apparent that the applicant has a plan for funding project goals for at least three years after the term of this grant.

The applicant presents evidence of a concerted effort to maintain and foster best practices. Via the proposed community of practices and the quarterly continuous improvement meetings, best practices will likely be captured, shared, and archived for future application even after the grant period.

**Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)**

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant presents a thorough description of a coherent partnership to support the plan described in Absolute Priority 1 as outlined in this grant proposal, it is not apparent how the partnership will be completely funded.

The *Denver Kids* partnership is likely to augment the schools' resources by providing additional student and family supports to schools that address the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of the participating students. Notable is the proposed support this partnership will provide to the participating parent community to address such concerns as daily attendance, on-time graduation, and post-secondary pursuit particularly with high need student population.

The plan to track selected indicators and to use data to inform decision making is appropriate and consistent with effective education practices.

**Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments**

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>		<b>Met</b>

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

Throughout the application, the applicant consistently provides evidence of a comprehensive and coherent reform model that builds on the four core assurances. Most notable is the applicant's assertion that by 2020, 100% of all district students will be served in personalized learning environments. This speaks to the comprehensiveness of the applicant's vision which is not solely dependent on this grant's funding.

The applicant sufficiently describes a high quality plan for assuring learning resources will be made accessible to all students. In addition, the applicant will employ a robust selection process for selecting appropriate vendors to address the professional development needs of educators. Educators will monitor their progress in producing significant reform in student achievement via a state approved educator evaluation system that includes student growth performance. This will likely increase the effectiveness of educators.

The performance goals presented in the application for mathematics and reading are appropriate.

Notable are the goals presented per grade level and for comparable student subgroups.

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>190</b>
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## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

#### Application #0236CO-4 for Denver Public Schools

#### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant has developed a quality comprehensive reform vision to ensure success for all students to the greatest extent possible. The Applicant's reform vision incorporates data that is integral and validates the ambitious yet achievable goals, well-defined strategies and activities that have timelines, deliverables, responsible parties and their specific roles.</li> <li>• The Applicant has developed a strategic plan to include all students in personalized learning environments over the next five years which is rigorous but achievable. The specific steps in achieving this goals are reasonable and have been benchmarked to ensure success. Detailed plans of action are embedded throughout the proposal.</li> <li>• The state has adopted supportive legislation in the following areas to ensure success of its vision. The state already receives RTTTD funds which have been used to pilot the personalized learning environment initiative; therefore many aspects of the state's and district's culture to ensure successful implementation are in place:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Performance-based educator effectiveness and</li> <li>2. Implementation of a school quality and accountability metrics system that emphasizes academic growth, college and career readiness for all students, innovative schools to addressing diverse learning styles and individual academic interests and needs and competency-based graduation.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• The Applicant's strategic plan specifically aligns to the core educational assurance areas as well as provide extensive descriptions of the personalized learning environments throughout the high quality plan.</li> <li>• The Applicant presents a high quality strategy that is inclusive of measures to ensure success: adoption of standards and assessments, data systems that enable educators to make instructional decisions, defined measures for recruitment, development, supports, incentives and retention of teachers, a strategic plan for turning around the lowest performing schools.</li> <li>• The Applicant outlines ambitious yet achievable goals for its "Each Students' Pathway" initiative to yield sound results.</li> <li>• The Applicant clearly defines approaches and means to achieve its goals. The Applicant describes the classroom experiences for students and teachers: the five "Pillars of Personalized Learning," specific objectives and the responsibilities of Approved Partners, Teachers and Leaders and the Learners. The goals of the personalized learning environment contains all the necessary requirements to have the specific objectives classified as rigorous and ambitious yet achievable.</li> </ul>		
<b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant provides a high quality implementation plan for its proposed initiatives:</li> </ul>		

1. A selection process to encourage schools and communities to participate;
2. Multiple stakeholders' engagement opportunities;
3. Rigorous and thoughtful matches between schools and Approved Partners; and
4. Completion of proposals by schools invited to apply based on school system's requirements as well as RTTD requirements.
  - The Applicant presents a thorough description of an effective process for school selection as well as student selection aligned with the Grant's expectations.
  - The applicant provides a list of schools that have already expressed an interest according to the LEA given guidelines.
  - The Applicant presents comprehensive data indicating participating schools with specific information on participating educators, participating students, participating high needs students, and the numbers and percentages of low income students.
  - The Applicant's plan defines an implementation process which is based on quality factors for identification of schools and students that would be invested in the implementation of this initiative to ensure success and are in compliance with the RTTTD requirements.

<b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
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- (A)(3) Reviewer Comments:**
- The application to the greatest extent detailed a high quality plan that defines ambitious yet achievable strategies to ensure meaningful and sustainable school wide implementation. The Applicant details effective goals and strategies that have a research/best practice base, timelines, deliverables and responsible parties.
  - The Applicant has presented reasonable timelines and monitoring intervals to ensure success of its proposal.
  - The Applicant's proposed RTTTD Initiative (Each Student's Pathway) is presented as the critical component of the entire District's plan. The Applicant's proposed initiative facilitates individual student guidance and planning based on students' needs and interests. This form of student engagement and involvement is cited as a research-based best practice.
  - The Applicant's LEA- wide reform and change plan is aligned to the core educational assurance areas to ensure maximum academic results and achievement.
  - The Applicant's Theory of Action describes goals, activities, outputs, outcomes and impact that are rigorous yet reasonable.
  - The Applicant presents a high quality plan that that aligns each assurance to key LEA goals with activities, timelines, deliverables, rationales, and human resources/agencies that will be responsible for ensuring transition to the district. The Applicant describes a quality plan for expanding the initiative to all schools by 2020. The plan is reflective of stakeholders' collaborative and invested efforts thereby ensuring a high level of transition to all schools and students.

<b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
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- (A)(4) Reviewer Comments:**
- The Applicant's vision is highly likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as specified in its ambitious yet achievable goals. These goals are needs driven and aligned to research-based strategies that are high yielding in improved student achievement.
  - The Applicant's high quality plan presents comprehensive data showing status and growth areas for each school. The Applicant presents data showing the current status of academic achievement by schools and school populations including subgroup data categories.
  - The Applicant provides trajectory assessment data which is reflective of expected increases in student's academic achievement. The data also reflects gains/growth and discrepancies in student achievement in subgroups which solidifies and validates the need for personalized learning environments. The Applicant includes data for increasing graduation rates and college enrollment as defined in the notice. The targets as presented lack rigor yet are achievable.
  - The Applicant's presented comprehensive historical data indicative of status and growth areas for each school.
  - The historical data includes SY 2011-12, forecasted data goals for 2013-14 through Post Grant data through SY 2017-18.
  - The data was presented in alignment with requirements of the grant.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>
<p><b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Applicant has provided quality information and data to support its record of success in the areas as outlined in the application.</li> <li>Policies and practices have been aligned to the state initiative (CRPF). The Applicant provides results and comprehensive data support that clearly serve as a support buttress that the newly implemented goals and initiatives are effective.</li> <li>The Applicant presented high quality data to support its track record of success utilizing multiple assessments to improve student achievement in an ongoing manner.</li> <li>The Applicant provided detailed data to support increased graduation rates and college enrollment.</li> <li>The Applicant's high quality plan presents data that supports overall increasing achievement . Although the data reflected overall increasing achievement, there are still discrepancies in data for various subgroups of students. The Applicant provides data that show improvement in all the population groups; however the achievement range was less in the subgroup categories.</li> <li>The Applicant presented a focused plan of high quality data describing the reform measures in low performing schools:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The School Performance Framework (SPF) details ambitious yet achievable goals for all schools.</li> <li>The Applicant's district has developed a research-based comprehensive improvement plan , "Blue Print Design" (grounded in Harvard Ed Labs).</li> <li>The Applicant's Plan details high quality strategies and goals for school turnaround that were initiated in earlier RTTTD funding.                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Applicant's information detailed appropriate and innovative ways to inform all constituents of school performance data through its "School/Choice Enrollment Options" Plan.</li> <li>The Applicant's District provides an extensive and strong mechanism for its Principal, Teacher, Parent, Student, and Partners Portals for sharing information and improving participation, instructional delivery and services.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> </li> </ul>		
<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Applicant to the greatest extent possible provided substantial information regarding its financial transparency as required by law.</li> <li>The Applicant's plan provided information about financial expenditures that are published in a Budget Book, quarterly and annual financial reports as well as posted on the website. Individual school profiles and data are posted and available from each school. The information in the Applicant's plan has a level of transparency as required by law and the LEA's regulations. The plan lacks information on accessibility and comprehension of this information by various stakeholders.</li> </ul>		
<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Applicant's plan indicates the highest extent of State support and documentation for implementation of DPS proposed initiative. The Applicant provides supportive evidence that a culture of autonomy and flexibility is in place inclusive of legislature, policies, procedures and letters of support from multiple stakeholders.</li> <li>The Applicant presented documented legislation references to support the RTTTD Initiative: Colorado Constitution (Article IX, Section 15), local autonomy and flexibility to each district through the Charter School Act, and the Effectiveness Act for rigorous evaluations of teachers and principals which provide essential components for implementation of the initiative.</li> <li>The Applicant presented a high quality plan that includes High School Graduation Guidelines and the current</li> </ul>		

process for development of a set of competencies in academic knowledge, habits of work and interpersonal skills for all students. These conditions and regulatory requirements would provide an appropriate environment and context for the implementation of personalized learning environments.

- The lessons learned from implementation of this initiative in the past serve as a basic foundation for ensuring the success of the proposed initiative.

<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>
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**(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant's plan to the greatest extent provided evidence of meaningful engagement of stakeholders throughout the development of the proposal.
- The Applicant presented a comprehensive listing of opportunities to engage stakeholders in the development of the proposal: webinars, one -on-one conversations, teacher surveys, presentations and discussions with staffs, students, Student Board of Education, Teachers' Association, Board of Education, Parent associations, Industry Experts and the Office of Mayor. These multiple opportunities were ambitious and appropriate in order to validate support for the initiative.
- The Applicant provided high quality evidence of involvement and engagement for the proposal with the inclusion of more than 25 letters of support and endorsements from various stakeholders. The letters of endorsement did not contain one from the Teachers' Union/Association; however survey responses would indicate majority support.
- The Applicant's proposal spoke to the multiple opportunities for involvement and engagement of stakeholders dating back several years ago. The Applicant's plan includes this information as a most valued process that reflects buy-in/investment as well as sustainability of future work.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>

**(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant 's high quality plan describes to the greatest extent possible actions to ensure maximum success to appropriate population in the 28 selected schools. The Applicant's plan details a track record of successes that they can continue to build upon.
- The high quality plan defines specific outcomes with measurable and attainable goals with descriptive/detailed strategies in support of personalized learning. Previous involvement with personalized learning provides significant building blocks for an extension and expansion of this initiative.
- The plan details the components of "Each Student's Pathway" in alignment with RTTTD Criteria.
- The high quality plan identifies what all students will learn with specific adaptations for special students (subgroups: ELL, SPED, and High-Needs) inclusive of diversity/cultural needs support.
- Each knowledge area of the Applicant's plan describes specifically the support of parents/guardians as well as the teachers' and partners' roles.
- The Applicant's plan addresses a detailed plan for making learning rigorous, relevant, and connected to College and Career Readiness, using technology to facilitate student learning and ongoing accountability measures to assess students' mastery of content and effectiveness of "Approved Partners."
- The Applicant's high quality plan provides specific ongoing mechanisms for continuous student training and support through flexible and high quality learning environments: knowing their own data, goal setting, monitoring their feedback, organizing their course work and benchmarking products to be submitted. Students' engagement in this process is addressed in an ongoing manner to ensure transition of all students for involvement in personalized learning environments.

<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>19</b>
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**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant's high quality plan to a great extent identifies rigorous yet achievable goals, outcomes and strategies to support implementation of personalized learning environments.
- The Applicant's high quality plan describes in a comprehensive manner the process to ensure 100% of participating

educators are prepared to implement the personalized learning environment for students. The plan is somewhat unclear as to what will happen if all goals are not attainable by all those implementing them.

- The Applicant's plan provides a comprehensive listing of means to support and train teachers: "DPS School Leadership Framework", "Lead in Denver", "Strategic School Design", LEAP Evaluator System, and Adaptable Professional Development.
- The Applicant's plan details the standards/goals for teachers, and school leaders in the areas of technology-based supports and classroom designs for improved student achievement.
- The Applicant's high quality plan specifies the "specific readiness continuum" for schools and educators in order to build capacity to ensure each student's success.
- The Applicant's plan to a great extent emphasizes professional development and effective command of technology as major tools for learning best practices of instructional development to engage students in personalized learning. The plan provides details about ongoing staff support and feedback mechanisms to ensure implementation of personalized learning environments for all students.
- The Applicant's high quality plan describes specific initiatives/action steps that will evolve to strengthen existing infrastructures to ensure on going student success: assignment of "Approved Partners" and ongoing communication among staff, students, and parents.
- The Applicant's high quality plan documents multiple initiatives to ensure effective and highly effective teachers for high needs schools, specific subject areas and specialty areas utilizing seven pipelines for developing new educators and improving the quality of already-seated educators: Residency for the Educational Development of DPS Intrapreneurs, Ritchie Program for School Leaders, Get Smart Schools, Lead in Denver, Denver Teacher Residents, and Teach For America.
- The Applicant's plan provides a comprehensive view of its Teacher and Leader Evaluation Systems. The plan identifies the specific supports for both groups inclusive of resources and tools of external partners and the professional development continuum to build capacity of the staff. The evaluation systems outline effective processes with built in timelines regarding data collection of behaviors, analyzing the behaviors and impact on teaching and learning. There is a well defined communication loop to ensure information is shared in a timely manner and is used for improvement by the individual.

#### D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>

**(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant's high quality plan to the greatest extent describes in a comprehensive manner the current governance structure that was launched in the 2005 Denver Plan but is currently being modified to set forth clearer expectations for schools' and students' performance.
- The Applicant's high quality plan details the goal of personalized learning for all DPS students by 2020. The strategies to be implemented as well as the current DPS strategies are rigorous and reasonable yet achievable.
- The Applicant's high quality plan describes in a comprehensive manner the flexibility and autonomy given to schools as well as the accountability measures that are included in the school/district report cards.
- The high quality plan provides a comprehensive and feasible description of the dedicated Staffing Model that will be used to ensure the successful implementation of "Each Student's Pathway" initiative.
- The Applicant's high quality plan states current core beliefs using the references of School Choice and Enrollment Equity policies, multiple instructional models and school designs.
- The Applicant's plan provides specific details in reference to an appropriate staffing model and collaborative governance structure for implementation of the Initiative.
- The Applicant's plan provides a comprehensive description of Mastery-Based Models that will be implemented with support from external partners. Some of the activities include : designing and opening a fully mastery-based high school, implementation of competency-based learning, and participate in an Ecosystem Redesign initiative to align state statutes and district policies, practices, and systems to support mastery-based environments. These effective activities and strategies will likely to the greatest extent yield information that will lead to effective personalized learning environments implementation for all students.
- The Applicant's Plan provides information on flexibility in the ways that students learn as well as to choice of some course content to ensure a high level of student engagement and improved academic achievement. The Applicant's plan provided information on current ways that students can earn credits; however, this area will be further developed.

The Applicant's high quality plan presents the student-based funding formula which ensures appropriate spending to match student needs.

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

**10**

**8**

**(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant's high quality plan to the greatest extent outlines specific activities and strategies that align to necessary documented supports needed for teachers, students and parents. The Applicant's plan identifies key components that are in alignment with the RTTDD expectations that are research-based and have been deemed highly effective.
- The Applicant's high quality plan documents existing technology investments from the LEA and the State. It describes the alignment and extension of anticipated RTTDD funds to ensure a greater degree of success obtaining necessary tools and resources. The Applicant's plan outlines positive results from its earlier RTTDD funding.
- The Applicant's high-quality plan identifies DPS Office of Community Engagement to ensure outreach and free workshop sessions to enhance an understanding of personalized learning. This office will also provide parents/guardians with opportunities to give input into the process for ongoing monitoring and feedback.
- The Applicant's high quality plan provides detailed information on multiple data gathering processes so that principals, teachers, and parents can access various types of data; however, the Applicant states that "real time data" in open formats is a continuing focus area. The focus areas of getting timely data and implications of that data present challenges for getting the information for meaningful planning and decision making to all stakeholders in a timely manner.
- The Applicant's plan specifies a need to build more robust learning management system as critical in advancing learning for all students.
- The Applicant provided ambitious yet achievable activities for providing access to technology and technology supports.

**E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)**

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>

**(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant's high quality plan outlines rigorous yet reasonable and achievable strategies to ensure continuous improvement:
  1. Educator and classroom cycles of learning,
  2. School Cohort communities of best practices,
  3. Knowledge Management and sharing platforms, and
  4. Integrated and aligned district systems of processes and cultures.
  - The Applicant's high quality plan specifies the design processes and what will occur as adaptations and modifications are needed
  - The Applicant's plan recognizes the importance of frequent and open communication with all stakeholders and is assured that having a full-time Community Engagement Manager working in collaboration with the District's Community Engagement Office will attain this significant goal.
  - The Applicant's high quality plan includes a detailed action plan for stakeholders' communication and feedback. The Applicant's plan addresses a future staffing position to work with the current Community Engagement Office to define measures and practices to provide a systemic way of monitoring and measuring initiatives and sharing with all stakeholders.
  - The Applicant's plan provides a well defined process for reviewing data and the goals in an ongoing manner. The continuous monitoring ensures high quality data to make sound decisions and modifications as needed. The process is reflected throughout the comprehensive plan. The staff that will be employed to guide this area will be critical in determining the effectiveness of this initiative.
  - The Applicant's plan provides specific information on the development of a Knowledge Management and Sharing Platform to share all aspects of learning with teachers, students, DPS staff, parents/guardians and the broader community of stakeholders. The platforms will provide information as well as afford stakeholders the opportunity to give feedback and input. The Applicant describes the types of information that will be available inclusive of best practices, lessons learned, and effectiveness of

partners and investments.

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

**5**

**5**

**(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant's high quality plan to the greatest extent identifies reporting and sharing of ongoing feedback with all stakeholders at designated intervals. The Applicant's plan for communication is an extensive one. The Applicant's plan addresses the importance of ongoing communication with all stakeholder to ensure a clear and focused message . The communication means that are presented are highly effective tools to ensure clear communication as senders and receivers of messages.
- The Applicant's high quality plan through a graphic of communication looping and the organizational infrastructure of staff promote a level of assurance that communication is ongoing.
- The Applicant's plan does identify designated responsible parties and processes for effective ongoing communication.

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

**5**

**4**

**(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant's high quality plan to the greatest extent specifies ambitious yet achievable performance measures by total population and all subgroups. The plan addresses each implementation strategy and the expected outcome.
- The Applicant's high quality plan describes the goals for all students with a reflection of the exponential growth trend for each component of the "each Student's Pathway" initiative.
- The Applicant's high quality plan contains specific data for each school, grade level spans and specific performance measures for the subgroups for the selected schools and addresses specific action steps, timelines, responsible parties and outcomes.
- The performance measures are ambitious yet achievable (undergirded by the expectations to exceed those performance targets) with all resources and supplies from additional funding sources.
- The Applicant's high quality plan to a great extent provides the rationales and data sources for each performance measures. The Applicant throughout the plan provided insight and reflections for its focus.

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

**5**

**5**

**(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant's high quality plan describes an additional evaluation tool to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of RTTTD funds and District funded activities. This evaluation will assist in the program evaluation to the greatest extent possible. The evaluation of the RTTTD funds and District funds are strategically designed to identify each component of the action plan as to effectiveness.
- The Applicant's plan has well defined components inclusive of research based strategies for the professional development and technology activities that should yield successful results/outcomes.
- The Applicant's additional highly effective evaluation tool will utilize a third party contractor to conduct an annual evaluation to measure program goals and overall effectiveness.
- The Applicant's high quality plan defines a process for communication with the designated data analysis and personnel results sharing with all stakeholders.
- The Applicant's Independent Program Evaluation defines core metrics for each grant area: student outcomes, program delivery, District's operational Efficiencies, professional development, capacity building and quality and Effectiveness of "Approved Partner" Portfolio using technology. These metrics will serve as rubrics to measure and identify the successes and areas needing modifications.

**F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)**

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>

**(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant's high quality plan to the greatest extent details the budget in chart form, outlining District's funds, external sources of support, LEA, State and Federal funds aligned with implementation strategies in the application. The budget is comprehensive and clearly categorizes the one time investments and the ongoing operational costs. The budget narrative and tables are accurate and reasonable.
- The high quality plan documents the budget in the areas that are outlined in the application and allocates appropriate funds for the goals that have been identified by the Applicant.
- The Applicant's plan reflects at a high level the components that define accountability and sustainability efforts.

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

**10**

**10**

**(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant's high quality plan speaks clearly to the strategies and action steps aligned to the learning and cultural changes for the implementation of "Each Student's Pathway" initiative. It is not viewed as "add-on."
- The high quality plan addresses the need to transition from relics of a "traditional" model and the necessity of reallocation of resources and reshaping of the learning environment with an emphasis on digital learning tools.
- The high quality plan presents a detailed sustainability plan which is reasonable and strategic. The Applicant's plan reflects careful consideration and thought to implementation of the initiative even if the Applicant's application is not awarded.
- The high quality plan identifies to the greatest extent the project activity, the investment budget, investment categories, sustainability plan beyond 2018 and long term funding sources. The plan is indicative of a commitment and belief system steeped in personalized learning environments to ensure improved career and academic achievement for all students.

**Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)**

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant provides a detailed description of the partnership that is organized to render services to students who are in need. The funding request will build the capacity of the Educational Counselors to serve more effectively. The Partner is a public-private organization. The Application provides specific information about the success rate of services provided by the select partner.
- The Partner organization has an assessment component that yields ongoing data to show growth or lack of growth. The data is available to all stakeholders and has a high degree of transparency. The partner has performance measures to align with the District and RTTTD guidelines.
- The Partner Organization works collaboratively with the district to create defined guidelines and procedures to implement a selection, execution process, and evaluation processes to serve the appropriate students, schools and family needs. The select Partner identifies its ambitious and achievable performance measures and bases its performance measures on a record of success. The data provided by the Partner's track record of success to the greatest extent ensures a high degree of effectiveness with the identified population. The plan lacked specific information on the process that will be used to keep teachers and parents informed and to how this will impact student learning directly.
- The Applicant's plan lacks details on how it will build capacity in school staffs; however, the Applicant does present a timeline and a strategy to expand the model over the five year period. The plan lacks information on sustainability of the partnership beyond 2020.

**Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments**

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>		<b>Met</b>

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant's plan provides detailed information about its implementation of the core educational assurance areas. The Applicant presented comprehensive strategies and goals that were ambitious yet achievable.
- The high quality plan was comprehensive with goals that had rationales, deliverables, outcomes, and ongoing monitoring and feedback mechanisms. There are identified monitoring tools and intervals to ensure success.
- The Applicant's plan describes in a comprehensive manner the strategies and actions to achieve personalized learning environments for all students. The plan included a thorough data analysis summary and needs assessment to develop ambitious yet achievable goals.
- The Applicant's plan provided ample information about processes and procedures to achieve personalized learning environments for students. Resources and tools for accomplishing the initiative were identified and formulated into a highly organized plan of action.

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>200</b>
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## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

#### Application #0236CO-5 for Denver Public Schools

#### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>

**(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

Denver Public School (DPS) has a school-wide vision: "Every student, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnicity, or native language, will graduate prepared to succeed in college and their career.". DPS and all stakeholders came together to submit *Each Student's Pathway*; which leverages existing strategic indicatives, while aligning the four core assurances but most importantly drastically accelerate student achievement for all students, particular high-needs students. The Each Student's Pathway provides the equity to all students by personalizing their learning and support.

DPS ensures that all four educational assurance areas are interwoven throughout the application.

The applicant articulates a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating students learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support grounded in common and individual tasks that are based on student academic interest. For example, DPS will create personalized learning environments for 38 schools serving 20, 500 students . The participating schools will select one or a few independents pathways to creating the independent learning environment. *Each Student's Pathways* designed with the most current knowledge of what students must learn to thrive in the 21st century, how to best acquire the knowledge and skills and demonstrate the mastery. Central Office staff, teachers, school leaders and parents must understand how new schools and classroom will be designed and embrace technology.

The applicant plan describes what the classroom experience will be like for students and teachers participating in personalized learning environments. For example, each Student's Pathway Initiatives and the Denver Public Schools' *Each Student's Pathway* Framework. Both of these grids provides a detailed and specific description of what a classroom setting would emulate.

<b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
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**(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant created a competitive process criteria in which schools could apply and were evaluated by a team consisting

of the instructional superintendents, central office leaders, external partners and the Each Students Pathway team. The selection criteria consist of 10 areas including: target demographics, universal personalized learning readiness conditions, customization meet specific student needs, aligned academic improvement goals, aligned professional improvement goals, alignment with and designed to support existing initiatives.

As of the submission of the grant 13 schools have expressed interest and are believed to be high-potential candidates.

The total number of students to be served is 20,500 for 2014-15. The applicant provides raw demographics at both the school and district level, which indicates 72% of the district is low-income.

<b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
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**(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant expressed a sense of urgency to have all students engaged in the *Each Student's Pathway* by 2020. While initially there will be 38 schools serving 25,000 pupils an additional 65 schools will be rolled out over the next five years. The applicant provides a detailed Theory of Action and Roll-out timeline for the full implementation district wide. The applicant will serve 29,750 students by 2015-16. DPS will also serve 746 teachers in 2014-15 and eventually serve over 1,000 teachers by 2015-16. The implementation will consist of 4 different cohorts starting with the first starting in 2014.

The applicant's prior experience implementing reforms is a strong indication of future success implementing a district-wide reform plan.

<b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
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**(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The vision and goals of the applicant were both reasonable and yet aggressive and obtainable. The applicant sets clear goals that clearly send a message that the is expectation that ALL students will be successful within the district. For example, here are some of the goals set for students:

Summative (based on at proficient or above)

3rd grade math: Overall: 54.1%, Five year goal: 76.3%

4th grade math: Overall: 55.7%, Five year goal: 75.3%

College Enrollment: Overall: 43.7%, Five year goal: 54.5

Closing Achievement gaps was also included and reflected a reasonable incremental gains.

The applicant provides a message that even the traditionally under-served students within the the district can and will succeed. The graduation rates were contradictory due to the fact that the applicant stated that they goal was to reach 80% in 5 years and yet no subgroup made the 80% in 5 years.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>

**(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant has improved student learning outcomes and moving towards closing achievement gaps, including student achievement, high school graduation rates, and college enrollment rates within the past four years. For example, DPS increased the percentage of students scoring proficient or above in the transitional Colorado Assessment program, with the exception of 3rd and 4th grade Spanish. DPS graduation from 2006-2012 increased from 39% to 58.5%, a six-years increase of nearly 20%. Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) has been closing the achievement gaps with the gap between students and non-ELL students narrowing reading scores for non-ELL increasing for Proficient and above on statewide assessments.

The applicant makes student performance data available to students, educators, and parents/guardian in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and services. For example, the applicant uses Pearson's Schoolnet which is available at the front-end portals. The data obtained in Schoolnet includes the following: tools to analyze data, organize curriculum, track instruction, measure performance and student performance data. The parents and student portals are user-friendly

and provide color-coded and graphic displays of student's grades, attendance, behavior, assessment data and curriculum materials. The portals are available in seven languages and offer many resources for parents/guardians to work with students at home.

DPS has had demonstrated success transforming low-performing schools. The Harvard Labs "Blueprint" is used to work with the turnaround schools and increases in reading and math scores have continued to increase.

<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
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**(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:**  
 The school board has a traditional position of approving all staff hiring and school budgets which are assessable through meeting, televised board meeting, website and community meetings. The applicant is fully compliant with financial transparency required by law. The district website also provides minutes from all school board meetings. The Colorado Department of Education and the Office of Civil Rights also maintain a variety of reports including school budgetary information. The applicant provides a high level of transparency for all stakeholders.

<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
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**(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:**  
 The applicant has maintained a great deal of autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements. The applicant provided several state statutes which indicate the state is closely aligning with the common core standards. The state of Colorado has also made a commitment to aligning to the best practices for implementing 21st learning and is open to reforming schools which are poor performing. The state requires evaluations for teachers and principals ensuring staff standards. The applicant has a strong degree of demonstrated autonomy and will be able to implement sweeping reform district-wide.

<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>
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**(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:**  
 One of the core strategies for The Denver Plan is to "Deepen engagement with families and the community. DPS has made it a practice to foster dialogue and input from stakeholders. This civil engagement includes working with community and civic organizations. The applicant conducted the following engagements just within the last year as the formulated a proposal:

- \* Webinar and one-on-one with the Denver reform community who provided feedback
- \* Webinar for school leaders and teachers which allowed for virtual discussions and feedback
- \* Teacher's surveys
- \* Presentations and discussions with current students.
- \* On-going partnerships with the Association
- \* On-going partnership with the DPS Board of Education
- \* Community meetings with parents
- \* Ongoing internal thoughts with partnership

The applicant did not provide adequate information on direct impacts of these meetings, as well as teachers' direct participation in the creation of the reform plan. The letters of support demonstrated a strong support and partnership with a variety of stakeholders. The score reflects the overall quality of how DPS engaged with stakeholders ensuring transparency. The applicant demonstrates highly meaningful engagement with all stakeholders.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>

**(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

DPS has created a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college and career-ready. For example, the plan will do the following:

\*Students in the earliest grades, learning is interdisciplinary and organized college and career-ready standards articulated in Gateways. Students observe and learn about a broad variety of college and career options. Tracking mastery to standards for SPED, ELL and High-Needs and helping students connect their language to their long-term goals.

\*Students are working towards mastery of CCSSS-aligned standards. Students can begin to select from multiply pathways to college and career readiness. Differentiated supports increase engagement levels and accelerate progress to mastery for students with special needs.

The applicant provides an intensively comprehensive learning environment which supports students, parents and teachers. DPS take responsibility and support any college-ready programs and Advanced Placement. Here are several programs to be carried out, included:

- Three prong approach to increase career course
- Academic Gateway educates students and families about the importance of school
- Personalized education plans to support secondary students.

The application contained many significant tactics with prescribed outcomes and goals which align of *Each Students' Pathway*. The detail in the planning were brilliantly tied into creating an environment where excellence is the norm. The competitive process for selecting a proivder was very vigorous. The competitive process for selecting a provider includes the following criteria:

\* Approved partners will provide individual learning plans that re robust and dynamic, because they are fed by data in real time and integrate multiple data ppoints in a single, open accessible formate.

\*Approved partners' learning platforms will enable the facile alignment of ILP, CCSS and assessments, and content, empowering students and families with agency over thier learning path

\*The school design and school day schedule accomodate "Flex Block" during which students have increased choice over what, how, and often where they learn.

\*Approved partners curricula provide resources in multiple languages, and devices call upon content in multiple languages. Students use technology to connect with studeents around the nation and world.

\*Technology provide scaffolding for students who are learning to operate as autonomous and self-directed learners. Frequent, formative feedback will help student see a clear path to ongoing improvement, and monitor their progress towards master. Approved partners will work with teachers to develop content, activities, and real-world projects that allow students to develop: critical thinking and problem solving; collaboration across networks; agility and adaptability, initiatives and entrepreneurship; effective communication; ability to access and anylze information; and curiosity and imagination.

\* Approved partners will help teachers tailor their instruction to students' preferred modalities and to different orders of a learning taxonomy. All content will be aligned with state standards.

\*Providers will have the ability to adapt curriculum and web-base programs for students in real-time, granular feedback about performance on a specific standards aligned tasks and quizzes.

Any approved partner will have to create programs which provide personalized web-based outlines of student's progression toward college- and career-ready standards. Additionally strategies within programs to meet the needs of high-needs students.

<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>
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**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

Outcomes 2: By 2018 ensure that 100% of participating educators have the necessary content, pedagogical and technological skills, knowledge, and dispositions to succeed in personalized learning environment.

Goal 1: 100%of participating teachers receive targeted personalized and cohort-based supports.

Goal 2: 100% of participating school leaders receive targeted personalized and cohort-based supports.

*Each Student's Pathway* leverages, repurposes, retrains, and supplements professional learning in DPS, it calls upon a

clear set of evidence-based principles about what good professional development "looks like". The applicant provided a grid which articulated the characteristics of high-quality professional development and outlines what it means to teach in a personalized learning environments. Educators will have ample time to work with fellow teachers and eventually within the classroom. The applicant will ensure 100% of participating educators will have the necessary content, pedagogical, and technological skills, knowledge, and dispositions to be effective in personalized learning environments.

DPS will offer multiply pathways and opportunities for career-long growth. For example, the following were offered:

\*DPS School Leadership Framework (SLF): This training allows school leadership to understand foundations of effective leadership and ways to improve through training.

\*Lead in Denver: A leadership pipeline and development initiative, provides intensive, year-long, job-embedded residencies and structured cohort-based learning aligned to competencies detailed in Denver's School Leadership Framework.

\*Cohort-based pilots and programs: providing a variety of cohorts to continue to develop and engage leadership for staff.

\*LEAP: a nationally-renowned, comprehensive educator evaluation system, defines effective teaching using a calibrated framework and supports educators in their pursuit of higher levels of teaching mastery through evidence collection, personal feedback, and differentiated professional development.

The applicant developed a effective criteria for teaching in personalized learning environments and expect all teachers have the skill for successful implement. Teachers are expected to implement and demonstrate the following:

\* Teachers are guides who facilitate learning for all students; they do not teach to the class, but rather to the student. Teachers have an array of instructional methods in order to tailor personalized learning.

\*Teachers use authentic and ongoing assessments to support deep learning.

\*Teachers are able to set personal growth goals that support their individual practices and "roll-up" to team and school-level strategies.

\*Teachers have accessible and quality real-time data tools that allow them to regularly evaluate students' interests, aptitudes, specific skill and knowledge gaps.

\*Teachers use 1:1 devices to open digital content, as well as next generation curriculum.

\*Teachers demonstrate growth mindsets that contribute to their own personal leadership improvement.

\*Teachers help each other improve. They are afforded ample time to work together to develop assessments and curricula, make meaning of students data across courses and, over time, engage in reflective practice and contribute to school leadership.

The applicant created a process for preparing personalized learning and engage teachers in a parallel continuum. Teachers and Principals will have research-based, effective evaluations which also provide growth and training to improve when their a gaps in skill set.

Overall, the plan for teaching and leading was exemplary and demonstrated the extent of this highly-quality plan.

This plans illustrates the commitment by the applicant to ensure all details are explored and research-based programming is interwoven into the plan.

#### D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>

#### **(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

The governance system made up by *Each Student;s Pathway* Steering committee will provide overall vision, ensuring fairness and transparency. The steering committee wants to create an atmosphere of collaborations and worked to create a

working relationship between DPS and Denver Classroom Teachers Association (DCTA), In order to promote collaboration the following guidelines helped in structing the governance committee:

\*The committee will be composed of equal numbers of DPS and DCTA representatives, in addition to representatives from other external organizations mutually agreed upon

\*Co-chairs will include one cabinet-level DPS representative selected by the Superintendent and one DCTA representative selected by DCTA.

\*DPS and DCTA mutually support the efforts contained in this proposal

\*DPS is committed to ensuring that the implmentation strategies discuees herein are consistent with federal and state laws, local policies and DCTA collective bargaining agreements.

The following staff will be hired in order to ensure that every need of the students can and will be met:

*Each Student's Pathway* Director, Project Manager, Data Analyst, Financial Analyst, Knowledge Manager, Field Research Manager, Instructional Specialist, Instructional Specialist, English Language Acquisition, Special Strategic School Design Association.

The applicant's complete and strategic design is an excellent indication of best practices in policy and infrastructure planning. This plan is worthy of the given score and is of high-quality.

DPS will give students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic. For example, DPS has the following activities/programs supporting mastery-base models:

\*Due to funding by the Carnegie Foundation, DPS will design and open a fully mastery-based high school. DPS will use support and successes from this school to apply within the *Each Student's Pathway*. DPS will engage in an Ecosystem Redesign initiative to align satate statutes and policies and practices to support mastery-based models.

\*DPS is rolling out the Gateways for academic, personal, and social/emotional readiness indicators correlated with college and career readiness. The Gateway will set the context fo rmastery-based learning

A number of DPS schools have well-developed approaches to mastery-based models and their will be opportunities for *Each Student's Pathway* teachers to learn from other teachers.

DPS will support ELL learners and Students with special needs in the following ways:

\*A ELL teacher will be hired to work full-time and exclusively with Each Student's Pathway students, approved providers will ensure the needs of ELL and SPED students are fully met, building capacity among participating school staff to deliver personalized instruction, partnering with current DPS central office staff that serve all ELLs and SPED students, All teachers must participate in English Language Acquisition training.

The applicant's complete and strategic design is an excellent indication of best practices in policy and infrastructure planning. This plan is worthy of the given score and is of high-quality.

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

**10**

**9**

**(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant will provide a robust and intentional use of technology. The current situation provides most of the needed technology, however more equipment will be needed. In Nov 2012 , Denver voters approved an additional \$10 million to purchase 21st century technologies, An additional \$49 million targeted for additional technology equipment for students.

This all encompassing plan is worthy of this scores indicating the completeness and thoroughness of the plan. The applicant provides a intentional and strategic plan in which to harness outside funding sources in order to promote equality and access of technology. This plan demonstrates the realities of access of technologies in the 21st century.

The applicant will provide an array of technical support such as:

\*Provide a Digital Educator Academy to provide professional development for any DPS teacher with a focus on developing proficiencies for creating effective digital learning opportunities.

\*School Representative currently provide on-the-ground support for classroom technology. This plan add an additional staff member to provide support.

\* Currently phone and internet support for teachers need immediate support.

\*The applicant will provide parent technology training, access to student's academic plan and work, mobile portals which parents can have access to technology, subsidies computer purchasing program through partnership with Comcast. and workshops in the district to provide additional free technology classes.

The applicant also acknowledges that the data system within DPS needs to be update to manage the increased technology needs of the district. The approved partnerships will provide technology infrastructure and access at participating school. The existing portals will also be updated to meet the needs of elevated teachnology needs.

The technology infrastructure backbone ensures that teachers, principals, students, and parents are able to access data from multiple sources through a single front-end, user-friendly portal interface. These pertals ensure that all students, parents/guardians, and educators have access to necessary content, data, and learning resources both in and out of school.

Currently, DPS does not have use of a interperable data system. However, they are working obtain such systems and the hired providers will work with each participating school to ensure this data system is included in the work provides.

### E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant provides a high-quality plan which is rigorous and ensures improvement at all levels. Each level has a double loop learning cycle in which assessment of programming effectiveness can be determined. DPS will capture and ensure the diffusion of personalized learning across the district. The DPS will incorporate the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Educator and classroom cycles of learning that use proven R &amp; D processes to 1) capture and codify learning</li> <li>2. School cohort communities of practice to share best practices across participating schools in order to build capacity</li> <li>3. Knowledge Management and Sharing Platforms; and</li> <li>4. Integrated and aligned district systems, processes, and culture.</li> </ol> <p>The applicant has demonstrated a strong plan for continous improvement from prior and existing programs and an intensive high quality plan to monitor the improvement process.</p>		
<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant fully acknowledge the need of a point person to handle all communications. The plan will include a full-time Community Engagement Manager who will ensures all necessary communicated to the proper stakeholders. The applicant provided a four page grid of all of the stakeholders, topics and feedback generated and what areas of the entire plan those feedbacks impacted. This grid illustrated a level of engagement with external and internal stakeholders. This plan</p>		

demonstrates a strong commitment to transparency through communication.

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

**5**

**5**

**(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant provides a flowchart indicating the tools for assessment for all grade levels. There is seamless articulation on rational for all given assessments. The applicant's collection of data, evaluation criteria are realistic, high and obtainable measurements and based on sound best-practices. For example, the following are some of the performance measures:

Math Measurements of Highly Effective Teachers/Principal,(All students) Baseline: 30.2%, Five year goal: 35.5%

Reading Measurements of Highly Effective Teachers/Principal, (All students) Baseline: 29.4%, Five year goal: 32.8%

The applicant provides other measurements such as PreK-3, 4-8, 9-12 and Effective Printargetscipals. All of these measurements are realistic, attainable and indicative of the high expectations. All measurements provided subgroup and career and college track measurements.

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

**5**

**5**

**(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant will provide survey/assessment for each participating school. Additionally, the applicant created a grid/plan that examines a specific area and assigns an evaluation focus. The evaluations will occur often and action plans for improvement. There is enough flexibility for building leadership to make immediate changes as needed.

Their plan embodies best-practices in innovative personalized learning that meets the needs of all students and families. This plan demonstrates of the importance of investing in students and teachers. The importance of the investment set a tone of how important something is when it is invested in by the applicant. This plan was intentional, strategic, data-driven and empowering and models excellence in educational opportunity. The score given indicates the strength of the plan.

**F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)**

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>

**(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant budget and narrative was reasonable and would support the completion of the plan. The total proposed budget close to 30 million with 10 million supporting the staff and supporting the implementation of the program. This request is reasonable based a the size and number of students being served. The applicant has an outside funding source over 38 million. The investment of DPS's funds are a indication of thier own committment to the plan. The plan demonstrate a clear understanding a budget developments which are clear and concise and sound.

The given score is based full knowledge of k-12 district finance and a familiarity of solid budgets to successfully implement reforms.

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

**10**

**10**

**(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant has provided a through and insightful examination of sustainability issues and the funding that it will need to continue this program. The applicant was even open to the idea of shifting existing funds. The entire plan, letters of support, engagement of stakeholders. The support from state and government leaders was one of many strong indications that this proposal was submitted with state-wide support. The applicant has plans to continue to engage stakeholders of the programs outcomes, budget and successes. The best indication of future engagement is the way in which the applicant engage stakeholders prior to the submission of this grant.

**Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)**

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The Denver Kids, Inc is a public-private partnership with DPS. This partnership began 68 years ago and has positively impacted the lives of thousands of young people. Denver kids, Inc. provides academic and social/emotional support for 3rd through 12th grade students. Through this application the applicant will expand the partnership. The success of Denver Kids has produced a graduation rate of 79%. DPS and Denver Kids, Inc allow for unrestricted access to data, schools, teachers and students. Denver Kids, Inc matches with private dollars 4 1/2 times each in-kind dollar contributed by the district.</p> <p>DPS provides a flowchart detailing the population-level desired results, which include SPED, free and reduced lunch and results such as on-time graduation, post-secondary pursuit, improving attendance.</p> <p>Denver Kids, Inc tracks all of the desired results as well as the following:</p> <p>*student's counselor and mentor interaction, progress and issues resolution, graduation outcomes and post-secondary pursuit through our Civcore.</p> <p>The applicant and partner will improve results for participating result by hiring a Manager of Evaluation and Data in order to build the system which will better inform Education counselors.</p> <p>The applicant will expand beyond the current students by increasing the number of counselors from 26 to 90 by 2020. This will allow for personalized programming for students. The increased 1:1 personalized time between students and counselors will allow for the implementation of a personalized plan. Increase the number of students being served and scale up to serve more high-needs students.</p> <p>The Denver Kids, Inc have worked with DPS to create the following goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Strengthen organizational capacity to support growth and to position Denver Kids, Inc. as the leading intervention program for youth challenged by high-risk circumstances in Denver Public Schools.</li> <li>2) Significantly increase the number of Denver Kids, Inc. students who graduate from Denver Public Schools college- and career-ready through optimization of program and growth</li> <li>3) Strengthen the capacity, quality, and consistency of program evaluation.</li> <li>4) Strengthen financial capacity to support and sustain growth and program results.</li> </ol> <p>Denver Kids, Inc will integrate education and other service through some of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Providing positive role model to guide students in helping understand the value of education.</li> <li>2) Providing a holistic, personalized an long-term approach with student starting at a young age.</li> <li>3) Provide strong advocacy and support with parents/guardians.</li> <li>4) Continue to provide programs such as: Future Options, Mentoring and Family engagement</li> <li>5) Denver Kids, Inc will help staff build capacity by working with together with the students and parents/guardian. All data collections will be shared and used to provide data-driven decisions. Parents will have on-going communications and face to fact meeting opportunities.</li> </ol> <p>The Denver Kids, Inc. will work directly with staff from DPS to refine program services for students in additional to visiting schools.</p>		

**Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments**

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>		<b>Met</b>

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant coherently and comprehensively address how all of the core educational assurances areas are interwoven throughout the proposal. This plan was comprehensive and bold in it's reform initiatives. The plan put the student and teacher at the core and built a plan with the focus directly on the primary participants in K-12 education; students and teachers. The stakeholders throughout the state were invited to become a participant and the applicant honored this participation be listening and adjusting accordingly. Through this plan the applicant illustrated that the role of central office leadership is to step out of the circle and support learning as it occurs. Sweeping reforms such as this application push the boundaries and takes many stakeholders out of their comfort zone. This plan challenges but also makes stakeholders realize that a different path must be traveled in order to close the achievement gap and allow for equal access to the highest quality education.

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>202</b>
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