



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0232CO-1 for Eagle County School District Re50J

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal submitted by Eagle County Schools includes a well-articulated, comprehensive, and coherent vision for reform. Following a useful introduction to the nature, history, and demographics of the district, the narrative offers significant and relevant support of how the vision:

- continues the district's work in ensuring that all students meet the Common Core State Standards
- plans to expand beyond their data system centered around Educator Central by upgrading the number of databases for full interoperability towards a culture of data use,
- will expand upon its long-standing and successful teacher and principal compensation systems, and
- replicate their own successes in turning around lowest-performing schools.

The applicant addresses each of the six projects within the proposal - the first three focusing on each of the stated goals: accelerating student achievement, deepening learning, and increasing equity through closing the opportunity gap. The binding thread for all is personalized learning.

The classroom experience for students and teachers participating in the environment outlined is new and challenging for both. There are more responsibilities for students as they shift into the dynamic role of learners, increasing personal capacity and responsibility for their own learning. Teachers move from the center to the side, become facilitators, advocates, and providers of resource material.

The applicant provides an excellent response to this criterion.

The score is high.

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

ECS is a small rural district; the project, with 6,487 participating students, will involve all of the district's students in every grade at every school. The applicant provides a listing of the schools and data that confirms the required 40% overall average of low-income students.

The narrative provides, as well, information on the selection of school sites for each of the three pilot programs that are a part of the project. Details are offered on program eligibility (i.e.. 90% of the teachers must agree to participate), and on the process to be used if multiple schools apply to serve as the pilot school (readiness for program implementation).

Columns E and I are incorrectly calculated on Table (A)(2); these figures should reflect the # of low-income students in the district, not within the school (Column E). No points are deducted for this.

The applicant provides a full response to the criterion with additional details on the three pilot programs, district eligibility, and which factors were included by the district in calculated high-need students (only ELL students).

The response merits a high score.

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

The application includes a high-quality plan that meets the definition in the notice. It includes activities and the timelines

and deliverables aligned to them, as well as the position responsible or assigned to it. Each activity is also tied to a section of the application narrative that is expected to provide additional details.

The narrative describes each of the six projects in turn, specifically identifying the steps of project implementation. In each case, the description includes a phased approach. An example includes Project #1, Investing in the Instructional Core, that includes hiring key staff to assist both at the district and school levels throughout the grant from the beginning of funding, then launching the "grow your own" teachers through a partnership with higher education as this project is scaled up. Not only do each of the projects have their own time tables for full implementation, but the three pilot programs represented within Project 4 will be initiated at one school and then scaled to others based on the evaluation and educational return-on-investment results from their pilot study.

The proposal includes an implementation timeline for the activities within the plan for each project. Like on the full plan, deliverables and responsible position are noted.

A simple logic model is offered that provides two outcomes: rigorous and personalized academic experiences for students and teachers and a stable teacher corps. The final impacts reflect the goals of the RttT-D program.

The response to the criterion is thorough with significant additional detail to provide a full look at the applicant's plan for scaling up the projects and how the six projects will assist student and their teachers and supporters in meeting program goals.

The score merits a high rating.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	9
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The Eagle County proposal includes data showing projections for increased academic knowledge, decreased achievement gaps, and increases in both the graduation rate and the rate for college enrollment for every year of grant funding. Information is provided on each goal area, including any specific methodology used (i.e.. to determine the achievement gap).

The applicant does an excellent job in providing a detailed explanation of the summative assessments selected, including the rationale behind the selected grades. One example is the inclusion of grade eight due to its predictive value for both high school and postsecondary success. Information is provided, as well, on the district's methodology for determining growth (in student growth percentiles rather than the more standard test score gains). The attention to this detail and the applicant's use of their own methodology rather than inserting an easier one that might be acceptable for the proposal, demonstrates a commitment to use the application as a tool to assist the project itself. Eagle County will be able to use the data they have submitted to support their goals should they be funded.

The narrative includes baseline data and annual goals for each area. They are also ambitious and achievable. The annual differences for reducing the achievement gap are larger when there was more work to do - larger gaps as represented between White students (the comparison group) and LEP students in 8th grade - moving from a gap of 68% to 30%. Other increments were smaller, as the gap was smaller (Latinas in grade 8). This is reasonable and reflects ambition when ambition is possible.

Ambitious and achievable goals are demonstrated by the graduation goals, with the overall rate increasing from 75% to 90% over four years. This reflects a lower rate of progress for White students (94% to 98%) than it does for either students with disabilities going from 31% to 82% or Limited-English Proficient students increasing from 53% to 86%), but the record of the district indicates that this type of change is possible.

The proposal provides detailed background on work with Harvard's Strategic Data Project to better determine college enrollment and persistence rates for district graduates. The district is unable to access information through the National Student Clearinghouse; as this is a very useful resource for this exact data, the project could be strengthened through the addition of a mechanism that would provide access to this database (no points are deducted for this).

College enrollment goals indicate a steady increase each year of the grant; this is a reasonable rate. Moving non-English proficient students from a baseline of 0% to 35%, would be highly ambitious. A clarification of the how the pace was developed for this final goal is needed.

The score for this criterion is high.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Eagle County has been at the forefront of teacher performance compensation with a reform effort, the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), designing an implementing a system that replaced the traditional entry levels and steps for teachers and principals in favor of one that reflects performance. With the additional support of a large federal Teacher Incentive Fund award, an evaluation of the data from spring 2007 to spring 2010.

The narrative states that the differences in reading and math scores between Eagle County students and neighboring districts that were matched to Eagle County was due to the TIF grant. The brief description of the differences in scores (i.e.. "nearly four points higher") does not provide enough information to determine if any of the results qualify as statistically significant. The proposal also includes three charts illustrating the average growth in reading by minority students to document "growth trajectories," another indicator of the success of TIF after four years. The final graph would call this into question when the comparison and the district groups are on track to merge as time moves on into high school. This would suggest that the effects of TIF, if any, lose potency as the years progress.

None of the data for this work extends beyond 2010, thus not meeting the request for a record of success in the past four years (2009-2013).

The district has succeeded in turning a school deemed among the lowest-performing in the State to one recognized as a Blue Ribbon School within four years. The narrative provides clear evidence of a struggling school with a challenging set of student demographics. After four years the demographics were significantly more challenging but the addition of time through extended day (Saturday School and extended year), enrichment experiences, a focus on core subjects and standards, and embedded weekly PLC time, both reading and math scores were significantly higher.

This work ended following the 2010-2011 school year. No follow up information was provided and no indication is given as to whether the supports offered to the school during this time of focused work was continued into and beyond the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years. No details were provided, as well, regarding any additional human resources (teachers or staff) who might have been brought into the school during this time and, if so, if they continued at the site.

Student performance data is available to students and their parent through the online student instructional management system. In addition to communication with teachers, counselors, and others, students have access to the curriculum, assignments, grades, their assessments, and other key data that they and their parents can use. A more descriptive analysis of how this system can be used to increase student and family participation would strengthen the proposal.

The score is high in the middle range.

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

Eagle County's response to this criterion does not demonstrate a high level of transparency for the four categories of school-level expenditures identified. The level of transparency provided (available upon formal open records request to the district) would be indistinguishable from a lack of transparency and following the letter the law.

The narrative does provide other information, however, including various methods used by the district to provide transparency. They include public reviews of the budget, open and public board meetings, and a website that includes salary and benefit information.

The score on this criterion is low mid-range.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	7
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal provides an in-depth discussion of the positive environment within the State that will support the personalized learning within their plan. The information is provided clearly with details and examples that support an ongoing and vital

relationship between Eagle County School District and the State of Colorado. Highlights include:

- Colorado Department of Education's Race to the Top Phase 3 award, with a focus on STEM education, supports the implementation of new standards in these areas; teachers within the district will continue to design and test new curriculum and units of study based on these standards,
- The State Board of Education and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education defined postsecondary and workforce readiness in 2009, a description that included both subject mastery and demonstrated 21st century skills. These areas are key to student learning opportunities.

In addition to factors within the State that support the work of the district in providing a personalized learning environment for students, the proposal includes several examples of other partnerships and programs that will be effective in reaching and sustaining this goal. One example is the district's participation in the Colorado Integration Project (funded through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation).

The proposal does not provide evidence of autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environment, such as any minimum number of hours of instruction, number of school days per year, or flexible definition for attendance.

The score for the response is high mid-range.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	12
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal describes a systemic approach to ensuring meaningful engagement by key constituent groups of stakeholders in the preparation of the application, including students, families, teachers, principals, civic leaders, the SEA, business leaders, and partners. The applicant provides a comprehensive description of how each of these groups was involved in the proposal development. Students, for example, returned 255 surveys. These included surveys from all grades, elementary through high school, with a focus on Hispanic students. The responses to open-ended questions provided the grant-writing team with sufficient insight and feedback to revise the proposal to better meet the concerns identified through the surveys. Similarly, surveys to families yielded 328 responses. The proposal identified the primary areas of concern and the revisions to the proposal based on the feedback from families.

Stakeholder engagement included face-to-face meetings with the teachers union president as well as with representative teachers. Input from these groups resulted in significant changes to the proposal, including, for example, rewriting and renaming of a full section based on teachers' reactions to an activity defined by cultural competency, and prioritizing teacher support in Project #2. These are excellent examples of how key stakeholders (and end users) should be involved in the proposal design from the earliest stages in order to increase the likelihood of meeting project goals.

Staff members preparing the application met with some district principals in focus group sessions for direction and feedback. Revisions based on those activities include changing the scheduling of professional development from during the school year (when a teacher would need to be out of class) to the summer, thus reducing the time that teachers are not with their students.

The applicant provides a series of examples of outreach to stakeholders (above and also including partners, and civic and business leaders) and specific examples of review and revision of the proposal based on feedback from that outreach. The use of this input to redesign the strategies and approaches within the plan will be critical to the positive attitudes, buy-in, and ease of implementation. This adds considerable strength to the proposal; excellent.

The application includes numerous letters of support in the appendix. The letters represent non-profit agencies, government, and higher education. While the letters of support are useful, most are based on one of two templates, thus repeating the same general support in the same way as many other letters. A large portion of the letters focus mainly on the use of Wayfinder data supports, leaving fewer letters of support for the full vision of personalized learning environments. The letters are less effective when they are not specific to the stakeholder and do not provide insight as to the interaction or support that will be available to the proposed program. This area of response could be strengthened significantly.

The score for this criterion is low in the high range.

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

	Available	Score

(C)(1) Learning (20 points)

20

14

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The application includes a high-quality plan for the school district to implement the six projects within "Learning at the Core" that includes key activities, timelines, deliverables, and groups or individuals responsible for those deliverables. The plan is structured by project with activities aligned to sections within the proposal. The format and resulting chart make the plan both clear and easy to review. It includes activities implementing strategies for personalized learning environments for students (i.e... Project #4-A pilot programs with personalized learning opportunities). The plan is sound and feasible and completely aligned to the narrative.

The applicant's plan intends to be student centered. Current practice includes an individualized growth plan for each student based on unique strengths and interests that can be aligned to goals identified by the students themselves. The plan is designed to build on this growth plan, tying it more closely to student use and their understanding of the links between their goals and their learning. The proposal notes that professional development for teachers will result in additional supports for students as they use the growth plan, but no information is provided as to instruction or guidance to the students as to how they can maximize the use of this tool themselves.

In addition to the current Advanced Placement and dual-enrollment courses, the project will provide opportunities for students to pursue learning, including deep learning experiences, in new areas that will be a part of pilot programs during years two and three (identification and development in year one). No reference is made as to whether the pilot programs specifically address college- or career-readiness. With year one allowed for development, the proposal does not provide evidence (i.e.. sequence of rigorous science courses in the appendix or possible linked online and sequenced university courses available for dual credit) of the depth and breadth of these learning experiences for students.

The narrative offers a sequence of instructional content - the learning progression - that ensures a set of subskills and knowledge a students needs to master en route to success at the next level in a course sequence. The district intends to modify a project from a second district and place LEP students (earlier described, as a group, as low-performing as well as low income) in AP courses - "a course that is at least 1-2 years above their grade level." The expectation is that these LEP students would fail the AP test but students would be given the opportunity to test out of a lower-level course that they would be able to pass, with the understanding that their increase of content knowledge following the AP course would exceed the increase in knowledge of their LEP peers in the non-AP course. This example is inconsistent with the learning progression referred to earlier. Classroom monitoring would need to ensure that unforeseen cultural, demographic, or esteem issues are readily identified and addressed.

While the narrative does address how students will develop goal-setting skills and monitor and revise them as needed, there is no reference to teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem solving. These are key factors in career as well as college success. A response to this portion of the criterion is not offered.

The narrative describes only a minimal shift in the district's approach to learning in which students have access to a variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments. The applicant does not offer alternatives to the traditional structure of classrooms or schools, student and teacher ratios, or who is considered a teacher through year one, followed by three small-scale pilot programs. There will be minimal impact on the majority of district students.

During year one, a design team will study optimal ways to include digital learning as part of each student's personalized environment. A recommendation will be made to the principal whose leadership team will approve a model for a pilot program in an elementary school. That model for blended learning will run throughout years two and three.

Blended learning includes numerous approaches and strategies within several models. The effectiveness of any depend upon the age of the student (elementary, middle, or high school), the expertise level of the teacher, the purpose of the lesson and work, and the degree of involvement expected of the participants. One model, the flipped classroom for example, may be appropriate for high school but not for elementary. This approach for the design team and the limitation for a pilot program for two years at the elementary level is incompatible with a rigorous and 21st century implementation of digital assets to support personalized learning.

Eagle County's high-need student population are their English language learners, representing 42% of the student body. The plan will provide these students with access to afterschool and summer school instructional and enrichment programming at three school sites, hire family liaisons for eight schools with the highest Hispanic enrollments (plus two district-wide liaisons), provide translation services for students and their family members, and add a contractual translator to the special education team.

No data is tied to this discussion, specifically student progress in core academic subjects or focused English language instruction. The proposal notes that the ESL staff will be invited to volunteer to work these extended hours (afterschool and summer) for a stipend. Information is not provided regarding any research on optimal tutoring for success (or if this is being considered), what content will be covered, if the focus be on instructional over enrichment, and if transportation will be

provided to students who do not attend one of the three sites and transportation home at 5:30. Greater specificity would clarify if these programs will help ensure that these high-need students are on track toward meeting college- and career ready standards.

Teachers will be responsible for ensuring that students understand how to use the Educator Central platform and can access and track their grades, homework, attendance, and expectations or goals. The district's Data Culture Team will provide similar trainings for parents throughout the year, including during parent-teacher conferences. These are reasonable and sufficient approaches.

The proposal addressed this criterion that focused on learning from the perspective of the teacher and district rather than from the perspective of the student. Examples include:

- With the support of parents and educators, all students are able to be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interests. The proposal offers information on what teachers must do for these experiences to occur (i.e... have deep content knowledge), and
- With the support of parents and educators, each student has access to accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students. The proposal describes a programs for teachers to receive a stipend to take courses to earn an endorsement in Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Students from a Community College or full scholarships to Spanish-speaking county residents who agree to teach in the district for five years.

These and other examples place the focus away from the student (no points deducted for this).

The score for this criterion is high middle range.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	13
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Eagle County School District's approach to teaching and leading builds on successful work initiated through opportunities such as the federal Teacher Incentive Grant and the more recent passage of Colorado's Achievement Plan for Kids instituting the Common Core Standards. After three years of work, the district's purchased instructional management system, Educator Central, serves as a critical tool for educators students, parents, and other instructors and school and district staff. This central data warehouse is a fundamental element for the success of the project; a good start.

This system allows teachers access to assessments tools, data, and other resources through Educator Central that they can use to positively impact student progress towards meeting college- and career-ready standards and goals. An example includes the availability of common formative assessments (CFAs) used by teachers to quickly assess student knowledge and then use the resulting data to inform and revise their practice. While the process of using an assessment to provide formative data that can improve subsequent instruction is good, clarification on the use of any common formative assessment and how it supports a student's personalized learning plan would strengthen the response.

All district teachers will participate in professional development as part of the Race to the Top-District project. This adds strength to the project and to the proposal. The professional development is provided for numerous groups of educators, including teacher leaders, teachers, and school leaders. All teachers are members of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and provided with 60 minutes every week to meet as a team as well as an additional 60 minutes annually of ePD throughout the school. Opportunities for supports, trainings, and other learning sessions for members of these groups is appropriately varied and the focus of the programs (i.e.. content, differentiating instruction) support student academic needs. This supports a personalized learning environment and would assist with meeting project goals; very good. The weekly embedded time allows teachers to plan and work together on a continuous and regular basis, for a strong model.

Descriptions of the trainings and professional development opportunities for all three of the stakeholder groups often focus on the needs of the group members rather than the student; for example, Implementation Coaches for all of the principals and Mentor/Master teachers selecting the "Becoming a Curriculum and Instructional Specialist" Academy among a group of four choices. The emphasis of the training and the PLCs, for the purposes of this project, is to build their capacity to support the effective implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies to meet student needs. The proposal does not provide a clear alignment between addressing the needs of the educator and the needs of student.

The proposal does not provide data or information on how student progress towards meeting college- and career-ready standards or graduation requirements will be used to inform either educator practice or professional development.

Even though teacher and principal evaluations are included in the appendix, the narrative does not address how any feedback based on the results of these evaluations would be used to improve practice and effectiveness.

All participating educators are familiar with and have extensive training on the Educator Central management system. This primary tool provides educators, students, parents, and other school staff with student information needed to track student progress and use data to revise instruction. Each student's individual learning (growth) plan is accessible through the data base.

The proposal states that the district will expand the infrastructure with grant funding, but it is unclear if an expansion of Educator Central is a part of that expansion. The narrative does not include the use of Educator Central as a hub for communications, postings, access to resources for teachers or students, or repository for ideas or interests. These areas would support a venue for teachers to personalize education and a personalized learning environment for students. The current resource as described is minimal and does not support a thriving personalized learning environment.

The application does not address the number of students receiving instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals; this information is lacking in the proposal.

Included in the overall high-quality implementation plan is a description of a partnership with Colorado Mountain College with a long-term goal of increasing the number of Spanish-speaking teachers in the district through:

- "Grow Your Own Recruitment" (for student teacher)
- Stipends to current teachers to earn endorsement in Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Students, and
- Full college scholarship plus housing allowance to eight Spanish-speaking county residents towards to goal of obtaining a teaching certificate and teaching in the district for a minimum of five years.

Student and parent surveys conveyed concern that too few teachers spoke Spanish and resembled the majority of the student population. The application does not provide evidence of the survey results, either individually or by summary, any research supporting increased achievement or college- or career-achievement for students who have teachers who are multi-cultural, or any evidence that the lack of diversity among faculty is a factor in student success in the district.

The score is in the mid range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	11

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The organizational chart of leadership positions within the Eagle County School District was revised to accommodate two new Directors and a Specialist for the Race to the Top-District grant who would report to the Assistant Superintendent for Learning (reporting to the Superintendent) as well as a separate Race to the Top Project Manager - a contracted position - who would report to the district's Chief Strategy Officer (also reporting directly to the Superintendent). As the Project Manager is tasked with overseeing the implementation of all aspects of the initiative, some additional clarification is needed to ensure that those responsible for learning within the district remain both involved and accountable and the organizational relationship between the Chief Strategy Officer and the Assistant Vice President for Learning. As it stands, the governance structure appears potentially problematic.

School leadership teams have sufficient flexibility and autonomy to facilitate personalized learning, including control over schedules, staffing, school-level budgets, and personnel decisions. This ability to meet the needs of students and families, respond to consistent data, replicate successful pilots and other models, and implement strategies to personalize learning for students is a great strength for the proposal.

The proposal notes that the district has both policies and options for students to progress in their academic work based on mastery rather than based on time; no documentation is included within the application as support. Although students are eligible to do so if they meet the criteria, documentation is provided on Graduation Requirements (Appendix Z) stating that students are not encouraged to graduate from high school early. The narrative provides a few examples of opportunities for students to advance (CTE-certified credits, the ASCENT program), there are no web-based or virtual opportunities that might include enrollment in university courses for dual credit that would provide strong college- and career-ready experiences. The applicant provides minimal support to students in this area.

As an example of demonstrating mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways, the applicant selected the virtual online K-12 World Academy, the district's educational program for home schooled, hospitalized, and

other students who do not participate in the brick and mortar schools program. No documentation is provided to support the success of this school, although reference to its relatively small size, transient membership, and non-involvement as a participant school remove it from serious consideration. Examples of students demonstrating master throughout a school year through online, presentations, written reports, standardized or placement tests, oral testing and interviews, work product or another objective method at a participant schools would strengthen the response.

The district is building internal capacity to provide adaptable and fully-accessible learning resources and instructional practices to all students in numerous ways, including:

- instructional coaches working with classroom and SPED teachers to improve instruction and outcomes for students with disabilities,
- training of classroom teachers to reduce unintended referrals of English as a second language students for students with disabilities services, and
- dual-language programs in which only half of the class are native speakers.

These practices are all positive, well-grounded, and, if followed with fidelity, would facilitate personalized learning for students. Good selections.

The score rates high in the middle range.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal provides a full description of the technology-based tools available to participating students, parents, educators and other stakeholders (including here, for example, the Project Director). All students in grades 6-12, their parents, and school and district staff have sign-on accounts with access to Google Apps for Education, Office 365, and an advanced list of student information. Student assignments, scores, teacher comments, and attendance are among the many data points available through Educator Central. Learning resources extend beyond the district to include the public library system, and access to resource lists that can provide students with additional tools and resources. The opportunities provided through these technology tools will strongly support the personalized learning environments for students and significantly strengthen the plan.

The applicant does not address access to this technology and the resources it brings to students specifically for low income students and families. With 40% of the students from low-income homes (up to 82% at one school), the likelihood that families will have access to the internet, home computers, or smart phones, decreases. No reference is made to wireless zones, computers available for families to borrow, open computer labs after school or on weekends when the three schools are open on Saturday mornings that might provide additional opportunities for low income families to take advantage of district technology.

Professional development is provided to teachers to ensure that they have the level of technical support they need to both use the technology and, in turn, teach their students. The application does not specify when or how this training will be provided. Trainings for parents will be provided, including during parent-teacher conferences; a great convenience for parents. Trainings will occur by classroom teachers (for students) and online. These strategies are reasonable and fit the needs of the respective learners; good.

The applicant does not fully respond to the criterion regarding the ability of students and parents to export information from the data system in an open data format and use the data in other electronic learning systems. The response, rather, focuses on the expansion of the electronic learning system with the addition of blended learning. The response does not address the criterion.

While the current data systems are not interoperable with other systems in the district, grant funding will support the expansion of Educator Central to include EdMin and build a linkage with Wayfinder (an early warning indicator system) that would significantly increase these functions (human capital and project management). This expansion is included on the Plan to Support Project Implementation that includes a timeline, deliverables, activities, and responsible party (a high-quality plan).

The score is rated low in the high range.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	11
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The proposal includes a plan for continuous improvement that includes the elements required for high quality (timeline, deliverables, etc). The plan does not, however, make reference to timely and regular feedback on progress towards project goals (and the process for revisions based on that feedback), either during or after the period of grant funding. The plan offered within the narrative is limited to only one of the six projects within the larger Race to the Top-District program (#4, Exploring Systems Change) while within the body of the narrative itself, the continuous cycle of improvement through evaluation is directed at teacher professional development, instructional practices, and the availability and contribution of data systems. The plan needs to include all of these segments to serve as a comprehensive and complete reflection of continuous improvement.</p> <p>Included within the focus of improvement are areas that overlap all six projects within the grant, including fidelity of implementation and tracking of change, and that specify areas such as teacher content knowledge (including knowledge of the Common Core standards), teacher proficiency with individualizing instruction, and teacher cultural competency. The district will leverage already embedded evaluation and improvement processes to add quality elements that identify the specifics of the Race to the Top projects including pilot projects and building teacher competencies. This approach utilizes strong structure that is already in place within the district and builds from it; a strong direction that indicates confidence in its current direction.</p> <p>The involvement of two state-required accountability processes for tracking continuous improvement (the Unified Improvement Plan for Schools and the District Performance Framework) in the continuous improvement process will demonstrate how the project will monitor and measure the data. These strategies are appropriate and support the project. The plan does not address how the district will publicly share information on the quality of the investments provided through this funding.</p> <p>The narrative does include a series of research questions that are directly aligned to activities within their plan (i.e.. to what extent are teachers using their data effectively?). Given the clarity of other plans throughout the narrative, the plan for continuous improvement would be strengthened by both including these research questions within the framework of a "high-quality" plan and expanding the plan to include the continuous improvement across all six projects.</p>		
The score for this criterion is high in the middle range.		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The narrative addresses numerous strategies and approaches that will be used within the district for the Race to the Top-District project that are effective means of communication with stakeholders, both internal and external. They include technology-based (website and e-mail) as well as print-based, and extend to current modes of communication such as twitter and social media such as Facebook. The full range of options increases both the numbers and the generations attracted to the information.</p> <p>Even though 42% of the students are learning English, the proposal does not address translations, translation services, or alternative sites or strategies for Spanish-speakers. Without this additional support, a portion of the participating families may lose access to these communications. A more thorough plan would include access to all families.</p> <p>The launch of the Insider's Academy - a seven-session class introducing the public to the workings of the school district - has the potential to create an ever-growing cadre of citizens knowledgeable about the work of the district and this project. This is an innovative way to attract stakeholders - and potential advocates - on a regular basis throughout the year.</p> <p>The plan that follows the narrative is only high-quality in that it includes the requisite components of activities, timetable, deliverables, and responsible party. The plan itself does not include the useful information within the "non-chart" narrative, but rather limits itself to only two projects and five of six "deliverables" with little background or discussion. There is little, if any, alignment between the narrative and the plan that follows it. This significantly weakens the value of the plan and the caliber of the response.</p>		
The score for the criterion is midrange.		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:		

Eagle County School District has included 12 performance measures in their proposal in the requisite areas and each with annual targets. The rationale for their selection includes the fact that the data is available through either the district's data warehouse, Educator Central, or its early warning system to identify at-risk students, Wayfinder. While using performance measures for which data is readily available makes sense, earlier portions of the narrative have indicated a need to expand both of these systems to collect more data that is needed to assist students and educators in meeting the goals of this project. An expanded discussion of the rationale for inclusion would better support these specific measures.

The selected measures will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information to the six projects within the overall plan. The detail and information within these performance measures is well considered and can be used as a guide for teachers and counselors throughout and beyond the grant years to assess progress and as critical feedback to revise implementation strategies. Within the overall positive framework of the performance measures, areas of weakness include:

- Performance measures featuring effective and highly-effective teachers and principals. Although the proposal reiterates the applicable definition of terms, the measures show baseline data of almost 90% of teachers meeting the qualifications of an effective teacher and 30% highly effective teacher. With no baseline data, 100% of the principals are expected to be effective by the end of year one: all students, in all subgroups, achieving at least one grade level in an academic year. These numbers are inconsistent with the academic progress and graduation rates for students provided in Section (A)(4).
- Performance measures for high school students include, separately, ACT Math, ACT English, and ACT Composite (adds Reading and Science), as measures for college- and career readiness. The inclusion of three ACT measures indicates the value placed on it as an accurate indicator by the applicant. The goal, after full program implementation, is that only 40% of students will score at or above the national average on the Composite measure; the full range by subgroups is 20% - 50%. The percent for all students meeting this standard is higher for both the ACT English and the ACT Math scores separately, largely buoyed by the strong scores of White students. As college readiness is a primary focus of Race to the Top-District as well as the school district itself, and the district has selected this performance measure, a more ambitious set of targets would provide the level of rigor needed.

The proposal does not address how it will review and improve the measures over time should they be insufficient to determine the progress of project implementation.

The score for this criterion is high mid-range

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal includes a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of their Race to the Top-District grant; it includes the requisite activities, deliverables, timelines, and responsible parties that would support a high-quality plan. The chart provided, however, does not include the activities described within the narrative that precedes it and is lacking the associated information (timeline, deliverables, responsible party) for many of those activities. The timeline represented within the chart is overly broad, simply noting: Years 1-4; the activities are limited to only one of the six projects and reduced to the description of "activities." Far more detail is necessary for this chart to represent a high-quality plan for evaluation of the program's effectiveness.

The narrative, however, includes information that will assist in the guidance of the evaluation process. The role and responsibilities of the external evaluators are clearly described as well as the interactive role of the district staff in the evaluation process. A list of evaluation questions is provided that reflects work within the six projects (i.e.. increase in student/parent engagement, improved student outcomes) and reference is made, as well, to the performance indicators as an area for evaluative work.

Of the ten evaluation questions included in the narrative, none refer to college- and/or career-readiness or to student, parent, or educator use of technology in or out of the classroom. Both of these areas are critical: technology as a tool through Educator Central and as a means to expand and personalize learning for students, and college- and career-readiness as a primary goal of both the district and Race to the Top-District. The list of evaluation questions is insufficient without addressing evaluation in these areas.

The score for this criterion is low in the mid-range.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score

(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	5
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The application submitted by Eagle County School District includes budgets for the six projects within the Race to the Top-District grant. While the proposal includes a worksheet (a portion of Budget Summary 2) displaying the total budgets of each of these projects, it does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall Budget Summary Table (Budget Subpart 1) providing all requested costs for the full grant by budget category by year, including costs from other sources; all applicants must provide this budget breakdown, • the narrative portion for the Overall Budget Summary Narrative (Budget Subpart 2) that provides sufficient information to determine if the costs are necessary, reasonable, and allowable, • Project-Level Budget Summaries (Budget Subpart 3) as both the cover sheet for the individual project budgets and their total costs by budget category by project year, • identification of the source of other (non-grant) funding that will support the projects, such as expenses in Projects 2 (for registration fees) and 3 (costs for afterschool and summer programming), • the identification of one-time costs versus ongoing operational costs (i.e.. salary of the new Director of Equity and Opportunity versus the contractual cost of the Project Manager for Race to the Top-District). <p>Budgets and budget narratives are included for each of the six projects within the overall Race to the Top-District proposal. The lack of details within the narrative limit the understanding of how the budget figure was determined, such as specific salaries (Project 5), the components included and the rates under benefits (in all projects) and contractual costs (Project 4C).</p> <p>The narrative states that the primary associated criterion and location in the application for the budget and associated narrative for Project 5 is the Competitive Preference Priority. The application does not include a response for this priority.</p> <p>The vast majority of the costs included within the budget appear to be reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the proposal. The budget includes some costs, however, that are unsupported for the level of funding. Specifically, Project 3 will cover full tuition, fees, and a housing allowance for eight students per year at an approximate cost of \$25,000 per year per student; an estimated \$800,000 over the course of grant funding. The return on this investment does not equate to the investment.</p> <p>The budget includes numerous positions (i.e.. Family liaisons, Project 3) that are contractual and non-continuing (earlier reference within the narrative). No additional training for school staff or parent groups is included in the budget to carry on the work of these liaisons following the period of grant funding. This lack of sustainability demonstrated through the budget is a weakness within the response.</p> <p>The individual project budgets do offer an overview of the categories and expenditures that will be included during planning and implementation. Key areas are included, such as personnel, stipends for teachers to collaborate and participate in professional development (Projects 2 and 3), and provide evaluation (Project 6). The information is useful in determining how reasonable and sufficient the expenditures are relative to the development and implementation of the full project.</p> <p>The response to the criterion fails to adequately address all of the subcriteria, as noted above, resulting in a partial description and summary of the budget data. A more thorough response, including narrative addressing the sections identified, would strengthen the proposal.</p> <p>The score for the response is mid range.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	7
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Eagle County School District presents a plan for sustainability of project goals centered on the evaluation of program components based on their educational return on investment (eROI) and the creation of a district-wide annual budget development process that will use these evaluations to determine the best use of limited funding beyond the years of grant support.</p> <p>Housed within Project 6, the applicant will engage the use of a contractor to study the eROI to ensure smart decisions for the continuation of pilot programs and other programs within the full project. The plan includes an in-depth description of the proposed three-phased Resources Alignment Process that involves all projects and programs throughout the district (expanding beyond Race to the Top-District) that are included within the ECS budget.</p> <p>While there is considerable overlap between the grant project and the work of the district during the period of grant</p>		

funding, the applicant does not provide a clear differentiation between the two regarding the development and implementation of this new process. It is unclear if the contractor working on eROI will be working for the Race to the Top-District programs, for the full district on all budgets and costs for all areas (including, for example, maintenance staff or food service). A rationale should be included if these entities (grant project and district) are combined for this effort. The applicant provides a description of the role and responsibilities of the contractor hired to assist the Race to the Top-District team on this project; both grant and district responsibilities are included.

The Resources Alignment Process follows a logical sequence, includes feedback from key constituents, and occurs in a timely manner (within a year). Clear objectives are provided for each phase. The Strategic Resource Decision Process clearly identifies critical steps that are logical and support good decision making. Move to these processes will enable the six projects to use data-based decisions in determining which programs within the grant should be sustained with district funds and which should be phased out. This is a strong and useful approach and positively supports the response to the criterion.

The district is committed to picking up the costs of some personnel; specifically the Director of Data Culture ("re-oriented" position of Data Director). Confidence is covering these costs is due to positive projections for economic conditions for the county and for the State: both anticipating a 10% or higher increase in jobs by 2022. The narrative refers to assistance provided by external groups, but these are limited to reinforcing the messaging for communications (Vail Valley); no financial resources other than district are included in budget predictions for sustainability. The addition of business or other partners or State investments would add significant strength to the plan for sustainability.

The score for the response to this criterion is high in the middle range.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:		
The applicant does not address the competitive preference priority. No partner is identified, desired results from that partnership, or a discussion of the work or potential value of the partnership.		

The response is missing.
No points are assigned.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:		
The proposal submitted by Eagle County School District, Learning at the Core, meets Absolute Priority 1. The application coherently and comprehensively builds on each of the four core assurance areas throughout the narrative and through one or more of the six projects within the overall project.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project includes Common Core standards as well as standards for college- and career-readiness and the preparation of students to succeed through opportunities in pilot programs, expanded day for at-risk students, and online advancement, • Data systems, including the districts' Educator Central, will expand towards greater interoperability with other district systems and provide students, educators, parents, and principals with data they need to improve learning and instruction, • The projects include the recruitment and development of teachers, with an emphasis on Spanish-speaking teachers to support the high percentage of ELL students within the district, and • Replication of a successful model within their district that turned around a low-performing school into a Blue Ribbon 		

school.

Much of the focus for professional development, including Professional Learning Communities, centered on personalized learning and strategies to increase the school environment, technology, and resources to personalize each students' educational experience. Goals and targets provided throughout the proposal show expected increases in graduation for all student groups, and increases in college- and career readiness through key indicators (ACT scores).

The proposal and the applicant meet this Absolute Priority.

Total	210	148
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0232CO-2 for Eagle County School District Re50J

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform vision. It is receiving ten points for the following reasons.

It builds on work in the four educational assurance areas.

- Common core standards have been adopted by the state and curriculum has been designed around the standards, using essential questions and big ideas. Pre and post assessments have been designed to provide data to inform and monitor instruction. Teacher leaders are being trained to become experts at analyzing student data.
- There is a district-wide data system that measures growth, success and informs instruction. It houses curricular materials and assessments. It identifies students at risk and matches them with resources and interventions. Some data systems are linked to Educator Central and some are not. Students and parents have access to the system.
- Teachers participate in an evaluation, compensation and career pathways system. Teachers are able to earn additional compensation by becoming Mentor and Master Teachers who perform much of the job-embedded professional development. All teachers participate in flexible Professional Learning Communities weekly that are based on the analysis and response to student work. A partnership with Colorado Mountain College grows teacher candidates that focus on personalization.
- There is narrative about how the lowest performing school in the district was turned around in the last five years. The scores in reading and math increased significantly.

The narrative articulates a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning and increasing equity through personalized student support. The narrative outlines six projects.

- Project one is an investment in the instructional core that will deepen student learning and improve outcomes.
- Project two deepens the culture of using data to inform classroom decisions.
- Project three provides opportunities to accelerate the learning of all students by focusing on content, language development, extended learning time and family engagement.
- Project four pilots projects on blended learning, extended learning time, and competency-based education.
- Project five deepens the data system and partnerships to identify student social, emotional, and behavioral needs

and make connections with services.

- Project six builds the district capacity to analyze and track implementation progress.

The narrative describes what the expected classroom experience will be like for students, who will be more engaged and participate in speaking and writing about what they are learning. Teachers will be facilitators and will spend time at their professional learning communities analyzing data and student work and discussing instructional strategies. Principals will be instructional leaders and make operational decisions that benefit the personalizing of learning.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	7
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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's approach to implementing its reform proposal will support high-quality district and school-level implementation. The applicant has described six projects that will include all schools in the district, but there is no discussion around including all schools in the projects. One of the projects includes several pilot programs that the district wants to be implemented in only "one school or a subset of schools in years two to three."

A description on how the district will select schools that will house the pilots are provided. The pilots will be selected from seven schools that have over 40% of students receiving free and reduced lunch. The eligible schools will apply to participate in the pilot. Ninety percent of the teachers at a school must agree to take part in the pilot. The participating schools would meet the competition's eligibility requirements. A list of the schools that will participate in both the six projects and the pilots are included. The data about the schools include the total number of participating students, including students from low-income families, high-need students and participating educators. One part of the proposal will be to invite all 500 Non-English Proficient students to take part in afterschool and summer school extended learning activities. The extended learning time will focus on English language development and family-school communications.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	7
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The application includes a plan that describes how the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform. Although the plan includes activities, timelines, deliverables and the parties responsible, it does not include the goal for each activity. The plan is broken up into the six projects of the proposal.

The vision includes six projects that, combined, meet the vision of "Learning at the Core". All the projects will be district-wide except for the three pilots, which would begin in three separate schools. The only part of the proposal that would be scaled up are the pilots. The scale up of the pilots seem to take a long time and would not occur until an evaluation of each pilot takes place.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	5
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by achievable annual goals. The goals are not ambitious.

- The goals for performance on summative assessments drop down in years 2015-16 and 2016-17 and post-grant. The goals for non-English proficient speakers are not ambitious, especially since this subgroup is a focus group. The goals for the same years for students with disabilities are 60%, still not ambitious. The goals for low-income students, limited-English speakers and Latino males and females are the same but lower than the white subgroup.
- The goals for decreasing the achievement gap for non-English proficient speakers and students with disabilities are quite a bit lower than the other subgroups. The goals for the same years for students with disabilities are still not ambitious. The goals for low-income students, limited-English speakers and Latino males and females are the same but lower than the white subgroup. Therefore, these goals are not ambitious.
- The goals for the subgroups high school graduation rates do not align with the expected outcomes on summative assessments for several subgroups. All groups, except for non-English proficient which are not counted, have goals over 90% graduation. It is expected that 90% of students with disabilities and 94% of students who are limited-English proficient will graduate but it is not expected that these two subgroups will be proficient.
- The goals of this grant include students to be college- and career-ready. However, the post grant overall percentages of students attending college is only 70%. It is expected that only 50% of Limited-English proficient students and 70% of students with disabilities will attend college.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	10

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has some evidence of a record of success in the past four years. The district includes high schools but does not address a record of success of the past four years in the high schools. This section is receiving ten points for the following reasons.

- A reform effort that includes performance compensation has been in place since 2001. This has resulted in growth in reading and mathematics for several cohorts, for grades 3, 6 and 7 and for grades 4, 6, and 8. This is the only data included and does not address secondary schools. Data about student achievement, high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates are not included. There is not enough data included to determine whether the district has a clear record of success in improving student learning outcomes and closing achievement gaps.
- Data is included for the lowest achieving elementary school in the district where ambitious and significant reforms have resulted in improved student learning outcomes.
- Student performance data is available to students, educators and parents. Teachers use the data system to inform instruction.

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

The district has demonstrated evidence of transparency in processes, practices and investments. School-level expenditures for regular K-12 instructional support, pupil support, and school administration as well as building maintenance, operational expenditures and capital expenditures are available upon formal open records request to the district. If requested, the district will provide actual salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff, actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff, actual personnel salaries at the school level for teacher and actual non-personnel expenditures at the school level. Even though the district will provide the information if requested, it does not have a high level of transparency for the four categories of school-level expenditures from State and local funds.

The Colorado Department of Education's website does include access of several categories of support but the data available is not what is requested in the prompt. The district provides transparency through sharing at public board meeting and its website, providing budgets for public review and comments, posting actual monthly check transitions, debt schedules, salary schedules for all personnel. The district complies with Colorado's Public School Financial Transparency Act.

Even though the district will provide the information needed for this section, if requested, it does not have a high level of transparency for the four categories of school-level expenditures from State and local funds.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The district has successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in the proposal. The district is building on work already begun in the state of Colorado, who has been awarded a Race to the Top Phase 3 grant. "The school board has governing authority over the schools in the district and through the county government can levy taxes to fund schools". Many grants and programs are in place that will support the successful conditions and sufficient autonomy of the proposal. This section is being awarded ten points.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	10
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

There is stakeholder engagement and support of the proposal. The narrative states how students, families, teachers, and

principals were involved, some comments and how the plan was revised based on feedback. There is evidence of direct engagement and support for the proposal from teachers and their union. No evidence other than the narrative was provided to demonstrate the results of surveys and interviews.

There are letters of support from the Colorado Department of Education, Eagle County Education Association, County Manager, County Sheriff, County Health and Human Services, State of Colorado 5th District Probation Department, Vail Police Department, Avon town manager, Eagle Town Manager, Eagle Vail Metropolitan District Community Manager, Gypsum Town Manager, Minturn Town Manager, Bright Future Foundation, Catholic Charities, Colorado Legacy Foundation, Colorado Mountain College (3), Colorado House of Representatives, Early Childhood Partners, Eagle River Youth Coalition, Education Foundation of Eagle County, The Literacy Project, Mind Springs health, Red Ribbon Project, SOS Outreach, University of Colorado Boulder (2), Vail Valley Youth Foundation, Vail Valley Partnership, and Walking Mountains Science Center. These letters all read very much the same and in certain paragraphs use identical language. It looks like the letter writers were provided with paragraph stems.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	15

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a 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. The plan included both in the narrative and the appendix contains activities, timelines, deliverables and the parties responsible. The plan would be a high-quality plan if it included goals for each activity. The plan includes an approach to implementing instructional strategies for all participating students to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to college- and career-ready standards.

There is an approach to learning that engages and empowers all learners, especially English Learners. The plan does not separately address students with needs. All students, including the English Learners will understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals and will pursue learning and development goals lined to college- and career-ready standards. They students will be able to ultimately create goals and select pathways that will bring them success. There are several projects planned that would help students become involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest. The projects will help students master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication and problem-solving.

It is planned that students will have access to a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development to achieve individual learning goals and graduate on time. A variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments exist. High-quality content, including digital learning content as appropriate are available. Ongoing and regular feedback will be provided by both the teacher and the on-line data system. Student data will be updated continuously on the system and will be used to determine progress towards mastery of college- and career-ready standards. Personalized learning recommendations based on the student's interests are planned. Accommodations for students with disabilities will be researched. Many of the ELL students also have IEPs. Better supports for these students are planned.

There are mechanisms in place 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.

This section is very thorough. However, it is receiving fifteen points for several reasons.

- The plan lacks goals for its activities.
- The plan address English Language Learners but does not address students with disabilities.
- Many of the activities have not been thoroughly research. Sometimes more than a year of the grant will be spent on visiting schools, examining research and then designing programs to be piloted. Projects #4A, #4B and #4C are researched February through June 2014 and then a pilot school implements each project. The earliest either of these pilots are scaled up is July 2016. The grant states that it is district-wide, not for pilot schools. The data system is not expected to be fully expanded until December 2015.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	15
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant has a 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 standards. The plan contains activities, timelines, deliverables and responsible parties but it does not include goals for the activities. It includes an approach to implementing instructional strategies for all students although students with needs are not addressed separately.</p>		
<p>There is 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 goals. Content academies are held throughout the year to help teachers deepen their understanding of what they are teaching. It is thought that teacher's ability to personalize learning will be greater as their knowledge of the curriculum and instructional strategies increase. Coaches and master teachers will provide job embedded professional development that builds on the Content Mastery professional development sessions. Common Formative Assessments are available for all students. Results are uploaded into the data system and are discussed at weekly PLC sessions. Formative assessments are ongoing. There is a teacher and principal evaluation system that improves practice by providing feedback several times per year.</p>		
<p>All teachers and administrators have been trained on how to use the tools, data and resources already in place. Training around content, the expanded data system, common formative assessments and end of course assessments are planned. There is training planned around the implementation of future pilots. The goal of the proposal is for teacher's to be able to personalize and differentiate instruction. Content coaches and outside experts will be available to support teachers.</p>		
<p>All participating school leaders and school leadership teams will have training in the policies, tools, data and resources that will enable them to structure an effective learning environment that meets individual student needs and accelerates progress toward meeting college- and career-ready goals. The feedback from the teacher and principal evaluation systems will help school leaders and school leadership teams to assess and take steps to improve educator effectiveness. There is training, systems and practices to continuously improve school progress towards increasing student progress and closing achievement gaps.</p>		
<p>The applicant has a quality plan to partner with the Colorado Mountain College to support the "Grow-Your-Own" plan to recruit new teachers and to support new teachers by having effective teachers train become supervising teachers. The plan has activities but does not include goals.</p>		
<p>The proposal is weak in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no goals included for the activities in the plans. • Common Formative Assessments are being developed. The narrative lacks discussion around students showing mastery in different, individual manners for both courses that have Common Core Standards and those that do not. • Supervising teachers for the "Grow-Your-Own" Partnership will not be hired until March 2016. 		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	8
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The district central office is being reorganized to support the proposal. There is no narrative included on how the people to be hired will be trained. Nor does it address how the superintendent will evaluate whether these employees have enough background and experience to do what is asked of them, especially the key position of the Personalized Learning and Engagement Specialist.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director of Data Culture would "provide strategic direction for building a data culture across the district. The Director of Equity and Opportunity will manage Project #3 to boost opportunities for all students. • The Personalized Learning and Engagement Specialist will "provide leadership and coaching for principals and teachers on how to personalize learning and engage students in their learning". • Other staff and consultants such as the RTTT Project Manager, CMC Partnership Manager/Clinical Supervisor, data specialists, support staff, paraprofessionals, CMC Recruiter will be contracted. These positions have no funding beyond the grant. • Professional Learning Communities will be used at the district level, at schools and in the classrooms to score and 		

- stud student work, employ the data teams, process, and hone instructional strategies.
- The district "supports a mix of traditional, alternative and charter schools and schools with admission requirements". There are programs that serve all levels of English Learners and students with physical and/or cognitive disabilities. There many programs and services such as dual language immersion, extended day and extended year, summer and Saturday school, arts program, computer education, Expeditionary Learning, K-12 online academy, winter sports and recreation academy, afterschool enrichment, International Baccalaureate, Advance Placement, dual enrollment, Career and Technical Education-certified, Gifted and Talented programs. These options are expected to help students take ownership and personalize their own learning, according to interests.

The district provides "school leadership teams in all its schools with sufficient flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, rules and responsibilities for educators and non-educators, and school-level budgets.

The district has policies and options in place that offer students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic.

- Students may accelerate to higher grades or graduate early if they meet the number and required credits.
- Students may participate in concurrent enrollment at the college level.
- Students earn Career and Technical Education-certified credits.

The district provides students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple ways.

- There is a virtual online K-12 world Academy
- Schools with dual enrollment programs allow students to earn a high school diploma and an associate's degree by their "fifth year."
- The district is looking into ways that English Language Learner can demonstrate master with competency-based education.

There are learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and accessible to students.

- Coaches working in the classroom provide supports for students with disabilities and their teachers.
- In response to the belief that too many English Learners are being identified to receive special education services, three schools are piloting Response to Intervention.
- There are interventions and supports provided to English Learners.

A plan for this section is included but it is not a high-quality plan because it does not include goals. It includes activities, a timeline, deliverables and the responsible parties. Response to Intervention is a system that is already in place at most school districts. It is being piloted in only three schools. The lack of support for students with needs is evident in this section and in the goals set for the next five years.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	7
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

All participating students, grades six through twelve, have access to data systems that include content, tools and other learning resources. All parents, educators and stakeholders have access to many tools and resources.

Students, parents, educators and other stakeholders have appropriate levels of technical support. Spanish-speaking parents of new students receive training on how to access and use the system. It is hoped that with funding of the grant that teachers will assist parents on how to access and use PowerSchool during parent-teacher-conferences.

A high-quality plan is not included. The plan included does not have goals; it has activities, timelines, deliverables and responsible parties. Students below grade six are using technology at home. It is not clear why it was decided to not allow students under grade six to have access to an account similar to what is being offered to middle and senior high students. Teachers could help parents access and use the system now. It is not clear why this needs to wait until the grant is funded. It is unclear whether there are a range of strategies to help students, parents and educators access the computer systems. The existing information technology systems are not exportable to an open data format. It is expected that this will be addressed through the funding of the grant.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	8

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not include a high-quality plan. The plan included activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties but it does not include goals. The timelines on the plan are all a month in 2014. The sixth project, "Making Smart Decisions" is vague and does not include deliverables. Its only activity is Continuous Improvement with an ongoing timeline. The narrative addresses how the district will publicly share information on the quality of its investments funded by Race to the Top - District in the next section.

The narrative addresses how the district already has a culture of continuous cycle of improvement. They will continue to address teacher practices and student learning which will support continuous improvement.

- Yearly evaluation will use the Concerns-Based Adoption Model which is described and included in the Appendix. It is felt that this model will assist in "assessing where teachers are in the change process and to better pin-point and adjust strategies for affecting the pace of movement toward desired outcomes."
- The district already uses four components in its culture of continuous cycle. Personnel meet in PLCs to analyze data and examine practices to improve outcomes. It examines the units and formative assessments it designs in a Curricular System. Data systems exist that facilitate problem-solving. There is local capacity for building learning.
- The district will utilize two state-required accountability processes for tracking continuous improvement. Yearly or three-year results track four performance indicators.
- An outside evaluator will be hired to examine each project and pilot. and will use a cycle of plan-do-study-act.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	1
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not have a high-quality plan for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. A plan is included that lists goals, activities, timelines, deliverables and responsible parties but it does not include goals. Project 6, "Making Smart Decisions" is vague and only includes one activity, communication and engagement for two deliverables, regular social medial and project-based stakeholder engagement. This does not provide a picture of how communication will be improved. A district can post messages on its website, facebook and twitter but that does not guarantee that stakeholders are paying attention.

The narrative discusses that feedback will be solicited from all stakeholders who had provided feedback in the development of the plan. The district uses multiple modes of communication to communicate with stakeholders. The grant activities and their progress will be made available to the general public through annual progress reports. The grant activities and their progress need to be provided to stakeholders more than once a year to ensure that meaningful feedback is collected.

The district will begin an outreach program this year call the Insider's Academy where the public will be educated on key personnel in school district offices, how state policies, laws and regulations impact education at the local level, how school financing works, what it takes to have effective teaching and learning, and what overall supports are available for students and families. This is an interesting project but does not seem to be within the scope of the proposal. It would be more helpful if the outreach program provided information on the projects, the data system and/or personalization.

A communications department engages the community daily through social media, website posts, and phone app updates.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The district has achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup. The applicant describes its rationale for selecting the measures and how the measures will provide rigorous, timely and formative information, and how it will review and improve the measure over time.

- The measure for determining the effectiveness of teachers and principals is based on the amount of student gains which corresponds to a least a year's growth in a year's time. The original measure is no longer being used.

Teacher effectiveness is now based on the Professional Practices observation that yields a score between 1 and 5. All students and subgroups are included. This measure is not ambitious because it is expecting that only 50% of teachers would be highly effective post-grant. It is expected that all teachers will be effective. It is expected that only 25% of the principals will be scored as highly effective post-grant. It is expected that all principals will be effective. These percentages apply to all subgroups.

- The PreK- Grade 3 measure of decreasing the number of students identified with a significant reading deficiency on the DRA2 assessment shows the goals to be ambitious except for Latino males, and non-English proficient. Most subgroups and grade levels are expected to be at zero. However, for these two subgroups, the number declines over the years but does not reach 0 post grant. It is expected that all children (100%) will achieve adequate yearly growth post-grant in all dimensions as measured by the Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment System. These goals are not ambitious because students with an IEP with a significant impairment that would not allow them to have adequate yearly growth are not included. Neither are students who are Limited English Proficient.
- For grades 4 - 8, again the measures are not ambitious because non-English proficient and students with needs are expected to have outcomes post-grant that are lower than the other subgroups. For the number of students, by subgroup, who are reported to have a disciplinary incident in grades 4 - 8, It is expected that half of the students who have a referral post-grant are low-income students.
- For grades 9 - 12, the number and percentage of students who complete and submit the FAFSA form seems adequate. All population groups have the same percentages. The measure for determining the number of students who are on track to college- and career-readiness based on the percentage of students who are at or above the average national ACT scores is not ambitious. The district is expecting only 50% of its participating students, post grant, to score at or above the average national ACT score. That sounds reasonable if 50% is the mean. But again, it is not expected that Latinos, and low-income students, and students with needs, will perform equal to the white students. Post grant, the career readiness measure is only expecting 81% of students to be on track for career readiness. The number of students reported to have a disciplinary incident in grades 9 - 12 is higher for Latino males and low income students than other subgroups.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The district will hire an external evaluator to assist in collecting baseline and ongoing data to continuously improve its plans. The external evaluator will work with the district staff to "modify and finalize the design design of the evaluation plan, develop instrumentation and pilot it, collect baseline data and employ linear modeling to assess causal relationship between various interrelated project activities on teachers' instructional practices, student achievement and student socio-emotional well being. The proposal describes in detail the strategies the evaluator will use to evaluate the plan. Making the evaluator stick to these methods might not result in a clear picture of how to continuously improve its plans.

A plan is included to evaluate the effectiveness of Race to the Top - District funded activities. It is not a high-quality plan because it has no goals. It does contain activities, vague timelines (years 1 - 4) general deliverables and the parties responsible.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The budget tables outline all the projects and supplies some narrative about expenditures. Although there is one budget that addresses all the projects, and therefore the full proposal, that budget does not include more information than the total grant funds requested for each project. There is a separate budget included for each of the six projects outlined in the proposal. The first project, "Investing in the Instructional Core" is receiving the most funds. This is the core of the proposal and should be the highest in expenditures. Most of the funds will be spent on personnel and training and contracts. The budgets for the six projects does not include funds from other sources. There are explanations for the expenditures throughout the six budgets but they are not rationales.

The budget tables indicate that no outside funds will be used to support the project. The funds that will be used for one-time investments are included along with a discussion on strategies that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the projects leading to personalized learning environments.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	6
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not include a high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. The narrative includes activities that would take place leading to and after the grant ends. "We want to strategically invest in building our infrastructure and our capacity so that we can continue the effective practices of the project for many years to come. Thus, most of the RTTT - D grant will provide us a short-term capacity building infusion of resources that, once expended, will not require continuation funds. A small number of grant expenditures will be in the form of long-term desired investments, which will either be picked up by the district or for which we will work to raise funds from some of our long-term partners." This might not be true. There is no guarantee of funding.

Throughout the grant the district will determine ways to reallocate existing resources around personalization. They will be using some funds from the grant to study the educational return on investment (eROI) of the grant activities and to analyze the systems of support within the district to reorient the budget. They will build the capacity of stakeholders involved in budget decisions to become more strategic and data-based in how allocations are made. This will take place next year. This should take place on an annual basis. The educational return on investment should be part of the evaluation process. This will be accomplished through outside evaluators. Just because the district is creating a new decision process does not mean that it will be effective.

- Phase 1 is to create the foundation for the new resource decision process. The district will examine how performance compensation has impacted student performance. There will be a focus on analyzing programs for targeted student populations, including English Language Learner programs and special education.
- Phase 2 will be to "develop the new annual strategic resource decision process... and realign resources in the areas of teacher professional development, teacher compensation, and programming for targeted student populations." Other areas of spending will also be analyzed and a multi-year schedule to evaluated all areas of spending will be instituted.
- Phase 3 will be coaching and support for strategic resource process. This phase will also see the development and adoption of future budgets and a multi-year finance plan. Communication and engagement with key stakeholders will also be a focus. There is a great deal of narrative around failures of past communication and how communication of resource allocation can be improved in the future. Communication will include State and local government leaders.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	2

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

One of the Projects, "Helping Students in Need to Find their Way" is included as the Competitive Preference Priority. This project builds a data system and partnerships to identify student social, emotional, and behavioral needs and makes connections with targeted wraparound services. This project is addressed throughout the proposal.

The district has many external partnerships and supports for its students. These are included in Appendix AF. Appendix AG includes Intervention Organizations and Prevention Organizations that are part of the Wayfinder Organization. A flow chart located in Appendix AH explains the referral process.

Performance measures and a separate section to address the Competitive Preference Priority were not located, even though the section was referred to in the description of the project. We understand from the narrative that a partnership exists and that a data system will be enlarged to provide support. The narrative does not provide a description of the partnership and exactly how it will support the social, emotional or behavioral needs of students and their families.

Population-level desired results are not included. There is not a description of how the data system will track the indicators or target resources. There is no description of how education and services would be integrated. There is no description of how the partnership and the district would build the capacity of the staff. A budget is included.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant coherently and comprehensively addresses how it will build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards. The proposal will accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student. The evaluation system will increase the effectiveness of educators and expand student access to the most effective educators. Achievement gaps will decrease for all student subgroups and the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and career and increase.

Total	210	134
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0232CO-4 for Eagle County School District Re50J

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Eagle county school has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform vision by the following:

- Their Race to the Top initiative has 3 main projects 1) explore outside the box with some of the pilots, 2) supporting students in need, 3)Making smart decisions
- Eagle county's 6- RTTT ideas encompassed are 1) instructional core, 2) information rich environments, 3)opportunities, 4) pilot projects, 5) finding their way, 6) making smart decisions
- With these as their over-arching goal they will-
 - invest in a personalized learning system that will accelerate and deepen student knowledge and skills, eliminate achievement gaps, and improve student academic, social and emotional outcomes overall
 - prepare for differentiating more instruction by making the students and student learning center of their work, making sure teachers have deep content knowledge, easy and useful access to formative assessment data, and making sure teachers have a strong pedagogy
- This will be done with/
 - locally developed assessments
 - professional learning communities
 - individual student identifiers and student-teacher matches
 - daily formative assessment data
 - Their Educator Central Data repotor for teachers, school leaders, and at times for parents which contains the following data systems-
 - Naviance -the counseling database
 - Edmin - teacher and leader evaluations and compensation
 - Avatar- professional development database
 - Common formattice assessment data

- Statewide assessment data which is linked to individual students
- Early student learning objectives
- National Clearinghouse data for college-going and persistence rates
- AIMS web- for progress monitoring
- MyAlpine- English language development database
- Wayfinder- an early at risk detection system
- Teacher feedback and student perceptions on curricular products developed
- Educator Effectiveness:
 - Eagle County has a mature education evaluation, compensation, and career pathways system
 - They eliminated teacher lanes back in 2001 and have fostered a student achievement- centric culture
 - Advanced professional are mentor teachers or master teachers and lead teachers
 - They all attend PLCs 60 min a week
- Duplicating its success at one of its schools, Avon- 92% of the students are Hispanic and Latino, 87% are ELL and 77% are free and reduced lunch students (key foundation) for receiving the RTTT funding
 - In 2006 it was deemed a persistently low achieving school but by 2012 it was recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School
 - In that 5 years the proficient and advanced and proficient in reading went from 25.53% to 67.83%
 - In that 5 years the proficient and advanced and proficient in math went from 38.85% to 69.23%
- Their system meets with parents no less than 3 times a year face- to- face to discuss data on their child
- To pull all together the building on the four core assurances happens all of the items listed above. The clear and credible approach to the goals are laid out throughout the entire piece. ECS goes through the understanding of differences between a student and a learner in order to examine the student and teacher experience.

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

The following is a description of the process that the applicant used or will use to select schools to participate in the RTTT:

- 1) Investing in the Instructional Core- they will re-center their focus on personalized learning and give students choice and agency, increase the knowledge and skill in content and content pedagogy of all teachers (specific focus on writing about content)
- 2) Nesting instruction in an information rich environments -deepening the culture and skills to use data to inform decisions in the classrooms, buildings, district, and community, expand and align Educator Central for more personalized learning through formative assessments and differentiated instruction, continue expanding standards-aligned curriculum and common formative assessments for all teachers
- 3) Surrounding the system in opportunities- closing the opportunity gap and accelerating the learning of all students- extended day and extended year learning opportunities, partner with Colorado Mountain College to grow teacher candidate who will thrive in the environment of personalized learning and the Latino community
- 4) Pilot projects to explore systems changes- explore systems transformation by implementing targeted pilot projects, including learning to use a blended learning model, starting a competency-based education pilot in the high schools, and a year-around elementary pilot
- 5) Helping students in need in finding their way- deepen partnerships with agencies and nonprofits to provide coordinated and integrated county-wide services
- 6) Making smart decisions- Measure the impact of the RTTT projects in order to make good decisions through continuous improvement feedback

The outputs listed include:

- increased teacher content knowledge and content pedagogy knowledge, rigorous curriculum assessment and assignments, increased student engagement, cultural and linguistic inclusion, targeted supports and interventions, effective leadership, and greater decision making capacity

The impacts on students listed include:

- College and career ready students, reduction in racial achievement gaps, and improved social and emotional outcomes

The listing of the schools and information of A(2)(c) is listed with in the writing and thoroughly detailed accordingly.

A description of the process that the applicant used or will use to select schools to participate. The process must ensure that the participating schools (as defined in this notice) collectively meet the competition's eligibility requirements;-

- Eligible schools include those with at least 40% of their students eligible for free and reduced price meals.

A list of schools eligible is then provided along with a complete list of student numbers participating from each.

The above thoroughly completes the criteria requested for A2.

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

Eagle County describes how the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools, and will help the applicant reach its outcome goals with the following details:

The district funds and the RTTT funds will be input towards the following activities:

#1 Investing in the Instructional Core- Kickoff project as described in detail with timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties

#2 Information-rich environments- Kickoff project as described in detail with timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties

#3 Creating opportunities- Kickoff project as described in detail with timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties and family liaisons

#4 Developing the 3 described pilots- Kickoff project as described in detail with timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties and designing the pilots

#5 Continuing to develop the Wayfinder for at risk identifying-Kickoff project as described in detail with timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties

#6 Making smart decisions- Kickoff project as described in detail with timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties

Along with this detailed outputs, outcomes and impacts are listed.

The above list describes the items that have been scaled-up and can be seen as meaningful reform happening within the participating schools. All listed are designed and meant to help the applicant reach its outcome goals of improving learning outcomes.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	9
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Eagle County's vision to improve student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goals are in the following areas. The following are the goals set forth for Overall students, Whites, Latino males and females, Non-English proficient students, Limited- English proficient students, SWD, and Low-income students

(a) Performance on summative assessments

- Decreasing the gaps in subgroup performance on TCAP Reading in Grade 3 to 15% between White students and all subgroups except NEP, where the gap will be decreased to 45%, and SWD, where the gap will be decreased to 25%
- Decreasing the gaps in subgroup performance on TCAP Reading in Grade 5 to 15% between White students and all subgroups except NEP, where the gap will be decreased to 45%, and SWD, where the gap will be decreased to 25%.
- Decreasing the gaps in subgroup performance on TCAP Reading in Grade 8 to 15% between White students and all subgroups except NEP and SWS, where the gaps will be decreased to 45%.
- Decreasing the gaps in subgroup performance on TCAP Math in Grade 3 to 15% between White students and all subgroups except NEP, where the gap will be decreased to 45%, and SWD, where the gap will be decreased to

25%.

- Decreasing the gaps in subgroup performance based on the percentage of participating students are at or above the average ACT scores in English, Math, Reading, and Science

(b) Decreasing achievement gaps

- Decreasing the gaps in subgroup performance on TCAP Reading in Grade 3 to 15% between White students and all subgroups except NEP, where the gap will be decreased to %, and SWD, where the gap will be decreased to 25%
- Decreasing the gaps in subgroup performance on TCAP Reading in Grade 5 to 15% between except NEP, where the gap will be decreased to 45%, and, where the gap will be decreased to 25%
- Decreasing the gaps in subgroup performance on TCAP Reading in Grade 8 to 15% between White students and all subgroups except NEP and SWS, where the gaps will be decreased to 45%
- Decreasing the gaps in subgroup performance on TCAP Math in Grade 3 to 15% between White students and all subgroups except NEP, where the gap will be decreased to 45%, and SWD, where the gap will be decreased to 25%
- Decreasing the gaps in subgroup performance on TCAP Math in Grade 5 to 15% between White students and all subgroups except NEP, where the gap will be decreased to 45%, and SWD, where the gap will be decreased to 30%
- Decreasing the gaps in subgroup performance on TCAP Math in Grade 8 to 15% between White students and all subgroups except NEP, where the gap will be decreased to 45%, and SWD, where the gap will be decreased to 25%?
- Decreasing the gaps in subgroup performance based on the percentage of participating students are at or above the average ACT scores in English, Math, Reading, and Science

(c) Graduation rates

- Eagle County Schools believes that its work will not only increase graduation rates significantly across all students and subgroups, but that graduation gaps can be completely closed by school year 2017-18

(d) College enrollment rates

Eagle County Schools does not have current access to college enrollment databases such as National Student Clearinghouse due to having no third party assistance to collect this data. Eagle County Schools will have access to college enrollment data, and expects to have baseline 2012-13 data by November 2013

All areas detailed are all covered thoroughly and completely. The evidence demonstrates ambitious and achievable goals as they are all designed to increase student learning, close the learning gap, decrease graduate dropouts, and an overall summative assessment boost.

These are reasonable, ambitious, and achievable as the applicant's vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goals, that are equal to or exceed State ESEA targets for the LEA.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Eagle County Schools has demonstrated a clear track record of success. Including items that have improved student learning, have achieved ambitious and significant reforms, and have made available student data. The list below shares the items that they provided.

- Abolished the steps and lanes pay schedule for teacher salaries
- Designed and instituted a performance evaluation system for teachers and principals, as well as a performance-based compensation system
- Created multi-career pathway for teachers including the creation of the Master teacher and Mentor teacher positions
- Designed and established professional learning communities at the district and school levels
- Received the TIF grant in order to implement the TAP (teacher advancement program) which in turn:

- funded increases in the master teacher and mentor teacher stipends and recruited more highly effective teachers
- supported overall quality of instructionally-focused leadership
- provided bonuses for hard to staff positions
- provided funds for Excellence in Teaching awards
- district wide and in building professional development activities for all teachers
- corresponding updates and improvements in the data management system
- this in turn had an overall positive effect on reading and mathematics achievement and growth for elementary and middle school students, data points are stated to show this in action
- the TIF grant ended in 2012 and the schools have continued with the reform efforts through sustained and fully-internalized and institutionalized the four reform initiatives- performance evaluation system, performance compensation, multiple career pathways support, and intensive investment in in- service for teacher development through PLCs
- Avon elementary is their prime example of their track record in advancing student learning and achieving. They managed to completely turn around Avon as it was a low performing school. Avon has recently became a national blue ribbon school and was recipient of the Title I School turn around grant as well. Data presented supports this also.
- Using models such as they are planning with Avon will Improve student learning outcomes and close achievement gaps , including by raising student achievement, high school graduation rates , and college enrollment rates. Doing so I believe will help them to achieve ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools (like Avon) or in its low-performing schools
- ECS has Made student performance data available to students, educators, and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and services. Education Central is a prime example of this.

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

Eagle County School has provided adequate documentation as to how transparent it is with actual salaries for all listed. The following is how this is done at ECS:

- Some data is available upon formal open records request (all salaries)
- The public can access the district expenditures for total and per pupil costs for:
 - instruction and support
 - administration
 - building and facility maintenance
 - operational expenditures
 - capital expenditures
 - and total use of funds
- ECS also :
 - shares information during public board meetings
 - post on website monthly check transitions, debt schedule, bond payments, and other compensation and salary information
 - posts benefit and salary information on the website
 - complies with the Colorado's Public School Financial Transparency Act
 - hosts an insider academy
- Actual personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff is provided by ECS. Thus meeting the criteria as described in B2.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	9
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described by Eagle County follows:

- 1) First example of autonomy is the ability for abolition of the step-and-lanes pay schedule of salaries and bonuses for teachers
- 2) They were allowed the development and implementation of a district-wide performance evaluation system for all school employees including teachers and principals

- 3) They were allowed the development and implementation of a performance-based compensation system based on the evaluation system
- 4) The ability to create of multi-career pathway for teachers which includes the establishment of the Master Teacher and Mentor Teacher positions
- 5) The ability to establish professional learning communities or cluster groups at the district and school building levels as part of an integrated system of ongoing in-service professional development that meets and support student and teacher needs
- 6) They were also allowed the cost of living stipend for teachers to attract and retain teachers in the high-cost-of-living county.
- As described the proposed RTTT-D activities are stated to be aided by statewide reform efforts underway, several of which are already participating in, for example the Great Teachers and Great Leaders Act.
 - In 2008, Colorado's General Assembly passed Colorado's Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K), which instituted the Common Core standards rigorous academic standards in mathematics and English language arts that are aligned from preschool to postsecondary levels.

As for accountability: The state enacted the Education Accountability Act, which holds the state, school districts and individual schools accountable for performance on the same set of indicators and related measures.

- The new law :
 - requires a review of all schools and districts on common measures of achievement, growth and postsecondary workforce readiness in order to consistently describe performance
 - outlines shared accountability measures for districts and schools
 - provides clear requirements for support and intervention for struggling schools and districts
 - focuses improvement through unified improvement planning

Eagle County provides ample evidence of state support in the initiatives planned for RTTT.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	13
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

It appears that Eagle County has taken into account the stakeholders in the following ways described:

- Students-were given surveys specifically searching for information the level of engagement in classes, setting learning goals, what they like about their school, and about what their school could do to better aid in their education
- Families- were given surveys regarding how their children's school was preparing them for their future and the quality of the services that they are receiving
- Teachers- teachers were given face to face meeting, teachers were interviewed about their beliefs of how the ECS system believes in them and supports them
- Principals-certain principals had face to face meetings
- Civic leaders- receive a draft copy and were given 10 days to respond, many civic leaders offered letters of support
- Business leaders- Over 30 meeting were presented by Dr. Jason Glass in front of communities and also business leaders
- Partners- Eagle County worked with multiple partners with several projects and programs

There are also multiple letters of support from stakeholders listed within the appendix. Including all of the above brings in meaningful stakeholder engagement throughout the development of the proposal and meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal. Therefore meeting most of the criteria as described.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Eagle County's design for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready is as follows:

- As a part of ECS current system, teachers were trained to and regularly create "Engaging Learning Tasks."
- Experiences that produce personal insights that are deeper and longer lasting than explanations is one of their goals
- They believe that a rigorous curriculum ought to provide students with meaningful learning tasks that are both engaging and experimental.
- Teachers: The starting point that they are trained to begin at is to develop the learning progression.
 - Learning progressions provide guidance to teachers regarding what to assess and when to assess it as part of the formative assessment process.
 - Elaborate learning progressions may be instructionally helpful for some teachers, but teachers must be sure to assess students' mastery of all building blocks in a learning progression.
 - When constructing learning progressions, teachers should select a building-block grain size that best meshes with their tolerance for detail
- They have implemented the use of individualized growth plan a process designed to engage each student based on their interests and strengths in the process of connecting what they are doing in school with the goals they hope to achieve. This appears to be a very unique approach.
- Their next overarching focus is deep learning experiences, diversity, and 21st Century Skills, The practice of identifying students' interests and using that knowledge in designing instruction is built into the expectations for all of their teachers
- The next overarching goal is their Competency-Based Education Pilot Project it focuses on deepening students' learning, exposing them to new contexts, and drawing upon their interests and desires to move at a rapid pace.
- Ongoing and regular Feedback, using data, and learning recommendations is and will be happening through Educator Central, their district-wide warehouse for longitudinal data, curriculum, and common formative assessments.
- Additional focuses follow:
 - Supports for High-Need Students
 - Afterschool and Summer School
 - Year-Round Schooling Pilot
 - Family Engagement
 - Translation services
 - Grow-Your-Own; Cultural and Linguistically Diverse Students Endorsement; and Co-Teaching
 - Assessment accommodation
 - Personalization and Digital Content
 - Students Managing Their Learning

The above list addresses learning: An approach to learning that engages and empowers all learners, in particular high-need students, this is done with the aid of the teachers and at times parents. This is also done in the multiple ways listed which secures their understanding of this process further.

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

20

18

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Eagle County Schools 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 are listed below:

- The first focus ECS has is on Learning at the Core and on creating the conditions, expectations, and capacity across ECS to personalize learning, personalize teacher learning, teacher leader and principal learning, central office, family, and community learning
- The backdrop for ECS is for moving toward College and Career Ready Standards ECS has a long history of investing in the ongoing professional learning of our teachers
- ECS offers focused coaching supports for their career teachers and for their Mentor and Master Teachers
- Each member of the in-building Instructional Learning Team (Mentor Teachers, Master Teachers, and principals) will take part in one Academy per year
- ECS will have national content experts available for virtual coaching around instructional shifts in the Common Core and personalizing learning based on formative assessment data, with a focus on speaking and writing about content
- ECS will run a combined Teacher Leader Academy for our aspiring teacher leaders

- The career teachers will engage in deep ongoing professional learning throughout the year
- This initiative also aims to affect instructional leadership of principals
- They will launch a new “Grow-Your-Own” partnership with Colorado Mountain College to provide clinical supervision to their brand new teacher education program, with the expectation that teacher candidates from CMC who learn our approach to personalizing learning would be able to dive into a new classroom right after they complete their rigorous studies and are working toward certification
- ECS also has a very detailed timeline table that sketches out the exact implementation of all activities for RTTT-3

All participating educators appear to be engaged in the training processes listed including in professional teams or communities. All participating school leaders and school leadership teams also have training, policies, tools, data, and resources that enable them to structure an effective learning environment.

The applicant has a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals, including in hard-to-staff schools, subjects (such as mathematics and science), and specialty areas (such as special education). Elaborating on the last 2 areas would be useful for a full score.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

ECS's high quality plan is to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator, and level of the education system with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed is described with the following details:

- They have organized themselves to provide the supports and services to all their schools in the facilitation of learning
- They have made and will continue to make significant investments in the learning of their students and the professional development of their teachers (Career Teachers, Mentor Teachers, Master Teachers), principals, and district administrators

Their structure is described with the following:

- there are the agents of the school board that are responsible for administering the public education for the citizens in Eagle County.
- One group of school district leaders are fully focused on providing learning services
- All aspects of learning for both students and teachers are housed and served by the Learning Services Team
- The student support services team provides the underpinnings to the system
- The leadership group oversees the vision, mission, and direction of the school district
- They plan on hiring three full-time ECS employees to serve as the Director of School Data Culture, the Director of Equity and Opportunity, and the Personalized Learning and Engagement Specialist
- To further operationalize their proposed RTTT grant activities, they will be contracting staff and consultants

Continuing-

- Professional learning communities permeate the above structure and is how they do their work throughout the district—at the district level, in school buildings, and in the classrooms
- They support a mix of traditional, alternative and charter schools and schools with admission requirements. Along with programs that serve English language learners and students with physical and/or cognitive disabilities, each school has its unique blend of programs and services
- Additionally, many schools also provide opportunities afterschool for recreational and enrichment

D1b-

- They provide school leadership teams in all its schools with sufficient flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators, and school-level budgets. As demonstrated by Avon Elementary which has a dual language immersion

D1c-

- ECS has policies and options in place that offer students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic. As stated, students, upon request, may accelerate to higher grade or graduate earlier as long they meet the number and kinds of credits to earn a high school diploma

D1d-

- ECS provide students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and multiple ways. Through schools like the nearly virtual online K-12 World Academy and schools with dual enrollment programs are examples presented

D1e-

- They have become more focused and intensive in providing learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities (SWDs) and English language learners (ELLs) many of these resources are listed in detail

The preceding instances describe how ECS is providing a personalized learning environment well.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	9
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

ECS's plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provides every student, educator, and level of the education system (classroom, school, and LEA) with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed is listed below:

- They support personalized learning by ensuring that all participating students, parents, educators and other stakeholders, 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.
- Through their single sign-on accounts, sixth through twelfth grade students are able to also login to PowerSchool and access their own student profile, including school information and announcements, course schedule and grades, attendance record, assignments, assignment scores, and teachers comments
- They also provide teachers individual student-, class- and school- level information, and administrators and school-wide and district-wide information through Schoolnet for PowerSchool and Educator Central
- Besides the administrative data and instructional management systems they support for students, teachers and parents, they also house the District Library Media Services Department which provides 24/7 digital services to students, their parents and teachers.
- They subscribe to a number of online tools and resources that are free for students, parents and teachers use simply by logging in to the Destiny database
- Through a partnership with Children's Hospital of Denver, they provide their teachers with free access to the Health Teacher database, which covers age-appropriate resource on a variety of health, fitness and well-being topics such as physical fitness, substance abuse, anatomy
- Taking to account all the various ways they provide instructional management supports as well as digital learning services and resources for the district
- They have been able to facilitate personalized learning through the use of electronic learning systems, particularly through its nearly virtual online K-12 World Academy
- They utilize Educator Central as their main hub of information.
- They also provide training for all of the student, parents, teachers and administrators.

The above ensures that all participating students, parents, educators, and stakeholders, can use available data and information technology systems to gain support and resources when and where they need them.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

ECS's high-quality plan for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the term of the grant are listed below:

- ECS has deliberately worked over the last twelve years to develop a world-class education system that builds on previous successes and lessons learned, that is financially sustainable over the long-term
- Already embedded into their continuous culture are the following programs
 - Teacher use of achievement evidence to adjust classroom content and activities to better meet learner needs.
 - Teacher proficiency with individualizing instruction and short-cycle formative assessments to impact classroom practice and maximize student engagement.
 - Teacher proficiency with using and interpreting existing web-based and newly developed data presentation systems, such as Educator Central (aka SchoolNet).
 - Cultural competency of teachers and principals.
 - ELL student engagement.
 - Socio-emotional levels of students and negative behavioral issues.
- ECS will utilize two state-required accountability processes for tracking continuous improvement: the Unified Improvement Plan for Schools and the District Performance Framework for local education agencies
- They are proposing a team of external evaluators
- The following questions will be asked of them
 - To what extent have teachers made changes to their instruction based on professional development, coaching, and PLC collaboration?
 - To what extent are teachers using data effectively?
 - To what extent are teachers differentiating instruction as the result of their use of data?
 - To what extent are students having more opportunities to actively engage in their own learning in class?
 - At what level of cognitive demand are the students engaging in class?
 - To what extent is the teachers' enacted curriculum rigorous?
 - To what extent are the teachers' enacted curriculum aligned to CAS/CCSS?
- For the three school-based pilot studies under Project #4: Exploring Systems Change, ECS is combining both formative and summative examination of the school pilots using the rapid prototyping approach
- The Continuous improvement timeline is completely sketched out in table format also

ECS high-quality plan for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the term of the grant seems clearly stated in the above details provided by ECS.

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

5

5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

ECS's high-quality plan for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders is detailed in the following:

- As part of the development and implementation of Projects #1 through #6 they will be engaging various stakeholders over the course of RTTT-D activities, In addition they will be soliciting their feedback and providing them with information as part of the continuous improvement
- They have multiple modes of communicating with their stakeholders and will utilize email, texting, print and online media, School Board Meetings
- It will also make available to the general public information about RTTT-D grant activities and their progress through the annual progress reports as well as the final summative report written and submitted by the external evaluation team.
- One innovative outreach to note is the Insider's Academy. The Insider's Academy is a seven-day, two-hours-long classes open to the local public through enrollment which provides a thorough overview of key details of the district
- They also have a highly effective communications department that engages the community daily through social

media, website posts, and phone app updates

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Eagle County Schools lists off ambitious yet achievable performance measures the details listed follow:

- Eagle County Schools has had a long history of utilizing student performance on summative assessments as part of its determination of teacher effectiveness
 - The district developed its own student-teacher alignment system that was first implemented in the 2006-07 school year
- A total of 236,038 PowerSchool records of student-teacher linkages for the 2011-12 school year were examined for the purpose of analysis
- The cut points used are based on ECS policy as follows:
 - 1) Low Performing Teachers, which equates to a score that is less than 3.0 and is categorically referred to as 'unacceptable' or 'needs improvement' within the district;
 - 2) Effective Teachers, which equates to a score of 3.0 to 3.99 and is categorically referred to satisfactory' within the district;
 - 3) High Performing Teachers, which is categorically referred to as 'High Performing' or 'Exceptional' within the district.
- Additionally for principals, evaluation scores based on school-wide value added scores from SY 2012-13 are used to determine if s/he is highly effective or effective

Making the data easier to follow will allow for a slightly higher score.

The applicant provided ambitious yet achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup, this also includes a plan for improving over time. This can be seen by the evidence and data tables that are presented by the district. The rationale is clearly discussed as well.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

ECS's plan to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of Race to the Top – District funded activities, such as professional development and activities that employ technology follow:

- They plan to hire a team of third-party external evaluators to provide objectivity and validity to the processes and results of the summative analysis of the RTTT-D activities and their impact on student, personnel, and system outcomes in Eagle County Schools
- The following evaluation questions will guide the evaluation team efforts, which seems to be a thorough evaluation.
 - Overall, what was the quality of the RTTT-D grant's implementation? How was the grant implemented? To what extent has the grant met its' goals?
 - To what extent have the RTTT-D activities improved teachers' instruction?
 - To what extent have the RTTT-D activities led to improved student academic outcomes and socio-emotional outcomes?
 - To what extent have the RTTD-D activities closed achievement gaps for Latino students, English language learners and economically disadvantaged students?
 - How have student engagement increased over the course of the grant?
 - How have parental engagement increased over the course of the grant?
 - How have teachers differentiated instruction based on their data use?
 - Which of the three school-based pilots exhibited rapid transformation of their participating school sites? Which, if any, where replicated to other schools?
 - Did the ECS-CMS partnership lead to more successful placement of student teachers participating program to schools following their graduation?
 - Which RTTT-D activities resulted in a high return on investment? Which RTTT-D activities resulted in a lower return on investment?

The above list details how ECS will evaluate their effectiveness for the race to the top. Adding to how this might be done

more specifically would lead to a higher score in this area.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	4

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Eagle county School's budget, including the budget narrative and tables begins by breaking down the projects. It was then broken down into the following categories: personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual, and training stipends. These are described thoroughly .

There was minimal narrative, only tables of information. In order for this to meet criterion listed you would need to identify all funds that will support the project. There would need to be reasonable and sufficient information to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal, and it would clearly provide a thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities in narrative form as well as in the tables of information.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	8
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

ECS plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant:

- ECS understands that the grant will run out after four years, they want to strategically invest in building their infrastructure and their capacity so that they can continue the effective practices of the project for many years to come
- ECS will be working throughout the grant period to determine ways to reallocate existing resources around their new vision for personalized learning and expect that they will be able to eliminate some practices that currently are considered standard operating procedures in favor of new, more effective practices that will become a part of a new culture within the district
- They are investing a portion of their RTTT-D budget to study the educational return on investment (eROI) of their grant activities and to analyze the systems of support within ECS in order to reorient the budgeting.
- With their contractors, they will create a robust, data-driven annual budget development process for ECS overall. The process will be designed to be usable and practical, with simple requirements for data collection and analysis

From this it may be determined that ECS has a high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

Not present.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The personalized learning environment can be seen in its use in. . .

- Educator Central

- Learning at the Core
- The 6 RTTT-D projects
- Educator Effectiveness initiatives
- Data processing systems

It is my belief ECS has coherently and comprehensively addressed how it will build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements; the will accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student; increasing the effectiveness of educators; expanding student access to the most effective educators; decreasing achievement gaps across student groups; and increasing the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.

Total	210	181
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