



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0121NJ-1 for Elizabeth Public Schools

### A. Vision (40 total points)

|   | Available | Score     |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>10</b> |
| <p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant has provided a coherent reform vision that includes the following.</p> <p>(a) This is demonstrated in the comprehensive and detailed description of how it is building on its work in four core educational assurance areas . Table the Four Educational Assurances Areas table describes the district's current work to date in each of the core areas, the district's plans in the core areas, and lastly, how those plans specifically align to RTTT-D fund use.</p> <p>As one example, the district is implementing the state teacher evaluation system and plans to use RTTT-D funds to provide training of teachers in best practice around personalization and individualization.</p> <p>(b) The applicant has ably articulated a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support grounded in common and individual tasks that are based on student academic interests. this is demonstrated in the applicant's vision for innovation which encompasses the following three major components.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Centered Learning Time - which includes an extended day for K-8, 90 minute student owned intervention time and enrichment</li> <li>• Innovative Schools - which includes open-space/blended learning environments, student access to all math teachers, teacher assignment by teacher strength</li> <li>• Equity of Access- which includes laptops for 11th and 12th graders, 24/7 internet access, SAT/ACT on line prep, AP and credit recovery online</li> </ul> <p>(c) The applicant provided an articulate and credible description of the changes in teacher roles, content and student responsibility in the classroom. The classroom experience for students and teachers participating in personalized learning environments will see the teacher as a facilitator of learning, a mentor and a resource. Students will be responsible for planning, implementing and monitoring their learning plans. Content in this new classroom will be meaningful (address student needs, weaknesses and the CCSS) and personalized (capitalize on student academic interests, learning style and choice).</p> <p>Overall, the applicant has ably and credibly responded to these criteria and scores in the high range.</p> |           |           |
| <b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>10</b> |
| <p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>While not explicitly stated, all 31 schools in the district are participating in the grant. This is evidenced in Table A2.2 where the total number of participating students (24,027) equals the total number of students in the district. (24, 027). The participating schools collectively meet the competition's eligibility requirements.</p> <p>(a) The applicant described the process that was used to select which of its schools would participate in grant activities by each of major reform components (Student-Centered Learning, Innovative Schools and Equity of Access). All participation</p>   |           |           |

decisions were made through an analysis of student achievement data, staffing capacity, building infrastructures to support proposed activities, and teacher and principal input. The processes described appear to be intentional and complete.

As an example the student-centered schools process was described as "multi-faceted". First all K-8 schools were to be included. During data analysis meetings it was determined that middle level "teacher capacity" and scheduling for the intervention time was a concern. Additionally, the logic model provided in Tables A3.1, 2 and 3, describe in greater detail, the rationale to include all schools. As such, it was decided to use the intervention time (the three hours that are gained from an extended school day) in a new and more student-centered manner. This new time will allow for linking students by interest and to the teachers that have the skill sets to meet their needs.

(b) In Table A2.2, the applicant has provided a complete list with each school that will participate in grant activities. The applicant has also identified which of those schools are currently Innovation, Equity of Access or Student-Centered Learning schools (Table A2.1).

(c) Table A2.2 includes the total number of participating students, participating students from low-income families, participating students who are high-need students, and participating educators. As described, these schools collectively meet the eligibility requirements.

The applicant has clearly and completely responded to all criteria and has scored in the high range.

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| <b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>8</b> |
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**(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant has presented a high-quality plan with goals and activities, rationale and outputs which describe how the proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support the current and proposed district-wide change in all schools in the district. In describing its plan, the applicant has very clearly aligned all goals and activities to the following three major components of reform in the district.

- Student Centered Learning
- Innovation Schools
- Access and Equity

As currently written, the applicant has a strong potential of reaching its student learning and other outcome activities identified in the logic model.

Of positive note, the applicant also provided intended impact (i.e. student achievement, retention, engagement).

In the Innovation Schools logic model, the applicant has indicated its commitment to scaling up reform in its adoption and pilot of the Teach To One algorithm-based instructional model. The applicant had proposed this model in last year's unsuccessful RTTT-D proposal. In spite of not getting the grant, the applicant went ahead and piloted the model in one school this last year and proposes to implement in the 9 Innovation Schools with this grant.

Also noteworthy, the applicant has specifically addresses increased access for ELL and students with disabilities to the math curricula.

Additionally, the applicant has proposed activities in a logical sequential manner that is clear and will likely lead to completion. As one example, in the Student-Centered Learning logic model, under the Development of the Digital Portfolios, the applicant's plan is to first train teachers and students in the use of Blackboard, then provide access to Blackboard, and then train students in *how* to set goals and to monitor their progress. That the applicant has identified the need and will *explicitly* train students in goal setting and progress monitoring is a critical and often missed important step to helping students take ownership for their learning.

The applicant did not include a timeline and persons responsible for the activities.

Overall, the applicant has very comprehensively responded to the criteria and scores in the high range.

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| <b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>9</b> |
| <p><b>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>As noted earlier, per the district's clear and focused three component vision and comprehensive logic models specifically aligned to those components, there is a strong likelihood that the applicant's proposal will result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by their ambitious yet achievable annual goals. The applicant has provided goals for every grade level and every subgroup and for graduation rates.</p> <p>The applicant did not address whether or not these goals equal or exceed the State ESEA targets.</p> <p>(a) The applicant has clearly and completely provided performance goals for every grade level and every subgroup, defined the methodology for determining status and the method for determining growth. The applicant is using the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge for English Language Arts and Math (NJ ASK ELA and Math).</p> <p>(b) The applicant has provided goals for decreasing achievement gaps for every grade and subgroup using the statewide data as the comparison group. In essence the applicant is proposing to mitigate the gap between district performance and state performance on the NJ ASK. There were no goals provided that mitigate the gap between the subgroups <i>within</i> the district. As an example, whites and females predominately have high achievement across all grade levels and content, while African Americans have lower achievement across all grade levels and content. Decreasing the achievement gap between these two subgroups <i>in</i> the district is another way to approach this criteria and mitigate the gap locally - not just at a state level.</p> <p>(c) The applicant has provided graduation rate goals that appear to be achievable and ambitious. The applicant has differentiated yearly increases for each of the subgroups- making the goals more ambitious for some subgroups. As an example, yearly increases for whites are 1 and 2 percent alternating increases each year, while African American increases are 3 and 4% percent alternating increases each year.</p> <p>(d) The applicant has provided achievable and ambitious college enrollment rates. As well, the rates were differentiated for each subgroup making some more ambitious than others, clearly intending to mitigate the gap among subgroups. Given the district's past record of success, there is a high likelihood of the applicant decreasing the gap.</p> <p>(e) The Applicant has proposed very ambitious overall postsecondary degree attainment goals. The yearly 8% increase has a good likelihood of being met, given the specific equity in access activities proposed in the grant.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant has clearly and comprehensively responded to these criteria and has scored in the high range.</p> |           |          |

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

|  | Available | Score     |
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| <b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>  | <b>15</b> | <b>15</b> |
| <p><b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(1) The applicant has very comprehensively demonstrated a strong record of success in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching in the past four years. Through numerous narrative descriptions, charts, graphs, and student outcome data, the applicant has provided solid evidence of its ability to improve student outcomes and decrease the achievement gap. (a) The following are examples of evidenced based student and district successes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School Graduation Rate has increased for almost every subgroup</li> <li>• Achievement gap at highest quartile is low</li> <li>• College enrollment rate for 4-year graduates has increased since 2009</li> <li>• 11th Grade LAL &amp; Math performance has increased at significant rates</li> <li>• NJASK Mathematics Grades 4-8 increase</li> <li>• NJASK LAL increases 2009-2012/ 2012-2013</li> <li>• In 2012-2013, the NJASK underwent a significant change to be aligned to the CCSS; changing test items, clusters,</li> </ul> |           |           |

and cut scores.

- The significant increase in LAL Grade 7 between 2012-2013 illustrates a significant curriculum overhaul to meet the needs of the students based on an analysis of student performance data from prior years
- Consistent performance above the DFG A average as a comparative group (other districts with similar economic profile, i.e. Newark, Paterson, Trenton, Camden, etc.)
- 100% of the elementary schools have Average to Very High performance in Academic Achievement and College and Career Readiness when compared to Peer schools that have similar grade levels and students with similar demographic characteristics.
- Three schools have been awarded National Blue Ribbon Schools
- In 2011 and 2012 the EHS was ranked #2 in New Jersey

It should be noted that the applicant has remained committed to improving student learning outcomes and closing the achievement gaps over the course of the last 7 years. It first implemented its 2006-2011 strategic plan in 2006 and started to see improvement in student outcomes in 2010. The applicant has consistently remained faithful to its goals and strategic plan. It developed and is now implementing its 2011-2016 strategic plan. Given this record of commitment and consistent focused efforts, combined with actual improved student outcomes, this proposal has a strong likelihood of meeting its goals within the grant period. Additionally, the applicant has demonstrated with its graphs, charts and critical analysis that it is a very data driven district and consistently meets the RTTT-D Educational Assurance Area that deals with data systems.

(b) The district has initiated and followed through on a number of reform initiatives over the last several years. The following are representative of a few of the state and local initiatives implemented by the district.

- Adoption of a Managed Instruction framework for teaching and learning
- Increased early learning opportunities
- Providing school choice (The district also has several magnet schools which are lottery schools)
- Implementation of a school uniform initiative
- Implementation of an extended school day
- Implementation of the state No Bullying legislation
- Adoption of district wide initiatives specific to special education and ELL students - that include, but are not limited to a continuum of programs, enhanced special education recruitment and professional development, and the development of an Advanced Bilingual Model (ABM)
- Initiated partnerships with the Panasonic Foundation, The Merck Institute for Science Education, Monclair University, Rutgers University,
- Re-organized the high schools into 6 career and academically themed high schools.
- Implemented two credit recovery programs
- Piloted the state teacher evaluation program

As one example of how the district has achieve ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools or in its low-performing schools, the applicant piloted the Teach to One model in one of its schools last year and has strong enough student feedback (Appendix K) and results to propose this algorithm-based model in 9 other schools.

c) In an effort to make student performance data available to students, educators and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, and instruction, the applicant subscribed to PowerHouse in 2006 and continues to maximize its capacity for use. PowerHouse is a student Information System that provides daily access to information about the progress of their child to parents. The recent adoption of Blackboard will provide will provide student access to their learning profiles as well as community news and information. The district is working on identifying a public data dashboard that will provide parents with important student information.

Overall the applicant has provided comprehensive evidence of a demonstrated record of success and scores in the high range.

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| <b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>  | <b>5</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <p><b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicantigh level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments, including by making public, by school, actual school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration. At a minimum, this information must include a description of the extent to which the applicant already makes available the following four categories of school-level expenditures from State and local funds:</p> <p>(a, b, c) The applicant has stated that all staff (salaried, hourly and stipend) are Board appointed. As such, actual personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staf are available at the time of appointment, and can be found published in the Board minutes which are available on the district website and at the main branch of the library and through the Secretary/School Business Administrator's office.</p> <p>Additionally, salaries for full time employees can be found in the collective bargaining unit agreements which are distributed to every employee by category and available in each school office and through the Secretary/School Business Administrator's office.</p> <p>(d) School level non-personnel expenditures may be found in the school budgets held by the school principal and shared with each school Instructional Leadership team (ILT). Individual school budgets are also part of the larger district budget which is public and available through Board meetings, on the district website, annual budget presentations, and through taped versions on YouTube.</p> <p>The applicant has adequately noted the district transparency in district processes and expenditures and scores in the high range.</p> |          |          |

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| <b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>9</b> |
| <p><b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant indicated two potential waivers that may be necessary to ensure successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in its proposal. All other, necessary conditions exist.</p> <p>The first potential concern would impact the student -centered learning intervention time where 5-8th grade students would work at the math center at their own pace and possibly with a teacher other than their own teacher. The waiver would be needed for the 5th grade teachers who do not have the content endorsement to teach math. At this time the district does not see a potential problem with obtaining a waiver as the students' teacher of record will be in the Math center with them and the student/teacher ratio will be lower than if in the classroom with their teacher.</p> <p>The second potential area for a waiver is with regard to student growth. The new teacher evaluation system value-added data only attributes success to a single teacher of record. In the model proposed by the applicant it would need a waiver so that multiple teachers of record could be afforded attribution for student success.</p> <p>These are areas of potential waivers speak to the innovation and commitment to "whatever it takes" to ensure improved student achievement. Additionally, the proposal speaks to teacher commitment to improved outcomes. In the case of the student growth model, if multiple teachers will be attributed success for students - so too, can mutiple teachers be attributed responsibility if students do not succeed.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant has demonstrated sufficient autonomy to implement its proposed plan and scores in the high range.</p> |           |          |

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| <b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>  | <b>15</b> | <b>14</b> |
| <p><b>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant actively engaged all district leadership in the research and input stages of this proposal.</p> <p>(a) As evidence of the applicant's commitment to meaningful stakeholder engagement throughout the development of the proposal and meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal, there were numerous meetings and presentations to obtain</p> |           |           |

student, parent and educator feedback. This is demonstrated by the surveys, survey results and sign-in sheets from the Principal Data meetings, RTTT Tech meetings, Parent Focus Group meetings, and Stakeholder Focus group meetings, and student iPrep academy comments (Appendices J and K).

While the applicant did provide evidence of meetings and a description of how students, families, teachers, and principals in participating schools were engaged in the development of the proposal, parent participation did appear limited.

Additionally, there was no mention of outreach efforts to engage parents, as one example, parents who speak a language other than English.

(i) The applicant provided **both** a signature on the application assurances page and a strong letter of support from the district collective bargaining representation (President of the local union) as evidence of direct engagement and support for the proposals from teachers in the district.

(b) The applicant provided 12 letters of support from key stakeholders in the district. These letters of support came from the following.

- The Elizabeth Education Association Union president
- Elizabeth Administrators and Supervisors Association
- Elizabeth Chamber of Commerce
- YMCA
- Harvard Education Center for Policy
- AVID
- Business and Education partners (Elizabeth Development Company, Proceed Inc, National Center for OnTime Learning, New Classroom, National Academy Foundation and Pearson)
- In addition, the applicant provided an "Articulation Agreement" between the district and Fairleigh Dickensen University and Elizabeth High School Upper Academy.
- An email from the NJ DOE regarding it's support of the district application and the 10 day business days to review the application.
- A letter from the Elizabeth mayor's office regarding it's support of the district application and the 10 day business days to review the application.

Overall, the applicant has comprehensively responded to the criteria and has scored in the high range.

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

|                                    | Available | Score     |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b> | <b>20</b> | <b>17</b> |

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

The applicant provided a very comprehensive and high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in the table in section

The applicant provided goals and related activities, the staff person(s) responsible for these activities, the deliverables and a timeline. While rationale were not specifically written into this plan, rationale for each of the proposed activities has been provided in other tables in this proposal.

Many of the activities had a very global and non-specific timeline of 1-4 years. Thus, it is unclear as to when the activity or goal would be complete. As one example, under Goal #7, it is unclear when the capital renovation project will be started,

completed and open for student use. Additionally, it is unclear which school will receive this renovation.

(i) Goal #5 which is to have students develop a digital Portfolio on Blackboard is a good example of ensuring that students understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals. Students will learn how to write their own goals and how to monitor their progress on those goals.

(ii) The third component of the district reform vision, Equity of Access, fully demonstrates the applicant's plan to help students identify and pursue learning and development linked to college- and career-ready standards or, college- and career-ready graduation requirements, and to understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals. Additionally, Goal #8 which is to expand AVID all Innovative Schools and high schools is another example, as is Goal #5, mentioned earlier. As one last example, Goal #9 proposes to provide wireless access to all high school students and online resources for college and career readiness.

(iii) The applicant did not specifically address *how* students would be involved in **deep learning** experiences in areas of academic interest; and (iv) *how it would provide* access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning.

(v) While the applicant has addressed a goal to help students learn goal setting (#5), it did not sufficiently address how it would build mastery in critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving.

The applicant has proposed that students and teachers will be surveyed to capture each student's preferred way of learning, their personal interests and their academic strengths and weaknesses. Coupled with the student's actual achievement data the survey will generate an individual learning plan/profile for each student.

(i) The applicant proposes a personalized learning environment anchored by "skill maps" aligned to the CCSS personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable the student to achieve his or her individual learning goals and ensure he or she can graduate on time and college- and career-ready. This will be accomplished with:

- A unique learning plan for each student
- Providing immediate information about their performance (feedback through their digital portfolios)
- Access to additional learning resources *and* learning modalities as well as multiple attempts..

(A) Per Goal #5, students will have instant access to their own individual student data with their digital profiles on Blackboard. Via individual portals students will see "at-a-glance" what skills are on their Teach to One "playlist", how they are progressing through their playlist, which skills they have mastered, and which skills may require additional instruction and reinforcement. The digital Profile will assist students in determining progress toward mastery of college- and career-ready standards, and/or college- and career-ready graduation requirements.

(v) The applicant specifically addressed how it would ensure that ALL students have access to multiple learning experiences. To that end both ELL and students in special education with IEPs will participate in this personalized education program. The applicant proposes to fully involve students and parents in determining the extent to which students who are typically in self-contained settings can participate in the intervention block and/or other learning groups. Additionally, both ELL and special education students will develop a digital portfolio. This commitment to including high needs students in all aspects of the plan is indicative of the applicant's attention to accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students to ensure that they are on track toward meeting college- and career-ready standards and college- and career-ready graduation requirements.

(c) Mechanisms are 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. As one example, evidenced in Table A3.1 under the Development of the Digital Blackboard indicates that students will be trained on Blackboard use **and** on the development of their goals and monitoring of progress. As well, the applicant plan is ensure students are active learners and take control of their own learning.

As another example in Table A3.2 students will be trained in essential college and career readiness skills.

Overall, the applicant has comprehensively demonstrated in its plan, an approach that engages and empowers all learners, and implements instructional strategies for ALL students that enables them to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to college- and career-ready standards and college- and career-ready graduation requirements and to accelerate his or her learning through support of his or her needs. Of positive note is the applicant's specific attention to the needs of high needs students. The applicant has scored in the high range.

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

**20**

**16**

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

The applicant 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, implement instructional strategies for all students and accelerate his or her learning through support of his or her needs and graduate college and career ready is found in the Table in section C-1, Tables A3.1, A3.2, A3.3 (logic models for the three reform components) and in the 2011-2016 strategic plan.

Additionally, the third core Guiding principle in the Elizabeth 2011-2016 Strategic Plan is: Leadership. They will:

- 12. Recruit, develop, retain and reward results - driven leaders
- 13. Build and develop high performing teams that achieve excellence
- 14. Implement an accountability system that identifies important performance indicators, measures performance using these indicators, collects and distributes performance data, and applies predetermined consequences (rankings, rewards, sanctions, and/or interventions) for achieving predefined outcomes for schools and other functional units.
- 15. Live the legacy we want to leave.

Of positive note is the consistent reference to the three components to the district reform vision: Student-centered learning, Innovative schools and Equity through Access and the dual learning for both students *and* teachers in each of the components.

The applicant's approach to teaching and leading to help educators to improve instruction and increase their own capacity to support student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards is to shift from teachers as doers, to teachers or guidance counselors as facilitators or mentors. This approach further requires that teachers collaborate with their peers and learners and leaders. To that end (a) all educators will be engaged in ongoing training, and in professional learning communities, that supports their individual and collective capacity to (i) Support the effective implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies that meet each student's academic needs and help ensure all students can graduate on time and college- and career-ready. This is specifically focused on in Goal 1, and is embedded in all goals in C-1).

(ii) The applicant did not specifically address how it would adapt content and instruction to provide opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks, in response to their academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches.

(iii) The applicant acknowledges the necessity for its counselors to be fully trained and competent in their support of student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements. It is noteworthy that the applicant is cognizant of the specific skills and knowledge needed to direct students toward opportunities (i.e. online university for credit courses, credit recovery, credit accrual, on line SAT/ACT review, online AP courses, etc.) that mesh with their overall learning plan, needs, interests and current coursework. As such, the goals and activities presented in section C-1 are evidence of the applicant's intent to provide ongoing training and supports to all educators,

(iv) The applicant has demonstrated its commitment to improve teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness by

using feedback provided by the state teacher (EE4NJ) and principal evaluation systems. The applicant has piloted this new state evaluation system for the 2011 and 2013 school years. The teacher evaluation system is based on the Danielson framework and provides a formal observations, measures of student growth, as well as informal observations (i.e. lesson design, walkthroughs, PLC participation) as opportunities for feedback on individual and collective effectiveness. The principal evaluation is based on student growth, data -driven decisions, and teacher evaluation. It is based on the Marzano model.

(i) The district’s teacher and principal evaluation systems will provide data and support to help school leaders and school leadership teams assess, and take steps to improve, individual and collective educator effectiveness and school culture and climate, for the purpose of continuous school improvement. As an example, school PLCs and district study cohorts are two ways that collective learning take place in the district.

(b) The applicant has proposed and demonstrated in its training goals that all district educators will have ongoing access to specific training on content, strategies and technology that align to the specific proposal goals on personalized learning and to the CCSS and will know how to implement the various tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress.

(i) The digital portfolio will provide actionable information that will help teachers, counselors and all educators identify optimal learning approaches that respond to individual student academic needs and interests. The applicant will also be providing ongoing training specific to personalized learning curricula (Goal 3) and personalization of instruction (Goal 6).

(ii) The Equity through Access goals (specifically Goals 8, 9 and 10) address the provision of high-quality learning resources that including digital and online resources that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards and college- and career-ready graduation requirements.

(ii) The comprehensive plan in C1 and the logic models in Tables A3.1, A3.2 and A3.3 fully describe numerous training, systems, and practices to continuously improve school progress toward the goals of increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps.

(d) While the applicant did not provide a high-quality plan to increase 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). The applicant did address a plan for training and mentoring new teachers and for ongoing teacher learning opportunities via the goals in C-1.

As noted earlier, the applicant could strengthen this plan by providing more specific timelines.

Overall, the applicant has sufficiently described an approach to teaching and leading that will help educators to improve instruction and increase their capacity to support student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards. As such, the applicant has scored in the low-high range.

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

|  | Available | Score     |
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| <b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b> | <b>15</b> | <b>11</b> |

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

The applicant has described practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning as demonstrated by the following.

(a) The applicant has sufficiently described the district office with (superintendent, 3 Assistant Superintendents, etc.) and the infrastructure (2011-2016 Strategic Plan, District managed Instruction, Accountability and Data Dashboard policies) that are organized to provide support and services to all participating schools. Of positive note, the district has been organized

and operating under a strategic plan for over 7 years. They are now on their second plan. This commitment to focused goals speaks to the applicant's strong infrastructure and supports for this proposal and leads to a high likelihood of accomplishing the proposed goals.

The applicant did not provide a timeline and persons responsible as defined by a high quality plan.

(b) As evidence of school and school leadership team 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, the applicant notes the following.

- School schedules are flexible with the start and end times- schools and teams may organize the schedule as necessary. The district is even providing specific training and support to revision scheduling in order to personalize learning.
- Schools and teams may personalize district curricula
- School budgets have a mixture of flexibility and structure

Critical areas of operation including the school calendar and content area curricula are not flexible.

(c) The applicant district has already started giving students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery not on seat based time in a content area. As present the district offers mastery-based credit options to its students as demonstrated by the APEX credit recovery program and dual credit opportunities with institutions of higher education (RUBY and NJIT). Additionally, at the primary level, the Teach To One and iPrep programs offer learning opportunities based on a student's skill level- regardless of their grade level.

(d) The applicant proposes that all schools in the district currently offer "a wide array of reinforcements" to provide the content required in each personalized learning environment. As well, several divisions in the district (Staff Development, Bilingual and Special Education, REA and Elementary and Secondary Education) will "offer a range of integrated services" to support implementation of the three major reform components.

The applicant, though, never explicitly noted that it will offer students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways, thus it is unclear as to the extent that this will happen.

(e) As noted earlier, the applicant has demonstrated it's intent to included and support all students (including students with disabilities and English Language Learners) by providing learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible. As one more example, the applicant proposes to equip special education teachers with a tablet computer for real time access of student location, tasks they are working on and their daily goals when special education students are participating in small groups or other personalized learning environments. This information will also assist the special education teacher in communicating with and assisting the general education teachers in how to support student progress.

Overall, the applicant has scored in the medium range.

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| <b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>7</b> |
|---|-----------|----------|

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

The applicant has proposed that the data dashboard Policy, managed Instruction policy and Accountability Policy are illustrative of the school Board support and district policies that support student achievement. As one specific example, the Accountability Policy indicates a number of ways that the district recognizes and rewards performance of both students and educators. As another example of the infrastructure, support and resources provided to all students, educators and parents, the district 2011-2016 Strategic plan speaks to the district mission, guiding principles, Theory of Action (Managed Instruction) and plan priorities (activities). As such, the applicant has described how it will support the project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator with the support and resources they need to succeed.

The applicant did not provide a plan with a timeline and persons responsible.

The applicant has specifically demonstrated how the district and school infrastructure supports personalized learning as noted below.

(a) The applicant's 2011-2016 and Data Dashboard Policy, Managed Instruction Policy and Accountability Policy, specifically address how the district will ensure that all participating students, parents, educators and other stakeholders regardless of income, have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of this proposal.

(b) The goals and activities noted in the table in Section C-1 very specifically demonstrate how the applicant will ensure that students, parents, and educators will have the necessary and appropriate levels of technical support to implement this proposal. As one specific example, the Teach To One program will provide professional development and on-site facilitators at each school to assist with program implementation, train, run data and trouble shoot technology challenges. As another example, the district will provide specific training on scheduling option to maximize time and personalized learning opportunities.

More specifically for students, in addition to PowerSchool, and extended day, and Blackboard access and training, the iLEAP centers will offer technology access and support during and beyond the school year. Parents may access the Adult Education Program for classes and computer use.

(c) As noted earlier, the applicant is already subscribing to PowerSchool and has recently added BlackBoard as data information technology system that allow parents and students to export their information in an open data format. These systems will allow parents and students to see report cards, progress, student profiles, and recommendations for additional learning supports.

(d) While the applicant stated that it uses EduMet for human resources and budget data and PowerSchool for student data, it did not speak to the interoperability of these data systems. Thus, it is unclear if that is a possibility.

Overall, the applicant did not address all the elements of a high quality plan and scored in the medium range.

## E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

|  | Available | Score     |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b> | <b>15</b> | <b>11</b> |

### (E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

It appears as if the applicant is combining it's evaluation of investments and continuous improvement processes. This is evidenced by the activities to be measured in Table E4:Evaluating Effectiveness. In its proposed plan, the district will monitor the following grant activities with both quantitative and qualitative data on a quarterly basis.

- Capital improvements
- Student data
- Teacher effectiveness
- Leadership effectiveness
- Professional development
- Technology usage
- Stakeholder engagement

The applicant also identified the measurement tools to evaluate progress. As an example, it provided an extensive list of both formative and summative student assessments to measure student achievement.

Of concern is the lack of any goals and/or targets for activities other than student achievement (goals are noted in E-3). It is unclear how the applicant will evaluate for effectiveness without targets and/or specific goals that determine success.

Additionally, it is unclear how the applicant will provide timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals with the current yearly timeline.

The applicant proposes to publicly share the continuous improvement information via Board meetings, social media, the district website and community newsletter and Board roundtables.

Overall, the applicant has not provided all the required elements of a high quality plan and scores in the medium range.

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

5

2

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

Because the applicant's plans represent the best thinking at a point in time, and may require adjustments and revisions during implementation, it is vital that the applicant have a clear and high-quality approach to continuously improve its plans. This will be determined by the extent to which the applicant has—

The applicant proposes to communicate and engage community members through the following.

- Community newsletters (Monthly at the school level, quarterly at the district level)
- Board meetings
- District website
- Social media (Facebook, You Tube)
- Board open office hours and community roundtables
- Parent teacher organization
- RTTT-D Blog

While these are all worthy methods of communication, the applicant did not address all the elements of a high quality plan (as defined in this notice) for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. As such, the applicant has scored in the low-medium range.

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

5

5

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

The applicant had provided 13 proposed measures that include the required performance measures.

- (a) The applicant has completely described rationale for selecting each measure.
- (b) For each measure, the applicant has indicated how it will provide rigorous, timely, and formative information tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action. As one example, teachers will monitor algebra benchmark goals and attendance on a quarterly basis.
- (c) The applicant has comprehensively addressed each measure and how it will review and improve the measure over time if it is insufficient to gauge implementation progress. As an example, the district will change to the PARCC assessment in 2015-2016 and no longer use the NJASK. As another example, the district will examine the need to phase out MAPs and Terra Nova based on the quality of the PARRC data.

Each of the performance measure yearly increases appear to be differentiated to each of the subgroups. As such, the achievement gap is somewhat mitigated.

Overall, the applicant has comprehensively provided achievable and ambitious overall and subgroup performances measure. based on the above comments, the applicant has scored in the high range.

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

5

3

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

The applicant has presented a plan for an internal evaluation of the effectiveness of Race to the Top – District funded activities. This is evidenced by Table E4: Evaluating Effectiveness. The table is inclusive of activities, measurement methods and a timeline. The district senior leadership will conduct the evaluation. The rational is guided by the following research questions.

Research questions for formative evaluation:

- To what extent are the RTTT-D initiatives implemented as intended?
- In what ways have teachers used training and support they receive to enhance teaching and learning?
- How can the district improve the professional development plan and deliver

Research questions for summative evaluation:

- What is the impact of the RTTT-D initiatives on students and stakeholders (teachers, school leaders, parents, community)?
- To what extent have we made progress in each of the performance measures and annual targets? What are student outcomes by subgroups of students?
- What is the impact on closing the achievement gap, increasing graduation rates, and preparing students for college and careers?

The applicant proposes the following specific tools for measurement of program effectiveness.

- Student and teacher surveys
- MyLearning Plan - a professional development management system. This tool can survey faculty and collect data on the efficacy of the professional development and district initiatives.

All data and evaluation results will be shared with district and school leadership for analysis and action planning, though, the applicant did not specify a specific process for the analysis and how frequently such an analysis would take place.

The applicant proposes to create a data dashboard to monitor the impact of the programming and share critical milestones, though, did not sufficiently address how it would evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed professional development and technology..

While the applicant did provide activities and a timeline, they were very global in nature and did not include *specific* evaluation steps, the *specific* person(s) responsible and a more specific timeline (monthly and/or quarterly). Additionally, evaluation is a critical and time consuming component of a large scale project such as RTT-D. It is not certain that district staff will have time for such an endeavor with their current teaching and learning responsibilities and the added RTTT-D grant activities. It is unclear why an outside evaluator was not proposed.

For the above noted reasons, the applicant has scored in the medium range.

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

|  | Available | Score    |
|--|-----------|----------|
| <b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>9</b> |

### (F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has provided a clear and complete budet inclusive of narrative, an overall budget, and project budgets with rationale and line item descriptions of expenditures. This is demonstrated as follows.

(a) The applicant has very clearly identified all funds that will support their Race to the Top – District grant. All budget pages have completed budget categories and indicate total revenue. The applicant has not indicated the use of any external funds for the grant period, though has indicated the use of local district funds, Title I and Title II funds and a technology grant to sustain the grant after the grant period.

(b) The applicant has decribed an overall budget that is reasonable and aligned to the goals and activities proposed by the applicant and will support the development and implementation of said proposal. Project budget requests are reasonable, with rational and line item descriptions and within allowable costs.

It is unclear why the applicant has not requested indirect costs in its budget.

In a few instances it would have made for greater clarity to provide more information. As one example, in Table 3-1: Innovation Schools Project budget, under 5, Supplies, the laptop costs are noted at approximately \$873, 000 per year for three years. It would provide greater clarity to line item out the actual cost per laptop x the number of laptops.

Additionally, in the same budget, it is unclear why only 9 schools (verses all schools) require the stated contractual service fee.

It should be noted that the applicant proposes a \$4,150,000 capital expenditure for construction/infrastructure redesign of a classroom space. While the district contribution to said expenditure and the absolute necessity of the redesign is unknown, this expenditure *is* in alignment with the applicant's goal for personalized math instruction from any teacher. It is also a one time only allowable cost.

(c) The applicant has provided clear and thoughtful rationale for its investments and priorities. This is evidenced by the Four Core Educational Assurance Area chart in section A. For each assurance area, the applicant aligns the district's current work with their grant activities and the rationale for the RTTT-D expenditures.

(ii) The applicant's proposal narrative and budget tables describe the funds that will be used for one-time investments versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs that will be incurred during and after the grant period. For ongoing costs the applicant has very completely compiled a 3 year after grant budget that delineates all costs and provides potential find sources for the ongoing costs after the grant. As such, the applicant has very comprehensively described strategies and fund sources for the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments in the district.

Overall, it should be noted that this is a very clear, complete and well justified budget proposal. All costs are clearly aligned to the four educational assurance areas and the goals and activities of the proposal. As such the applicant scores in the high range.

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

**10**

**10**

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

The applicant provided a comprehensive and high-quality plan that demonstrated its sustainability plans for 3 years after the grant period. As part of its sustainability plan, the applicant proposes the following activities and deliverables: establish an advisory board, develop an action plan that includes a written sustainability plan, identify needed resources, and build capacity in its district personnel.

The applicant provided a comprehensive table that addressed each of the RTTT-D four core educational assurance areas -aligned to the current EPS initiative, projected costs beyond 2017 and a *projected* sustainability source. The detail in this analysis of future needs is demonstrated in the teacher and principal evaluation observation and the MyLearningPlan Initiatives where the applicant has identified costs as on-going beyond the grant and funded by the district. As another example, the applicant identified the on-going costs of PowerSchool being covered by a technology grant. As one last example, the district identified its Title II grant funds as a source for sustaining the RTTT-D professional development efforts.

In Table F-2, the applicant further provided specific cost descriptions for sustaining grant activities and/or positions and the identified source of funding for those costs.

The applicant proposes to evaluate the effectiveness of the RRRT-D investments via cost-benefit models that identify student progress under different programs and their cost-benefit ratio to the overall system budget. These models will identify activities where the program has had the most impact as well as identify activities and areas of weakness. Lastly, the applicant proposes to evaluate student achievement trends over longer periods of time and tie them to programmatic investments to identify both long and short term impact.

The applicant has comprehensively responded to these criteria and has scored in the high range.

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

|   | Available | Score    |
|---|-----------|----------|
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>7</b> |
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</b>   |           |          |
| <p>The applicant has provided a description of a coherent and sustainable partnership with the regional medical center that will support its proposed plan described in Absolute Priority 1. This is evidenced by the following.</p> <p>(1) In response to the Competitive Preference Priority: Results, Resource Alignment, and Integrated Services, the applicant has proposed to enhance its current <u>longstanding</u> partnerships and collaborative efforts with the Trinitas Regional Medical Center. This partnership currently provides students and family with access to behavioral, social-emotional, educational and health services. As an example of the long standing relationship, Trinitas has served the district high school students with the Youth Enrichment Services (YES) program for over 25 years. In addition to YES, Trinitas currently provides the following services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensive outpatient program</li> <li>• Children's mobile crisis response</li> <li>• Child and adolescent psychiatric services</li> </ul> <p>The applicant's rationale for the competitive priority funds is to address the needs of the "whole child".</p> <p>(2) The applicant has identified 9 population-level (ages 5-8, elementary school and high school) desired results for students in the district. As noted by the tracking indicators these desired results align with and support the applicant's broader Race to the Top – District proposal.</p> <p>The proposed results are inclusive of (a) educational results and other education outcomes as exemplified by the following educational outcomes for the students ages 5-8.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate age appropriate behavior and attention span</li> <li>• Exhibit appropriate classroom behaviors</li> </ul> <p>(b) The applicant did not address specific family and community supports results;</p> <p>3(a) The applicant has provided a table that clearly tracks 8 selected indicators that would measure each result at the student level for the participating students. While the applicant is tracking pre and post intervention data such as the number of discipline referrals and removal from class it did not explicitly address tracking aggregate level data for all children within the district. Thus, it is unclear from the chart if this will happen.</p> <p>(b) The applicant has ably described what data it will collect and how it will use that data to target its resources to improve results for students with special emphasis on students facing significant challenges, such as students with behavioral, social -emotional challenges, and significant crisis needs due to poverty, family instability, or other child welfare issues. This is evidenced in the Action Plan.</p> <p>(c) The following are examples of how the applicant proposes to scale the model beyond the participating students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Track student services to determine the impact on academics, social emotional growth and behavior</li> <li>• Institute a self assessment process in each school to evaluate available services</li> <li>• Develop comprehensive transition plans for students exiting the Trinitas program and re-entering school</li> </ul> <p>(d) The applicant did not specifically describe how it proposes to improve results over time and (4) describe how the partnership would integrate education and other services (e.g., services that address social-emotional, and behavioral needs, acculturation for immigrants and refugees) within the schools.</p> <p>(5) In response to how it would build the capacity of staff, the applicant has proposed to provide training for teachers</p> |           |          |

and student support personnel in the following areas.

- culture of poverty
- cultural awareness
- effective communication with parents of children with extreme challenges
- behavior management skills
- strategies that address social-emotional and behavioral concerns
- developing transition plans
- analyzing data for correlations between achievement and behavior expectations

(a) The above activities as well as the activities in the Action Plan, would additionally assess the needs and assets of the participating students and are aligned with the partnership's goals for improving the education and family and community supports serviced by the partnership.

(b) The applicant did not address how it proposes to identify and inventory the needs and assets of the schools and the community that are aligned with those goals for improving the education and family and community supports identified by the applicant.

Nor, did the applicant address (c) any decision-making process and infrastructure to select, implement, and evaluate supports that address the individual needs of participating students, or (d) how it would engage parents and families of participating students in both decision-making about solutions to improve results over time and in addressing student, family, and school needs.

(e) While the applicant did provide a timeline and include some activities to monitor results, it did not specifically describe how it would routinely assess its progress in implementing its plan to maximize impact and resolve challenges.

Overall, the applicant provided a high quality plan with goals, activities, a timeline deliverable sand persons responsible for the activities. Additionally, its desired performance results are related to the overall proposal and personalizing learning for students in the district. The longstanding relationship between the district and regional medical center indicate a strong likelihood of achieving the proposed goals *and* in improving student achievement and other outcomes.

The applicant has not sufficiently responded to all criteria and identified annual ambitious yet achievable performance measures for the proposed population-level. The applicant has scored in the medium range.

### Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

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

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant has very capably, coherently and comprehensively addressed how it proposes to build on the four RTTT-D core educational assurance areas to create personal learning environments that will 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, accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student.

Over the course of the entire proposal, the applicant has consistently aligned the four Assurance areas to the goals and activities of the proposal as well as to the districts three reform initiatives (Student-centered learning, Innovative schools, and Equity through access). Additionally, the applicant already has demonstrated success in incorporating several personalized learning models and has addressed how it would do so for ALL students, including students with disabilities

and ELLs.

Lastly, the consistent and focused district efforts over the past 7 years demonstrate the district's commitment and capacity to implement the goals and activities of the proposed project with a high degree of success.

|              |            |            |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Total</b> | <b>210</b> | <b>178</b> |
|--------------|------------|------------|



## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

Application #0121NJ-2 for Elizabeth Public Schools

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

|   | Available | Score     |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>  |           |           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applicant provides a plan that spans from K-12; the plan focuses on three parts, student centered learning, innovation schools and equity of access. The applicant's reform vision encompasses students across all grade levels.</li> <li>The applicant provides a chart that addressed the four core educational assurance areas with current information as well as their proposed plans. The chart demonstrates the current goals as well as a clear vision of their plan if awarded.</li> <li>The applicant provides a clear description of the classroom experience for K-8, Grades 7-8 and high school juniors/seniors however 9th and 10th grades are not addressed. It is unclear if the applicant will include these grades as participating students.</li> </ul>   |           |           |
| <b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>10</b> |
| <b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>  |           |           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applicant does an excellent job of describing the process used to select participating schools. The applicant was able to describe a clear rationale for selection of each school for each aspect of the plan they were included in such as Student Centered Learning, Innovation Schools, and Equity of Access. The applicant provides a Logic Model within the narrative to support. Each logic model demonstrated high-quality implementation as evidenced by outlining inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes/goals and impact; the applicant was able to include elements of high-quality plan although not required. Additionally, the applicant describes data analysis meetings conducted with the school principals in making the decision to include all schools.</li> <li>The applicant provides Table A2.1 which lists the schools that will participate in grant activities</li> <li>The applicant provides Table A2.2 to show school participation data. The total number of participating students at each school meets the 40% low-income family criteria. In fact all schools surpass this percentage and have well over 70% at most schools.</li> </ul> |           |           |
| <b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b>  |           |           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applicant's plan has three major components which are Student Centers Learning Time, Innovation Schools and Equity of Access. The applicant provides a narrative describing each of the components as well as a Logic</li> </ul>   |           |           |

Model. The Logic Model provides all aspects of a high-quality plan except a timeline. The timeline is not addressed in the narrative. The Logic Model does however include the following information: inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and goals towards their overarching goal.

- The applicant presents the impact the reform proposal will have within the Logic Model in vague terms such as "increase in student growth" or "decrease in retention rates". The vagueness of the impact make it difficult to determine the extent to which this proposal can truly be scaled up and translated beyond the participating schools.

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

**10**

**5**

**(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

- The applicant does not provide a narrative to accompany the charts provided it is unclear if the goals are ambitious and achievable as there are no comparable data.
- The charts are thorough in regards to providing data for each subgroup within each type of assessment pre and post grant. The figures provided demonstrate achievable goals however there are no figures to determine if the goals are ambitious.
- The applicant does not provide a narrative for decreasing the gaps. Although a table is provided there are insufficient details to determine what gaps exist and if the gaps will be decreased.
- The applicant does not provide a narrative for graduation rates and college enrollment. It is unclear how the reform will reach outcome goals as there is no basis to compare baseline and goals.

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

|   | Available | Score     |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b> | <b>15</b> | <b>14</b> |

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

- The applicant did not provide a narrative to accompany the numerous charts and graphs of success data. The data provided demonstrate the applicant's track record of improved student learning outcomes and decreasing achievement gaps by increases in student achievement. The applicant provides: longitudinal Comparisons between High School Proficiency Assessment and New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge; State Run District Rankings by district/subject District Achievement and Growth by school, race, grade; District Student Growth Heat map by school and by grade which is ranked; as well as District Growth by school, grade, status, race/ethnicity, proficiency status in math, proficiency status in math.
- The applicant thoroughly describes various programs such as Keys to Excellence which have been implemented in the district for ambitious and significant reforms. the applicant has described successful conditions of reform in all its schools and intends to scale up and enhance the plan. The applicant provides details in the narrative of the successes of such programs as well as lesson learned and improvements adopted towards continued success.
- The applicant describes in great detail several programs in place to increase high school graduation. These programs include credit recovery programs, GRIP and Check and Connect as well as career/themed high schools.
- The applicant provides more than one platform for student performance data such as Blackboard and Power School. Additionally, the applicant is preparing for a public data dashboard.
- The applicant has described a collaboration with Harvard Data Project to provide in-depth data analysis into all aspects of teaching and learning as well as a customer service website to assist in informing stakeholders of school and student performance as well as providing an avenue for input and two-way communication.
- The applicant has implemented School Improvement Plans for reform in low-achieving schools and is working with the DOE Regional Achievement Centers.

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

**5**

**5**

**(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

- The applicant provides evidence for District Budget transparency to support the narrative. Appendix X contains more than 40 pages that include the criteria for this section of the application. The applicant describe that subsequent salary information can be found in the collective bargaining unit agreements which are available in each school office and through the Secretary/School Business Administrator. Non-personnel expenditures can be found in the school budgets which are available at the central office. Individual school budgets are held by the respective

school principals. The District budget made public annually at the board of education meeting, district publications and district website. Public comment is allowed.

- The applicant describes that appointments of school personnel are available in board minutes. The board minutes also include starting salaries, hourly rates, maximum amounts that can be earned and stipends amounts. Board minutes are available at the board meetings, online, at the main branch of the public library, and through the Secretary/School Business Administrators' office.
- Overall, the applicant demonstrates high level of transparency as evidence by the detailed information and appendix items provided on the districts overall goals as it relates to sharing of information.

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

**10**

**10**

**(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant exercises sufficient autonomy as described in the narrative by the following:

- The applicant states that the district is actively working towards waivers that they believe will impact student achievement. These are Highly Qualified Teacher requirement and Student Growth Percentage. The applicant provides rationale that the teacher of record for each student will be grade and certificate appropriate.
- The applicant plans to meet or surpass the State's student teacher ratio on the whole as the students will attend blended learning centers.
- Students who master areas of learning may move on to the next area without accruing a certain amount of time.
- Multiple teachers of record will be afforded attribution for student value-added data.

**(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)**

**15**

**15**

**(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

- The applicant provides a thorough description of meetings that occurred involving engagement from various stakeholders for development of this plan. The applicant does a comprehensive job in describing their strategies for ensuring significant stakeholder engagement as evidenced by the letters of support from various stakeholders, sign-in sheets from meetings, survey results, student input forms provided in the appendix.
- The applicant's plan was signed by the local teacher's union president.

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

|                                    | Available | Score     |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b> | <b>20</b> | <b>16</b> |

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

The applicant provides as high-quality plan building on previous success and continuing to focus on individualized needs to support student learning and achievement. The applicant describes three components of their plan for personalized learning. These three components are called: Student Centered Learning Time, Innovation Schools and Equity of Access Learning. The applicant describes each of these components in another section of the application and provides a Logic Model for each that includes all aspects of a high-quality plan.

The applicant describes meeting student needs for each sub-criteria in this section. Below are the approaches to learning and empowerment of all learners that address the sub-criteria (a)(i-v) and (b)(1-v):

- Digital portfolio containing learning goals and that reflect evidence of student monitoring; Digital portfolios track progress, develop plans and store work products
- all K-8 schools participate in an extended school day providing an extra 3 hours per week of instruction
- unique learning plans for each student
- creative student schedules
- meaningful intervention curricula developed; personalized learning curricula developed; high school transition curricula developed
- built-in intervention periods , teacher-led live instruction, small group instruction, virtual course work, AP courses
- Individual student portal that provide at-a-glance data as well as Teach to One Playlist for instruction
- Preschool programs offering dual language instruction
- College Preparatory Academy; Engineering Academy; Kahn Academy

- iLeap centers in various locations (Interactive learning spaces); one to one device initiative; interactive whiteboards
- Teach to One Classrooms for mathematics learning experiences that focus on skill rather than grade level
- LEADS, a language arts literacy program, MyAccess, a web-based writing program, Everyday Mathematics program
- Pre-Calculus requirement for all students by high school; increased high school graduation requirements to include 160 credits
- matching students to their best learning with the best educator for this learning
- AVID program for college readiness for elementary through higher education to accelerate student learning using research based methods

The applicant describe: Daily Math Advisors and access to teachers for content specific intervention and for enrichment as support for students. This is not sufficient support for all the above listed programs, initiatives and activities. It is also unclear what role parents will have in regards to the criteria for this section of the application.

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

**20**

**15**

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

The applicant describes aspects of teaching and leading in various sections of the application. Although there is description of various activities throughout the application, a high quality plan complete with all aspects is not evident.

The applicant describes the following approaches to satisfy sub-criteria (C)(2)(a)(i)-(iv):

- a shift and training for school counselors however the description provided for teachers is lacking in detail.
- a newly implemented maximum class requirement size
- no minimum amount of seat time
- plans to propose onsite logistical and technical support beginning in year one and tapering off as capacity is built within schools
- job-embedded coaching as well as coaching from an outside consultant
- Instructional Rounds approach to build common dialogue around instructional practice
- on-going PLC's
- Institute for Teaching and Learning to provide ongoing support and Professional Development beyond the school day
- Harvard Strategic Data Project to provide analytical data on student performance

The applicant describes the following approaches to satisfy sub-criteria (C)(2)(b)(i)-(iii):

- Powerschool, Blackboard and the portal for Teach to One are digital resources and tools available to teachers for not only sharing data but also for instructional purposes
- Institute for Teaching and Learning to provide ongoing support and Professional Development beyond the school day to assist educators in knowing how to use tools, data and resources

The applicant describes the following approaches to satisfy sub-criteria (C)(2)(c):

- Harvard Strategic Data Project Fellow to build and refine teacher evaluation
- participation in Excellent Educators for New Jersey teacher and principal evaluation pilot program; evidence provided in the appendix
- implementation of iObservation; a platform that is in place that allows for two-communication between a teacher and evaluator.
- Danielson's Framework for Teaching; evidence provided in the appendix
- Implemented Marzano's District Leadership Evaluation Model; evidence provided in the appendix
- implemented more concise educator certification requirements

The applicant describes the following approaches to satisfy sub-criteria (C)(2)(d):

- A high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals was not evident. Although the application describes evaluation tools for measuring effective teachers and leaders, the applicant does not provide aspects of a high-quality plan.
- the applicant describes retaining teachers through Teach For America; this program usually attracts new and/or beginning teachers who have little or no prior teaching experience and therefore cannot qualify as highly effective until the complete one year of successful teaching and learning.

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

|  | Available | Score     |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>   | <b>15</b> | <b>13</b> |
| <b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>   |           |           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant does not address all aspects of high quality plan. The applicant does not provide a rationale for activities, timeline, persons responsible or deliverables.</li> <li>• The applicant describes organization of the LEA central office where the Superintendent is the leader of operational and educational aspects. Three Assistant Superintendents report to the superintendent; Assistant Superintendents of Schools, Family &amp; Outreach and Teaching and Learning. The Assistant Superintendents each have respective responsibilities within the realm of their area and have the added responsibility to work closely with school principals. The applicant refers to a flowchart within the narrative to describe the organization of the central office; the flow chart was not included.</li> <li>• The applicant describes that critical areas of operations are not flexible, including school calendars. It appears that school leadership teams do not currently exercise full flexibility and autonomy over all factors. The applicant intends to provide professional development for school leaders as part of the reform plan. The applicant describes an inability to demonstrate autonomy within the narrative.</li> <li>• The applicant describes earning credit based on mastery throughout various sections of the application. The programs referred to for credit mastery include APEX Learning, GRIP, RUBY and NIJT. The applicant states these are dual-credit opportunities however no further description is provided.</li> <li>• The applicant addresses SWD and SLL in section B of this application; the information provided in the narrative for section B satisfies the criteria for this section as well.</li> <li>• The applicant has a selected third party provider called Teach to One, evidence of this program is provided in the appendix. The program demonstrates multiple opportunities for learning based on their skill level, regardless of their age.</li> </ul> |           |           |
| <b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>   |           |           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant explains that students are currently familiar with accessing data and information however the applicant does provides provisions for those who are unfamiliar. These include written directions, Parent Liaison, Training and an Adult Education program.</li> <li>• The applicant describes access to technology through various methods that include mobile devices issued to students, extended day, Saturday programs, iLeap centers, public libraries and plans to provide Wi-Fi in common rooms at public housing; the applicant will have technology support personnel at several of these locations as well as the schools.</li> <li>• The applicant describes EduMet briefly. This system houses human resources and budget data. PowerSchool is used to house student data.</li> </ul>  |           |           |

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

|   | Available | Score     |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>  | <b>15</b> | <b>13</b> |
| <b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>  |           |           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant provides a table outlining activities and a partial timeline for continuous improvement however more detail was not provided in the narrative to support the items listed in the table. it is unclear if the applicant intended for this table to represent aspects of a high-quality plan; other aspects of high quality plan are missing such as deliverables, persons responsible for implementing the activities.</li> <li>• The applicant is currently in partnership with Harvard Strategic Data Project which appears to provide feedback towards continuous improvement however it is unclear if the partnership will continue throughout the grant</li> </ul> |           |           |

- implementation as well as post grant.
- The applicant describes publicly sharing information on school newsletters and school websites in addition to a specific blog space. The applicant has also created a customer service website for publicly sharing information as well as as an avenue for two-way communication.
  - Additionally, student roundtables, surveys, classroom visits, and parent meetings will provide on-going feedback. Examples of surveys are included in the appendix.
  - It is not clear if the above mentioned will continue post-grant.

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

**5**

**4**

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

The applicant does not present all elements of a high quality plan. The applicant describes the following communication mechanisms to improve its plan with internal and external stakeholders:

- My Learning Plan, iObservation, PowerSchool
- Future intentions of implementing Blackboard
- Community newsletters (a copy is provided in the appendix)
- District website
- Facebook
- YouTube Channel
- Board of Education Open office hours
- Board of Education Community roundtables
- Board of Education Meetings
- Parent Liaisons
- PTO

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

**5**

**5**

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

- The applicant provides a description of the various assessments selected for performance measures. These include New Jersey Assessment of Skills, New Jersey High School Proficiency Assessment, NJPASS, Scholastic Reading Inventory, Developmental Reading Assessment, Teach to One Academic Diagnostic Measures, TerraNova, Measures of Academic Practice. The applicant provides a bulleted list for each assessment that includes a description of the assessment, how the measure provides rigorous, timely and formative information, what it measures and other pertinent information like will the assessment be phased out once PARCC is introduced.
- Additional performance measures include: Behavioral Referrals, Detentions, and Suspension Rates; Attendance; Social/Emotional Diagnostic Measures; Completion of Algebra I; Advanced Placement Enrollment and Success; SAT Enrollment and Success.
- The information provided served instrumental in reviewing the performance measures as listed in the tables provided.

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

**5**

**1**

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

- The applicant does not provide a high quality plan that includes all aspects of the criteria. The applicant briefly describes MyLearningPlan, a web-based professional development management system. The system appears to only track and communicate within the district. This does not represent a rigorous evaluation of effectiveness.
- The applicant refers to a specific blog space for RTTT-D; this is not enough to demonstrate rigorous evaluation of the effectiveness of funded activities. It is unclear if the intent of the blog is to public share information or collect data; either way it is an informal method that cannot be accurately measured.

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

|  | Available | Score    |
|--|-----------|----------|
| <b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>8</b> |

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

- The applicant provided a table with various columns outlining the required criteria for budget. A limited narrative was provided in addition to the table.
- The applicant describes funding sources such as State and City funds, Federal NCLB funds, 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant, Adult Basic Literacy Education Plus Grant and an assortment of non-discretionary grants.

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

**10**

**6**

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

- The applicant does not provide a narrative of the high-quality plan for sustainability; rather a column on the table provided offers limited information about the sustainability.
- The applicant does not list any estimated budget post grant.
- A description of how to evaluate effectiveness is not provided.

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

|  | Available | Score    |
|--|-----------|----------|
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>8</b> |

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

- Throughout the application, the applicant describes partnerships with Panasonic Foundation, The Merck Institute for Science Education, Academy for Leadership in Science Instruction, Montclair State University Network, IB, NAF, RUBY to augment the schools' academic resources. Additionally, describes partnership with Trinitas Regional Medical Center. The narrative provides description of four elements Intensive Outpatient Program, Children's Mobile Crisis Response, Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services and Youth Enrichment Services provided through this partnership. The services cover the span from early childhood through high school.
- The applicant identifies the following population-level desired results: ages five through eight, elementary school and high school with the following educational outcomes: social-emotional, behavioral and learning.
- The applicant provides a table to demonstrate indicators for tracking, the resulting data and how they intend to utilize the data. It is unclear if the indicators described will track all children. Although not required the applicant provides a table listing goals, activities, timeline, deliverable and person responsible for implementing the activities.
- The applicant describes the partnership will address the needs of the whole child (behavioral, social-emotional, educational and health services) which will have an impact on student achievement.
- The applicant does not have any correlation data generated at this time.

**Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments**

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

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

- - Overall the applicant has provided a comprehensive plan for reform built upon enhancing and scaling up many programs, strategies and curriculum which have proven success over time.
  - The applicant has provided consistent descriptions of the three major components of their plan throughout the application and has provided ample support within narratives and also in the appendix that support personalized learning environments.
  - The applicant has sufficient support from the community and partnerships with organizations to promote career and college readiness from preschool to high school and beyond. The applicant provides a plethora of support from the students and their families.



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0121NJ-3 for Elizabeth Public Schools

### A. Vision (40 total points)

|   | Available | Score    |
|---|-----------|----------|
| <b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>9</b> |

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

The applicant has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that builds on its work in four core educational assurance areas, articulates a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support grounded in common and individual tasks that are based on student academic interests, and describes what the classroom experience will be like for students and teachers participating in personalized learning environments.

The applicant has been classified by the New Jersey Department of Education as one of the most socio-economically challenged school districts in the state. Located at the crossroads of the metropolitan area, the district's diversity is evidenced by its demographic breakdown: 69% Hispanic, 21% African American/Black, 8% White, and 2% Asian. Currently, 82% of students receive free or reduced lunch.

The applicant states that over the past six years they have engaged in: the expansion of early childhood education programs; institution of extended school days across the district for K-12; uniforms for every Pk-12 student; adoption of rigorous teacher and principal evaluation systems; adoption of board policy to establish a data dashboard to monitor data across operational and instructional systems; institution of one of the highest high school graduation requirements in New Jersey far exceeding the academic standards set by the State of New Jersey; and the development of an accountability plan that recognizes specific elements such as student attendance, college enrollment, rigorous curricula, and value added teaching data. The applicant believes that creating a high performing district culture, based on high expectations, will lead to high student achievement.

The applicant notes that their overarching goal is to support personalized learning opportunities for every student, maximizing opportunities for engagement and empowering ownership of learning. For students in kindergarten through eighth grade, this means moving from learning time currently dedicated to interventions to learning time specifically built to engage all levels of learners. For a group of specific schools, this means completely changing learning spaces and provide innovative mathematics instruction that employs an algorithm to directly address content and social/emotional learning needs. Finally, by equipping high school students with resources equitable to those of their suburban counterparts and re-visioning the role of high school guidance counselors, they can increase college preparation and career readiness.

The applicant's reform vision spans the K-12 continuum and encompasses three major components: Student Centered Learning Time, Innovation Schools, and Equity of Access. All three components share several common elements, the most obvious being a restructuring of student learning time and space, both within and outside of the school day. a process to Recruit, Develop, Reward, Retain Teachers and Principals,

The applicant delineates their work to date and their future plans in the Four Core Educational Assurance Areas which includes Adopting the Common Core State Standards, Building Data Systems, and Turning Around their Lowest Achieving Schools. They further state that in all grades;

Teachers will become facilitators of learning experiences, mentors and resources for guidance in student planning. Teachers will empower students to make choices that reflect their academic interests, capitalize upon their strengths and help them overcome their weaknesses. Teachers will help students design their individualized learning plans, work with students on identifying appropriate resources and assist students with time management.

Students will be responsible for planning, implementing and monitoring their learning plans. This will be a major shift in their role as students. They will track their progress (for all aspects of school) on digital portfolios where they will also develop plans and store work products.

Content will be both meaningful and personalized. Meaningful content will address the CCSS, student weaknesses and areas students need to address in order to be college and career ready. Personalized content capitalizes on student academic interests, takes learning and teaching styles into consideration and allows for choice – choice of teacher, choice of project, choice of collaborators.

In total, the applicant provides a relatively strong basis to support their application and is well on their way to achieving most of their goals and could have provided more specific information on participating schools.

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

**10**

**9**

**(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant’s approach to implementing its reform proposal will support high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation of that proposal.

The applicant has decided to include all K-8 schools in Student-Centered Learning and presents a Logic Model to demonstrate the process. This will address the needs of all students – the need to inquire, the need for extra help, the need to collaborate and problem solve, the need to explore careers and colleges, and the need to do something that the students plan and own.

The applicant identified participating schools in three critical phases. First, the central office leadership team identified 10 schools that had the most need and also possessed the facilities that could support the transformation required by the Teach to One model. In examining student performance, the team reviewed the district rankings which are based upon the total number of students in each school who scored in the proficient or advanced proficient range on either district selected norm-referenced tests or state mandated assessments. All but one of the schools chosen have fewer than 67% of their students exhibiting proficiency on State and district summative tests. The Supervisor of Secondary Mathematics reviewed the schools for both student performance and staff capacity and recommendations were also taken into consideration. Next, principals from the identified schools attended a meeting that introduced them to the Innovation Schools concept, and engaged them in a discussion about the possibility of such a model being implemented in their school. At each site meeting, the Innovation Schools concept was discussed with school leaders and teachers to further identify leadership and staff capacity. Teachers asked questions about the proposed program and provided feedback via an anonymous survey. Additional schools have been identified to become Innovation Schools based on student demographics, infrastructure, and principal interest.

In the identified Innovation Schools, they will begin with mathematics instruction in grades five through eight. These grades present a significant opportunity to address students who require both remediation and acceleration of mathematics skills. They provide a gateway to further impact change at the prekindergarten through third grade mathematics curricula as well as prepare students for participation in higher level mathematics in grades nine through twelve. They hope to create a consortia of partners that work with us to train new teachers on innovative learning practices in the Teach to One classroom. Enhancing that current partnerships will have two goals: first, to develop elementary and math dual certified teachers who will be prepared to teach in 21st century classrooms and second, to recruit these teachers to join the EPS school system to continue to build a highly effective teacher corps.

Their equity of access plan proposes three key investments: significant training for our high school guidance counselors, wireless access for all high school students, laptops for all 11th and 12th graders, and access to a wide variety of online resources. *Equity of Access* ensures that all EPS high school students have the opportunity and support to access resources that support their ability to pursue a post-secondary education and will be implemented in all the high schools in the district.

The applicant provided a list of the schools that will participate in grant activities and school participation demographics. The applicant has presented a strong approach to implementation of their project.

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

**10**

**9**

**(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The application includes a high-quality plan describing 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.

The Center for Time on Learning is currently involved in a study of the applicant's schools and has found that the applicant

is unique in its implementation of extended learning time with true fidelity. The applicant's goal is for all students to experience personalized learning encounters designed around their individual needs, including their preferred learning modalities, prior learning experiences, and areas of academic interest.

The applicant presents a logic model for Student Centered Learning Time with a goal to personalize learning opportunities during the school day in order to maximize student engagement in learning; an Innovation Schools Logic Model with the goal to provide innovative, individualized, technology-based blended classroom learning experiences in mathematics, and an Equity of Access Logic Model with the goal to provide students access to college and career-readiness resources equitable with their suburban peers.

Overall, the applicant presents strong evidence of a goal of LEA wide reform and change and provides timelines and deliverables.

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

**10**

**7**

**(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

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, overall and by student subgroup, for each participating LEA. The applicant demonstrates its vision by providing tables that address each of the areas of this criterion. However, no narrative is provided. This leaves the reader to interpret and infer from the tables.

For performance on summative assessments, the information in the table denotes that the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) is used. The methodology for determining status is the percentage of students proficient and above and the methodology for determining growth is change in achievement levels focused on annual equal increments so that within six years the percentage of non-proficient students overall and in each subgroup is reduced by half.

For decreasing achievement gaps, the applicant notes in the table that the methodology for determining achievement gap is specified in the table for each assessed grade in reading or language arts and in mathematics: Achievement gap is the difference in proficiency levels between each subgroup and the comparison group.

For graduation rates, goals are provided for the next five years.

For college enrollment, the applicant presents increasing rates for the next five years.

For postsecondary degree attainment, the data was obtained from student records matched to National Student Clearinghouse and demonstrates increased attainment from the current 3.7% to 43.8% in five years.

While the information is presented in the tables, there is no narrative that addressed that applicant's vision and provided written justification.

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

|   | Available | Score     |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b> | <b>15</b> | <b>13</b> |

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

The applicant has demonstrated evidence of a clear record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching, including a description, charts or graphs, raw student data, and other evidence that demonstrates the applicant's ability to: improve student learning outcomes and close achievement gaps, including by raising student achievement, high school graduation rates, and college enrollment rates; Achieve ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools or in its low-performing schools; and Make student performance data available to students, educators, and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and services.

The applicant states its transformation began in the 2005-2006 school year with the implementation of their initial Keys to Excellence Strategic Plan 2006-2011. Since then, three schools have been awarded National Blue Ribbon status and one school is a recognized NASA Explorer school. Over the last two years, two high schools have been nationally recognized. *The Washington Post* recognized Elizabeth High School in their national assessment "The High School Challenge." In 2011, EHS was ranked #2 in New Jersey and #176 in the nation; in 2012 it was ranked #2 in New Jersey and #77 in the nation, rankings identical to those in *Newsweek*. In 2012, *The Washington Post* also recognized Alexander Hamilton

Preparatory as #65 in New Jersey. In 2012, *US News & World Report* ranked Elizabeth High School #6 in the state and #139 in the nation. Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy was ranked in the top 50 in the state.

Critical to their success has been the establishment of the Theory of Action: Managed Instruction which was developed through collaboration with the Center for Reform for School Systems (CRSS) in partnership with the Broad Foundation. The applicant's school board commissioners worked closely with the superintendent and district leaders to develop the policies that support student growth through a comprehensive district-wide curriculum system. The applicant does not provide further information about CRSS or the Broad Foundation such as letters of support or articulation agreements.

Across the district, their investment in technology includes: installing interactive whiteboards in the majority of classrooms at 23 different schools throughout the district; purchasing notebook computers for their high school programs; integrating iPads into the curriculum for children with special needs; providing the opportunity for teachers to pose questions and receive instant responses from every student through the use of automatic responders called "2Know" units. By 2010, student assessment data began to reflect their goals for increased student achievement and EPS students' average assessments were above those of districts with similar student demographics. In 2011, EPS implemented *Keys to Excellence 2: Strategic Plan 2011-2016* which enhances their focus to provide excellent educational experiences and prepare students to be successful in post-secondary education. The applicant provides many charts and exemplars of how gaps are closing across the district. The charts also provide an overview of the increase in student achievement throughout the district. There are some critical data points that highlight areas of success, but there are also areas for improvement upon which the applicant expands and demonstrates its initiatives.

In 2006, many of the schools were among the lowest performing schools in the state. While they continue to have schools that have achievement challenges, they are using some specific changes to address those schools. In addition, over the last two years, several of the schools have had significant changes to school leadership and teacher placement. Schools that are lowest achieving have instituted School Improvement Plans and are working with NJDOE Regional Achievement Centers (RACs) to examine data and identify areas within the school to address deficiencies. The applicant does not provide copies of any School Improvement Plans.

To better inform and communicate with parents the applicant has added two important systems; PowerSchool, a Student Information System that provides parents with daily access to information about their child's progress; and Blackboard, which is just being implemented. Its capacity includes community news and information, and they are working on identifying a public data dashboard that can provide parents with critical student data. The applicant implemented its customer service website, EPS Direct, which is dedicated to meeting the needs of parents, guardians, and residents. A redesign of the district website has made following the news and events of EPS easier than ever. The new system empowered each school building to continually update and provide the latest information about their school. In addition, the district maintains an Elizabeth Public Schools Facebook page, YouTube channel, and EPS/TV, an Internet site that streams live Elizabeth Public School events, leveraging the strength of social media to broadcast information to a larger audience.

Overall, the applicant has demonstrated a clear track record of success in addressing this criterion absent specific information about organizations with which it has partnered as well as documentation of School Improvement Plans.

|   |          |          |
|---|----------|----------|
| <b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>5</b> |
|---|----------|----------|

**(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant has demonstrated evidence of a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments, including by making public, by school, actual school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration.

Appointments made by the applicant's board are published in the board minutes along with the starting salaries, hourly rates, and maximum amounts that can be earned and stipend amounts. Minutes are available to the public at the board meeting when the appointments are made, online via the district website, at the main branch of the public library, and through the Secretary/School Business Administrator's office.

Subsequent salaries for full time employees can be found in the collective bargaining unit agreements. These agreements are distributed to every employee by category. Copies of the agreements are available in each school office and through the Secretary/School Business Administrator.

Non-personnel expenditures at the school level can be found in the school budget. All school budgets are available at central office. Individual school budgets are held by the school principal. The principals share their budgets with the Instructional Leadership Teams most of which have parent/community representation.

Individual school budgets are part of the larger district budget. The district budget is made public annually at a board of education meeting. The district comptroller delivers a presentation at the designated board meeting. The budget is also

published in a variety of district publications and is posted on the district web site. Specific expenditures are also provided in the monthly board minutes, available to the community via hard copy at district meetings, and online following the meetings.

Annual budgets are presented to the public at designated meeting of the board where public comment is allowed. All board meetings are videotaped and broadcast live on a public access television channel. In addition, ongoing access to these meetings is available via YouTube.

In summary, the applicant presents strong evidence of meeting this criterion.

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

**10**

**7**

**(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant has somewhat demonstrated evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in the applicant's proposal.

The applicant's plan developed in this grant can meet the State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in its proposal. They are moving forward towards resolving two possible areas that may require waivers; the Highly Qualified Teacher requirement, as identified in No Child Left Behind and the Student Growth Percentage that will be calculated for teacher value-added growth beginning in the 2013- 2014 school year by the State.

However, the applicant does not present evidence that they have state context for implementation other than to note they are a NJ school district.

**(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)**

**15**

**14**

**(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant has demonstrated strong evidence of meaningful stakeholder engagement throughout the development of the proposal and meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal.

District leadership was instrumental in researching a variety of innovative programs and providing input as to the programs' impact on students. The central administration team reviewed the findings of their colleagues in an effort to find innovation that would change the course of student achievement in their low performing schools and ensure that their students were college and career ready. The central administration team then reported their outcomes to school level leaders. Representatives from the administrators' union were also present and indicated their support of the proposal. Student feedback from iPrep, their first *Innovation School*, indicates they are making a difference by implementing their strategic plan.

As they work to further engage community support, they intend to present their plan to the community in a variety of ways, including presentations at board meetings, information on the website, community newsletters, involvement of the PTOs at the Innovation Schools, and through social networks such as the Blackboard Learning System and Facebook.

Over the past seven years, the district has worked to increase the relationships between community groups and the schools. Letters of Support are provided by the following partners:

- Elizabeth Education Association
- The Elizabeth Administrative and Supervisory Council
- Elizabeth Development Company
- Gateway Chamber of Commerce
- PROCEED Inc.
- YMCA Eastern Union County
- Harvard Strategic Data Project
- Center for Time on Learning
- New Classrooms
- National Academies Foundation
- Pearson Learning Systems
- Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)

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

|                                    | Available | Score     |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b> | <b>20</b> | <b>15</b> |

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

The applicant has a relatively high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready.

The applicant states that in order to prepare students for college and careers, they must first ensure they are equipped with the resources and experiences that are equitable to their peers and allow for a high level of personalization and ownership. Their goal is to build personalized learning opportunities that focus on a variety of key experiences on the K -12 continuum. Their model is a three-pronged approach that includes *Student Centered Learning Time*, *Innovation Schools*, and an *Equity of Access*. They plan to use these experiences to strengthen curricula and provide all students access to personalized learning designed to prepare students for 21st century college and careers. The applicant presents a comprehensive table of goals, activities, responsible personnel, deliverables, and timelines for each of its 10 goals.

The district’s program aims to provide students with multiple learning experiences – including teacher-led live instruction, small group collaborative learning, and virtual learning opportunities. Their model will uncover students’ individual academic needs and match those needs to specific learning preferences and academic interests. Their proposed personalized learning programs will be anchored by skill maps that are aligned to CCSS– standards that are explicitly designed to ensure that students are prepared for college and the 21st Century workforce. This will be done by:

- Generating a unique learning plan for each student. This plan will show what skills students need to work on and how various skills relate to one another and how these skills can be organized under units of study.
- Equipping students with information about their performance. Through digital student portfolios students will access test scores, grades, learning plans, and performance progress on PBLs.
- Giving students additional learning resources. Through virtual libraries, video streaming, web quests, online course work, and opportunities to create their own learning experiences, students will access resources that will motivate, engage and deepen understanding.

This active-learner model requires students to engage in critical thinking, creativity, and problem solving.

Students with IEPs will receive additional assistance through qualified special education teachers and paraprofessionals who will provide dedicated support. English Language Learners (ELLs) will be provided learning opportunities that have stronger visual representations and students will take part in the same diagnostics and assessments as other students. ELL students will have in-class support teachers to strengthen their learning in the classroom environment. Their *Equity of Access* plan is designed to provide Elizabeth high school students access to college and career-readiness resources that are on par with those of their suburban counterparts. This will be accomplished by providing internet access to all high school students and laptop computers to all juniors and seniors.

A significant weakness of this part of the application is that the support of parents and educators is not specifically enumerated.

|  |           |           |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b> | <b>20</b> | <b>19</b> |
|--|-----------|-----------|

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

The applicant has a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready.

In the applicant’s three-pronged model, teaching and learning will require teachers to extensively collaborate and may require modifications of teacher and student schedules allowing them to deliver instruction to students spanning a variety of grades. Through consistent and targeted professional development, EPS will build capacity to fulfill the goals of their action plan and logic models. Additionally, guidance team members will be asked to re-think their approach to counseling and be focused on individualizing student services.

For *their Innovation Schools* group-throughout the first year of implementation, on-site logistical and technical support will be provided to participating schools and ongoing operational and academic support to teachers will also be provided. Over the life of this grant, support structures will gradually phase out. At the end of the grant period, implementation at participating schools will become self-sustaining both operationally and financially.

Professional development will be provided to all staff members. Beyond the school day they have established the Institute for Teaching and Learning to provide teachers with ongoing support and professional development directly related to

instructional practice and content. Instructional coaches and outside consultants will continue to provide job embedded professional learning based on individual schools and teachers' needs around digital portfolios, personalizing learning, capitalizing on student interests and facilitating PBLs. Professional Learning Communities will continue to meet during specified times to discuss student data, achievement, lesson planning and curriculum. The PLCs will become the cornerstone for discussion and planning of personalized instruction and individual learning plans.

The applicant's *Equity of Access* model will provide professional growth opportunities for students, parents, and guidance staff. Parents and students will receive a number of opportunities to receive information about the college selection and application process through college fairs and junior and senior college seminars. Additionally, specific training will be provided on the completion of the common application and the FAFSA. The guidance team will be trained in advising students about online opportunities including college credit online, course recovery, virtual AP classes, SAT/ACT support online, the use of AVID components off site, and how to prepare students for college success. APEX, the applicant's current credit recovery provider, can be extended to home use (provided that our students have internet access and the required hardware). Counselors will play a role in advising students as to where credit recovery fits into their individualized learning plans.

Between September 2011 and July 2013, the applicant participated in the New Jersey teacher evaluation pilot program. They chose the Danielson Framework for Teaching model because it was the most accessible and had a distinct similarity to district language. They also purchased a software platform that enables two-way communication between the teacher and the evaluator, provides a multitude of resources, and creates electronic portfolios for teachers. This platform facilitates the analysis of data around individual and collective effectiveness. Teachers will continue to receive targeted feedback regarding their practice and areas of need. In addition to the formal observations, teachers are evaluated by measures of student growth and informal observations such as lesson design, walkthroughs, professional learning community participation, etc.

Administrators will also receive targeted feedback regarding their leadership skills. They selected the Marzano Leadership Evaluation model as its administrator evaluation instrument. The model is grounded in research that supports the notion that competent administrators display specific actions and behaviors that have a direct relationship to student achievement. Administrator evaluation will be based on student growth, use of data to guide decisions, and teacher evaluation.

The applicant presents a strong and well thought out program to address this criterion.

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

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

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

The applicant has a high-quality plan 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.

The applicant states that since 2005, with the implementation of *Keys to Excellence Strategic Plan 2006-2011*, EPS has worked to strengthen the infrastructure to support innovative learning opportunities, build capacity for instruction, and develop internal systems to support teaching and learning. Critical to its success has been the establishment of the district's Theory of Action: Managed Instruction. This Theory of Action was developed through collaboration with the Center for Reform for School Systems (CRSS) in partnership with the Broad Foundation.

The applicant has properly organized the central office to provide support to all participating schools. Through significant professional development programming at the school and district level for teachers and leaders, they actively work to develop teams that will support learning at every level of the district. Many of these systems help to retain teachers and they are committed to identifying new ways to build and retain successful educators and leaders. EPS has instituted board policy to recognize the achievements of students and faculty and use a variety of ways to reward performance and recognize our teachers at board meetings, in district publications, and through district-sponsored events.

There are school leaders who maximize the capacity of their staff, encouraging them to personalize district curricula and programming based on their strengths and some leaders have not demonstrated initiative to address school schedules or other areas within their control.

The applicant has already embarked on offering mastery-based credit options to secondary students through APEX credit

recovery wherein students are being offered the opportunity to secure credits toward graduation based on mastery of standards as opposed to seat time. Also, the *Equity of Access* portion of this application provides resources to increase access to these opportunities. In addition, EPS recognizes credits earned in conjunction with the RUBY program, and the NJIT program, both developed to provide access to dual-credit opportunities.

At the primary level, they have started offering these options via two different programs. The Teach to One model and the iPrep Academy provide students access to learning programs and curricula based on their skill level, regardless of their grade level. This allows students who need additional support the ability to learn critical concepts again, and introduces high achieving students to concepts previously only available at the secondary level.

The applicant asserts that all participating schools will have a wide array of reinforcements to fully implement the content required by a personalized learning environment. The district will employ a Race to the Top supervisor dedicated to program implementation. The selected third-party provider, Teach to One, will furnish full time instructional coaches at each school site; in addition, significant support for the technology and learning teams will be available. The School Improvement Panels (SciP) at each school will work in tandem with consultants to construct schedules that best support the personalized learning environment allowing students to work on engaging activities.

In total, the applicant demonstrates relatively strong evidence and commitment to this criterion.

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

**10**

**9**

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

The applicant has a high-quality plan 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.

The applicant notes that students in selected grades and content areas in participating schools will receive a mobile device. Since schools are in session from 7:30 am to 3:45 pm, an extended day affords students Wi-Fi access for approximately 10 hours daily. Additionally, there are a number of Saturday programs that are held in a variety of schools which will offer students Wi-Fi access.

Parents may access PowerSchool, Blackboard, and student math portals through their personal computers, their child's school-issued iPad, or a mobile device at one of our schools or at the public library. General files that contain learning resources, content, and tools will be available through the external consultant. Required content will also be available in hard copy to ensure all students have equal access when necessary.

Stakeholders will have a variety of levels of technical support from the district and third party provider. Students will receive training to utilize different types of technology to access the curriculum, and increased access to advanced mathematical curricula.

Participation in intensive training will be provided for all participants. Staff members and students are currently familiar with using PowerSchool to access homework assignments and grades. Students may turnkey this information to their parents. Written directions on parent use of PowerSchool are available in the main office of the schools. Parent Liaisons also offer PowerSchool training to parents during training sessions at their respective schools. Adults who participate in their Adult Education Programs and 21st Century Community Learning Centers have the use of computers located at two of the high school academies; and additionally access to some technology training is offered.

Student and teacher support is built into the grant proposal through an on-site facilitator supplied by the vendor and a supervisor to manage the goals. There will be one on-site facilitator per *Innovation Schools* who will serve as a full-time liaison between the school and the external consultant. This facilitator will be in the math centers to acclimate teachers and students to the program, to run data, to troubleshoot technology challenges and to ensure that the program is running properly.

Overall the applicant presents a solid plan within appropriate laws and regulations to meet this criterion.

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

|  | Available | Score     |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b> | <b>15</b> | <b>14</b> |

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

The applicant has an overall 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.

The applicant states that Elizabeth Public Schools will monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of the investment made possible by Race to the Top District funds.

They indicate specific research questions to guide formative evaluation:

- To what extent are the RTTTD initiatives implemented as intended?
- In what ways have teachers used training and support they receive to enhance teaching and learning?
- How can the district improve the professional development plan and delivery?

and summative evaluation:

- What is the impact of the RTTTD initiatives on students and stakeholders (teachers, school leaders, parents, community)?
- To what extent have we made progress in each of the performance measures and annual targets? What are student outcomes by subgroups of students?
- What is the impact on closing the achievement gap, increasing graduation rates, and preparing students for college and careers?

They further provide a table with the timeline for assessing progress of the program.

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

**5**

**5**

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

The applicant has high-quality plan for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders.

They are committed to regular communication with internal and external stakeholders about the program. For EPS team members, they will communicate via a variety of mechanisms including, but not limited to, MyLearningPlan, iObservation, and PowerSchool.

EPS also has a variety of channels which we access to engage community members. Attendance at board meetings and communication with elected board trustees is encouraged. Community newsletters are sent out quarterly at the district level and monthly at the school level. Finally, the district website and Facebook account are used to communicate a wide range of resources, from real-time news to long term strategic planning. Social media is widely used and includes a YouTube channel that shares student performances and important community events.

The Board of Education communicates with community members through open office hours and community roundtables at schools across the district. In addition, a significant number of schools employ a Parent Liaison who functions as a critical part of the school community. Each school also has a Parent Teacher Organization that provides a variety of opportunities for parents to interact with, and support their school community.

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

**5**

**5**

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

The applicant has an ambitious yet achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup, with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures.

The applicant states data is continually analyzed and used to drive instruction on a daily basis. Assessment is used to provide information on the progress of learning, diagnose students' strengths and weaknesses, and initiate additional teaching and learning. They have included periodic formative and summative assessments within their Strategic Plan. The following performance measures will be used to track student achievement through the term of this grant:

The New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJASK)

The New Jersey High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA)

NJPASS

Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI)

Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)- 2nd Edition

- Teach to One Academic Diagnostic Measures
- TerraNova
- Measures of Academic Practice (MAP)
- Behavior Referrals, Detention, and Suspension Rates
- Attendance
- Social/Emotional Diagnostic Measures
- Completion of Algebra I
- Advanced Placement Enrollment and Success
- SAT Enrollment and Success
- Teacher and Principal Performance Evaluation

The applicant provides its rationale for selecting that measure; how the measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant's implementation success or areas of concern; and how it will review and improve the measure over time if it is insufficient to gauge implementation progress for each applicable population. Overall it is a strong plan to meet this criterion.

|  |          |          |
|--|----------|----------|
| <b>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>3</b> |
|--|----------|----------|

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

The applicant does not present a high-quality plan to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of Race to the Top – District funded activities, such as professional development and activities that employ technology.

They state they are currently investigating various student survey tools (Panorama, Tripod, etc.) to gather student feedback around teacher performance and academic rigor with a goal to employ such a survey by 2013-2014 so that we may do comparisons of student engagement across the district. Through the use of such a tool, they expect to make comparisons between the traditional model of instruction and the student centered/personalized model. Students will be surveyed to assess certain programs on indicators such as teacher availability, use of student portals, daily math advisory sessions, and the availability of a variety of modalities for each skill.

They use the MyLearningPlan web-based professional development management system to track and communicate with staff about learning opportunities in the district. They also use the tool to survey faculty and collect data regarding district initiatives and efficacy of professional development. Through the NJ Principal Evaluation Pilot, they are coordinating with Val-Ed to administer teacher surveys around principal leadership practice.

All of these measures will drive an ongoing improvement process whereby problems will be resolved when they arise and the program components will be enhanced as opportunities present themselves. All data and evaluation results will be presented to each district and school leadership for analysis and action planning.

They intend to create a specific blog space to share the goals of the RTTT-D projects and communicate with the public. They will create a data dashboard to monitor the impact of the programming and share critical milestones. They will also engage students in the process through student roundtables, student surveys, and classroom visits. In addition, they will continue to meet with parents to gather their feedback about the programming.

The applicant's plan seems to focus more on global effectiveness and does not get into the specifics of professional development and activities that employ technology in this section.

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

|  | Available | Score    |
|--|-----------|----------|
| <b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>5</b> |

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

The applicant's budget, including the budget narrative and tables: Identifies all funds that will support the project; Is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal; and Clearly provides

a thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities.

The applicant provides a summary of initiatives with an overview of future budgeting areas and significant areas of resources for their schools for each of their projects. They note that each project will include an investment in technology resources, including hardware, and wireless connectivity. In order to support participating educators in developing the skills and competencies necessary to succeed in this model, all district faculty will participate in robust professional development programs. All projects will also provide opportunities for students with disabilities and Limited English Proficient students by customizing their math instruction to their own learning profiles and by leveraging a variety of learning modalities.

The applicant provides tables addressing current EPS initiative, future plans and initiative, costs beyond the grant expiration, and sustainability sources for each of their grant activities. They also provide a table for the Budget Years 5-7.

In total, the budget presented does not indicate any indirect costs or funds from other sources to be used in any of these projects, which is a substantial weakness. The applicant does distinguish one time investments versus ongoing operational costs with an eye toward long term sustainability of the personalized learning environments.

|   |           |          |
|---|-----------|----------|
| <b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>5</b> |
|---|-----------|----------|

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

The applicant does not have a high quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant.

The applicant states funds from Race to the Top will be used to build infrastructure, conduct research on best practices, develop curricula, and strengthen practice of all members of the organization.

To ensure sustainability of the personalized school projects, the applicant will put in place a number of support strategies by the end of the grant period to include establishing an advisory board committed to supporting the implementation of the personalized learning project. In addition an action plan outlining the specific steps that the district will implement to continue to sustain the program after the grant period will be developed and will include creating a written sustainability plan as a guide to support the on-going management of the project. The sustainability plan will help identify which resources are needed to sustain the project and encourage the development of partnerships and additional support, as well as evaluation criteria.

The main strategy to ensure sustainability is to build capacity of district personnel over the four-year period to become internal consultants. Building school based experts and district level technology experts will move away from the support of contractual providers. To maximize professional development, the use of Title II funds will be critical to the sustainability of professional development in supporting administrators and teachers.

Sustainability strategies will also include increased communication efforts to keep the community and families informed of the developments, challenges, and successes of the project.

Additionally, they intend to reach out to a variety of revenue sources in support of ongoing development, after the grant expiration. This is a weakness to this criterion since the plan to reach out is not planned to begin until after the grant expires.

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

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

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant demonstrates the extent to which they propose to integrate public or private resources in a partnership designed to augment the schools' resources by providing additional student and family supports to schools that address the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of the participating students, giving highest priority to students in participating schools with high-need students.

Elizabeth Public Schools has a coherent, sustainable partnership with Trinitas Regional Medical Center which enables them to access behavioral, social-emotional, educational, and health services for our students and their families. Their partnership encompasses four key elements: Intensive Outpatient Program, Children's Mobile Crisis Response, Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services and the Youth Enrichment Services (YES) Program.

The Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) works with students aged five through eight who are faced with such significant

behavioral challenges that they cannot tolerate a full day of school.

The Children's Mobile Crisis Response is available to both elementary and high school students who are in crisis.

Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services help to meet the needs of children exhibiting patterns of inappropriate responses, violent and/or destructive behavior, cutting, feelings of worthlessness, etc. all trigger a need for an immediate response, but not necessarily a crisis-level response.

The Youth Enrichment Services (YES) Program's goals are to increase educational aspirations, to help students accrue a greater number of credits, to diminish student feelings of unhappiness, and to reduce destructive behavior.

Grant monies will enable them to utilize the Child Behavior Checklist, institute a self-assessment process in each school to evaluate services available to students and teachers, and community resources available to parents. There is also the need to develop comprehensive transition plans for students exiting programs and to track student services and ascertain their impact on academics, social-emotional growth, and behavior as part of a scale up program.

Plans to expand the partnership with Trinitas Regional Medical Center will include teacher and student support personnel training around: the culture of poverty and cultural awareness, effective communication with parents of children with extreme challenges, behavior management skills, strategies that address social/emotional/behavioral concerns, developing transition plans, analyzing data for correlations between interventions and student achievement, and developmentally appropriate learning and behavior expectations.

Overall this is a relatively strong plan provides ambitious but achievable goals.

### Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

|   | Available  | Score      |
|---|------------|------------|
| <b>Absolute Priority 1</b>  |            | <b>Met</b> |
| <b>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</b>   |            |            |
| <p>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 or college- and career-ready graduation requirements; accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student; increase the effectiveness of educators; expand student access to the most effective educators; decrease achievement gaps across student groups; and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.</p> <p>The applicant has already made great strides in many areas addressing the very tenants of this grant. They already have momentum to continue to generate positive results. A great concern is that this initiative will not continue without additional funding and investment by external partners and business organizations.</p> |            |            |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>210</b> | <b>176</b> |