



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0183NM-1 for Gallup-McKinley County Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The Gallup-McKinley School District is a rural LEA that experiences significant linguistic and cultural diversity. The applicant presents an appropriate picture of its current demographics. However, the applicant does not provide specific examples of reform initiatives that are currently in place to support students and its record of success.

The district has adequately demonstrated its commitment to create innovative personalized learning strategies to meet the need of their students, but the applicant provides very limited information related to the specifics of the current work it has been doing around the four core educational assurances.

To prepare for the implementation of the Personalized Learning Environment, the applicant identifies four primary activities: 1) implementation and expansion of technology-blended learning, 2) Implementation of competency-based models of programming and assessments, 3) development and expansion of individualized college and career readiness opportunities and 3) involvement of parents, schools and community stakeholders.

Instructional technology will be integrated with the school's curriculum and planning. Students, faculty, and staff will have access to exchange information locally, nationally, and internationally through the internet. At all elementary schools the district has developed grade-level scope and sequence for the use of technology which aligns with the national technology standards. The applicant currently provides broadband access to 35 schools and all but one site has ample bandwidth to access district systems and internet.

The applicant describes what the classroom experience will be like for some of the students. For example, within the Pk-5 elementary schools learning centers will be established at each of the 19 elementary schools. Students will either rotate between small groups/stations in individual classrooms, or rotate between classrooms, based on a fixed schedule between online learning and teacher/student interaction. The structure within the schools will be an autonomous decision and the applicant assumes that the middle schools will incorporate individual rotation and lab rotation into their blended learning. At the high schools, the Flex model will allow students to choose where they want to spend their time without a set bell schedule. While the models are clear with regard to the rotations, it is unclear how the applicant will accelerate learning, how the stations will deepen students learning, and how changing the role of teachers to facilitators supports common and individual tasks. The narrative also lacks a clear description of what the experience will be like for students in grades 6-12.

The applicant also provides a general overview of how it will support students. Teachers will move from the traditional role of teaching to one of facilitator. At the high school level teachers may serve as collaborators and mentors with students engaging in real world opportunities to learn marketable skills.

The narrative, however, lacks specifics regarding how the teachers new roles will help to accelerate learning achievement, help to deepen student learning, and how equity will be enhanced and increased through personalized learning.

Teachers will also be given the autonomy to create their own professional personal learning environment which includes colleagues, blogs, wikis, video conferencing, social networking services, online communities, digital photo sharing, and content development communities.

To address the decline in the lowest performing schools, in the spring of 2013 the applicant implemented an A-F grading system. An Instructional coach has been assigned to the "F" rated schools and the district is also providing additional professional development and resources to the teachers. The applicant, however, does not provide specific details related to the interventions that were implemented in these schools, nor does it describe the role and responsibilities of the instructional coaches to turn around its lowest performing schools.

The applicant proposes to implement three models of blending learning throughout the district in grades K-12. Students will learn in part through on-line delivery of content and instruction with some element of student control over time, place path, and/or pace, and is at least, in part, supervised away from home.

The district also plans to implement the Response to Intervention (RTI) Model and teachers will provide supplementary instruction, support, and academic or behavioral interventions at increasing levels of intensity. Teachers will monitor the progress students make at each intervention level and use the assessment results to decide whether students need additional instruction or intervention. The applicant does not clearly articulate and illustrate how the RTI Model fits into the overall personalized learning environment plan as well as how this model is aligned to the four strategies identified in the vision.

The district currently has a data warehouse for real-time monitoring of all data. Several data resources are used to provide quality student assessments to evaluate student knowledge of the Common Core. The applicant describes how students in grades 4-8 are administered benchmark assessments up to four times a year to help gauge students understanding of the national standards. Students in grades K-6 are administrated the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) to assess early literacy skills. The applicant, however, does not articulate how this data is used and will be used to inform teachers and principals and to improve instructional decisions. It is unclear what is done with the data after it has been compiled.

The applicant did not address how the current work it is doing builds on recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining highly effective teachers and principals. It also did not adequately address the current work that is being done to turn around the lowest performing schools and provided limited information related to how data is currently being used to improve instruction.

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

The Gallup-McKinley County Schools explicitly provided the criteria they used to identify the schools that would be part of the reform proposal.

The applicant selected all 35 of its high needs schools to participate in the grant. Eighty-three percent of the students in PK-12 are identified as Economically Disadvantaged.

.For each participating school, all required information is included: the total number of participating students, of participating from low income families, of participating who are high needs, and of participating educators.

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

The applicant provides details related to its district wide reform proposal and ensures it will bridge the gap through a variety of activities and or strategies. Training will be ongoing throughout the project period and beyond. Teachers will participate in Professional Learning Communities by grade bands. The Project Director will lead this effort and will be supported by the Technology Coordinator. Each year, educators will participate in ten hours of formal professional development trainings.

Additional strategies and or activities include hiring coaches, purchasing iPads , SMART Boards, and accessing technology through Chapter Houses. The coaches will spend at least three hours each quarter with every teacher throughout the district to provide training and best practices aligned with their needs, strengths, and weaknesses. Smartboards and computer tables will be outfitted in each classroom. All teachers will have access to technology-enabled lesson planning that facilitates experimentation to deepen learning.

The applicant states it will scale up the reform proposal to fit the autonomous approach for individual schools, but the plans lacks specificity how the model will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district wide change. The applicant does not provide a plan for how each school will scale in light of the fact each school will be autonomous in their approach.

The applicant does not show the alignment between the scale-up plan and the four strategies identified in its vision. The scale up plan is unclear as to the steps that will be taken to move all the reforms to all 35 participating in the district both during the grant period and beyond.

The applicant does not provide a high quality plan that includes the goals, rationale, timelines, and persons responsible for each of the activities it is proposing.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	8
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides baseline data and targets for student performance by grade and content area, graduation rates, and college enrollment for all students and by the required subgroups. The data is clearly presented, the rationale for targets is included, and targets for subgroups enable narrowing of gaps between subgroup performances. Each target is ambitious yet achievable. The summative data submitted is based on the current assessment system.

The applicant has presented a specific methodology for determining growth based on the Short-Cycle Assessment, Discovery Education, and DIBELS.

The applicant has set ambitious yet achievable goals for the first year of the grant. The expectation is that there will be a 60% increase in the number of students district-wide who are proficient in critical thinking, math, reading, and science. During the second year of the grant, the goal is to see a 75% increase, in the third year of the grant, the goal is an 80% increase, and at the end of the grant the goal is to see a 90% increase.

The high school graduation rate over time is ambitious and achievable as evidenced by the gradual targets that have been established. The table for graduation rate goal demonstrates a gradual improved expectation. For example, the graduation rate for English Language Learners grows from 65.1 percent in 2012-13 to the goal of 81.6 percent by 2016-17.

The applicant states in its narrative that the overall graduation rates increased from 68.3 to 69.4 percent, a nearly 10 percent increase. However, this is actually a 1 percent increase.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	3

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides evidence of a mixed record of success. According to the 2013 New Mexico Public Education Department, of the 35 schools in the Bridging the Gap Program, seven schools have a "B" rating, nine are rated "C", nine are rated "D", and ten are rated "F". Three-year averages show that 13 of the schools show a current decline from the previous years, 16 have remained constant, and seven have shown improvement.

The district proficiency writing scores show similar mixed results of success. The district showed a 51 percent proficiency in writing district-wide in 2010-2011, 57 percent in 2011-2012, and 52 percent in 2012-2013. The applicant provides graphs in the appendices showing student performance on the HST assessments and the levels of proficiency are not up to state standards.

Because of the mixed record of success among the 35 participating schools and given the fact that only seven schools received a "B" rating, the applicant has not clearly demonstrated its ability to improve student outcomes and close gaps district-wide.

The applicant has hired a new Superintendent who is in support of the technology-based blended learning district-wide. A tiered system was implemented in response to schools identified as "failing" and not being able to meet the one size fits all interventions and the district is now realizing improvements in core curricula that should be reflected in 2013-2014 school level data. The narrative lacks specific details regarding the tiered system and the kind of support and interventions that were provided to the low performing schools.

The applicant proposes to make all student data available to all stakeholders through e-Chalk and other methods. The applicant does not describe how often the data is shared, nor does it provide specific information related to the various formats in which the data is made available other than e-Chalk.

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

The applicant makes public direct instruction, instructional support, non-instructional support, and capital outlay school-level expenditures from State and local funds. The information is posted in the local newspaper for viewing as well as made available on each school's website.

The local newspaper periodically prints all salaries of teachers', staff, and administrators of the district for public review.

The Superintendent leads the efforts toward transparency and attends community meetings to make presentations and answer questions.

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

The applicant assures it has met all State; legal, statutory and regulatory requirements to implement personalized learning environments and cite three technology goals from the New Mexico Public Education Department.

The applicant, however, does not provide specific examples that support evidence of autonomy and support to carry out the work of the grant proposal. It is unclear if the applicant will receive any support from the state to carry out the project as well as what the participating schools will do since each is autonomous.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	7
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides evidence of stakeholder participation in the development of the project which includes teachers, administrators, and community stakeholders. Input was also received from the University of New Mexico-Gallup, Western New Mexico University-Silver City, and Crown Point Community College.

The vision and principles of the proposal were discussed in professional staff meetings which included teachers, principals, and the Superintendent. Principals of each school have been tasked with evaluating budgetary items to be included in the project proposal. The project has also been discussed at length with representatives of the teacher's union.

While the applicant provides some details related to stakeholder involvement in the development of the proposal, it is unclear how the proposal was revised based on their engagement and feedback. The narrative lacks a timeline for documenting stakeholder participation.

The applicant provides evidence of a parent committee being established, however, the applicant does not document evidence of parental engagement in the development of the proposal.

A student committee is also being set up to have representation and input, but there is no evidence of student involvement in the development of the proposal.

Three letters of support are included in the appendices. One letter is from the teachers union, another letter is from a principal, and the other letter is from the Boys and Girls Club. A letter of support was requested from the Mayor's office, but at the time of submission of the proposal the letter had not been received.

The reviewer noted that there were no letters of support from the Universities, PTAs/PTOs, parents, tribes, and local businesses. Even though, universities were referred to as having input in the development of the proposal.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	7

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes the need for each student to have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) to ensure they are college or career ready. Currently all students in the middle and high school have these IEPs which are based on college or career interest. The IEPs are created through the support of the Student Assistance Team consisting of teachers, administrators, and counselors.

The applicant will establish Grade Level Assistance Teams to ensure all students K-12 will have an IEP which will require hiring Educational Assistants to free teachers up to meet with students quarterly.

Under the proposal for personalized learning to ensure students are college and career ready, the applicant will implement blending learning strategies in the higher grades which will allow students more flexibility and interest in their programming and support greater achievement.

Parents will be engaged with their children's academic learning and language skills through goal setting and will be involved in school decisions and governance. Parent toolkits will be provided to families which are designed to support the development of school, family, and community partnerships.

The applicant does not adequately describe the work it is currently doing to ensure students are college and career graduation ready, nor does it provide specific activities for students to achieve these goals. The plan is unclear for all students.

The applicant provides insufficient details related to how regular education students with Individualized Educational Plans will be used to deepen learning experiences in areas of academic interest.

The blending learning model description lacks depth and it is unclear how students will have access to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that deepen their learning.

The applicant does not address the kinds of training that will be provided to students to ensure they understand how to use the online tools and resources.

The level of parent involvement in the development of the Individualized Educational Plan is unclear because the parent was not identified as a member of the team. It is unclear if the parents are being given the opportunity to review and provide input into the plans.

The applicant does not provide a high quality plan to include goals, rationale, activities, timelines, deliverables and parties responsible. The applicant has listed a variety of activities, but it has not clearly demonstrated the alignment of these activities to the goals of the project.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	7
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant shares information related to providing technology professional development for all district users. The Instructional Coaches and other district staff will provide some technical training and support to core teachers related to direct instruction and training for on-line education software and data analysis for short cycle assessments. Professional development in the district is ongoing.

The competency-based models allow students to learn and progress through the content at their own pace in response to their academic needs. The district is also considering implementing the Response to Intervention Model which is a multi-step approach to provide support to struggling students.

The districts use of IMB Cognos Data Warehouse for real-time monitoring of all data, will foster increased opportunities for staff to use data to inform instructional practices

The applicant has applied for a Leveraging Leadership Through Principals grant. Participation in the Academy will support school principals to set instructional expectations.

The applicant does not address how it will use feedback from the teacher and principal evaluation to improve practice.

The applicant provides a technology plan that includes strategies, timelines, and outcomes. The plan however, does not include the rationale or parties responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the plan.

The applicant does not provide adequate details to ensure students receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers in hard to staff schools and subjects.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	3

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes its policies related to Parents Rights to Know. The applicant also provides information related to its practices and rules that support personalized learning and cites two examples. The Indian Education Unit supports Navajo/Zuni Language and Culture teachers through professional development and technical assistance. The IAES/AEP program provides opportunities for students who have been expelled from their home school site to earn core credit as well as continue the learning needed to pass the five areas tested on the New Mexico Standards Based Assessments.

The applicant does not address how the LEA organizes its central office to provide support services to all participating schools. The applicant also did not provide responses to criteria D. b-e.

The applicant does not provide a high quality plan that includes goals, rationale, activities, timeline, deliverables, and parties responsible.

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

The applicant provides broadband access and telecommunications to 35 schools, a Student Support Center, Educational Development Center, and a bus barn covering approximately 5,500 square miles. The district also provides voice and data connectivity with services from five telecommunications companies for 14, 200 users. All classrooms are equipped with a minimum of eight data drops. Approximately 6,000 PCs are dedicated to students.

All users including students have access to e-mail accounts. All schools and the district have interactive web-sites to improve communication among all stakeholders. Teachers, students, and parents have access to real-time data including student and staff demographics, grades, and attendance which affords them access to grades and attendance via the Internet.

Technical support is provided to all school and district sites and the Technology Media Services is responsible for providing training to all users across the district.

Instructional coaches and other district personnel provide some technical training and support to core teachers related to direct instruction and training for on-line educational software and data analysis training for short cycle assessments.

The applicant currently uses the IBM/Decision Ed Cognos data warehouse to provide data to principals, teachers, and district office administrators. The district uses an interoperable data system that allows users to create dashboards and more detailed reports. It is unclear, however, if this data system has the capability to make recommendations for additional learning supports.

The applicant does not specifically state if its current data warehouse allows parents and students to export their information in an open data format.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes its plan that would support continuous improvement. At the district level, an annual needs assessment will continue to be conducted and results publicly shared, along with benchmark measures and benchmarks, as currently done.

The district will convene a stakeholder committee twice a year to assess progress and to recommend changes.

Each school will be responsible for implementation of the Personalized Learning Environment Plans. Each learning plan will establish measures and benchmarks that will target conditions for learning and teaching as well as measures of academic engagement, progress, and achievement which will serve as early warning signs for students in need.

At the classroom level, the teachers will implement instructional and classroom management strategies that support academic and emotional learning. The teachers will assess student progress daily and meet with colleagues weekly in professional learning communities to review student data and make practice changes. Routine and formal classroom observations will be conducted as well.

While the applicant has listed a series of activities and or strategies to ensure continuous improvement, it does not provide a high quality plan that includes goals, activities, rationale, timelines, deliverables, and parties responsible. It is unclear how these activities are aligned to the four strategies identified in the applicant's vision. The applicant does not document how the blended on-line models described earlier in the proposal will be measured and monitored to ensure quality of the investments.

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

The applicant provides a general overview of ongoing communication and stakeholder engagement. The Project Director will communicate with each principal on a regular basis and the principals will communicate with their staff. Teachers will be responsible for communicating with students on a daily basis. Monthly reports will be provided to the Project Director.

Parents will have access to the school grading system through PowerSchool, and parent-teacher conferences. Annual school reports to parents and families will continue to inform the families and the public of the status and changes of participating schools and the district.

The applicant does not provide a high quality plan that includes goals, rationale, activities, timelines, deliverables, and parties responsible. It is unclear how these activities are aligned to the goals described in the applicant's vision.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes twelve performance measures and provides a rationale for selecting each measure.

The applicant has identified its performance measures, the rationale, and methodology. The reviewer was unable to determine if the performance measures are ambitious and yet achievable because some measures are expressed in percentages, while others are stated in raw numbers. It is unclear how the applicant derived at the raw numbers for the baseline data and the narrative does not provide an explanation. For example, the Performance Measure for grades 9-12, (d, and e) identifies 2012-2013 baseline data for English Language Learners as 504/917.

The applicant has selected these measures because the short cycle weekly assessment are tied to the Common Core that specifically pinpoint standards mastery or lack thereof. The use of these measures identifies students in need of additional support, mastery, or proficiency.

The applicant does not provide sufficient details related to how it will improve the measure over time, but instead describes how the Student Assistance Team will determine the next steps for the individual student.

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

The external evaluator and data collection specialist will create documents and be responsible for collecting relevant data sets from a wide variety of sources to measure both the fidelity of project activities and the impact on teaching and learning. The external evaluator will closely examine data sets and related budgetary issues to determine through the fiscal impact of targeted technology activities, structures, and programs.

The data collection specialist will work with the external evaluator to create, distribute, and collect surveys that measure teacher, student, and parent impact. All data sets will be incorporated into Quarterly Evaluation Reports and Annual Reports.

The applicant does not provide a high quality plan that includes goals, activities, rationale, timelines, deliverables, and parties responsible.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The budget is reasonable and sufficient to support the goals of this project. The budget narrative and tables are comprehensive, addressing each grant requirement. The applicant clearly provides a thorough and thoughtful rationale for its investments. Extensive charts are provided for each budget. The applicant also clearly delineates funds that will be needed for the life of the grant or if the funding was a one-time investment.

The applicant does not provide details related to external grant partners or Federal grants such as Title III.

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

10

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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a general overview for sustainability of the projects goals. The district will increase its allocation to maintain the data system. The district will also earmark an estimated \$125,000 for professional development and the district can utilize Title II funds to offset cost.

The applicant will conduct an external and internal data collection and evaluation during the four year period. Eighty-three percent of the students in PK-12 are identified as Economically Disadvantaged.

The applicant has not designed a high quality plan that includes goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, rationale, and parties responsible.

It is also unclear, how the technology hardware will be replaced after the grant as well as the cost associated with the software licenses.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant only provides a list of partners and it is unclear whether or not these are new partnerships or partnerships the applicant is building upon. The applicant does not provide details as to when these partnerships were formed. It is also unclear what type of services these agencies provide to support students because this information was not shared.

The applicant provides a brief overview of the four desired results, however, the applicant does not indicate how these desired results are aligned with and support the goals of the project. The family desired results are lacking measureable outcomes

The applicant has identified a Student Assistance Team Coordinator to track the selected indicators. The applicant shared the data analysis will consist of weekly, curriculum based measurements or weekly standards based assessments provided by the textbook company. The data would be tracked for mastery using the district standards tracking tool. However, it is unclear what this tracking tool is as the applicant was vague regarding its description.

The applicant provides limited information regarding scaling the model. A list of activities and or resources is cited without describing how these strategies would be used to scale the model.

The applicant provides information related to how it would improve results over time through analysis of instruction and constant evaluation and monitoring of individual school leadership. The applicant does not specifically address how the community partnerships it has identified will be monitored and evaluated. The applicant also does not articulate how information from parents and students will be gathered to improve program outcomes.

The applicant does not provide sufficient documentation as to how it would integrate the community services to meet the social-emotional and behavioral needs for all participating students. The applicant's response is limited to integration of services provided only to students at the juvenile detention center, alternative educational settings, homebound students, and students with 504 plans.

The applicant will assess the needs and assets of participating students through the administration of weekly curriculum based assessments and weekly classroom assessments. Plans will be developed based on these assignments. The applicant makes no reference to analyzing attendance data, suspension data, and qualitative data analyzed based on surveys administered to the students. The applicant limits its response to only meeting the academic needs of the students.

The applicant shared that the New Mexico Public Education Department conducts an annual parent survey and the results are reviewed by each building Leadership Team and are used to determine next steps and best practices. The applicant does not document what it will do at the district level to identify and inventory the needs and assets of the participating schools and its community.

The applicant provides the titles of the various teams at the district that are involved in decision-making. However, the applicant does not provide sufficient information related to the protocols. It is unclear who is responsible for the selection, implementation, and evaluation of the supports that address the individual needs of students. The roles and responsibilities

of the teams are not clearly defined.

The applicant will establish learning centers at local chapter houses and community centers to engage parents and families. It will make available a Parent toolkit, offer continuing education, and host family nights at the participating schools. The applicant does not provide sufficient documentation of how parents are engaged in the decision making process to address students' needs and to provide input and feedback about solutions to improve results.

The applicant shared that it will routinely assess progress through weekly curriculum based measurements and weekly class assessments in Core Curriculum. The applicant's response is limited to assessing the student's academic growth and there is no reference to assessing the goals of the project to ensure progress is being made. The applicant does not provide information related to qualitative data that will be used to measure progress of the project goals.

The applicant presents a chart with the performance measures listed. The reviewer was not able to determine if some of the performance measures are ambitious yet achievable because the applicant did not provide an explanation of how the baseline numbers were derived. For example, Grades 4-8, Performance Measure b., which identifies the baseline for 2012-2013 as 823/1,272. Because this chart includes raw numbers without an explanation in the narrative, it is unclear if these numbers represent growth or attainment. The reviewer is unsure of how these numbers were derived.

Overall, the applicant has not fully demonstrated a proposal to support all the criteria for competitive preference.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has addressed how it will build on RTTD core educational areas and has created a plan to improve individualized learning through a variety of strategies. The project will implement strategies designed to improve teacher quality ensuring that students with highest needs are taught by highly effective teachers. The applicant proposes four primary activities that are aligned to the core assurances to attain its goal of personalizing the learning environment in each school throughout the district. The applicant has designed a project that will support increased student achievement through personalizing student learning, providing tools and strategies specific to each student's skill development and mastery, and the use of technology to assist with meeting the diverse needs of all students.

Total	210	108
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0183NM-2 for Gallup-McKinley County Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant scores a 7 in this area.

a. The plan does not provide information related to developing or adhering to a standards-based curriculum that will be aligned to the key goals, activities and deliverables. There is limited mention of aligning goals and proposed activities and deliverables with the Common Core curriculum. The applicant does indicate that there is a scope and sequence; however the plan does not provide information as to what standards-based foundation was used to create the scope and sequence. The applicant indicated that the technology proposals for the plan follow the National Technology Standards.

The applicant proposes a program that utilizes teleconferencing for the purpose of exploring college and career opportunities. Elementary students will browse the internet. If applicable the plan proposes this activity "can become part of the student's IEP". It is unclear as to the way this activity is worded if this opportunity will be a part of each student's personalized learning, or if some IEP students will have access to this opportunity. Middle school students will research college and career opportunities. Ninth grade students will choose courses. A facilitator/counselor will assist high school students in career readiness. A Sponsoring Career Days with a variety of speakers/presenters from different careers will be held annually at each school. The applicant expresses hope that these activities will motivate students to stay in school thereby preparing students for college and careers and at the same time increase the graduation rate.

The plan does not contain a vision for recruiting, developing, retaining or rewarding effective teachers and principals. The applicant provides information related to observing teachers; however there is no information provided as to what tool the applicant will use to determine what would identify a teacher or principal as being highly qualified and/or effective.

The plan does provide information for implementing and using data systems to measure student growth and success.

In the 2011 school year student report card grades showed a 51% increase in proficiency in writing districtwide and a 52% increase for the 2012 school year.

The plan cites documentation from the New Mexico Public Education Department in the "Bridging the Gap" program that demonstrates seven of the 35 schools in the district showed overall improvement and 15 remained constant. The data in the plan shows ratings of A, B,C, D and F. There is no breakdown in the plan to identify what the indicators/benchmarks are for each of the letter grades.

b. The applicant proposes to personalize student learning, increase student achievement, and build equity in learning by implementing updated digital programs and technology, and using the teachers to realize student strengths in order to deliver instruction based upon student academic interests. The plan includes such activities as distance learning, maintaining and building online learning communities, implementing Integrated Blending Learning opportunities, and improving the quality of its current technology infrastructure.

c. The plan indicates that technology will be infused into student personalized learning in a variety of ways: in classrooms through social contact learning with teachers and students, outside classroom activities, using subject matter experts, blogging, podcasts, wikis, social bookmarking, and access of content from many sources.

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

The applicant received the highest possible number of points (10) in this area.

The narratives describe the process that the applicant used to select all of its schools to participate. All schools are in rural areas, have high levels of poverty and high needs students, especially students identified as English Language Learners. The plan contains a chart listing the participating schools and the total number of participating students along with data showing low-income families, and numbers of English Language Learners

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

The applicant receives a score of 3 for this area.

The plan does not provide detailed outlines for when each of the activities will begin and proposed end times to assure when and how learning outcomes will be delivered to students. The plan does account for parent and family involvement..

Some of the activities have an assigned individual to oversee the success of the learning experience. There is not consistency throughout the plan relative to specificity with timelines and activity alignment with a designee to oversee and assure that the plan will be credible and successful throughout the duration of the grant project.

The proposal does not provide information as to how the applicant will use reform to scale up and translate into

meaningful reform beyond the participating schools.

The plan lists activities and deliverables. The applicant does not provide specificity as to how processes and activities will be carried out in a sequential, coherent and comprehensive way that will guarantee success for the applicant to meet the stated outcome goals.

Activities and deliverables which have been proposed as part of the model include:

- Rotation model using Blended Learning, one-to-one and small group instruction, virtual learning activities, video conferencing technology.
- Building data systems that measure student growth.
- Using formative and summative assessments at all levels
- Varied software learning programs
- College and Career Readiness Activities, which include speakers, expert consultants, teacher and guidance counselor interventions.
- Digital access to resources.
- Professional Development using ongoing technology-focused Professional Learning Communities.
- Building Test Coordinators and Instructional Coaches will be hired to oversee implementation of this model of teaching and learning.
- Specific software training for teachers. Training will focus on use of SMART boards, ipads, and assistive technologies and hardware
- Provide hands on learning for students through the use of education technologies.
- Communication with families using Parent Link, PowerSchool, and providing all families with access to technology through Chapter Houses which offer access for parent support
- Technology-enabled instruction using real-time student performance data at all grade levels
- Formation of a Cyber Academy.
- Face-to-Face technology to deliver personalized student instruction.
- Reorganize schools in order to redesign personalized instruction.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	3
(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:		
The applicant received a score of 3 in this area.		
The applicant is currently using and proposes to use a combination of summative and formative assessments to identify areas of proficiency and growth. The plan contains charts which demonstrate the plan's estimated goals for increasing student achievement and decreasing achievement gaps.		
The chart (A4)(b) <i>Decreasing achievement gaps</i> is unclear as to what the applicant has set as goal for student learning increases and achievement gap decreases relative to student achievement for English Language Learners. Percentage indicators increase and decrease over the course of a five year projection. The number of students associated with each percentage consistently decreases. The percentage estimates do not align with the estimated projected number of students.		
The increased student achievement gains, decreasing achievement gaps, graduation rates and college enrollment projections appear to be achievable based upon the information and rationales presented in the plan. It is not clearly stated by the applicant as to whether or not the goals are ambitious when compared to and aligned with the minimum State ESEA targets.		

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	1
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
The applicant received a score of 1 in this area.		
In the 2011 school year student report card grades showed a 51% increase in proficiency in writing districtwide and a 52% increase for the 2012 school year.		

The plan cites documentation from the New Mexico Public Education Department in the "Bridging the Gap" program that demonstrates seven of the 35 schools in the district showed overall improvement and 15 remained constant. The data in the plan shows ratings of A, B, C, D, and F. There is no breakdown in the plan to identify what the indicators are for each of the letter grades.

Due to barriers (high poverty, minimal parent involvement, high needs student populations) listed in the plan's narratives, there have not been significant increases in student performance over the past four years.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
The applicant scores a 2 in this area.		
The applicant's plan provides information that all 4 categories of expenditures are made available to the public upon request. The information is also posted in the newspaper. School Report cards are available online and at each school. The district also posts per child expenditures on its website and at each school site. The local newspaper periodically prints all salaries of teachers, staff and administrators. The Superintendent addresses community stakeholders with updates related to grading, scores, progress, funding and investments.		
The plan does demonstrate a moderate level of transparency. The plan does not indicate how often the Superintendent meets on a regular basis to provide current updates for processes, practices and investments. The plan does not indicate how often all budgetary expenses are explained to the public, if newsletters that are sent out regularly to the public contain budget changes, updates, etc. The plan does not provide for a high level of transparency providing immediate website access with regular updates for all district expenses that may cause the budget figures to change on a daily, weekly or monthly basis.		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	1
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
The applicant scores a 1 in this area.		
The applicant provides a statement from the New Mexico Public Education Department related to having funding for technology and the capacity to establish student centered, technology-enhanced learning environments that result in increased student performance and economic viability. The plan does not provide verification that the state allows autonomy to bring about reform for personalizing student learning as it relates to the goals in the project for recruiting, retaining, and rewarding teachers and principals.		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	7
(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:		
The applicant received 7 points for this area.		
The plan provides information about how the district formed an Advisory Team which included teachers, administrators and community stakeholders who provided input for the proposal. The district solicited input from local universities. The plan provides a letter of support from the Teacher's Union. The district has formed a parent committee to get parents actively involved with programs. The applicant proposes setting up a student committee for the purpose of soliciting evaluation input as the programs aligned with the proposal evolve. Letters of support are also provided from a Principal, state official, and local Boys and Girls Club.		
The plan does not contain letters of support from teachers, parents, or students. In addition the plan does not provide for signatures of parents and/or community members who attended meetings. There are no dated minutes of meetings confirming stakeholders were involved with the proposal process or to demonstrate that there was a high volume of support for meaningful engagement and feedback in the actual development of the proposal. The applicant does not explain how the proposal may have changed or not changed as a result of feedback from the various parent, teacher, and community meetings.		

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

	Available	Score

(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	4
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
The applicant received a score of 4 in this area:		
The applicant plans to use the Bridging the Gap program for the purpose of using technology to enable students to meet Common Core standards and successfully prepare graduates for college and career.		
Each student will be assessed to determine college and career readiness. The plan does not address which assessments will be used to demonstrate if a child is classified as "college and career ready."		
The district plans to develop an Individualized Education Plan for each student in collaboration with teachers, administrators, students and counselors. These Grade Level Assistance Teams will create a plan for each child quarterly. The district plans to hire highly-qualified Educational Assistants to successfully implement an individualized plan for each child beginning at the pre-kindergarten level.		
The plan proposes using Blended Learning strategies at the high school level to address student interests and an opportunity to increase graduation rates.		
The applicant makes reference to a plan for English Language learners with a proposed outcome for increasing college and career readiness. Specific details as to which programs will be used, at which grade level the plan will begin to be implemented, and how the plan will be evaluated and who will be responsible for the successful execution of the program are not provided		
The plan focuses on engaging parents as a strategy to increase student learning with a variety of digital on-site and off-site resources		
The applicant proposes using a variety of community engagement interventions to connect student learning with real life in order to be prepared for college and career, such as: improve volunteerism, increase recruitment of activities to involve families and stakeholders, and connect local business, agencies, cultural, civic organization, colleges and universities with the schools.		
The applicant proposes to use the Boys and Girls Club of Gallup and business partnership affiliates for job shadowing opportunities.		
The plan does not provide detailed information for how to provide training and support to students that will ensure that they understand how to use the technology and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning.		
Rationales are provided for proposed instructional learning interventions and aligned with the plan's key goals. The applicant does provide timelines for when some of the proposed activities will be implemented, namely: Bridging the Gap Through Technology, purchasing classroom technology, and using technology based interventions with low achieving English Language Learners.		
The plan does not assign designated individuals who will be responsible to lead, collect data and oversee the following proposed activities:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • successful implementation of creating and individualizing a plan for each student, the parent engagement program, and job shadowing, • building and maintaining the business partnerships, developing blended learning strategies that are designed to meet individual student needs, • implementation and maintenance of the software programs, • data collection from the college- and career- ready assessments. 		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	3
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
The applicant received a score of 3 in this area.		
The applicant has a partnership with three local universities for teachers to maintain licensure, take graduate level courses and provide leadership courses for principals.		
The plan proposes developing teacher retention by developing talent within the district through training and professional support using a peer network designed to improve teacher collaboration, reduce professional isolation and improve morale. The plan does not outline specific activities to connect the teacher retention strategies to: providing opportunities to employ interventions that will meet outcome goals, improving student progress toward responding to meeting individual		

student needs, executing college-and career-ready standards and closing achievement gaps.

The applicant proposes instituting a Principal Leadership Academy as part of professional development to prepare administrators to implement curricula.

Educators will be prepared to integrate technologies into their classroom. Coordinators will be hired to serve as technology support to teachers throughout the district. Technicians will also be hired to provide on-site technical support for staff who use the network. Teachers will participate in technology training and workshops three times a year.

The plan does not propose specific professional development for teachers and administrators to address the following areas:

- 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
- Adapt content and instruction, providing opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks in response to their academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches (e.g., discussion and collaborative work, project-based learning, videos, audio, manipulatives);
- Frequently measure student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice), or college- and career-ready graduation requirements, and use data to inform both the acceleration of student progress and the improvement of the individual and collective practice of educators.
- Improve teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness by using feedback provided by the LEA's teacher and principal evaluation systems, including frequent feedback on individual and collective effectiveness, as well as by providing recommendations, supports, and interventions as needed for improvement.
- Processes and tools to match student needs with specific resources and approaches.
- Feedback about the effectiveness of the resources in meeting student needs.
- Information from such sources as the district's teacher evaluation system that helps 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
- A plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals, including in hard-to-staff schools, subjects (such as mathematics and science), and specialty areas (such as special education).

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	2

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant received a 2 in this area.

The plan does not provide specific activities related to how the central office will organize in order to provide support and services for facilitating personalized learning to all of the participating schools. A detailed outline of rules, practices and processes for how central office will operate relative to the projects will be implemented from start to finish are not provided in the plan

The plan does provide information about organizing school leadership teams in participating schools. There is no mention as to whether each school has the flexibility and autonomy for school schedules, calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing, roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators, and school budgets.

The applicant does not provide specific activities that provide students with the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery versus the amount of time spent on a topic.

The plan does provide a statement that students have the opportunity to take dual enrollment courses that give students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways.

The applicant does provide technology and digital resources in the form of instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including English Language Learners.

The plan does not provide for timelines and assigned individuals who would be responsible for each of the activities listed. The plan does assign some individuals to oversee some of the technology related activities. The credibility of the plan is questionable due to a lack of specificity for timelines and role responsibilities for overseeing major components of the plan

related to policies and rules that would assure the successful implementation of each activity from start to finish.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
The applicant received an 8 in this area.		
The plan provides detailed narratives outlining the availability of the technology to all parents, educators and stakeholders participating in this plan both in and out of school. The plan outlines the levels of technical support which the applicant applies to stakeholders using a varied range of strategies. A Director of Technology oversees the Technology Department with one coordinator and two supervisors. Trained staff are available for on-site troubleshooting.		
The plan does not provide information as to how the technology system allows parents and students to export information in and open format to be used in electronic learning systems such as tutoring software, learning management systems, etc.		
The applicant does provide information that demonstrates the schools use interoperable data systems for attendance, grading and discipline data.		
Rationales are provided for the technology plan along with key goals aligned to the National Technology Standards. Individuals are assigned to be responsible for parts of the technology plan.		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	11
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
The applicant received a score of 11.		
The plan provides activities that the district proposes to deliver. The applicant proposes to use positive peer evaluation to share information. The Plan outlines ways to engage stakeholders. The applicant explains ways for conducting weekly and annual classroom assessments. Teachers will meet with colleagues weekly in professional learning communities to review student data and make practice changes as necessary. The applicant proposes to create school stakeholder committees. School leadership teams will meet every other week. Student support teams will meet weekly and provide data to teachers. The applicant states that classroom walk-throughs will be conducted and individual professional development plans will be developed. The applicant plans to publish personalized learning plans with school-wide measures and benchmarks. These will serve as an early warning sing for students in need.		
Rationales for the activities are provided. The plan does not provide the title of the individual/s who will be responsible for monitoring and publicly sharing information on the quality of all the investments funded by Race to the Top. The plan does not specify how these activities will be delivered after the term of the grant.		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
The applicant received a score of 3.		
The applicant proposes activities for internal and external participants. The Project Director will communicate regularly with the Principal. The principal will communicate with staff. Communities will communicate monthly among educators throughout the district. Teachers will communicate on a daily basis with students. A contracted external evaluator and a data collection specialist will work directly with the Project Director to gather information form principals, teachers and the district. Annual school reports that will include grading systems, classroom e-Chalk access for bulletin boards, and changes in classroom assignments will be made to parents and family. Partnerships with college and universities will foster further community engagement.		
A narrative provides a rationale that is aligned with the key goals of the proposal. A Project Director is assigned to meet regularly with the Principal. Timelines are described for communicating on an annual, monthly, and weekly basis. The plan does not account for an individual who will be assigned to bear the responsibility for reporting to parents and maintaining the college and university partnerships.		

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant received a 3 for this area.</p> <p>The applicant lists a rationale for each measure the applicant selected for the project.</p> <p>The applicant has selected appropriate as well as the required number of performance measures as required for the proposal.</p> <p>The applicant provided a chart that lists the performance measures and the goals to be attained over a 5 year period of time for all participating English Language Learners.</p> <p>The applicant lists the metrics that will be used for the performance evaluation. The plan does not clearly outline how the applicant will use classroom observations, student surveys, and instructional coaching to measure the effects connected to the proposed goals that were set for English Language Learners. The plan proposes achievable goals.</p> <p>The plan does not provide for an individual to be responsible for collecting data, analyzing the data and reporting the data over time.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)		
(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant received 3 points for the criteria presented.</p> <p>The applicant proposes to add 17 new positions to serve districtwide: Test Coordinator/Student Assistant Team teachers, and 2 Technical Support Technicians. An oversight team comprised of the Project Director, District Superintendent, Director of Technology and Media Services, and principals from each school will serve as a team to evaluate the effectiveness of the fund expenditures. This team will be responsible for creating all evaluation documents and for collecting relevant data sets from a wide variety of sources to measure the fidelity of the projects and the impact of the projects on teaching and learning. A contracted external evaluator will examine the impact of unique project activities on all groups of stakeholders and compare outcomes to baseline data sets compiled at the start of the initiative. The evaluator will also examine data sets and related budgetary issues to determine the fiscal impact of Technology activities, structures and programs. A data collection specialist will work with the external evaluator to create, distribute, and collect surveys that measure teacher, student and parent impact. Quarterly and annual reports will be shared with each of the project leaders at the school and district levels, with the teacher's union and the public. The plan does not propose a tool to be used to measure the effectiveness of highly qualified teachers and principals. The applicant does not outline a detailed method of processes for how to measure the impact professional development activities will have on student learning.</p> <p>The plan provides a rationale, timeline for activities and deliverables, and assignment of responsibilities.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant received a score of 10 for this area.</p> <p>The budget narratives and tables identify all funds that will support the project. The plan is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal. The plan provides a thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities. Local, state and federal funds are presented and used to support the implementation of the proposal. All funds used for a one-time investment and those that will be used for ongoing operational costs that will be incurred during and after the grant period are identified. The budget narrative does account for technology expenditures over a four year period of time to ensure the long-term sustainability of personalizing learning environments.</p>		

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	6
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant received 6 points for this area of the plan.</p> <p>The plan does not provide for support from State and local government leaders in order to sustain the plan beyond the life of the project. The plan does provide for Title II Federal funding. The plan does provide for a team that will evaluate the effectiveness of past investments during the four years of grant funding, thus providing a basis for planning for future investments. The plan does not provide a post-grant budget. The applicant plans to maintain the technology that is purchased during the grant project beyond the years of Race to the Top funding.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	5
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant received a score of 5 in this area.</p> <p>The applicant lists six categories of sustainable partnerships that meet the criteria of Absolute Priority 1 to support the plan: Public Health Organizations, Business, Social Services, Civic Groups, Community Based Organizations, and Post-Secondary Organizations.</p> <p>The applicant lists population-level desired results indicating that all scholars will be academically proficient and performing at grade level in across all academic areas</p> <p>The plan provides for a Student Assistance Team coordinator to track data for participating students.</p> <p>The plan provides for weekly, curriculum-based measurements to be used in the data collection process on a routine basis. Short cycle assessments would be used and tracked for mastery of skills.</p> <p>The plan provides for professional development for parents, community learning centers, and access to on-line courses. There is not detailed information available to explain how these resources would be used to scale the project beyond participating students and families.</p> <p>The applicant proposes to engage parents and families by establishing learning centers at local Chapter Houses and community centers, providing educational materials to parents, implementing professional development for parents and families, and hosting family nights at the schools.</p> <p>The applicant provides a chart listing the performance measures with desired results.</p> <p>The plan does not provide for key individuals/positions from the listed support organizations that would be responsible for coordinating information about students that the organizations would be servicing. The applicant does not provide for a timeline or schedule of meetings to bring all supporting organizations together to assure that all organizations are moving in the same direction to meet individual student needs and programs.</p>		

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant met the requirements for Absolute Priority 1.</p> <p>The proposal provides for extensive use of technology to personalize learning for all participating students, especially English Language Learners. The applicant aligns goals to Standards. The proposal provides individualized activities and deliverables that prepare students to be ready for college and careers. The applicant addresses interventions designed to keep students in school and improve graduation rates. Interventions are planned with the goal of increasing student achievement. The applicant proposes to use Interoperable data systems to collect data. Leadership teams have been</p>		

designated to analyze data, develop reports, and provide public articulation strategies. The applicant proposes professional development activities designed to improve the effectiveness of teachers and principals. Data is provided and charted to implement interventions for decreasing achievement gaps for English Language Learners. The applicant provided information that demonstrates learning has improved in writing achievement over the past two years.

Total	210	92
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0183NM-3 for Gallup-McKinley County Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Gallup McKinley County Schools (GMCS) has set forth a reform vision that builds on the four core educational assurance areas through four primary activities. The district has been preparing for implementation of Personalized Learning Environments (PLE) for each student attending its nineteen schools located across a wide rural area within a Navaho tribal reservation. The applicant provided several ways it will build on the four core assurance areas:

1. It will implement strategies that will utilize technology to enable students to meet Common Core standards.
2. Schools within the district have a strong data system designed to provide continual monitoring of student progress and instructional effectiveness and will implement Competency-based models of programming and assessment.
3. The GMCS uses IBM Cognos Data Warehouse for real time monitoring of all data and uses SBA data, (along with DIBELS for assessing early literacy skills), to provide quality student assessments to evaluate student knowledge of the Common Core.
4. Personalized learning will require changes for both students and teachers. Teachers will move from the traditional role to one of facilitator who can provide alternative instruction or adjust learning if students fail to achieve learning objectives. Teachers will create their own PLEs to build professional connections to support their teaching practice.

The applicant outlines four primary activities that will support the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning through personalized student support. These include implementation of technology-based blended learning, competency-based instruction and assessment, expansion of college and career readiness opportunities, and increased involvement of parents and the community.

GMCS will initiate three general models of blended learning to be used throughout the district. Classroom Learning Centers will be established within each classroom where students will work in small groups and the teacher will act more as a facilitator and a collaborator. Schools will base their approach to blended models generally on three models that will be used at different grade levels: Rotation, Flex and the Self-Blend Model, each of which is described and referenced to Staker and Horn, 2012. A vision of how teachers would learn to implement these models was not provided, but a section in A3 discusses technology-focused Professional Learning Communities and embedded coaching for teachers.

The District will revitalize a program to allow professionals and educators to come on site and via teleconferencing to help students learn about different careers and Career Days will be held. There was no vision of how effective teachers and principals will be recruited.

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

Gallup-McKinley County Schools qualifies to have their RTT grant be district wide. 83% of the students in PK-12 are identified as Economically Disadvantaged/High Need. Over 76 percent of the population is Native American and nearly 32% of the families live below the poverty line making McKinley County one of the poorest counties in per-capita income in the United States.

Included in the project are nineteen PK-5 elementary schools, seven middle schools, and nine high schools. A list of schools is provided by community, with the number of students served, populations of the communities in which they are located, and the percentage of residents living at or below the poverty level. A list of the participating schools and the number of participating students, high need students, and low-income students was provided, along with the number of participating educators.

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

The applicant did not include a high quality plan as defined in the RTT notice. A high quality plan that lists specific goals, relevant activities, timeline, criteria by which they will measure implementation, and parties responsible for implementing the activities was not specified. A Theory of Change logic model is referred to on page 24, but there was not one included.

Over eleven pages of text were written that describe the proposed project called, "Bridging The Gap." A paragraph on page 27 provides a sense of their theory of action, but it was not labeled as such: "Through Bridging the Gap, student achievement will grow through Personalized Learning Environments. Blended learning through implementation of equipment, software, and necessary training will help create long -term change in the district. Technology enabled teaching, informed by real-time performance data will become standard expectation at all grade levels. Professional Learning Communities will promote collaboration for professional growth among teachers, which will benefit students in the classroom. " It was also noted that ELL learners will be identified as the target subset of student will benefit significantly by the introduction of a blended learning curriculum at every level.

The applicant notes that while the technology and software are currently in place to implement a network of PLEs across the district, it will require some school reorganization to personalize instruction as part of instructional components which is being done now. There was no further detail about this.

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

The summative assessments used for baseline and growth targets were identified. Goals for improved student outcomes were provided for Performance on Summative Assessments, decreasing Achievement gaps, graduation rates and college enrollment was estimated because records have not been maintained in the past. It was not clear whether each of their targets equals or exceeds the State's target. There is a table showing an overall target for decreasing the achievement gap between English Language learners and Non-English Language Learners, but it was difficult to understand. In the text and on this table, they noted, "Their goal for the first year will be a 60% increase in number of 'scholars' who are proficient in critical thinking, math, reading and science." This seemed quite ambitious, but was ambiguous. There were no targets to show how they would narrow gaps between other subgroups or across schools.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Gallup-McKinley County Schools cannot demonstrate a clear track record of success in advancing student achievement and closing achievement gaps. According to the 2013 New Mexico Public Education Department, of the 35 schools represented in the Bridging the Gap program, nine are rated "D", ten are rated "F" and three year averages show that 13 of the schools showed a decline from the previous two years and 15 remained constant. Movement in a positive direction was noted for student achievement only in writing during the past three years.

Additional positive points include that GMCS has a new Superintendent who strongly supports implementing technology based blended learning district wide. Since the introduction of a new state wide grading system, GMCS is seeing some improvement at the high school level.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
GMCS values transparency in all of its processes. The District makes public all four categories of school level expenditures from State and local funds. The local newspaper periodically prints all salaries of teachers, staff, and administrators of the district for public review. The minutes of all meetings are also published, but supporting documents to support the aforementioned activities were not provided.		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)		
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
The applicant quoted New Mexico's Public Education Department Goals that support the use of technology-enhanced learning environments and said that "funding available to support planning, implementing and assessing initiatives for integrating technology into New Mexico classrooms and schools." Based on audits, the district has met all state, legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement personalized learning environments described in the proposal. No evidence was provided to demonstrate the extent to which GMCS has successful conditions to implement the proposed personalized learning environments.		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	3
(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:		
The applicant listed the various stakeholders who participated in the planning of the proposal. An Advisory Team that included administrators and teachers and community stakeholders guided the development of the project, but information was not provided as to how many people or how many meetings were held. The project was discussed with the teachers union of GMCS who submitted a Letter of Support and signed the Application Assurance attesting to their support. Input was also received from three local colleges. The proposal only contains three letters of support: The McKinley County Federation of School Employers, the Boys and Girls Club Director, and the Principal of one elementary school. The applicant ascertains that both the State and Mayor comment period was met, but the Mayor's office had not responded at the time of submission.		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	3
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
GMCS outlined a few plans for improving the learning of students in this section. They include:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies that will utilize technology to enable students to meet Common Core standards and will be implemented. • Individualized Education Plans will be established for all students PK-12, rather than waiting to begin them in grade 9. • Grade Level Assistance teams will create a plan for each child quarterly, rather than just for students who have exhibited difficulties. • The implementation of blended learning strategies will allow students more flexibility and interest in their programming, and support greater achievement. Students will have increased opportunities for varied experiences that help prepare them for college and careers. 		
GMCS will try to encourage parents and community members to become more involved in their childrens' education through the use of telecommunications and Chapter Houses in selected communities that will enable greater access to distance learning.		
Without a high quality plan, it was not clear how the District's approach to learning would increase engagement for all learners, particularly high need students and help them understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals. There was no timeline or deliverables, or parties responsible for implementing activities. It was not clear that with the support of parents and educators, each student would have access to high quality content aligned with college and career ready standards and receive ongoing personalized learning recommendations based upon		

student's current knowledge and skills to ensure they are on track toward meeting college and career-ready standards. There was no discussion of mechanisms to provide training and support to students to ensure they understand how to use the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their own learning.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	5
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

This section explained that a key to GMCS's model for establishing personalized learning environments would be to ensure that teachers and principals have the necessary resources and training to establish and maintain highly effective classroom environments. Plans to ensure educators have tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress were described. Highlights include: Video conferencing and instructional coaches will help educators improve instruction and increase their capacity to support students across this rural district. Multi-disciplinary cross functional school and grade leadership teams will refine and execute school improvement plans to ensure continuous improvement at their schools and in the district. These teams will set goals establish work plans, commit to benchmarks, and monitor the school improvement plan regularly.

A Logic Model presented at the end of this criterion showing three major challenges that this grant will address, strategies/timeframe, and short-term and long term outcomes, was informative and included several components of a high quality plan. For the first time in this proposal, a table made it apparent that the district will incrementally institute technology and PLE's incrementally over the four-year period. Schools in some sectors of the District will not receive classroom technology until year 3 or 4. Missing was who would be responsible for implementing each item and details about how schools and teachers at different schools would be incrementally brought on board.

It was noted that GMCS faces challenges in recruiting highly qualified teachers and principals from outside of the district and reservation areas. An effort will be made to develop the capacity of those who are there with a peer network, but details were not provided. Little information was provided about the district's teacher or principal evaluation system to help school leaders, school leadership teams, and schools receive feedback to improve school culture and effectiveness. It was noted that GMCS is planning establish a district-wide program, "Examining Principal Work," which will be similar to examining student work. GMCS recognizes that they need to provide more support to principals and have applied for a "Leveraging Leadership" grant.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
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(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	7
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(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

GMCS reported that the LEA central office is organized to support decentralized flexibility and autonomy in matters pertaining to local school management of grant implementation in other sections of this proposal.

GMCS will expand their policies and infrastructure to provide every student and teacher with resources and technical and professional support to changing to a more personalized learning environment. The LEA adheres to the National Technology Education Standards in establishing standards for best practices in teaching and leading with technology. Each school will have a leadership team with autonomy over school personnel and school budget decisions. The applicant provides two examples as evidence that it provides support to facilitate personalized learning to all students, including English language learners and students who have been expelled from their home site school.

Missing from having a high quality plan are details about which activities will support key goals, a timeline and deliverables connected to the activities, and the parties responsible for implementing each activity.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	5
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

GMCS provided evidence that the LEA provides students, parents, and staff with access to technology and technical support. The District provides broadband access and telecommunications to all the schools, has a student-to-PC ratio of two students per computer, and supports video and voice communications using various electronic platforms. In order to implement PLEs throughout the district, internal and external bandwidth will be increased at select sites to meet state and

national testing requirements and add additional computers and other hardware to increase access to network and online resources. The LEA Technology Department is responsible for providing technical support and training all users across the district. Instructional Coaches and other district staff provide technical training support to core teachers to integrate technology into the curriculum. Video conference systems are used to provide cost-effective training across this rural district. GMCS currently uses the IBM/Decision Ed Cognos Data warehouse to provide data in an open data format to teachers, principals, and the district office administrators. Cognos reports student demographics, school enrollment on a daily basis, grades and behavior incidents, and assessment data. The system allows users to create dashboards and reports integrating data from several systems. It was not clear if the system includes human resource, budget, and instructional improvement data. The applicant lost points for not having a high quality plan to support program implementation.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	3

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not include a high quality plan as defined in the RTT notice for continual improvement. A high quality plan listing specific goals, relevant activities, timeline, criteria by which implementation will be measured, and parties responsible for implementing the activities was not specified. The plan did not address how the applicant will publicly share information on the quality of its investments funded by RTT, such as investments in professional development and technology.

The applicant did provide an overview of what would be done at the district, school, and classroom level to support a continuous improvement process. At the district level, annual needs assessments will continue to be conducted and a school stakeholder committee will convene twice a year to assess progress on recommended changes. At the school level, school leadership teams will meet every other week and the student support team will meet weekly and these teams will provide data to teachers with support coaching as needed. It was unclear what would be different at the district and school level to support rigorous continuous improvement on progress toward meeting the goals and activities pertaining to this grant.

Classroom teachers will assess student progress daily and meet weekly in a professional learning community to review student data and make practice changes. Classroom walkthroughs and individual professional development plans will support teacher growth. Students will set course-level performance goals based on rubrics for mastery and develop an individualized plan for college or career readiness. There was not enough specificity provided as to how teachers and students will be encouraged to make ongoing changes and improvements.

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

The applicant did not present a high quality approach as to how it would continuously improve its high quality plan. They did present rough timelines for ongoing internal communications. It was noted that the project director will be in contact with each principal "on a regular basis" and the contracted external evaluator will work with the Project Director to gather data and communicate monthly progress with him or her. Teacher professional learning communities will meet monthly. It was noted that the LEA will continue to develop and strengthen communications with the larger communities, but no evidence was provided for how this would be done.

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

The applicant has set forth 12 ambitious and achievable performance measures with annual targets and gradual trajectories for improvement that extend beyond the grant. The applicant outlined one rationale for using the performance measures listed in the application and described how mastery of each performance measure will be determined. Each performance measure is addressed for all participating students and for the subgroup of ELL students. How the measures will provide formative leading information tailored to the proposed plan and theory of action and how the measures will be reviewed and improved over time was not provided.

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

The applicant reported who will collect the evaluation data and who will provide oversight and accountability to the program to ensure the district is making good use of the funds. An oversight team comprised of the Project Director, district administrators, and principals from each school will provide oversight. An external evaluator and data collection specialist will be engaged for the duration of the program. The external evaluator will examine the impact of the project activities on all groups of stakeholders and consider related budgetary issues to understand the fiscal impact of the activities, structures and programs. Data sets will be incorporated into Quarterly Evaluation Reports that will be shared with the project leaders at each school and district level, the teacher's union and available to the public. It was explained at the beginning of this section that the majority of funding being sought for "Bridging the Gap" will be applied toward the purchase of technology and software and to establish 17 new positions for Building Test Coordinator/Student Assistant Team teachers across the district, and 2 Technical Support Technicians. There was no indication of how the effectiveness of investments in professional development and activities that employ technology to increase personalized learning and improve teaching would be determined. There was no effort to tie the criterion to a high quality plan.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	6

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant clearly identifies all funds to support the work laid out in the proposal. All funds appear to be from RTT funding, since multiple funding sources were not included in the budget. Timelines and deliverables, along with cost and responsibility, were not noted. The applicant did not provide a thoughtful rationale for its investments in this section. Funds for one-time investments and those that would be used for ongoing operational costs incurred during and after the grant were clearly delineated. The bulk of the funds will be used to buy technology equipment and software to implement blended learning classrooms each of GMCS's 35 schools and to establish 17 new positions for Building Test Coordinator/ Student Assistant Team teachers.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	3
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not present a high quality plan for sustaining the project's goals after the term of the grant. GMCS explained that they would be able to maintain the program with a minimum of expense since the greatest expenses will be to equip each student and teacher with the technology and software to facilitate Personal Learning Environments. The applicant reported that they have included maintenance, replacement and upgrading of equipment in its strategic planning, but no evidence was included to support this. They realize that professional development will be a continuous ongoing expense and they will set aside an estimated \$125,000 annually using Title II funds to support teachers. No additional budget information was provided and there were no plans to use data to inform future investments.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant listed over 25 public and private organizations with which it could potentially work in partnership. A table describing very general desired results for different populations such as ELL learners, parents and families, community stakeholders, and the general population of students was provided. Partnerships would track selected indicators using short cycle assessments to track common core standards mastery or intervention. Educational Services would be provided for "scholars at the juvenile detention center, in the Alternative Educational academic program, homebound and 504 as well as students with disabilities." The applicant did not describe how it would integrate resources in such a partnership to

augment the schools' resources by providing additional student and family supports to schools that address the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of participating students. No evidence was provided from the agencies that they had agreed to work in partnership

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:		
The applicant meets the requirements of Absolute Priority 1. The RTT grant will support GMCS to move from traditional methods of classroom management and instruction, to offering more personalized learning environments in which instruction will be paced to student learning needs and preferences. Through implementing technology-based learning, competency-based models of programming and assessment, expanding individualized college and career readiness opportunities, and increasing involvement of parents, schools and community stakeholders, GMCS will build on the core educational assurance areas.		

Total	210	77
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