



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0174TX-1 for Galveston ISD

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district has a comprehensive reform vision.</p> <p>(a) it proposes to build on data systems and use data to improve student learning (e.g., use of the Texas Data Student System to match student data with teachers). Likewise, the vision includes a commitment to implementing Professional Learning Communities, an effective means to discuss and transmit data among professionals. The district notes that the standards they have adopted (Texas College and Career Ready Standards), according to an independent analysis, are at least equivalent to the Common Core. This addresses the core are of colelge.career ready standards.</p> <p>(b) it proposes to incorporate 21 st century technology. It is grounded in theory that supports improving effectiveness of educators (e.g., Dufour, Danielson). Both Dufour and Danielson are recognized models to ground professional learning communities.</p> <p>However, the application lacks description of classroom experience, thus warranting a slight reduction from an otherwise high score.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) the district discussed their rationale for selection of the schools (e.g., selection by use of the criteria established in research by Fixsen, et al). The factors used (readiness, motivational readiness, organizational climate) are good selection indicators and represent elements of a high-quality plan. In other words, as a threshold matter, the district's choice of schools was based primarily on the prior success, as well, of schools in important areas, such as: past history of improving achievement;made AYP, and demonstrated blended learning.</p> <p>(b) (c) A list of schools is provided, as is the participating students and educators, including those that are high needs. As well, the number of participating educators is supplied by school and in total, as required.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has set forth a general plan for scaling up their reforms, generally with pilot sites and Professional Learning Communities (PLC) team engaging in the <i>My Backpack to the Future</i>. It has identified three levels of implementation and guidelines with respect to each person/entity responsible. Building PLCs and implementing the personalized learning strategies first at a pilot level of several schools is a sound way to attempt to develop and scale up the reforms proposed here. Importantly, the applicant appears to account for the fluidity of reform - that it can be a dynamic process (e.g., it accounts for exploration stage, prior to implementation). Because the applicant has identified the goals (see Appendix G), key stakeholders, and the various timelines involved with implementation, the applicant has a high-quality plan and deserves a high score.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a)(b) The plan has set forth ambitious and achievable goals here (e.g., improving overall achievement on summative state assessments by 13%; reduce achievement gaps in most areas by half by year 2016-2017) and the vision is sets forth is</p>		

likely to achieve these goals. The most promising way in which the vision will reach these goals is through the link between the evaluation and student achievement on these measures. Thus, this will provide the incentive for employees to focus efforts on these particular goals. In addition, the applicant's vision of Professional Learning Communities is another way to use data to exchange ideas from teachers with the goal of individualizing instruction.

(c)-(e) Likewise, the graduation rates and college enrollment are linked to the success with respect to the vision in (a) and (b) (e.g., linking evaluation to success on particular summative assessments). Moreover, the proposed vision allows students to tailor their interests and direction, thus increasing the likelihood that students will be invested in their education. This personal investment, in turn, holds promise for improving the outcomes addressed here that have to do with later achievement in the K-12 years.

The vision - which relies heavily on teacher evaluation linked to student growth achievement and creating communities of practice based on data - are a coherent vision to improve the outcomes in the markers chosen here. In addition, this RTTT grant will be leveraged to the existing grants the district has received which are also directed at the same goals. The focus of resources increases chances of success. Thus a high score is warranted.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	15
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
(1)A		
<p>(a) The district has a record of success in this subpart. In almost all areas, since 2009, the district has demonstrated meaningful value added growth in the core subjects. (e.g., 2009 value added growth in state test value added growth was 12+ above peers in reading, 2008 = +4, 2011 =+13, respectively). In the area of achievement gaps, the applicant's scores continue to reveal gaps in the subgroups identified in the notice. However, there are signs of progress. Participation in ACT from African Americans has improved. <u>See</u> (1)(a)(calling for progress in graduation and enrollment in college). The dropout rate has plunged (7.5% to 1.6%). <u>Id.</u></p> <p>(b) The multiple recognitions from the state reflect, to some extent, the district has a track record of success in achieving reform in its lowest achieving schools. In these schools, the district has implemented virtual schools, piloted an early college model in high school, established 21st Century Learning Centers that integrate out of school services.</p> <p>(c) The district makes student data available to parents and use liaisons as one means to assist parents interpretation of the data. This includes presenting parents with a child's individualized learning plan twice a year for those who are not making progress. Additionally, data is made available through more traditional means, such as websites, and publications.</p> <p>The district has demonstrated a track record of success, as described above and has presented data reflective of this fact. Thus a high score is warranted.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The district satisfies this criteria. The district reports to the state the expenditures stated in (a)-(d) primarily through the Academic Excellence Indicator System. This report detailed these expenditures, as well as a wealth of other data. The reports are made available on each school website, and a printed version is available at each school, according to the applicant. Thus, the public availability of this information, especially through the internet, where most retrieve information, reveals a high level of transparency. A high score is warranted.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The district has a number of initiatives that are reform-oriented and demonstrate it has sufficient autonomy to enact its reforms. In particular, the district has received a combined grant -- the Texas Student Data System, TSDS -- because of a combination between private foundations and the state. The data system is integral to achieve one important component necessary to achieve personalized learning environments - comprehensive and accessible use of data.</p> <p>The state dept of education has also created a curriculum resource center which, from the state level, provides</p>		

professional development aligned with curriculum changes.

Moreover, a number of state statutes and regulations will support the initiative. One in particular - the Top 10% rule - ensures that a state college will automatically admit a student to a public institution of higher learning.

Thus, the conditions and autonomy appear to be ripe for implementing the reform vision. Indeed, a number of initiatives (E.g., the TSDS) key to incorporating personalized learning environments have already been undertaken. A high score is warranted, given these circumstances.

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

The applicant deserves a high score.

- It has engaged the community and stakeholders in meaningful ways. First, the district attempted to gain input and revisions for at least one year prior to submission to the grant. Second, it submitted parent surveys. Surveys are an important and convenient tool to engage parents and process their feedback with respect to the direction of the proposal. It also engaged parents through focus groups conducted at pilot schools. Finally, it engaged other community groups and conducted an independent needs assessment to determine the areas needs related to college and career readiness.

- 95% of the teachers support the proposal, according to the district.

- The district provides letters from key stakeholders and diverse ones at that. The letters do come from a variety of sources, a local law firm, Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), and students, the Economic Development Council, the YMCA. The diversity is somewhat called into question because of a relative lack of support (at least in the letters) from institutions of higher learning, suggesting a reduction in one point.

Overall, the district has engaged the community, satisfied this subpart and deserving a high score. As discussed, it has started this process over a year ago through various means. However, a more apparent support, in this section, from the higher education community would have added to the application (one point deduction).

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district's primary approach is through the *Backpack to Learning*. The approach represents a high-quality plan to address the individualized learning and teaching called for here.

- The plan allows for students to construct some of their academic content and delivery based on personal interests, to the extent possible. Because of this, students have "buy-in" and connect their goals to learning see(a)(i). In addition to this personal buy-in, the use of technology, particularly blended learning, is promising to develop students' interest and allow access to different perspectives. Blended learning effectively uses classroom time and resources, allowing students to access resources outside the classroom and promotes "flipped" classrooms, which research supports is another effective means to leverage in-school time. See (a)(iii),(iv). In addition, blended learning/flipped instruction, if used appropriately, are high-quality mechanisms.

- The district's proposal to "self-blend" - where students select a course on their own to take online, or -in-class, promotes the personalization of instruction, allowing students to personalize their instruction. See(b)(i)(ii).

- Finally, the district proposes to incorporate several mechanisms the will improve creativity, perseverance, and communication. For instance, the district suggest that students will monitor their own progress through "student progress monitoring" with the creation of student-level dashboards. This allows for regular and ongoing feedback directly linking in the student. See(b)(iv)(requiring ongoing and regular feedback).

Overall - the Backpack approach and its component parts are innovative. The district warrants a high score, especially for its adoption of blended learning, flipped classrooms, making data accessible to the student. Elements of a high quality plan are also evident - the goals are clear, the stakeholders are identified and the various resources have been identified to assess progress towards the goals.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	20
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The district has highlighted the elements of a high quality plan, specifically:</p> <p>The district has integrated a means for frequent communication, up and down the school level, to exchange data and support the implementation of the backpack approach. It has identified key stakeholders and objectives, components of a high quality plan. Specifically, it requires that district and school leaders meet at least monthly to develop and engage in planning. The result of 8-week school level plans for implementation demonstrate that the district will have devoted significant forethought to effectively implement the personalized strategies embedded in <i>Backpack</i>. The development of <i>school-level</i> leadership teams further ensures that the implementation of the <i>Backpack</i> will occur. In addition, the district's development of the "levels of mastery" of personalized instruction for teachers provides the accountability and training needed to ensure that the teachers have the knowledge of the processes and tools they can use to personalize instruction. <u>See</u> (a)(i)(iv) and (b).</p> <p>In addition the district's Performance Based Compensation Plan will give school leadership an important tool to reaching the goals or personalized learning. The compensation plan - as well as the evaluation plan that links a teacher's growth to the goals of the <i>Backpack</i> program will provide data and individual information on a teacher-by-teacher level to make actionable decisions <u>see</u> (c)(i)(ii) and make decisions (personnel and professional development) to improve implementation. Moreover, the plan's tight links to the evaluation system also is an appropriate way to address the requirements of (d) whereby the leadership can use this information relative to teacher quality to make personnel shifts to improve access to high quality instruction around the district. Clear timelines are focused on teacher's professional development.</p> <p>Thus, the district deserves a high score. It has adopted a personalized program and, by closing linking teacher evaluation, teacher professional development -- both highly effective means to implement reform -- the plan is of high-quality. Additionally, the plan sets forth specific actions and stakeholders responsible for implementation of these programs.</p>		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	13
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The district has a high quality plan</p> <p>(a)-(b) In particular, its use of principals is particularly promising. Indeed, the district has empowered principals with significant decision-making authority. Promotion of this ground-level power is a highly effective means for implementation of reform, which can be dynamic and fluid. Here, the district promotes a "flat" organization, linking principals directly to the Superintendent. Moreover, the central office structure is a facilitator, rather than a top-down authority. Notably, the District has a "Support Center" by which school level officials can draw upon for needed resources, guided and some necessary oversight. The principals also have ownership of the budget, one of the most important levers of change in any reform, as well as approval of staffing and assignment needs. Again, this allows principals to direct talent as they see fit. The district also links PLCs to the principal and district leadership team, thus providing a connection between those who are seeing the implementation on a daily basis to those who can provide larger scale direction.</p> <p>(c)-(d) A number of practices/policies are notable in their contribution to this district's high quality plan. The district, through state education code, requires teacher to re-teach standards, where students have not succeeded in demonstrating minimum achievement. Students are re-evaluated in this process and instruction is differentiated based on this re-evaluation. This is promising in the sense that the district has policies that attempt to minimize student frustration. Indeed, the teacher is required to develop the means that work most effectively with the student to achieve the stated goal. Thus it envisions a process that, inherently, requires inquiry into the needs of an individual learner.</p> <p>(e) The district's application describes, in general terms, its work in addressing students with disabilities and ELLs. Significantly, with respect to ELL, the district has made an effort to distinguish a student's language need versus their instructional need. This is significant in that - a proper assessment of this will assist teacher devote resources efficiently and not conflate the two issues, something that can occur if there is no effort to distinguish the ideas. The district also describes the IEP process, as required by law and implemented by the district. However, a more rich discussion here could have added to the discussion (E.g., describing the types of <u>instructional practices</u> rather than legal obligations).</p> <p>The district deserves a high score here, with a minimum deduction for the lack of detail regarding instructional practices for students with disabilities, as described.</p>		

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district deserves a high score here because</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It intends to develop/implement the Texas Student Data System (a large longitudinal data set) that provides important student-level data. Indeed, these data -- which provide important information regarding a student over time -- can play an important role in developing personalized instruction. The benefit of longitudinal, individual data is that it paints a more complete picture over time, thus allowing a district to more efficiently tailor a plan of action (seeing what has been successful in the past). Yet the access of the data to <u>all</u> stakeholders was not sufficiently addressed, warranting some reduction. - The plan is high quality because it takes a comprehensive approach to assessing and ensuring that parents have the levels of access and support to use the data effectively. Significantly, the district proposes to first survey parents and students to assess their understanding of the tools available and then plan accordingly. This is an effective means to understand how best to tailor their response/use of the data sets. Additionally, the district has proposed to collaborate with Skyward - a system that is designed to share this information - with parents and students. - The district's discussion with (d) is lacking. Although it notes that a person can access budget, student information from the website, it is unclear the extent to which LEAs and schools have inter operable systems. <p>Overall, this is a high-quality. Of particular note is the applicant's proposal to survey parents and students to first gauge their needs/understandings of the tools and data available. This is an effective way to develop a response that ensures the goals of this plan, with respect to ensuring the necessary infrastructure for implementing this plan, which is highly technologically driven.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district deserves high marks here because it has developed a high quality plan. To begin with the elements of a high quality plan are squarely addressed (it intends to use a Project Manager who will develop stakeholder responsibilities, key deadlines, deliverables). The Project Director will provide monthly updates to oversight boards. In addition, the Advisory Board (constituting parents, educators, citizens, etc.) will have multiple opportunities to comment, thus there is a mechanism in place to provide two-way feedback to and from the community. The plan presented here includes all the relevant stakeholders (including parents) and clear timelines for reports to the various oversight boards so that meaningful feedback can be achieved. If implemented, this is a promising design for assessing and improving the plan. Thus, a high score is warranted.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The plan is high-quality. As discussed, the district proposes to have multiple meetings with the stakeholders, including semi-annual meetings with the advisory board to discuss progress and needed adjustments. Additionally, this will provide the means for community and parents (they comprise part of the Advisory Board) to add feedback. Likewise, the data dashboards that will be used will provide "real-time" and immediate data needed by all-stakeholders to make adjustments. Given that the principals have a direct link to the Superintendent, this could be used by school-level leadership as an effective and relatively quick way to communicate progress and any needed revisions based on data. A high score is warranted because of the efficient design of its plan to communicate and engage stakeholders.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district's measures closely linked to the district's objective of personalizing instruction; however, the rationalization for</p>		

the goals is lacking specifics. That said, the measure (number of students in subgroups that have "highly effective teachers") is one of the most promising mechanisms to assess this goal. Indeed, the research bears out that the best indicator of student success is the quality of teacher. The district's attention to these data as they relate to the subgroups should be commended.

Moreover, the district's effectiveness measure is also tightly linked to data that reflects whether a student is receiving high-quality instruction - specifically the growth the student makes on state assessments. Likewise, the choice of the measure of suspensions, with particular attention to the achievement gap in this area, is particular appropriate with respect to its goal to have college and career ready students. Indeed, suspensions reflect a disengagement with school and impedes students from accessing a personalized education embedded with college and career ready standards.

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

The district decision to have an outside evaluator supports the high score warranted here.. Indeed, the evaluator can provide unbiased and blunt assessments about the program and any revisions that may be needed. The evaluators CVs have been included and represent that they have a wide-variety of subject matter expertise and program evaluation.

Additionally, and importantly with respect to the high-quality plan requirements, the district is requiring that evaluators provide quarterly and annual reports assessing the use and effectiveness of various elements of the plan (e.g., use of the Texas State Data Assessment, TSDS).

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district has addressed the required subparts here and deserves a high score . Specifically:

(a) The district has identified all the funds that will be included for this grant. It notes that the majority of the grants will come from outside sources, including the district itself and the region's philanthropic group.

(b) The budget narrative and tables suggest that the funds requested are reasonable and sufficient. A great deal of the budget requested relates to additional personnel. The number and type of personnel requested here appears in line with the demands of the plan. Moreover, given the tech-focus of the grant, the number of positions required here seems reasonable (e.g., 12 campus instructional data coaches) and a wise investment.

(c)(i) The district provides the breakdown of funds and their sources, noting that a significant amount will come from the district itself and other grants it has received. Likewise, the narrative focuses on strategies and investments that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the plan, primarily the use of professional development to build teacher capacity.

The decisions for expenditures - on personnel, professional development, and data integration - align with the goals of the plan which are to improve teacher effectiveness with use of data to personalize instruction.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	9
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a high-quality plan regarding sustainability. First, a large portion of its investments are toward building capacity, thus, once teachers are "up to speed" the continued investment will be minimal. Embedded, on job learning, as proposed here, is one of the most effective allocations of money. Second, the district has support from state and other community leaders. Indeed, the district has already received state support to improve its use of data. Moreover, a number of community organizations have expressed, through letters, their continued support of the plan. The district also demonstrates commitment to sustainability in that it developed a three-year budget for post-grant status. One questionable reliance in the grant is its accounting for federal match. Given the circumstances in the federal budget process, this may misplaced reliance. Overall, the plan has detailed projections and commitments demonstrating a likelihood that the grant will be sustained. Although a slight reduction in points is warranted, given the reliance on federal funds.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	9

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

(1)(2)The district puts forth a comprehensive plan here. Significantly, there is a pre-existing organization that has already (e.g. Galveston Sustainable Communities) been utilized for the integration of the functions contemplated in this subpart. Thus, this allows the district to leverage the structure and interconnectedness of the various agencies. The district presents a plan that is high quality. It has clear goals both educational and non-educational (e.g., expand technology infrastructure; develop social/emotional well-being, decrease absenteeism).

The applicant addresses (3) with a high-quality description of the partnership working together. The measure will provide a scalable model, along the lines of the models that Galveston proposes to replicate (e.g., Los Angeles) in national way and, the district proposes to integrate private schools and charters in the area, thus providing a model that will be scaled on a local level.

(3)(4) (5) The plan calls for using the data dashboard to integrate and measure the services impact. The interventions/supports will be recorded by Family Engagement, counselors, etc. Integrating this data is a positive way to provide one repository for the various services and programs, assuming some privacy issues must be resolved. (See FERPA and its implementing regulations). Likewise, the twice annual meetings between students, Family liaisons and parents are significant steps in engaging parents and students in data analysis, and fashioning appropriate educational and non-educational responses (i.e.. identifying agency services that might be needed).

(6) The are identified and ambitious and achievable.(e.g., decrease absenteeism for students with 10 or more absences). However, some additional specification/quantification is warranted. These are clearly measurable goals; for instance, "increasing the percent of Galveston graduates with career ready credits" is commendable could be quantified and a percentage increase should be set as a goal.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The district's application, without doubt, has met this priority.

It has developed a coherent vision and plan - *My Backpack*- that is narrow and focused. The district has proposed to use data to leverage and improve teacher effectiveness. More specifically, this improving of effectiveness has been proposed through means (e.g., embedded, data-driven professional development) that has a high return on investment.

The focus on building teacher capacity is directly related to personalizing instruction. Research suggests that teacher quality is the most important, in school link to improving student outcomes. The district is implementing the Texas Data System which demonstrates its commitment to use data to improve instruction through professional learning communities, all areas considered in the core assurance areas.

The applicant has also set forth a way to connect the professional development investments to evaluation of teachers. It has proposed that teacher be evaluated based on student growth. Thus, this can provide a connection to the teachers work and the achievement of education goals.

Likewise, the district has proposed integrating unique and innovative models of learning that promote individualization of instruction. This includes virtual learning opportunities and "flipping" of classes, to name a few. These are promising means to allow students construct a learning path that they can be invested in and provide multiple means for them to reach their goals.

Finally, it should be noted that the district has focused - and achieved - on goals related to closing the achievement gap.

Total	210	200
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0174TX-2 for Galveston ISD

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The response articulates a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that include adopting standards focusing on college and career readiness, the use of data to inform student achievement, focusing on teacher effectiveness and turning around low performing schools. For example, the applicant uses as the basis of its reform plan vision the 'Back Pack' plan that will focus on individual student interests and college and career goals, one that is supportive of '21st Century Skills'. Through the use of data and data analysis, the applicant will focus on making clear to all stakeholders that data is the driving force behind the reform plan. The data will also drive teacher effectiveness as student-centered decision making is implemented in the district. However, the plan does not provide a comprehensive view of how the classroom experience for student and teachers will be actualized at the classroom level- ie, what that experience 'looks like' on a daily basis for students and teachers who will be participants in the plan based on personalized learning experiences for every student. As a result of addressing some, but not all of the selection criteria, the score is in the mid-range.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's vision for implementation focuses on five major components including data, content, and application of the reform to all classrooms. The applicant describes the process by which schools were selected to participate including a focus on criteria around whether or not a school has met Adequate Yearly Progress goals, experience significant achievement gaps, the level of readiness of stakeholders within the school, and capacity to implement change. However, the applicant does not explicitly discuss how the schools meet the competition's eligibility requirements. The response provides a high-quality overall approach to implementation by making sure goals are integrated into use of data, instruction, and school level-climate and culture change. Further, student demographic data is provided so that a total number of participating students, those from low-income families, and those with high needs. As a result of addressing all selection criteria and providing evidence of a high quality strategy for implementation, the response scores in the high range.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a comprehensive plan that will support scaling up the reform plan to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools by articulating a plan for 'implementation teams' that will spearhead efforts to gage the readiness of non-participating schools to be included in reform efforts. The response articulates a high quality plan that will allow for teams to assess the readiness of</p>		

non-participating schools through a four step process highlighting the applicant's thoughtful approach to scaling up reforms including the initial exploration phase to assess conditions, installation that prepares a school for implementation, then a two-phased implementation approach recognizing that full-fledged implementation is the result of a multi-stepped process. The response receives a one point deduction because it does not explicitly address a specific theory of change or logic model. Given the response articulates a thoughtful and thorough approaching to scaling up reforms beyond the initial participating schools, it receives a high score.

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

The applicant provides a comprehensive overview of the student outcome goals but does not provide a rationale for why each goal is ambitious and achievable. For example, reading progress for grades 3-11 is projected to grow at 15% over the next 6 years but no discussion is provided as to why this goal is rigorous or realistic (selection criteria A4a). Similarly, decreasing achievement gaps measures are clearly articulated but no rationale for how or why the goals are ambitious yet achievable is provided. The same is true for graduation rates and college enrollment. The response does clearly address how each measure is equal or exceeds state targets. The response does include the optional goal of improved outcome of post-secondary degree attainment but again, no evidence is provided for why the applicant has chosen an increase of 10% (from 31% to 41%) in five years as an aggressive or realistic goal. As a result of including all necessary goals, but neglecting to provide rationale for why measures were set where they are, the response scores in the mid-range.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes successes that show a clear record of success including recognition from the state education agency, gains in closing the achievement gap, college and career readiness, graduation rates, and college enrollment. For example, improved graduation rates of nearly 20% and improvement in closing the achievement gaps for both high needs students, low-income students, and minority students. However, while the response presents an overview of reforms implemented in persistently low achieving schools, it does not articulate any evidence for how the reforms have been successful or why the reforms indicate aggressive yet achievable outcomes. The response addresses how the applicant has made information on student performance available to stakeholders including websites, television, publications, and in-person orientation events. However the response does not specific how this data is shared with parents in way that ensures parents increase their general level of participation, that drives improvements in instruction, or access to services. Given the responses addresses some selection criteria and not others, the response scores in the mid range.

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

The applicant provides a comprehensive overview of the mechanisms by which the district makes publically available the salaries, employee benefits, operations, maintenance, and support services available to the public. However, beyond stating ways in which information is made public (district website and reports for the state education agency) the response provides no other evidence on how a high level of transparency will be structured around processes, practices, and instruction (as the selection criteria requires). For example, the response states that information on district processes

and practices will be available on the district website, but the response does not discuss how this will support a high level of transparency (ie, regarding how parents and interested stakeholders will be trained in navigating the information, will be given contextual information). Therefore, the response, while addressing the basic points in the selection criteria, does not provide discussion or elaboration on how transparency will be promoted beyond simple website postings and therefore scores in the low-mid-range.

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

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant’s response demonstrates that all the conditions and autonomies necessary to implement the reform plan is in place. For example, the state education agency has accepted the district as an early adopter of the state student data system (TSDS) that will allow for the integration of databases and guaranteed compliance with federal and state security regulations. The Back Pack plan is supported by new policies supporting innovative reform in schools including state support for the implementation of magnet programs, innovate credit earning possibilities, new policies in higher education supporting college entrance for top students, and flexible school year and day programming. Given the comprehensive discussion demonstrating evidence that successful conditions are in place for implementation, the response scores in the high range.

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

15

7

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The response provides evidence of meaningful stakeholder engagement throughout the development of the reform. The response describes the process by which early stages of the project were developed by administrators and a proposal development team that included district leaders, school leaders, community leaders, and external advisors. The plan was shared with all educators and with a 95% in support of the plan, the applicant is able to provide sufficient evidence that teachers support the proposal. Numerous letters from stakeholders as well as details on meetings that have been held also serve as sufficient evidence that stakeholders have been engaged in the reform planning process. However, the response does not discuss how the proposal was revised and continually revisited during the planning process based on feedback from teachers, students, parents, and community members. Insufficient evidence is provided as to how the proposal incorporated stakeholder feedback. Because the response provides a strong response to selection criteria ‘b’ and some parts of ‘a’ but not others, the response scores in the mid-range.

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 provides evidence that the reform plan that will engage learners in personalized learning communities. Parents and students will choose their school and learners will be empowered to ‘fill their own back pack’ with experiences that are centered on his or her own learning interests and needs. However, the response does not provide evidence of a high quality plan that centers on assisting students with understanding how and why learning is key to accessing a student’s personal goals or ensuring students understand how learning is key to long term success. The response to selection criteria ‘ai’ is, as a result, weak. However, the applicant does provide evidence that the plan will support student goals directly linked to college and career readiness through the creation of learning plans and use of 21st Century resources. As a goal, 100% of student in the pilot schools will have plans aligned with college and career goals. The response provides evidence of a high quality

plan that will support deep learning experiences based on personalized learning designed with teachers through one-on-one interactions, consideration of a student’s individualized learning styles, and differentiated curriculum. While access to experiences that promote diversity and exposure to diverse perspectives will be prioritized the response does not provide a comprehensive overview of how students will be exposed to different cultures. For example, the response states that two magnet schools will feature cultural themes and will introduce rich learning experiences to other schools but does not describe how the reform plan will facilitate this. Further, the response does not provide a detailed overview of how parents and educators will ensure students have access to a variety of instructional approaches or digital content (beyond reference generally to technology being integrated into the classroom and data systems). Therefore, the response is weak on selection criteria ‘biii.’ In addition, the response does not provide any evidence that the plan will prioritize providing students with on-going and regular feedback on their own progress and tailoring feedback to student’s prior and current knowledge of resources available to them (including standards and supports). The response includes evidence that the applicant has a plan for supporting high need students to help ensure they are track to meet goals through the use of two data systems but the plan is not high quality because it does not provide alternative strategies; a multi-pronged strategy would be evidence of a high-quality plan but the response articulates only one. It is also not clear given the response, what mechanisms will be prioritized to ensure students aware of the tolls and resources provided to them. While the response states that coaches and engagement specialists will be utilized, there is little detail as to strategy behind use of additional staff. As a result of a strong response to some selection criteria and weak response to others, the response scores in the low-to-mid range.

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

20

8

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The response provides a strong response to how educators will be part of a high quality plan to support personalized learning for all students and prepare them for future success. Based on the strong approval rate of the plan from teachers, the plan builds on initial educator buy-in by beginning teacher participation with an orientation retreat that provides evidence that the applicant is considering ways to arm teachers will the tools they need to implement the plan from the very beginning of the reform process. Through the establishment of backpack leadership teams in each schools, teachers will be the lead implementers of school level change which is evidence that the applicant recognizes the importance of teacher buy-in and support of the plan. Teachers will receive training through analysis of student achievement so that they can adapt content and instruction. The response provides evidence that the applicant has a meaningful plan to support teachers in all reform plan goal areas including personalized instruction coaches, data coaches, family engagement specialists, and college and career advisors. In order to foster the adaptation of content and instruction the applicant will again, rely on the use of support staff (instructional coaches), but the response does not provide evidence of a high quality meaningful plan around how these strategies will be used specifically to accelerate student achievement. Further, while the applicant does include a plan around providing a merit based compensation plan, the response does not provide evidence of a high quality plan around using the compensation plan to provide feedback to teachers to improve practice and provide interventions that will directly impact student achievement. The response does provide some evidence that actionable information will be used to help educators optimal learning approaches through the use of data, teams, and providing examples of effective lesson plans. However, the response does not provide details on how processes and tools will be put in place that will match student needs with instructional supports that will help teachers continuously improve. For example, the response states that grant funds will be used to buy personal tablets but does not provide details of a plan that supports use of them to aid teachers in personalizing instruction and driving student achievement. The response is weak in its discussion of how students will have increased access to effective teachers and principals. The response references an appendix but the referenced section does not provide any discussion, but rather includes teacher resumes and an overall timeline for implementation. Overall, the response is not sufficient because it does not provide details on how effective teachers will be recruited, trained, and developed. Overall, the response provides a sufficient response to some

selection criteria but not others as noted above and therefore scores in the low to mid-range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	5
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant’s response indicates that the reform plan is based on district leadership capacity to provide support to students, teachers, and parents. The staffing structure allows for principals to report directly to the Superintendent and in addition, principals are a part of the district budget process which allows for a direct line of communication between district leadership and school level leaders. School leadership is given flexibility to execute the plan and principals have the ability to hire and fire staff this providing evidence of a thoughtful plan centered around decentralized decision making and local autonomy (selection criteria ‘a’ and ‘b’). While the response does address aspects of the program that allow students to progress based on mastery of content and allows for assessments and mastery to be demonstrated in multiple ways, the response does not provide evidence of a high quality around how such opportunities and policies will be implemented on the ground. Further, the response does not provide sufficient detail on how instructional practices will be changed to make sure reform plan resources are available to all student, including high-needs students. For example, the response does state that the district structures Individual Learning Plans but does not describe how that function in actuality or are implemented in practice. Given the score does provide a strong response to the first two selection criteria but is weak on ‘c’, ‘d’, and ‘e’ the response scores in the low to mid range.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	3
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district’s plan provides some evidence of a high quality plan that supports the ability of all stakeholder’s to access information and resources. For example, the response includes description of how technology will be the primary vehicle used to disseminate information. However, it is not clear how stakeholders will have the necessary support to ensure comprehensive access by stakeholders who may have varying degrees of technological mastery. The response discusses (and provides a screen shot) of the web platform that will be used to house student data but the response does not provide a description of how other data systems will be integrated so that reform plan and district plan information is easily accessible. As a result the response scores in the low range.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	13
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The response provides a comprehensive overview of how the district plans to continually assessment the effectiveness of the reform plan and publicly share information on investments including monthly meetings with leadership teams and the establishment of a grant Advisory Group comprised of representatives from all stakeholder groups including parents, students, teachers, and community members. The Advisory Committee will issue a public report on the progress of the plan thus helping ensure information on progress is made publicly available. Reports on revisions made to the plan ('mid-course corrections' and adjustments) will be published twice a year and will be made only with approval from project leadership and all necessary stakeholders. However, the applicant does not provide a plan or specifics on how the mid course corrections will be vetted or developed- more detail</p>		

is needed on ongoing corrections will be conceived and implemented. Overall, the response is thorough and provides evidence that the district has prioritized continual improvement through providing stakeholders with feedback, making data publicly available, and monitoring progress by assembling groups of stakeholder advisors.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:
 The applicant's response describes a process by which external and internal stakeholders will be engaged and kept up to date on reform plan progress, process, and goals. The response examples of educator engagement through training and implementation teams, increasing communication with external stakeholders via on-line portals and publically accesible information, and partnerships with community organizations. Goals set by the applicant include 100% buy-in among teachers and ensure that 100% of schools are reaching out to parents and the community.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:
 The response articulates clear performance measures as well as an overview of why each measure was chosen including any relevant contextual information. However, neither the substantive reponse nor the charts provide evidence that the district has considered how their stated goals are realistic yet rigorous. Further, the response does not include a discussion of how each performance measure will be reviewed and improved upon over time if the measure is not successful in measuring success of the reform plan over time. For example, the applicant states the number of effective teachers will increase from 25% to 49% but does not provide a rationale for why the goal is robust yet realistic. The same is true for all performance measures- as a result the response scores in the range. It should be noted all performance measures are reasonable and provide targets by subgroup thus resulting in earning a partial score.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:
 The applicant has built into the reform plan an intention to engage an independent research and evaluation firm to provide the district with feedback on progress and effectiveness of the reform plan. However, it is not clear how professional development opportunities or technology will be used to assess effectiveness by the district. The response provides an overview of the goals of the evaluation team but fails to articulate how ongoing progressional development will contribute to the revision and improvement process.

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 clearly lays out the grant funds, as well as external support, that will support the reform plan. The budget is sufficient enough to support the plan as described by the applicant including reasonable expenditures to support training programs, technology, external consultants, and added staff. Funds from external partners include a grant from a local philantgropy group and state funds. However, neither the budget or the narrative identify funds that will be used for one-time investment versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs. Overall, however, the budget clearly descibes all funds to be used that are reasonable and sufficient to support the plan, and include external support. Given a strong response on all but one selection criteria the response ranks in the mid to high range.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	9
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:
 The response provides evidence that the applicant has not only a proven track record of sustainability of success changes but that long term sustainability was a central consideration in the development of the application. For example, the applicant provides rationale for how professional capacity will be

grown through the use of data that require start up capital but that can be sustained over time once integrated into district costs. Coaching as a means to increase teacher effectiveness is a strategy that requires low monetary expenditures but can be expected to be more effective over time as teachers themselves are invested in the plan and reforms are made. The response also acknowledges external partnership play a big role in large sustainability that will extend to other parts of the community that include external grants and matching opportunities. However, more detail is needed on how the applicant will evaluate improvements in productivity and outcomes that will support the development of a post-grant budget. Overall, given a strong response providing evidence of a high quality plan to sustain the plan beyond the grant period, a high score has been earned.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	6

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The response provides a evidence of a high quality strategy to support leveraging community partnerships to maximize capacity and thus, chances of success of the reform plan. The support from community alliances and a community plan centered around preparing students for college and careers provide a community-wide system that will help ensure success of the plan. The response also includes description of how partnerships will help track progress for desired results but does not include evidence of a meaningful decision-making process to vet support systems that will meet the needs of students. Further, the response does not provide evidence of a high quality plan for assessing progress by using partnerships.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Overall, the applicant provides a coherent and comprehensive reform revision that centers on creating personalized learning environments for students to accelerate student achievement in the district. The plan focuses on goals guided by the state education agency that will prepare students to be competitive in college and the workplace. The application shows the district has considered how data will be used to drive success and that ensuring all stakeholders have access to data is key. By focusing on training and collaboration, the district will focus on improving the quality of educators in the district. Through using the 'BackPack' plan as the foundation for the reform plan, students will be armed with personalized data that is integrated with district-data so that students and families can make informed decisions as to curriculum and programs available to them. As a result, absolute priority 1 has been met

Total	210	121
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0174TX-3 for Galveston ISD

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Applicant's clearly articulated reform vision, <i>My Backpack to the Future</i>, is comprehensive and coherent; and it builds on the four core educational assurance areas. The reform vision focuses on teaching and learning through a unique "Backpack" of personalized resources designed to enable each student to meet or exceed grade level proficiency and graduate ready for success in college and work. The Applicant's vision articulates a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support. Key features of the reform include an interactive network of supportive peers, experts, teachers and community partners; research-based rigorous and relevant technology-enhanced academic programs based on 21st Century Skills; training and supports for personalizing the classroom experience for students and teachers; and use of data to inform decisions. An illustration of the Backpack is included in the Appendix. Full points are awarded because the Applicant articulates a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that likely to succeed because it builds on its work in four core educational assurance areas and articulates a clear and credible approach to the requirements of this criterion.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Applicant's innovative proposal incorporates five comprehensive reform goals into three aligned implementation components (projects), including educator training and implementation of interoperable data systems to enhance data driven decision making processes; utilizing professional learning communities (PLCs) to personalize teaching and learning in technology-enriched learning environments; and identifying and developing instructional approaches and strategies to prepare students for college and career readiness. The Applicant provides a detailed chart clearly depicting the integration of goals into implementation components (projects). The Applicant thoroughly and comprehensively describes the process used to select schools to participate, which ensures that the participating schools collectively meet eligibility requirements. The process to select schools was clearly explained, is based on sound implementation research, and is justifiably based on locally prioritized factors of criticality, readiness and capacity. Full points are awarded because the Applicant's approach to implementing its reform proposal clearly supports high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Applicant includes a high-quality plan describing how the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools and will help the Applicant reach its goals. Included is the Applicant's comprehensive and evidence based logic model of change that clearly depicts how its plan will improve student learning outcomes for all students to be served. The Applicant's comprehensive and coherent plan details their scale up project implementation through a series of processes defined through 3 components (i.e... data, content, and pilot), with performance measures to quantify and monitor fidelity of implementation of each component. The reform efforts will be brought to scale as school-wide implementations and as Professional Learning Community (PLC)-level implementations through an iterative development process. The pilot sites and each PLC team engaging in personalized learning through <i>My Backpack to the Future</i> will develop, implement, observe results, revise and then repeat the process in iterative cycles, integrating lessons learned from the prior cycles. These iterative development processes will be documented and shared throughout the district as part of ongoing professional development. The Applicant thoroughly explains the specifics of their scale up reform and stages of implementation, which are flexible as personnel and circumstances change. Explained clearly and coherently, these stages include exploration, installation, initial implementation, and full implementation. Full points are awarded because the Applicant's high-quality plan for scaling up innovative reform efforts is likely to improve student learning outcomes for all students to be served.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Applicant clearly describes ambitious yet achievable LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes. The Applicant's vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by their ambitious yet achievable annual goals that are equal to or exceed the State ESEA targets for LEA(s), overall and by student sub group. This is supported by the Applicant's thorough data tables which document proficiency status and</p>		

growth for performance on summative assessments; decreasing achievement gaps, graduation and college enrollment rates; and the optional postsecondary degree attainment. Full points are awarded because the Applicant provides convincing data and focused LEA-wide goals that will likely improve student outcomes.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant convincingly demonstrates a clear track record of their success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching. The Applicant's comprehensively describes the focus of their track record of success. Examples include: effective strategies to improve teaching and learning, with an emphasis on turnaround teaching and leadership reform strategies for sustained school improvement; effective educators through embedded and sustained professional development; assessments of effectiveness and incentive programs; differentiated instruction in classrooms; dropout prevention and recovery, including targeted services for academically at-risk students and innovative schools; using data for continuous improvement; integration of 21st century technology and tools to create a college-going culture and enhance college and career readiness; and promoting student and family choice, magnet and charter schools. The Applicant's success in these areas of critical reforms is evidenced by the awarding of 36 distinct competitive grant programs for advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching.

a) -The Applicant provides convincing data documenting significant academic achievement gains for district students as evidenced by performance on standardized state assessments over the past four years. For example, the Applicant describes improvements in the high school graduation rates from 63.5% to 84.7% and significant improvements in the annual dropout rate which plunged from 7.5% to 1.6% for students in grades 9-12. Also, the Applicant reports the number of students earning postsecondary credit concurrently with high school has increased as academic rigor is evident in an increased percentage of students scoring at/above criterion on the ACT/SAT from 21% to 24.2%. The Applicant reports that College enrollment of district graduates in Texas colleges and universities has remained consistent despite the decreased student population with 416 students in 2011 compared. The Applicant reports that, although overall achievement gaps based on ethnicity have "flattened" significantly, the primary challenges continue to be closing achievement gaps for LEP students, African American students, and economically disadvantaged students. Collectively, these practices and their supporting data clearly demonstrate the Applicant's prior record of success in significantly improving student learning outcomes and closing achievement gaps, including by raising student achievement, high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates.

b)- The Applicant clearly and comprehensively describes a plethora of ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools. Strong examples of focused and successful initiatives targeting low performing schools and at risk students include:

- **Focused and intensive teacher/leader professional development** to support fidelity of implementation of curriculum, tiered supports and interventions, benchmarking and use of data to identify struggling learners, and enhanced classroom technology.
- **Individual Graduation Plans** are designed by student with counselor and parent involvement.
- **College Prep at the Middle School** to prepare underrepresented student populations for success in college, including dual credit..
- **Supplemental resources**, including interventions, tutoring and extra instructional days, for students struggling with reading, mathematics and language acquisition..
- **Technology** resources and instructional strategies to individualize instruction, engage students in 21st Century Skills using 21st Century tools, and connect to real world experiences to increase college and career awareness and readiness.
- **Out-of-school services** (21st Century Community Learning Centers) and intensive, school-based case management support (Communities in Schools) for at risk students.

These sound and beneficial initiatives clearly demonstrate the Applicant's success in achieving ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools

C)- The Applicant clearly describes their plan for making student performance data (as defined) available to students, educators (as defined), and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and services. Since the district is a “Schools of Choice” district in which parents select each child’s school, school-level information is broadly distributed through school and community publications, websites, meetings, television broadcasts and orientation events. Assistance is provided to parents through designated district personnel, parent liaisons, teachers, principals, and counselors who work directly with families. Parents receive data twice a year, all classroom based and standardized assessment data, and have opportunities to discuss data and participate in student planning. By successfully executing these practices, the Applicant proactively provides meaningful opportunities to make student performance data available to students, educators, and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and services.

Full points are awarded because the Applicant comprehensively and coherently describes their prior record of success and conditions for reform and has demonstrated evidence of their clear record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching, including a description, charts or graphs, raw student data.

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

The Applicant describes the district's practices for increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments through the district website, which facilitates access to stakeholder information. For example parents may access information regarding district processes, practices, and financial information, including budgets by school and at the district level. District meetings regarding data are televised, published in local newspapers, and data discussed is posted on the district WEB site.

The district’s Annual Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports for the district and campuses by the Texas Education Agency are made available to the public. The district makes this information available on each school’s web page, as well as providing printed versions available through school and district administrative offices. Although the district AEIS reports publish school-level and district-level data as well as general expenditures on salaries and employee benefits; actual personnel salaries and actual non-personnel expenditures required by this criterion are not included based on Applicant's narrative and the sample provided in the appendix.

Points in the medium range are awarded because although the Applicant provides evidence of limited transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments, including by making public, by school, actual school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration, the Applicant does not clearly provide a high level of transparency in reporting actual personnel salaries as required by this criterion.

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

The Applicant describes several initiatives. Examples include conditions to successfully implement the Applicant’s data goals. The Applicant was selected as a pilot for the upgrade of the Texas Student Data System to identify early risk factors and to improve data quality and dissemination. Secondly, the Texas Curriculum Management Program Cooperative (TCMPC) is a multifaceted system including the seamless alignment of professional development, curriculum and assessment, and innovative technology. The district uses this system to implement the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), which are the state academic standards, across all grade levels and core subject areas which are critical to the success of the Applicant’s content component of their RTT-D proposal. Third, the district’s implementation of personalized learning is supported by the state’s focus on educational flexibility. The Texas’s Legislature and State Board of Education (SBOE) continue to move educational regulation toward greater local control and autonomy within rigorous standards. Collectively, these initiatives demonstrate the likelihood of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in the Applicant’s proposal. Full points are awarded.

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

The Applicant describes how parents, teachers, students, educators, and community members regularly participate in planned meetings, are active members of district and school level committees, and contribute meaningfully to the decision making process. Strong examples include the district improvement plan committee with representation from both leaders and educators from every school as well as parents, community members, and students; the proposal development team that includes district leaders, school leaders, community leaders and three external advisors to support the quality of design

and quality of the evaluation plan. The team commissioned a parent survey to assess the student use of technology at home and at school, as well as the parent's vision of learning for their child; and The Galveston Sustainable Communities Alliance underwrote and conducted an independent assessment of needs related to college and career readiness encompassing Prekindergarten to Grade 12 demonstrating that the community has taken a proactive leadership role in designing the Applicant's *My Backpack to the Future* proposal. Clearly, the Applicant demonstrates focused and meaningful stakeholder engagement throughout the development of the proposal.

The Applicant reports that the district does not have collective bargaining representation. Therefore, following a year of meetings and discussions, communication and reflection, 95% of teachers at participating schools voted to support submission of the Applicant's RTTT-D proposal. Numerous meetings have been held throughout the past year with key stakeholders to discuss the project and the continuing focus on improving student achievement.

The Applicant provides letters of support from key stakeholders, including parent organizations, student organizations, pilot schools, the business community, local civic and community-based organizations, and institutions of higher education.

Full points are awarded because the Applicant clearly and thoroughly describes meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal and meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant has a well executed high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. The Applicant's plan includes an innovative approach to implementing instructional strategies for all participating students that enable them to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to college- and career-ready standards and college- and career-ready graduation requirements, and to accelerate his or her learning through support of his or her needs.

The Applicant's LEA is a Choice district where active participation of parents, students, educators, and partners is encouraged and expected. With the support of parents and educators, the students clearly understand what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals. Each student's "Backpack" is personalized to that students academic and interest based goals; and through support from parents and educators, students understand the connection between what they are learning and their future goals.

For high needs students schools will use data to implement personalized learning in targeted applications through professional learning communities, focusing on high risk students, gifted/talented and advanced students, and content/skill development areas the PLCs identify. "Schools of Choice" enables students and their parents to select the degree to which each child accesses personalized learning by choosing the school most suited to each child's needs and goals.

(ii) Through focused, rigorous and relevant instruction, professionally trained educators facilitate teaching and learning and support students through identifying and pursuing learning and developing goals linked to college- and career-ready standards. Each "Backpack" contains the tools necessary for students to understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, and how to measure progress toward those goals. The Applicant's "Backpack" reform initiative is a feasible conduit for helping students identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college- and career-ready standards and to understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals.

(iii) The "Backpack" will enable students to be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest. The Backpack will be managed electronically and/or manually to coordinate a student's personalized sequence of content concepts with resources and strategies related to the four C's of 21st Century Learning: Critical thinking and problem solving, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity and innovation. A Backpack will specify all required resources, plans to assess progress, and agreements for student/parent and teacher/facilitator roles in achieving or adapting the plan. School administrators and counselors will confirm each Backpack is based on the student's personalized plan and the plan meets rigorous academic standards and provides individualized supports and services necessary for that child to achieve grade level or higher proficiency, school completion and college and career readiness. Clearly, the Applicant demonstrates how their innovative "Backpack" reform initiative provides students with deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest .

(iv) My Backpack to the Future will empower the district's culturally diverse population to integrate their own personal family histories and contexts into learning in both formal and informal ways. Component B (Content) of the Applicant's proposal focuses on developing new high quality instructional resources, including community-based resources representing students' cultures. My Backpack to the Future will continue to build on this district- and school level work through group and individual instruction that engages students in collaborative learning with and about others

representing diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning. Clearly the Applicant's proposal will ensure that students will have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning.

(v) My Backpack to the Future will provide the tools and supports to help students master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving. Highly trained teachers and coaches will provide technology-enriched classroom instruction and utilize research based strategies such as blended learning and flipped classrooms to provide comprehensive systems of learning supports and to implement performance-based learning based on data driven results.

Full points are awarded because the Applicant provides a comprehensive and coherent high quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready and an approach to learning that engages and empowers all learners, in particular high-need students.

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

20

20

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

a) The Applicant clearly describes how all educators will participate in training and professional teams or communities, that support their individual and collective capacity to 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. Examples include Backpack leadership teams, external support teams, and professional learning communities (PLCs) at each school that develop and execute a school-level implementation plans appropriate to their environment, readiness, resources and needs. The Applicant provides convincing evidence that all participating educators engage in focused and meaningful training, and in professional learning communities (PLCs), that support their individual and collective capacity to improve teaching and learning and to prepare students for college and careers.

(i) Teachers will implement personalized learning based on analysis of student achievement. Teachers will participate in focused professional development which will prepare them to provide supports as coaches, employ effective teaching and learning strategies as members of professional learning communities and as expert practitioners in academic content. The Applicant ensures support of the effective implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies that meet each student's academic needs and helps ensure all students can graduate on time and college- and career-ready. Through appropriate data driven decision making, the Applicant demonstrates how educators 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.

(ii) The Applicant's plan for adapting content and instruction, includes providing training and support to educators in developing content and instructional strategies for successfully implementing personalizing learning; developing best practices for using multiple sources of data to assess each student's academic needs and interest; utilizing technology rich resources including videos, audio, and manipulatives; and employing optimal learning approaches such as collaborative and project based learning as the basis for designing instruction; and utilizing blended teaching and learning through 21st Century tools. The Applicant's laser focus on adapting content and instruction is the catalyst for providing opportunities for students to engage in interest-based, need-focused learning utilizing optimal learning approaches provided by well-trained and highly effective educators.

(iii) The Applicant will utilize the Texas Student Data System (TSDS) system of dashboards to measure student progress toward 4-6 week benchmarks for mastery of grade-level standards aligned toward CCR standards (more frequently for students receiving intervention services). These frequently used measures are designed to gage student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards. Data is used to inform both the acceleration of student progress and the improvement of the individual and collective practice of educators. The Applicant convincingly describes frequently measuring student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards and using data to inform both the acceleration of student progress and the improvement of the individual and collective practice of educators.

(iv) The district has an established, effective Performance Based Compensation Plan for teachers, principals and the superintendent based on clearly articulated expectations; regular observation and feedback; and recommendations, supports, and interventions as needed for improvement. The Applicant will utilize this plan to Improve teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness as well as by providing recommendations, supports, and interventions as needed for improvement. Combined, these practices provide evidence of the Applicant's successful implementation of practices specifically designed to 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.

b) The Applicant ensures that all participating educators have access to, and know how to use, tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready graduation requirements. 100% of district educators will engage in a guided process of learning how to use the Texas Student Data System (TSDS), which is Component 1 of the "Backpack" Plan. TSDS is Statewide Longitudinal Data System

that serves as a platform to integrate currently disparate sources of data into a single, easy to use set of “dashboards.” The Applicant's "Backpack" reform initiative provides specific and easy to use resources available to all participating educators that provide access to, tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready graduation requirements.

(i) Student data along with individualized student "Backpacks" will provide actionable information that helps educators identify optimal learning approaches that respond to individual student academic needs and interests. The Applicant clearly justifies how their "Backpack" initiative provides specific and actionable information that helps educators clearly identify optimal learning approaches that respond to individual student academic needs and interests.

(ii) The Applicant will provide high-quality learning resources by creating technology-rich schools; fully integrating a viable and rigorous curriculum through high quality instructional content and assessments; creating a college going culture through thematic magnet schools, STEM-focused schools, and early college schools; and connect with high quality learning resources providers within and beyond the school. The Applicant's reform initiative, *My Backpack to the Future* will build on these investments through targeted resources directly aligned to building capacity for personalized learning.

(iii) Individualized student "Backpacks" will provide tools to match student needs with specific resources and approaches to provide continuously improving feedback about the effectiveness of the resources in meeting student needs. The Applicant provides convincing evidence that their "Backpack" reform initiative will provide appropriate processes and individualized tools to match student needs with specific resources and approaches to provide continuously improving feedback about the effectiveness of the resources in meeting student needs.

(c) All district and school leaders will meet regularly throughout project implementation, including professional development events to build capacity to implement My Backpack to the Future with fidelity. Every school will establish a Backpack leadership team, which will develop and execute a school-level implementation plan aligning the district policies and tools to their specific student needs and ongoing initiatives. By Fall 2015, district and school Backpack teams will be fully engaged in implementing training, policies, tools, data, and resources according to their plans. The Applicant provides clear and comprehensive descriptions of how each Backpack plan will align to the overall district and school plan for training, policies, tools, data, and resources that enable them to structure an effective learning environment that meets individual student academic needs and accelerates student progress through common and individual tasks toward meeting college- and career-ready standards and college- and career-ready graduation requirements.

(i) A specific plan for school leaders and the school *Backpack* leadership teams to use information from the Performance Based Compensation Plan and the associated performance assessments to assess progress toward desired outcomes and act on those assessments to improve, individual and collective educator effectiveness and school culture and climate. Bernhard/Education for the Future will support design of these plans to ensure they effectively support continuous school improvement. The Applicant clearly describes how school Backpack leadership teams utilize 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.

(ii) A school-specific framework to match training, systems, practices and other supports to school needs and the continuous improvement of teaching and learning to increase student performance and close achievement gaps. The Applicant provides many successful examples of innovative and focused professional development systems and practices to continuously improve school progress toward the goals of increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps.

(d) The Applicant clearly describes their high-quality plan (High-quality plan means a plan that includes key goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities) for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals including in hard-to-staff schools, subjects. The full description of the Applicant's comprehensive and cohesive plan and logic model is provided in the appendix.

Full points are awarded because the Applicant comprehensively and cohesively describes a high quality plan for preparing students for college and career through effective teaching and learning.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The Applicant clearly describes how the LEA central office is organized within the district as the GISD (district) Support Center. The GISD Support Center will provide support and services through a Leadership Team of the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, the Chief Human Resources Officer, and the Chief Financial Officer. These individuals meet bi-monthly with Principals' PLC and these joint Campus Accountability Meetings and are

directly linked to establishing an organizational and policy framework for the successful implementation of goals and activities for *My Backpack to the Future*. The roles of individuals in the GISD Support Center bring a demonstrated record of successful collaboration on federal, state, and special grant initiatives, essential coordination on the district's Performance Based Compensation Plan, and managing for successfully sustaining academic achievement. The Applicant's goal of successfully implementing its reform initiative is likely to succeed because of the supportive and flexible LEA central office organizational structure.

(b) The Applicant clearly details how local board policy provides for enhanced flexibility in participating schools. Campus Principals and teams are part of the district budget process. The Chief Financial Officer distributes campus funds based on a per-pupil allocation. Principals and their campus Leadership Teams have the autonomy to budget the funds to meet their campus needs. In this campus-based planning and decision-making framework, GISD's board of trustees provides campus Principals flexibility to set their school schedules within the school start and end times. Through regular meetings principals work closely with chief human resources officer to determine campus staffing needs within their individual budgets. Based on those discussions, and as established in GISD Policy DK (Local), Assignment and Schedules, Campus Assignments, adopted by the board in July 2008, principals select, approve, and assign their campus personnel. In this campus-based planning and decision-making framework, GISD's board of trustees provides campus Principals flexibility to set their school schedules within the school start and end times. The Applicant provides a comprehensive description of the successful implementation of school leadership teams in participating schools whose critical roles require the sufficient flexibility and autonomy afforded them as they plan school schedules and calendars, make school personnel decisions and implement staffing models, determine roles and responsibilities for educators and noneducators, and manage school-level budgets.

(c) The Applicant describes how State law provides LEAs with options for allowing students opportunities to progress and earn credit by demonstrating mastery at multiple times and in multiple ways. Minimum Attendance for Class Credit, established in Texas Education Code §25.092, allows LEAs to establish policies establishing alternative ways for students to make up work or regain credit lost because of absences. Examples include Credit by Examination, dual enrollment, and Intensive Summer Programs. GISD has charter, magnet, and theme based campuses. As part of the range of educational choices provided to all students in GISD, local board policy establishes no student attendance zones utilizing the "Schools of Choice Model." The Curriculum Development: Innovative and Magnet Programs facilitate educational choice and offers students' flexibility in programs, and modes of demonstrating mastery for credit, and performance-based courses. GISD middle grade students may accrue as many as five high school credits before transitioning to grades 9 through 12. Collectively, these practices clearly demonstrate how the Applicant appropriately gives students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic.

(d) The Applicant clearly describes how GISD local policies and programs provide students opportunities to demonstrate mastery at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways. Texas Education Code §29.081 establishes requirements for Compensatory, Intensive, and Accelerated Instruction. GISD board policy provides for re-teaching and acceleration to help determine instructional strategies for those students in need of remediation to achieve mastery of rigorous content standards. The Applicant comprehensively describes multiple pathways for giving students the opportunity to successfully demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways to facilitate personalized learning.

(e) The Applicant clearly describes how GISD provides learning resources and adaptable instructional practices to students in special populations, including students with disabilities and English language learners. The Texas Education Code §21.101 and local district policy require that all students, regardless of special need or condition be provided a well-balanced curriculum and that students with disabilities are served in a variety of instructional settings, as determined by the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee. The student's present level of performance, measurable annual goals, including benchmarks and short term objectives, specific supports and modifications, dates of service, and evaluation procedures progress are determined by the Individual Education Plan (IEP) which is developed by members of the ARD Committee. For GISD's Limited English Proficient (LEP) the district has implemented local policy and procedures to differentiate between academic achievement and language proficiency and specify instruction and assessment strategies, testing routines and promotion and retention of LEP students, that are focused on rigorous core content while accommodating language and cultural differences in the local community setting. The Applicant provides extensive examples of research-based and proven strategies for providing personalized learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners.

Full points are awarded because together these practices comprehensively and cohesively provide a high quality plan (High-quality plan means a plan that includes key goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities) for the personalization of student learning and for ensuring that every student is able to achieve rigorous grade level, college, and career standards. These practices clearly indicate the capacity of the district to implement the programs, policies, strategies, and activities to achieve their ambitious yet achievable goals of the *My Backpack to the Future* reform initiative.

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

10

8

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) & (b) The Applicant clearly describes how their plan to implement *My Backpack to the Future* extends and enhances the capacity of the district's infrastructure to ensure that all students have access to personalized learning. Also the Applicant clearly describes how families are supported with access to content and technology necessary to ensure student success. Examples include TEKS Resource System to provide a rigorous and viable curriculum; students have equal access to all programs and resources through school choice and the school choice model supports families with data presented on student "dashboards" that provide parents and families, as well as teachers and administrators informative snapshot views of student progress and results; Texas' Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) which system provides detailed longitudinal data about student achievement, campus and district performance, class size, social and emotional data related to discipline and referrals, staffing patterns, and finances. Some of this information, including scores on the statewide student assessment, the state's Academic Excellence Indicator System data, and financial data is currently available to the public on the GISD website. TSDS, as it is implemented through the *My Backpack to the Future* program, will extend that data by disaggregating and presenting it at the individual student level. In partnership with Skyward, this same information will be made available to parents. Training and support regarding uses of the system and resources available will be provided to all stakeholders. **Although the Applicant plans on ensuring that students, parents, educators and other stakeholders have appropriate levels of technical support, which may be provided through a range of strategies; however, the Applicant does not clearly describe the range of proposed strategies (e.g., peer support, online support, or local support) and how they will support outcomes.**

(c) - GISD parents and families have data access through a Parents' Portal on the GISD website. The site is open and no registration or login is required. A Student Portal, a Board Portal, and access to district documents are also provided through the website. The Parents' Portal contains limited information at the present time that includes back to school information, a Schools of Choice application, a staff directory, codes of conduct, and user agreements. The website also includes prompts for access to district academic, financial, and budget data. Access to this data, as well as parent access to new data sources, will be greatly expanded through TSDS and the dashboards, which will be integrated into the Skyward Family Access system. When implemented in Fall, 2014 the systems will present content, tools and resources presented through TSDS and the dashboards to all parents, families, and community partners regardless of income, language, or socio-economic status. **The Applicant clearly describes how parents and students will have access to using information technology systems that allow them to export their information in an open data format; however, the LEA does not currently have an interoperable data system which would allow parents and students to use the data in other electronic learning systems (e.g., electronic tutors, tools that make recommendations for additional learning supports, or software that securely stores personal records).**

(d) GISD will survey parents and families to gauge awareness of the dashboards beginning in Fall, 2014. The dashboards will be accessible via computer, tablet, or smartphone also in that time frame. To build knowledge among parents, families, and community members and ensure full access to the new tools, GISD's plan calls for translation of the dashboards into Spanish and scheduling of family training sessions, on Family Access for both students and parents. The TSDS system and Skyward Family Access will build upon GISD's current PEIMS and financial tools to ensure access to and use of a broad range of interoperable data during the implementation and sustained use of the *My Backpack to the Future* project. **The LEA does not currently have an interoperable data system; however the Applicant's RTT-D reform proposal will ensure that LEAs and schools use interoperable data systems.**

Full points are not awarded because although the Applicant plans to ensuring that students, parents, educators and other stakeholders have appropriate levels of technical support, which may be provided through a range of strategies; however, the Applicant provides insufficient details to describe the strategies.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant provides a comprehensive and cohesive high-quality plan for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process. The Cornerstone of the plan is the Project Director who will work collaboratively to support district and school level teams to provide timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the term of the grant. The Applicant clearly details how the focused goals and supporting strategies in their plan will provide for appropriate monitoring, measuring and publicly sharing of information on the quality of its investments funded by RTT-D, including professional development, technology, and

staff. For example, the Applicant describes how the district will use appropriate protocols and rubrics for monitoring and providing timely feedback to facilitate adjustments in continuous improvement processes; how the district will provide feedback on their schools' capacity for successful implementation of blended learning and other strategies the implementation teams and PLCS propose for continuous improvement in accelerating achievement, deepening learning, and increasing equity; how the district will assist the classroom coaches to document and quantify their evaluations of teachers' and students' levels of use of data and 21st century technology to guide and support continuous improvement; and how the district will measure and regularly report progress at classroom, school, and district levels in achievement of desired outcomes for students during and after the grant period. Full points are awarded because the Applicant presents a clear and focused high quality plan implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process.

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

5

5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant presents a high-quality plan (detailed in the appendix & sections A-D) that describe processes for communicating with the implementation teams, curriculum and leadership teams, students and parents, community partners, and the general public information about goals and progress and quality of investments in GISD's race to the top. Examples of these processes include:

- an orientation retreat in Spring 2014 to equip district and school leaders with deep and common vision of comprehensive reform;
- engaging 100% of GISD educators through training, school-based PLCs, and pilot site implementation teams;
- providing events and one-to-one meetings in Spring 2014 with students and their parents to orient them towards the new level of shared opportunity and responsibility for tailoring learning to each student aligned to the student's needs and interests;
- increasing the numbers of methods, portals, and supports (e.g..., on-line portals, articles in school newsletters, home visits, family education sessions, informational resources in the local newspapers, text messages, and bulletin boards) for ensuring parents feel comfortable accessing, understanding, and using student-, school- and district-level performance data as a tool for assisting their student on the path to college and career;
- continuing to coordinate with community agencies through partnership agreements and collaborative planning to ensure family and community supports for increasing student connectedness to school and to college and career pathways are accessible and effective in eliminating disparities in behavioral and physical health, achievement, and career opportunities (see Section X);
- continuing to strengthen GISD's alliance with Galveston Sustainable Communities Alliance to engage business and local foundations and philanthropic organizations in community-wide plan to transform education (see Letters of Support);

Full points are awarded because the Applicant provides convincing evidence to support their high quality plan for providing ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders in the continuous improvement process.

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

5

3

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant provides clear descriptions of fourteen ambitious yet achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures. For each applicant-proposed measure, the Applicant clearly describes its rationale for selecting that measure. For example the Applicant states that the first three performance measures includes data for all students because all schools, educators, and students in the district will participate in their proposed reform initiative in each of the years of grant funding. For most of the performance indicators, the Applicant describes how the measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant's implementation success or areas of concern. For example, for performance indicator number twelve the Applicant states that the number and percentage of high school students by subgroups (ethnicity, Special Education, LEP, gender) who meet the State standard on EOC test for English I Reading is an on-track measure of progress toward college and career readiness (Goal 1 a and d). Closing the gaps for subgroups compared to all students by 50% is a leading academic indicator of success in implementing the Race-to-the-Top plan. However, the Applicant did not clearly describe how it will review and improve the measure over time if it is insufficient to gauge implementation progress. Points in the medium range are awarded.

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

5

5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Galveston ISD has a contract awarded to a Galveston based independent research and evaluation firm through competitive solicitation. The evaluation team assembled under this existing contract is experienced in survey and interview methods, participant-observer roles and rubrics for quantitative and qualitative approaches for evaluating teaching and learning, time-series analysis and growth modeling, experimental and quasi-experimental design for effectiveness evaluation, and quantitative and qualitative methods for capacity analysis and assessment of fidelity of implementation. The team members have subject matter expertise in personalized learning environments, response-to-intervention, teacher professional development, technology in education, social emotional learning, adolescent development, models of education reform, and evaluating return on investment. The Applicant has provided their resumes and letters of support in the Appendix. The Applicant outlined key evaluator goals that focus on providing timely information for action to increase likelihood of success in racing to the top. The complete evaluation plan detailing tasks, deliverables, proposed methodologies, timelines, and responsible parties and the logic model are provided in Appendix. Full points are awarded because the Applicant provides comprehensive and cohesive high quality plan to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of Race to the Top District funded activities.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Applicant’s budget narrative and tables clearly identify all funds that will support the project. The Plan budget is broken into 4 projects: Project 1- District Level Project Management and Oversight, Project 2 -Data, Project 3 Content, and Project 4 – Application. Funds identified appear reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implication of the Applicant’s proposal. The Applicant’s proposal includes a thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities, including a description of all funds that the applicant will use to support the implementation of the proposal, including total revenue from Race to the Top-District grant, external foundation support, LEA, State and other Federal funds. The Applicant identifies funds that will be used for one-time investments (i.e.. equipment) versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs that will be incurred during and after the grant period, with a focus on strategies that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments. Full points are awarded.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	4
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Applicant’s sustainability plan is based on the philosophy of building capacity through grant funding, so that the project activities become integrated and aligned within the instructional culture and curriculum of the district. GISD’s My Backpack to the Future project includes two major focus areas that will ensure sustainability of a personalized learning environment for Galveston students in the future: (1) building professional capacity through intensive job embedded coaching to analyze individual student data and implement targeted instruction; and (2) development of a robust data system to match individual students to the teacher, instructional strategies and supports. Upon the successful completion of this four year project, GISD teachers will have the capacity to truly personalize learning for every student</p> <p>The sustainability plan for My Backpack to the Future assumes decreasing reliance on grant-funded instructional coaches as their work with the school based PLCs develops the classroom teachers’ capacity for peer coaching and for assuming increasing responsibility for leadership roles on their school-based inquiry team for continuous improvement of teaching and learning</p> <p>The Applicant’s plan sustainability of the project’s goals after the term of the grant does not include include support from State and local government leaders, financial support, and a description of how the applicant will evaluate the effectiveness of past investments and use this data to inform future investments. The Applicant’s plan also does not optionally address how the applicant will evaluate improvements in productivity and outcomes to inform a post-grant budget, and does not include an estimated budget for the three years after the term of the grant that includes budget assumptions, potential sources, and uses of funds. Points in the medium range are awarded.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

(1). The Applicant provides a detailed description of the coherent and sustainable partnership to support the plan described in Absolute Priority 1 that it has formed with public or private organizations, such as public health (i.e.. Pathfinders Program); before-school, after-school (i.e.. Galveston ISD's 21st Century Community Learning Centers/Afterschool Centers on Education), and social service providers (i.e.. Teen Health Center Mental Health Services); and other community-based organizations (i.e.. GSCA, Galveston's ten community-based foundations); early learning programs (i.e.. Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) UTMB's Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) program); and postsecondary institutions (i.e.. Texas A&M University Galveston (TAMUG) and the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB)).

(2) The Applicant identifies not more than 10 population-level desired results for students in the LEA or consortium of LEAs that align with and support the applicant's broader Race to the Top – District proposal. These results both educational results or other education outcomes and family and community supports. A table in response to item 6 of this section provides the desired results of GISD's community partners (chiefly GCSA, GC, and UTMB) aligned with GISD's RTTT-D goals. These results will be attained through educational supports and resources to address the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of the participating children and families. Unless otherwise noted, the goals emphasize highest need students based on economic status, family instability, health instability, housing instability, language development needs, or academic achievement gap.

3a) GISD's Backpack Plan for student, classroom and school-level data dashboards encompasses academic, familial, and socio-emotional factors. They will be designed to establish benchmark data and monitor progress for the 10 desired results. Data will be collected collaboratively following the comprehensive data plan established with Education for the Future/Berhardt.

3.b. Use data to target resources- Data will be reported in aggregate and disaggregated to highlight needs of students facing significant challenges, including but not limited to, disabilities and/or health instability, limited English proficiency, students from low income families, students who are homeless, students with high incidences of absenteeism and/or behavior infractions, students from ethnic groups experiencing achievement gaps (i.e., African American), students who are pregnant and/or parenting, and students whose parents have low educational attainment. Data will be analyzed to determine the extent to which community resources are serving the targeted recipients

3.c. The project's outcomes will support national-level scalability by contributing to the body of knowledge regarding effective community/school partnerships. Regionally, the project will immediately scale beyond GISD to encompass non-district charter schools and private schools in Galveston. The size of GISD provides an economy of scale that enables the community to seamlessly support all children and families regardless of their serving school. Moreover, GISD's work conforms to and supports the work of a broader regional effort.

3.d. The alignment of school-based communities of practice with community-based communities of practice will align acts of improvement around a comprehensive plan. This will support increased focus on promising practices and cessation of unpromising ones. It will sustain focus on the citizens whose needs represent the highest levels of need and the greatest opportunity for transformation. It will support seamless integration of data collection and data analysis around a common set of improvement goals. These continuous improvement practices, based on the analysis of data, will improve results across all measures.

4. The student data dashboard will integrate education services with other services, ensuring that each child receives the appropriate levels and types of support, without duplicating or conflicting efforts. Communities In Schools of Galveston (CIS) provides another source of family-level support to ensure each student's needs are identified and met. CIS works with the whole family to address needs through a network of businesses, social service agencies, health care providers, and parent and volunteer organizations. GISD plans to integrate CIS's case management data into the student dashboard if data privacy issues can be resolved. The capacity to match each student with the support(s) received will provide valuable data by which to monitor progress and make decisions about whether to modify the student's plan. In the aggregate, these data will support programmatic-level decisions.

5) The Applicant plans to utilize their partnerships to build the capacity of staff in participating schools by combining qualitative data to district quantitative data to provide a clearer picture of assets and needs. Two data sources Community Report Cards of quantitative indicators of the demography, economic status, health, behavior, and safety of children and vulnerable populations and the Galveston Sustainable Communities Alliance (GSCA) independent analysis of students' needs and assets will be utilized throughout the implementation process of RTTT-D to enhance, corroborate, clarify, or highlight inconsistencies with school-based data. As part of school- and district-level dashboards, these data will enrich the overall picture of each community. In these ways, the partnership will build staff capacity to:

- a) Assess the needs and assets of individual students, high need students, groups of students experiencing achievement gaps, and other disaggregated populations in ways that support the district's RTTT-D goals and the community partners' goals for improving the education and family and community supports established in this proposal and in the partners' overall plans.
 - b) Identify, inventory and monitor the needs and assets of each school and the community in ways that support the district's RTTT-D goals and the community partners' goals for improving the education and family and community supports established in this proposal and in the partners' overall plans.
 - c) Implement a semi-annual continuous-improvement process using data to support decision-making related to selection, implementation, modification, and replication or cessation of supports that address the individual needs of all students and support improved results.
 - d) Engage parents and families of participating students through school-based and community-based partners to 1) enhance family members' awareness of available supports; 2) enable family members to share in the analysis of student level data to design educational plans and aligned plans for support services; 3) empower family members to select and access supports to improve results over time and in addressing student, family, and school needs.
- 6) The Applicant clearly identifies its annual ambitious yet achievable performance measures for the proposed population-level and describe desired results for students.

Clearly the Applicant demonstrates the extent to which the district will integrate public or private resources in a partnership designed to augment the schools' resources by providing additional student and family supports to schools that address the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of the participating students, giving highest priority to students in participating schools with high-need students. Full points are awarded.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The Applicant coherently and comprehensively addresses how it will build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators. The Applicant's ambitious and achievable reform plan, My Backpack to the Future, is built on five comprehensive reform goals that are aligned with college-and career-ready standards. Each student's "Backback" contains the tools and resources needed for accelerating student achievement and deepening student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student. My Backpack to the Future includes focused strategies designed to increase the effectiveness of educators; expand student access to the most effective educators; decrease achievement gaps across student groups; and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.</p>		
Total	210	198