



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0142CA-1 for Inglewood Unified School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Inglewood Unified School District (IUSD) application sets forth a vision of school reform that builds upon its work in the four core education assurance areas. IUSD implemented a reform effort in 2011 that, as presented in the charts comprising Figure B1, has begun to have a positive impact on the academic performance of students in the district schools noted by the California Department of Education (CDE) in 2010 as underachieving. The vision put forth in this proposal focuses on expanding these efforts to include all the schools and students in the district. These improvement strategies, according to the plan presented and discussed throughout the narrative, and specifically presented in the appendix as the School Improvement Grant (SIG) Work Plan, focuses on the four core areas and addresses the "whole child" through the provision of a personalized learning environment. The processes/activities and materials to be used in this effort sufficiently describe, in narrative and chart form, the classroom and web-based experiences as data driven and inclusive of both individual and collaborative activities. Given the fact that IUSD is a minority-majority student district it can be inferred throughout that equitable access is a key goal. Increasing equity for particular subgroups as well as for the majority student population is a primary task noted in the introduction to the proposal.</p> <p>In the introduction to the proposal the applicant provides descriptive background and an unlabeled chart which presents district objectives and strategies. Personalize Learning Environments is mentioned as the final strategy, The only other reference in section A of the proposal to "personalized" learning is in the final bullet in the Logic Model. "Personalized learning environment" does not consistently appear as a framing "phrase" that is central to IUSD's reform plan although throughout the application strategies and activities that capture this concept are well presented.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The school improvement effort began with three schools listed as "persistently lowest achieving" and six others in "corrective action" as determined by the California Department of Education (CDE). This understandably spurred the focus of initial reform plans. The current proposal provides a strong case, for expanding this effort to include all 18 IUSD schools which are listed in the application and 100% of IUSD students (12,318), of whom "over ninety percent are noted as qualifying for the free or reduced lunch program." The process for implementation is somewhat unique given its start as a state mandate. It is both reasonable and sound to expand the effort given the data showing improvements in the schools currently organized and operating under a reform plan.</p>		
<b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
<p><b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant's plans for reform and change are found throughout the application with goals and focus strategies enumerated. These reform goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and individuals responsible for each initiative were initially developed to meet conditions of the CDE for persistently low performing schools. Structures were commendably put in place in the district, e.g. the Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement Office, in support of these efforts. These plans, found in the appendix, are specific and thorough. The applicant ambitiously anticipates building on these plans moving from reform efforts targeted to three schools to providing comprehensive district reform involving all 18 schools. There is reasonable evidence of the intent to continue with the current action plan (e.g teaching teams will attend AVID training) and target goals (e.g. increase the ability of school staff to monitor student progress) as noted in the School Improvement Corrective Action Plan 2012-13 in this section.</p> <p>An RTTT grant plan, specifically the strategies, activities and timelines going forward is not noted in this</p>		

section although there is evidence throughout the proposal, as stated above, that the applicant anticipates building and expanding upon the current high quality improvement plans. However, absent a high quality plan explicitly focused on the anticipated grant period, the score on this section is mid-level.

<b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
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**(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The Goals noted in the charts and narrative generally appear achievable with the exception of the marked uptick in yearly progress for certain subgroup goals (e.g. Grade 6 ELL students in 2016-17 are anticipated to be at 62.83% proficiency status on ELA – however, the year before they are noted at 35.90% proficiency; 100% of grade 4&5 students with disabilities are anticipated to achieve proficiency status in math by 2016-17). Student outcome targets for closing the achievement gap and increasing college enrollment are projected at an annual increase of 10%, with 8% increase projected each year for graduation rates. These targets appear both ambitious and achievable.

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

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

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

The LEA has demonstrated evidence of a clear record of success in the past in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching. The narrative description, charts and graphs demonstrate this progress for the three schools that are the focus of the initiatives included in the School Improvement Grant (SIG) Plan. The applicant notes that “district-wide, our record of success remains below our targeted expectations; however, students are demonstrating steady progress.” This progress, since 2009, is convincingly documented in this section with achievement gaps closing for several subgroups and increases in AYP in Math and at the two focus middle schools in ELA specifically. While two of the three targeted lowest performing schools saw their API rise one of the middle schools did not fare as well and this down tick is not explained in the narrative accompanying the graphic.

Student data is available to appropriate stakeholders and with the integration of the new data system, routinely utilized by teachers and other educators for improvement of instruction and curriculum. Communication with parents and secondary students appears reasonable and online access to student performance data is provided to these stakeholders. There is reference to online resources but the discussion of access and utilization is limited in this section of the proposal leaving in question how routinely and easily this student data is accessed by non-educators.

<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
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**(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

Because IUSD is in receivership legal obligations are assumed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. This person determines appropriate levels of transparency that meet State statute and they appear consistent with RTTT requirements. The applicant has noted the status of the four categories of school-level expenditures from State and local funds that are mentioned in the prompt. The status appears reasonable and sufficient given the relationship of the LEA to the CDE.

<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
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**(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

Since 2008, IUSD is operating with state oversight under a required LEA Plan (LEAP). This plan (found in the appendix) clearly aligns with the goals of RTTT – and the Logic Model that applicant suggests is the focus of efforts going forward. The reform plan was revised in 2010 and is persuasive in its commitment to implementation of personalized learning environments. The state appointed trustee, who has leadership of the district, has project level autonomy. The approved, state mandated reform plan as evidenced in various

documents appended to this proposal, clearly focuses upon the implementation of personalized learning environments. There are conditions of autonomy, although not at the highest level, as well as regulatory requirements that are supportive of IUSD's RTTT plan.

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

**15**

**11**

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

A comprehensive and generally ambitious process for involving stakeholders in the plans to improve schools and student outcomes is documented and provides evidence of a realistic commitment to outreach in the formation of reform planning which began in 2010. The outreach involved several public hearings to obtain input from the community regarding the selection of the intervention model needed for the three lowest performing schools. Held in district facilities, the attendance at these hearings is not quantified and efforts to broaden outreach and input by meeting at other community sites, a strategy for engaging reluctant participants, is not noted. Notable in its absence from the narrative is explicit reference to the extent of stakeholder engagement around the RTTT proposal. Letters of support from teachers, parents and students are not included in the documentation nor is there an explanation provided for this absence. The degree of support for the activities proposed under RTTT is unclear.

IUSD management and Inglewood Teachers Association are commended for conducting "focus groups" at district school sites to specifically engage stakeholders in discussion about educator evaluation and development. Notable, as per involving stakeholders is that "Corrective Action Schools (6) also participated in a School Quality Review process", conducted by independent, external consultants. These included, as per the narrative, "parents, students, principals and their leadership team". Notably absent in the documentation here is teacher engagement in the SQR process. The signature of the Inglewood Teachers Association president on the Application Assurance page is limited acknowledgement of support but insufficient absent teacher letters of support. However, the articulate explanation of the current circumstances between and among the major professional stakeholders provides a serviceable explanation of the limited support, from teachers, referenced above.

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

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

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

The narrative in this section is inclusive of sustaining, improving upon and broadening the efforts currently in place in three district schools. The applicant plans, as example, to ensure personalized planning and goal setting with students in their classroom and with counselors, peer grading processes, opportunities for AP courses and/or internships as appropriate, a focus on STEM education and online tutoring. These and other initiatives, separately and taken together address sufficiently the criteria set forth in C1 i-v and the narrative creates a picture of empowered students engaged in a rigorous, personalized course of study. However, with the exception of the STEM education curriculum there is inadequate information provided as to which grades will be engaged, as example in collaborative assignments and "measuring their own academic progress" making it difficult, beyond inference, to gauge whether the instructional plans are sufficiently age-appropriate.

The student data system, implemented district-wide, the AVID program, and the responsibilities of the newly established Turn Around Office suggest the tools and resources are in place for ensuring ongoing and regular feedback to students and teachers. A serviceable plan is noted to be in place, through the Turn Around Office, to ensure teachers are supported in their efforts to meet individual students needs.

Less well developed in this section are the supports and roles for parents. A list of potential activities directed at parents, e.g. parent-teacher conferences and newsletters is insufficiently descriptive or attentive to the challenges of engaging this population.

With the caveats noted above, this section of the proposal suggests the district is focused on ensuring that student learning is occurring at an individualized pace. However, while there is evidence throughout of the applicant's intent to expand upon current reform efforts and several quality reform plans are appended, there is no documentation of a plan explicit to the grant period. The lack of such an organizing plan going forward, inclusive of the elements of a "high-quality plan" as defined in the RFP, leaves unclear how the proposed activities will be implemented and the hoped for outcomes achieved.

Section (E)(1) does include a "framework for measuring and increasing learning and teaching effectiveness" but this framework does not present as a high-quality plan for (C)(1), inclusive of elements as defined in the RFP for RTTT funding.

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

**20**

**15**

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

An approach to teaching and leading that helps educators to improve instruction and increase their capacity to support student progress toward meeting college-and career-ready standards is well articulated in this section of the proposal.

Additionally, in A3 the applicant provides a graphic display of IUSD's Performance Goals and Strategies for achieving these goals. It shows strong evidence, when coupled with the Logic Model also provided in A3, that the provision of appropriate and focused professional development is a centerpiece of IUSD's plans for school improvement.

Performance Goal #3 (charted in A3) is specifically pertinent to C2 as it notes the goal of ensuring "highly effective teachers in low-performing classrooms" and "highly effective educators" with the skills and knowledge to identify optimal pedagogy and appropriately utilize data. Ambitious strategies are noted to ensure that staffing is equitable and in (E)(3) the target goals and measures for this foci are provided. The SIG Plan of Work, included in the appendix, specifically addresses the PD for leadership teams and delineates expected outcomes. These initiatives around leader development is comprehensive and ambitious. Only a vague description of measures of assessing these outcomes is provided. The IUSD SIG Plan is for work carried out between June 25 and August 31, 2013. An outline of a future plan covering this grant period is not included here.

A comprehensive and reasonable explanation is given by the applicant concerning the status of principal and teacher evaluation systems in the district. The educators in the three reform focus schools have agreed to student growth as a performance measure. IUSD and the bargaining unit anticipate a "set of evaluation procedures and a protocol for all unit member evaluations for implementation for the fifteen (15) remaining schools during the 2014-15 school year." As noted in the application implementation of educator evaluation and development systems has proved exceptionally challenging nationally. IUSD is commended for its measured but persistent approach to development of such a system and for piloting, a redesigned comprehensive" teacher evaluation model."

It is stated in various sections of the proposal, D1 as example, that the 2010 LEA plan (LEAP) with the California Department of Education, inclusive of reform goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and individuals responsible, forms the basis of the RTTT plan. As noted in previous comments, the Budget Narrative suggests that future goals, activities and outcomes are depicted in the Logic Model (IUSD Paradigm Shift). The details provided in the various graphics in the appendix, especially the SIG Plan and the "excerpts from LEAP," are convincing examples of IUSD past efforts at developing high quality plans. The Continuous Improvement Process that is presented in Section (E)(1) does include a "framework for measuring and increasing learning and teaching effectiveness" however a high quality plan for the RTTT work around teaching and leading is not presented.

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

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

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

Compliance mandates have spurred the development of the SIG reform plan and the resultant processes and practices have been described throughout the proposal. IUSD's intent, as clearly noted, is to utilize RTTT funding to expand the current efforts district-wide. The applicant gives a credible and coherent description of the structures that have been put in place to support the implementation of personalized learning in the targeted schools. A district Turnaround Office is specified as the locus of support and services and its staff of coaches and specialists under the leadership of an Executive Director appear sufficient to address the needs of the underperforming schools that have been the focus of efforts to date. Less clear is the depth of consideration given to staffing this office when it is required to serve 18 schools. The description in this section concerning the potential growth of this office is noted with some mention of the proposed expansion of its "services" but concomitant projection of additional staffing requirements is vague beyond the addition of an RTTT Project Director as noted in the Budget.

At the heart of the current reform plan and the RTTT expansion is the intent of increasing the length of the school day

throughout the district. Policies are in place to allow each school's leadership team to determine the exact nature of these extensions in the school day and the applicant reasonably and insightfully notes that some current policies and practices (including engaging parents, and district departments) will need to be modified to accommodate the anticipated changes. School leadership teams are provided with the flexibility and autonomy to determine the processes and pace of developing personalized learning environments. Placing responsibility at the school site demonstrates high levels of professionalism among the district educators. That the plans must be aligned to the LEAP and must meet compliance mandates around student outcomes ensures high quality plans in compliance with district and State goals, will be developed at the individual school sites.

The proposal narrative documents ambitious and achievable goals and supportive processes that enable students, including those with special needs, to demonstrate mastery in a topic area based on ability. The notion that "teachers... advance students to the next level of academic study" is not fully developed leaving unclear whether students may advance into another class or grade or simply another "topic."

It is stated in various sections of the proposal, D1 as example, that the 2010 LEA plan (LEAP) with the California Department of Education, inclusive of reform goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and individuals responsible, forms the basis of the RTTT plan. The details provided in the various graphics in the appendix, especially the SIG Plan and the "excerpts from LEAP" are convincing as high quality plans but absent a similar high quality plan for the RTTT work this section does not receive a high score.

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

**10**

**8**

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

Processes, programs and structures ensuring that students, parents, educators, and others have access to content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school and that they have appropriate levels of technical support is thoroughly documented in this section of the proposal. The comprehensive nature of the efforts to ensure parent access and engagement, as graphically presented in D2, appear ambitious and demonstrate district and community commitment to ensuring high levels of access and support to stakeholders. The provision of, as example, parent centers, parent training, bi-lingual assistance; the description (here and elsewhere in the proposal) of how students will be supported in college and career goal-setting and the tools provided to students (parents and teachers) to ensure individualization, is persuasive in terms of meeting this criterion.

Students and teachers are provided appropriate levels of support to utilize open format data systems. As example, students can receive on-line tutorial assistance. There is access to teachers through a student portal. The interoperability of the various systems is noted to be in process with expected completion in the 2014-15 school year.

While it is evident throughout that the applicant intends to expand upon current reform efforts, a high quality plan for implementation of the work going forward (2014-2017) inclusive of the elements enumerated in the RFP, is not included.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>

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

A conceptual model of continuous improvement is provided in this section of the application as is a general plan for ensuring implementation. The discussion is broadly conceptual with few details concerning what constitutes "student growth" as example. Explicit expectations around progress on ensuring "personalized learning environments" for each student would enhance this section of the proposal. Measurement instruments suggested appear limited almost entirely to surveys and student performance data and public sharing" is conceived almost exclusively as "annual reports." While there is mention of data collection there is no indication of how that information will be analyzed and used to inform activities and strategies going forward. The applicant does not include qualitative measures such as internal and external forums for exchange of challenges, successes, insights, etc..The applicant has not fully met this criterion.

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

**5**

**2**

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

The applicant inadequately addresses section (E)(2) and does not present a clear and coherent plan or thorough narrative description concerning quality internal and external communication concerning RTTT activities. While there is reference in the narrative to “horizontal communication” and “bottom up communication” these are not convincingly or coherently detailed. No plan is presented for communication around this agenda nor is a current plan referenced in the appendix. The applicant does not reference, in this section, the plan charted in (E)(1) which clearly suggests a number of specific if limited vehicles for communication.

<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
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**(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:**  
 Applicant proposed performance measures are consistent with the key goals and strategies proposed in the plan. There is appropriate justification given for choosing these areas and methods of reassessing utilization of these measures is generally noted. Social/emotional/health targets are included. 100% proficiency by 2017-18 in several target areas is charted. As example: 100% of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will be at or above proficient on the English Language Arts Test. This 100% standard is also held for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students on the Math Standards Test and in the same year 100% of students will have a highly effective teacher. These are ambitious goals but there is not enough evidence provided to rate them as achievable. Presentation of an approach to continually improve measures is insubstantial referencing only the TBD external evaluator and the current data system. Creating a team that is representative of stakeholders and tasking them with assessing progress on proposed measures does not appear to have been considered.

<b>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
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**(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:**  
 Plans to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of Race to the Top – District funded activities are conceptually presented in section E of the proposal. IUSD documents its commitment to a “comprehensive third-party evaluation” and to procurement of a qualified entity to undertake this evaluation. The applicant suggests reasonable criteria, inclusive of quantitative and qualitative data for formative, summative and implementation stages. Reference to collecting “a variety of data” is vague while the comment that the evaluation will assess “overall goals and objectives, benefits to participants and staffing professional development” is unclear. A list of potential agencies, institutions and/or individuals considered for the evaluation component of the grant is not included. There is insufficient evidence that due diligence has been given to this aspect of the proposal.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>

**(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:**  
 Quoting from the proposal “Inglewood Unified School District is submitting for RTTT-District funding for one project “**IUSD Paradigm Shift.**” Confusing, is the statement at the conclusion of the narrative portion of this section that IUSD “will only be using the awarded Race to the Top-District funds to pilot the expansion of the AVID program district wide.” The budget line items show support for the district’s plan as set forth in the Paradigm Shift and reflect that approximately half of the grant funds will accommodate the “Extended Learning Times” project. Identification of funds that will be used for one-time investments and those that will be used for ongoing operational costs is adequately provided. The efficacy of the proposed budget is unclear given the current fiscal realities and the absence of documented support from teachers. However, with appropriate educator support the budget appears generally reasonable and sufficient for further development and implementation of the applicant’s proposal.

<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
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**(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:**  
 The applicant suggests proven and traditional avenues to sustain this work if funded, as example, funds from parcel taxes and imbursements from the state. Additionally, a presentation of sustainability strategies for each component is presented and appears thoughtful and ambitious given the current fiscal conditions of the district. Sustainability is

incorporated in the ideas presented in the Budget Section; however, a “high quality plan” inclusive of pertinent criteria, as example, persons responsible, projections for activities and subsequent timelines, is not presented.

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

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

IUSD and each school, as described in the narrative, grows partnerships around a “common vision for the social, emotional, physical, and academic futures of students”. The applicant is currently engaged with multiple and varied community based agencies and organizations in a an effort to augment the schools’ resources in meeting the needs of students and their families.

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) programs are central to the proposal and the narrative in this section is convincing concerning the influence and involvement of AVID in holistically addressing student needs. AVID PD is noted as enabling staff to identify student needs and AVID program data will be analyzed "and used to identify achievement gaps." There is no description of how the applicant will assess the various partnership programs progress vis-a-vis student emotional/social growth. Adjustments to determine if goals and objectives are being met is mentioned briefly in the budget narrative section of the application as is sustainability. The budget narrative suggests that "We will only be using the RTTT funds to pilot the expansion of the AVID program district wide.. (and) at present we do not have additional funds to allocate to the expansion." This statement is followed by insufficient evidence of a post-grant sustainability plan. Given what appears to be total dependence upon grant funding for AVID's engagement in 18 schools, the brief description of available mechanisms for sustainability is not convincing.

**Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments**

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

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

The concept of a "personalized learning environment" is central to IUSD's reform plan and throughout the application strategies and activities that capture this concept are presented. The district is building on the core educational assurance areas and is following a state approved, quality plan for school improvement in several schools. In the focus schools, the implementation of this SIG Plan has resulted in the creation of learning environments in which the achievement gap has decreased, educators have received training to increase their effectiveness and tools for personalization, including a state of the art data system, have been acquired and are being utilized. The applicant meet Absolute Priority 1.

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>158</b>
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**Race to the Top - District  
Technical Review Form**



## Application #0142CA-2 for Inglewood Unified School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>This is a very strong section of the proposal. The applicant will use its current Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as the overall structure. For each of these standards (e.g. CCSS Standard #1, which is Adopting Standards and Assessments), the applicant has described in detail what its vision is for Accelerating Student Achievement, Deepening Student Learning, and Increasing Equity through Personalized Support. Further, in each area the applicant describes its current or planned approaches to those goals. Overall, the vision is comprehensive and coherent; nothing is left out, and everything fits together into a logical and realistic picture.</p> <p>The only weakness noted is that the applicant does not describe explicitly what the classroom experiences in personalized learning environments will be. Nonetheless, the nature of those experiences can be inferred from the comprehensive list of programs that the applicant has presented elsewhere in the application.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant's plan is to expand and refine programs that it created in 2010 in three very low-performing schools, and to implement them in all of the 18 schools in the district. The applicant did not specifically state how the decision was made to involve all the schools, rather than to confine their efforts to just a subset of the schools. A list of the names of these schools, along with the data specified in criterion (A)(2)(c) is included. All grade bands and subject areas will be involved.</p>		
<b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<p><b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant's plan is to scale up and refine programs that are already under development in three schools so that the entire district is covered. The applicant presents a logical model for how this can be done, including inputs, activities, intermediate and long-term goals for each core area (e.g., Effective Teachers and Principals). Many more details about the applicant's plan for reform and improving student outcomes appear in sections (C)(1), (C)(2), and (E)(1-4).</p> <p>Nonetheless, this section is missing many of the details about how these activities are going to be carried out. For instance one of the "activities" under "Turning around low-performing schools" is "Place highly effective teachers with higher-need students." The applicant provides no detail on how "highly effective" teachers will be moved or recruited or retrained, what the potential barriers to this reassignment or upgrading of teachers might be, the schedule on which this is to be undertaken, and so on.</p>		
<b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
<p><b>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant presents a very detailed account of all of the measures used to determine student learning performance, how those measures were calculated, what the goals for improvement are, why those goals are ambitious, and why they are achievable. This is done for performance on summative assessments, decreasing the achievement gaps, high school graduation rates, and college enrollment. There are no figures for postsecondary degree attainment.</p> <p>Some of the figures in the tables appear to be incorrect. As one example, in the table for ELA proficiency, it is not clear why the "Overall ELL" post-grant goal is 100% while the post-grant goals for English Language Learners in individual grade levels are less than 100%. The Grade 5 ELL goal is only 85.5%, for instance. If 100% of English Language Learners are proficient, then, in particular, 100% of the 5th-grade ELLs would need to be proficient to accomplish 100% overall proficiency.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>
<p><b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant has done a remarkable job in advancing student learning in the district, as demonstrated by the percentages of proficient students in ELA and mathematics overall and for various sub-populations from 2009 to 2012. (It should be noted that some groups decreased during that time period, however -- e.g, Asians in mathematics).</p> <p>The applicant has broken out the API data for the three lowest-performing schools in the district, and the improvement is significant. These reforms, especially in the low-achieving Lane Elementary School, have been particularly noteworthy.</p> <p>The applicant describes the many avenues of communication among the stakeholders, especially between the schools and parents. Also, the Data Director software tool allows teachers to get up-to-the-minute data on classroom performance, allowing them to adjust individual and classroom assignments.</p> <p>No information is provided here about high school graduation or college enrollment.</p>		
<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<p><b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Most of this data is available in IUSD's School Accountability Report Cards. Actual personnel salaries for instructional staff are not currently broken out, but the applicant states that it is "working to make this information available as well." No further details are provided about who is working on it, or when it is expected to be available.</p> <p>The applicant does not explain how one gets access to these School Accountability Report Cards.</p>		
<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The IUSD is in State Receivership, unable to pay its obligations. It has a \$55 million loan from the state, and the state has appointed a Trustee until the district is able to get its fiscal systems and control in place. The trustee is an experienced school administrator and is completely familiar with California legal, statutory and regulatory requirements. IUSD has created a LEA Plan (LEAP) through the state of California in 2008. The LEAP <i>requires</i> that IUSD develop goals and strategies that align with California state standards. Then a revision of the plan was approved in 2010, and that formed the basis of the work that IUSD has done in the three low-performing schools. That work, in turn, is the basis for the current application. Thus it is clear that the Trustee and the LEA have sufficient autonomy to implement the plans that are being proposed, and there is no condition or situation within the state that would preclude the success of the project.</p>		
<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>
<p><b>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The support for this proposal is evidenced not just by the appended letters of support, but by the engagement of parents and teachers as the plan was being developed. This involved community public meetings, formal focus groups of parents at the local schools, meetings of the district administration with the Inglewood Teachers' Association, and "school quality reviews" conducted by an outside consultant.</p> <p>It is difficult, however, to determine the extent to which this engagement of stakeholders is engagement in the preparation of <i>this</i> proposal specifically, or engagement in the preparation of the <i>earlier, precursor</i> reform proposal. (That earlier initial collaboration started in March of 2010.) For example, the administration/teachers collaboration in the 2012-13 school year was directed toward developing new teacher and administration measurement tools, which is part, but not all, of the current proposal.</p> <p>Moreover, there are no letters of support from parents. Nor is there a letter from the president of the teachers' association attesting to the involvement of teachers in this proposal; Mr. Somberg's signature on the Assurances form simply indicates that he has read the proposal, is fully committed to it, and will support its implementation, not that he or his members have been deeply involved in its creation.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>
<p><b>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The section of the proposal in response to the sub-criteria (a), (b), and (c) is very strong. There are clear and convincing descriptions of how, for example, students will become involved in "deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest," (criterion (C)(a)(3)) through work with Chevron, UCLA, Kaiser Permanente and others. Similarly, the descriptions of the "high quality instructional approaches/environments" is detailed and realistic. The applicant presents admirable accounts of the STEM enrichment materials, the DataDirector program for monitoring student progress, the rationale for extending the school day, and for making a "complete transition from a content-rich, but dull 'busy work' to curriculum and instructional methods that require active minds and bodies."</p> <p>The problem, though, is that the applicant does not fully articulate a <i>high-quality plan</i> for accomplishing all this. It is not clear exactly how these reforms are to be instituted, by whom, on what schedule over the course of the four years of the grant, and with what "deliverable" results. While each sub-criterion is addressed persuasively, with clear passion and imagination, nonetheless the overall plan is not fully detailed. It is important to note that the LEA plan in the Appendix, which specifies timelines and personnel, is the plan for the earlier grant, <i>not</i> a plan for this RTTT-D application.</p> <p>One specific example of this lack of detail is in the section on parents. The applicant says that "Parents will also play a role in assisting and reinforcing the management of each student's individual learning plan. Parents will be provided with instruction via parent-teacher conferences, newsletters, personal letters, and the online parent portal." It is not clear who is going to provide this instruction and how often, who is going to write the personal letters or the newsletters, and exactly what the parents' role is vis-a-vis the teachers' role in "assisting and reinforcing the management of each student's individual learning plan." Similar questions could be raised about many of the proposed activities.</p>		
<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>
<p><b>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Again, the individual sub-criteria are addressed clearly and specifically, but fine-grained detail is lacking. One good example is under the first sub-criterion (C)(2)(a)(i), wherein PD workshops held in the summers of 2012 and 2013 are described. In that section it is stated that "Teachers are expected to collaborate regularly . . . to identify current instructional needs . . . and make instructional plans . . ." But it is not clear if all teachers are to be involved in these, how often the collaboratives are to be held, who is going to lead them, and what the expected outcomes ("deliverables") will be.</p> <p>As another example, the applicant describes in some detail a "framework" called ELEVATE for "increasing and measuring the effectiveness of learning and teaching." ELEVATE was developed in collaboration with the IUSD and the teachers' association a few years ago, and is now being pilot tested in the three SIG schools in IUSD. For <i>this</i> proposal (as opposed to earlier work on the SIG proposal) the applicant says ". . . it is our intention fo roll out the new teacher effectiveness model in all district schools." There is no indication of how this is going be done -- the schedule by which schools are going to be introduced to the new system, what pitfalls might be encountered (by teacher resistance, for example), who is going to be in charge of this "roll out," and so forth. In summary, ELEVATE was created under an earlier grant, and, while it may be extremely meritorious, there is no detailed plan for expanding its use beyond the three original schools.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>
<p><b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant already has (or will have) the needed practices and policies in place to accomplish all these sub-criteria. Thus, at one level, its "high-quality plan" is simply that it is already supporting project implementation effectively. For example, the applicant has already created a centralized District Turnaround Office that services the needs of the three</p>		

SIG schools; its mandate will be expanded to include all the remaining schools that are going to be involved in the RTTT-D project. Each school already has a "Single Plan for Student Achievement" as an overview for coordinating all the resources in an individual school to promote student achievement. The use of DataDirector and AVID make it feasible to accelerate learning by allowing students to move ahead as appropriate, based on their mastery of material, as demonstrated through any of several ways.

One area that is not fully detailed is the expansion of AVID from the schools it is now in (grades 4-6) to the rest of the schools in IUSD. The applicant says that the current AVID program "will serve as a cornerstone of the reform plan building a system-wide approach from elementary to high school," but it fails to describe in any detail who will be responsible for this expansion and the schedule over which it will take place. That is, it is not clear if this expansion will be done in grade-level blocks over a period of two or more years, or if it will be implemented all at once, over all grades. The AVID program is indeed a very critical component of the project, and therefore it is important to specify which students will have access to AVID support when and where they need it. These details could have a profound effect on the success of its implementation.

The applicant says that "school days . . . will be increased by an average of 200 to 300 minutes. . ." (which one can assume means per week, not per day), with the final decision on this extension to be made by each school's leadership team. This is such an important component of the applicant's plan that one would expect a more definitive statement about the likelihood of the extension's being accepted, and what, if any, modifications to the plan would be made in case a particular school accepts only a 30-minute extension, say, or no extension at all.

<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
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**(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

This part of the application is presented as a series of tables that list the "service access" to be provided to a variety of "targets" (i.e. parents, students, and educators). In many cases these services are continuations of what the IUSD is already doing -- for example "continue to provide Spanish translations for parents during conferences and in written communications." In other cases it is not clear if the activity described is something to be newly undertaken under the RTTT-D grant -- for instance "individualized technical assistance for parent portal problems or concerns." If this "individualized technical assistance" is a new activity, then the applicant must specify a high-quality plan for who is going to be providing this assistance and when or how often.

Still other activities appear to be confined to a single school -- for example the College Summit program at Morningside high school. No plan is presented for extending this to other secondary schools, so it is not clear that all students (regardless of income) will have access to this program.

There is no indication that students or parents will be able to export their own information in an open data format and use the data in other electronic learning systems.

With regard to interoperable data systems, the applicant plans to integrate human resources and budget data into the DataDirector system, to be completed by September 2014, but it is not clear exactly who will have responsibility for this. There is no line item in the budget for such an effort.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>

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

The applicant has included a high quality plan in the form of a chart that describes how staffing, student growth, professional development and technology are going to be monitored, measured, and communicated to the public. The schedule or frequency of these events are specified, as well as who is responsible for carrying out the work. For example, student growth will be monitored on a weekly basis by teachers at the classroom level (against weekly instructional targets set by the teachers), by principals at a school level, and by the Turnaround Office at the district level. Weekly reports will be available to students and parents through the on-line portal, with quarterly reports on the IUSD web site.

It is not completely clear how the slides on the "Ongoing Teacher Effectiveness Project" relate to the other parts of this section. The roles of the "Combined Effectiveness Indicator" and the Process Cycle for Social Justice are not specified.

<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
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**(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

This section makes excellent observations on the importance of communication among the various stakeholders, and it is clear that the applicant will use a rich mixture of channels and directions (top-down, bottom-up, sideways) to promote ongoing open communication and engagement among parents, students, teachers, principals, and central office administrators. These communications will be both formal and informal -- e.g. through "community meetings, parent centers, school surveys and casual conversation."

However, the applicant has not given much detail about the schedules or frequencies of these surveys and community meetings: the personnel responsible for planning the meetings, or creating the surveys, and so on.

<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
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**(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant has provided this information in detail, including specific rationales for deeming the measures ambitious and yet achievable. IUSD cites specific details about how the district will review the measures used, and how it will improve the measures if they are found to be ineffective in gauging progress. For example, one of the measures is the number of students retained in grade, particularly among the Hispanic population. The goal is a 5% annual decrease. This is to be accomplished by measuring student growth every 3 months and making reports on the individual student level within one business day through the Data Director system. This information, in turn, will allow teachers to make instructional interventions as appropriate, thereby reducing the number of students who are falling behind and in danger of facing retention. The central office will review the data and instructional practices periodically, and will adjust them as needed with input from the collective bargaining unit and from outside evaluators.

Some of the tables that show goals for the four years of the grant, plus the post-grant goals, are very difficult to decipher, mostly because the columns are so narrow that some of the headings are unreadable.

<b>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
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**(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant says that an evaluation will be carried out by an independent third party professional evaluator under a separate contract. The evaluator will look at the implementation of all activities supported by the grant, and will provide formative evaluations as well as a summative evaluation at the end of the grant period. Information will come from the DataDirector system, satisfaction surveys, test results, and self-reports from students and teachers, as well as from instruments designed by the independent contractor. There will be monthly formative reports, annual progress reports, and a final summative report at the end. In particular, the cost-effectiveness of the AVID professional development program will be examined. All of this seems reasonable and appropriate.

The applicant does not say who this professional evaluator is, nor does it describe the specific qualifications it seeks. Instead, the applicant apparently interprets this criterion to be looking at how IUSD will cooperate with an evaluator at the national level, chosen by ED, that will be examining the success of RTT-D program as a whole. Thus there is no high-quality plan in place for IUSD to evaluate its own project.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>

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

The applicant has presented a budget with good detail, with adequate explanations for most of the individual expenditures. One-time vs. ongoing operational costs are delineated. For example, under AVID, the budget lists separate costs for the AVID library, the binders for AVID classrooms, the supplies, books and instructional material, all with brief explanations of what the items are and an indication of whether each item is a one-time acquisition or an ongoing operational cost.

However, it is not clear how the two contractors will be chosen (one for evaluation and the other for data collection), nor

where the budget figures come from for the contractors. Each of them represents more than 10% of the total budget, a substantial amount that requires additional explanation. Surprisingly, the costs for these two contractors are exactly the same for each year of the grant, but there is no explanation for this similarity.

No other sources of funds will be used to support the project.

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

**10**

**8**

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

The applicant presents thorough discussion of where funds will come from to sustain the project. Some of it comes from an increased "parcel tax", which requires 2/3 of the district voters to approve. The applicant is confident that the voters will approve the new tax once they see how much IUSD has improved, but there is no discussion of how likely it is that voter approval will be forthcoming. If the parcel tax is approved, it will provide about \$3.6 million per year, which is a large part of the estimated budget for sustaining the project beyond the grant period. On the other hand, it is not clear what will happen if these funds do not in fact materialize.

A second part of the funds for sustaining the goals will come from increased revenue from the state as a result of more students moving into IUSD (with a higher attendance rate as well). The third part of the funds will come from savings from using solar energy in partnership with commercial company (Chevron).

These three sources will yield sufficient funds (more than \$4 million per year) to pay for the extended learning times in 340 classrooms, which is the only item that the applicant will need to continue beyond the grant. The cost-effectiveness of that extended learning time will have been assessed by the independent evaluator.

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

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

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant describes roughly eight agencies and a dozen different organizations that IUSD collaborates with in providing additional resources for participating students. The most important of these is the AVID program, which is described in more detail in the Appendix. AVID's role is central to the entire project and has been incorporated into earlier parts of the application.

The applicant also lists five areas of interest that are closely aligned with the project's overall goals. Through its partnership with the AVID group, IUSD will track indicators toward the desired results in these five categories. The population-level desired results themselves seem reasonable and appropriate, and the performance goals are achievable though ambitious.

The applicant's description of how parent and families will be engaged in decision-making about ways to improve results over time is somewhat less satisfactory, however. There is no detail about how parents are going to be involved in addressing student, family or school needs.

**Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments**

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

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

This section is very good throughout. The applicant has addressed all components of this criterion. In particular, the applicant has proposed to build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching. The plan is based on an expansion and continuous refinement of their existing work in three low-performing

schools. The emphases on (a) professional development, (b) personalizing instruction so that students are treated individually and appropriately to their own needs, (c) curriculum (particularly Common Core curriculum that is aligned with the goal of college- and career-ready graduation requirements), and (d) school-wide positive behavioral support are all consonant with the aims of the Race to the Top-District competition. Further, the application gives specific attention to increasing the effectiveness of teachers and expanding student access to effective educators; closing achievement gaps across income and racial groups, and increasing high school graduation rates.

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>162</b>
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## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

Application #0142CA-3 for Inglewood Unified School District

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

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

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

The applicant presents a clear and comprehensive vision for reform, which draws upon the success of initiatives implemented at persistently underachieving schools in the district. The vision is thorough and encompasses four major areas of teaching and learning (i.e., student learning, teacher knowledge and skills, content, and student engagement and personalization) with the goal of addressing these areas by applying strategies they believe are critical to the proposed changes. These strategies include the collection and use of data; instructional planning and delivery; connecting behavior and academic performance; professional development; and internal systems of accountability. In addition to building on work in the core educational assurance area of turning around the lowest performing schools, the applicant relies on work accomplished in the other three educational assurance areas (i.e., adopting standards and assessments; building data systems to facilitate student growth and success; and recruiting, developing, rewarding and retaining effective teachers and principals) to help shape their vision of reform.

The applicant's vision identifies specific tasks and processes they believe will accelerate student achievement, deepen student learning, and increase equity through personalized support for students. Critical to the applicant's reform vision is the development of a renewed learning culture as articulated in the applicant's statement of beliefs. This revised understanding of the learning environment will be shared by students, educators, families, and other stakeholders, and will serve as an overarching feature of the district's classrooms.

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

The applicant describes the process that led to inclusion of all district schools in reform efforts, even though there are schools within the district with persistently low achieving school status as well as schools under corrective action. The district moved from a focus solely on improving low achieving schools, where it will continue to channel attention and resources, to the decision to implement change that would facilitate their vision to bring about change throughout the district that would impact all teachers and learners. All 18 schools in the district will participate in the grant activities. The applicant includes a detailed chart that lists the names of each school, the total number of applicants from each school, the number of participating educators, and demographic student data as required by criterion A (2).

<b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Translating reform efforts at low performing schools into meaningful changes throughout the district is central to the applicant's reform agenda. The applicant presents a high quality plan for district-wide change that rests on their ability to implement strategies identified in their vision (i.e., collection and use of data; instructional planning and delivery; connecting behavior and academic performance; professional development; and internal systems of accountability). These strategies serve as an organizing framework for the five key goals, related activities, rationale for activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties that make up a thorough plan for district-wide reform and change.</p>		
<b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>
<p><b>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant sets ambitious goals for students at or above proficiency in math and English Language Arts at a rate of 13% annually, which exceeds the rate established by the state (10% annually).</p> <p>The projected growth in performance, presented by grade level both overall and by subgroups, is ambitious. The applicant also presents reasonable and ambitious goals for reducing the achievement gap, although the gap increases for one subgroup in reading with no explanation from the applicant as why they anticipate this occurring. A goal of a 100% graduation rate overall and for all students except English Language Learners is highly ambitious.</p> <p>The subgroups used to set performance and reduction in achievement gap goals are different—i.e., achievement subgroups include White students, English Language Learners, non-tested students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students. The achievement gap reductions are presented based on ethnicity. It is difficult to determine if the applicant has presented achievable performance projections that clearly reflect the performance of district students, given the confusion that emerges when annual performance is based on aggregate performance of different student group categories. Given the presentation of performance data, it is unclear how the applicant will use trend data to determine how ethnic minority students are progressing on an annual basis, and the extent to which the applicant is realizing improved outcomes for these students.</p>		

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

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>
<p><b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant provides evidence of a clear record of success over the past four year in improving student learning and achievement, as indicated by a 6 % increase in the number of students at or above proficiency in English Language Arts overall. Increases occurred among socioeconomically disadvantaged students (6.8%), African American students (3.7%), Hispanic students (8.5%) and student will disabilities (10. 4%). These performance levels provide evidence that the applicant has a positive record of reducing the achievement gap.</p> <p>The applicant reports that performance in its lowest-achieving schools is beginning to improve, but does not provide an explanation as to the nature of the reforms that have been responsible for the upward trend in student performance.</p> <p>A sufficient process exists for educators, parents, and students to access student performance data. Educators are able to access student performance data through the districts software program that allows them to plan for learning based on student individual and group needs. Parents access student performance data from face-to-face meetings with educators, through a parent portal on the district's student information system, or through the state online DataQuest system. Students primarily access performance data from teachers.</p>		
<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
<p><b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant states that personnel salaries for school level instructional and support staff, and non-personnel school expenditures are available in their School Accountability Report Card. No evidence is available to support this statement.</p>		

<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>
<p><b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant is currently being lead by a state appointed trustee and will remain so until the district demonstrates adequate fiscal systems and controls. While the current leader is supportive of the district's reform agenda, no evidence is presented to suggest that the district has sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in the applicant's proposal. The applicant is currently in the last year of a LEA Plan through the state that required a needs assessment, and goals and strategies be developed to address five state mandated performance goals. While three of the five performance measures can be aligned with the applicant's stated vision for reform, it is unclear whether or not the applicant has sufficient autonomy to implement a reform agenda, once the plan for the state mandated performance measures is complete.</p>		
<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>
<p><b>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant provides a description of the process used to include students, families, educators, and other stakeholders in meaningful engagement in development of the reform process. Most of the engagement however appears to have focused on the intervention processes for the low performing schools, and not the comprehensive reform effort presented in this application. As a result, stakeholder engagement in the comprehensive reform effort presented here is unclear.</p> <p>While the applicant includes a limited number of letters in support of the grant effort, letters from the mayor of the city, educational organizations, business leaders, a post secondary institution, and an administrator are presented. The application does not include letters of support from teachers, parents, and students. The applicant reports that the president of the teacher's organization reviewed the application, and signed the application assurances page as an indication of support. The application however does not include a letter from the president explicitly noting his support.</p>		

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

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant discusses an admirable array of learning-related activities and resources that are meant to facilitate and enhance personalized learning environments for improved teaching and learning. For example, students will have opportunities to discuss their career interests with career counselors; they are able to take AP classes and enroll in community college courses; and they are able to be involved in internships. The activities however are without sufficient structure to constitute a high quality plan.</p> <p>A set of articulated goals to focus the activities around a common set of objectives is lacking. In most instances, the applicant does not provide a rationale for the activities, or a timeline for their implementation. The applicant does not articulate anticipated outcomes for the activities listed. In some instances the applicant discusses what teachers and/or students will be expected, encouraged, or have opportunities do, with no way of ensuring that the activities are actually taking place for all students at all participating schools. The lack of the organizing elements of a high quality plan makes it difficult for the applicant to ensure that all participating students will be exposed to an approach to learning that supports their learning needs as they pursue a rigorous course of learning.</p>		
<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant presents activities that are currently operating in the district as well as a few that are planned for in the future, and all are intended to respond to indicators listed under the C (2) Teaching and Leading criterion. Teachers have been exposed to AVID strategies; engaged in professional development focused on how to support students as active learners; and have been provided access to the DataDirector system, for example.</p>		

The activities however do not constitute a high-quality plan with the organizing elements of a set of key goals, rationale for activities, timelines, deliverables and parties responsible for ensuring the activities are implemented and/or monitored. The lack of these elements makes it difficult to see how the applicant envisions the activities listed as part of a cohesive approach to teaching and leading where all activities work together to improve teaching and learning.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Support and services needed by schools to implement and maintain reform efforts will be coordinated by the District Turn Around Office, which was originally organized to work with the district's low performing schools. Personnel in this office will expand their role beyond a focus on turnaround schools in order to coordinate support and services meant to facilitate reform to all schools in the district. It is unclear however whether or not the applicant plans to evaluate the need for increased personnel with increased responsibilities of this office.</p> <p>The applicant presents strong evidence that school leadership teams at district schools have sufficient flexibility and autonomy over factors that facilitate personalize learning. For example, leadership teams can determine whether or not to adopt the district's expanded school day, based on school needs; individual schools develops their Single Plan for Student Achievement based on analysis of schools needs; and each school has control over school-level budgets.</p> <p>The applicant's processes for ensuring that students are able to advance based on their mastery seems adequate, as does the list of ways students can show mastery. Their decision to adopt AVID seems appropriate for ensuring that curriculum and instruction is adaptable based on students' need.</p> <p>While the applicant describes polices, practices, and rules to support implementation of their reform agenda, the lack of a high-quality plan makes it difficult to know whether or not the policies and infrastructure discussed are sufficiently comprehensive to support the applicant's overall reform plan.</p>		
<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
<p><b>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant details an impressive list of services to students, parents, and educators in order to ensure that the necessary tools and other learning resources are available to support implementation of the applicant's plan. Parents, students and educators have access to and technical assistance for working with technology-based information (e.g., grades, websites with support information, homework websites) that supports personalized learning. For example, parents are able to access their children's grades through an online parent portal. Teachers have access to student performance data through the district's DataDirector System. Students are able to access their grades, information about homework, and online tutoring.</p> <p>Students, parents, and teachers have support though non-technology based means as well. Parents are provided with information and training that encourages them to be advocates for their children's learning. Students receive support from college and career counselors for planning their futures, and teachers are provided curriculum and other materials that support development of personalized learning environments.</p> <p>The applicant however does not present a high-quality plan for infrastructure. As a result, it unclear whether or not the infrastructure components presented are sufficiently comprehensive to support the applicant's overall reform plan.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>
<p><b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant presents a plan for continuous improvement that focuses on student growth, technology, staffing, and professional development. Multiple measures are identified to collect data in each of these areas, and these seem</p>		

appropriate given the source of data. Clearly articulated goals for collecting data in these areas are missing, and it is unclear why the applicant selected these areas as particularly important to their continuous improvement efforts.

The applicant identifies the Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement Office as the district level body responsible for implementing and monitoring the continuous improvement process, although school level personnel are responsible for collecting student and teaching personnel data as they relate to the four continuous improvement areas. A reasonable timeline for collecting, analyzing and reporting data is included as part of the applicant's plan. The applicant details processes for publicly sharing data that includes posting information on the district website, online portals, and annual reports.

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

**5**

**3**

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

The applicant describes multiple methods of communication (e.g., horizontal, bottom-up, and internal to external communication) that will be used for ongoing communication with internal and external stakeholders. A number of sound processes will be used in conjunction with these methods (e.g., surveys, community meetings, responding to external organizations based on their input), which promise to keep stakeholders engaged with the applicant's reform efforts.

It is unclear however who will be responsible for managing the applicant's communication plan and when communication initiatives will be implemented. The applicant does not articulate clear key goals for the communication activities listed, or what they anticipate will be the outcomes of their communication and engagement efforts. The applicant's plan for communication and ongoing engagement is insufficient, due to the lack of attention to these elements of a high quality plan.

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

**5**

**5**

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

The applicant presents a comprehensive and clearly articulated set of performance measures to guide continuous improvement of their proposed plan. Sound rationales for selecting the measures are described, which are in keeping with the applicant's proposed plan and theory of action. Fourteen measures are provided both overall and for subgroups. Reasons for selecting the measures and targets generally are based on information from historical data, leading indicators for college/career readiness, information on what it means to be on track for college and career, and social-emotional well-being that influences overall achievement.

The applicant provides succinct and clear information on how each measure will provide rigorous and timely annual, and formative information, as well as how they will review and improve measures over time, if needed.

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

**5**

**5**

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

The applicant details a high quality plan for evaluating RTT-D funded activities. The evaluation plan includes goals, activities, and rationales for different types of evaluations (e.g., implementation, summative, and formative), and how information from the evaluation process will be included in various reports to show the effectiveness of RTT-D funded activities. Both internal and external individuals will be involved in the evaluation process.

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

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

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

The applicant presents a reasonable and sufficient budget to support implementation of the proposed reform plan. A clear and thoughtful rationale is presented for priorities and expenditures. The applicant has decided to focus use of funds on expansion of AVID and extended learning time related costs, since RTT-D will be the sole source of funding for their expansion goals. Use of funds in this way allows them to initiate their reform plans. The applicant identifies both one-time and ongoing costs.

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

**10**

**7**

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

The applicant intends to secure contributions from local constituents, foundations, and other grant and district funds, and state funds in order to sustain the reform project once RTT-D funds are no longer available. They also believe parents and educators will be able to sustain changes made once funding sources are no longer available. In some instances, components implemented to initiate change in the district will no longer be needed. For example, the applicant believes the extended day will no longer be needed as a result of accelerated learning. This may be an unrealistic assessment of an effective component of the reform effort, because it assumes that the conditions that contributed to the need for an extended day will be ameliorated within a four-year period.

The applicant presents a sufficient budget of anticipated costs and potential future funders for 3-4 years beyond RTT-D funding. While the applicant delineates how changes made possible as a result RTT-D funds can be sustained, a comprehensive high quality plan is not presented. The discussion of investments as a result of RTT-D funds and potential funding lacks a set of key goals to define the objectives of the applicant's sustainability efforts. There is no timeline to suggest when additional funds will be sought and at what point they will be available in order to ensure a smooth transition post RTT-D funding.

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

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

While the applicant lists numerous and rich possibilities for partnerships, they do not describe how they propose to integrate the public and private resources listed into a coherent and sustainable partnership to support their reform plan. There is no clear connection between the desired results anticipated from having a partnership and the list of agencies and organizations listed by the applicant. For example, the applicant appears to suggest that AVID will be the primary partner, however the connection to AVID as a partner and access to performing arts classes and activities in an afterschool program (one of the desired results of a partnership) is unclear. The applicant does not present an adequate explanation of how a partnership with AVID, one of the chosen partners, will facilitate the tracking of selected indicators that measure desired results.

The applicant's stated efforts to engage parents in both decision-making about solutions to improve results over time and in addressing student, family, and school needs is weak, and there is no support mentioned to help families address the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of students.

Since all students will benefit from a partnership with outside organizations, scale-up activities will not be necessary. The applicant presents a reasonable description of how teachers will be involved in assessing the needs of students. Targets set for performance measures over the life of RTT-D funding and one year beyond are also reasonable and appear to be achievable.

**Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments**

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

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant provides a clear and coherent vision for reform that builds on previous work in the core educational

assurance areas (i.e., recruiting, developing, and retaining effective teachers; adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace, and in the global economy; building data systems that measure student growth and success and inform educators with data about how they can improve instruction; and turning around lowest achievement schools). They have benefited from their experiences working with persistently underachieving schools in the district and intend to apply lessons learned to improve teaching and learning throughout the district.

The applicant has developed a thorough vision that focuses on four components/strategies meant to transform learning environments throughout the district: student learning, teacher knowledge and skills, content, and student engagement and personalization. Policies and practices exist to support development of learning environments where accelerated learning is possible and where deepened learning among students takes place through personalized support.

The applicant is focused on increasing the capacity of educators and parents to support the learning needs of all students, and in the process reduce inequities that might exist in achievement and/or graduation rates. The applicant presents a plan where ensuring that students are college and career ready at the end of their P-12 educational experience is an achievable goal.

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>145</b>
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