



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0214MS-1 for Jackson Public 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>Overall, they provide a comprehensive and coherent reform vision which includes their six plan goals, the four grant assurances, five district goals and seven specific projects. Generally, these are well aligned.</p> <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The vision includes clear and thorough descriptions of their plans for accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning and implementing personalized student supports</li> <li>Crit. A: Each of the four assurances are extremely well described in detail and is aligned with their reform vision.</li> <li>Criterion c, describe classroom experience, is well described because it presents their learner-centered model which places high priority on student and teacher reflection.</li> <li>Their vision is so comprehensive that it includes a description of how they see their district performing in 2016-17.</li> </ul> <p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is unclear how and whether all of the six project goals align with their five Building Stronger Schools, BSS, goals and plans (Appendix E). They describe the BSS information as their “blueprint” for success. For example, these 2 BSS goals are not clearly aligned with any of the Race grant goals. This raises some question about how coherent the reform vision is.</li> </ul>		
<b>(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Criterion c: detailed and thorough data tables are provided with all requirements in the notice and criterion.</li> <li>Five of their seven implementation projects are aligned with the six grant goals.</li> </ul> <p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They say all schools and students will participate, but 8 of the schools received a school-wide state grades of A or B and 21 schools are graded as C. It appears that there was no process used to select schools to participate (criterion a) and it is unclear if all district schools meet any participation definition.</li> <li>A.2: They describe a set of 7 major “projects”. Two of these (# 5, Communication/engagement and # 7, Transparency/Sustainability) are not clearly aligned with their six grant goals. This raises questions as to whether their all their implementation approaches support their proposal.</li> </ul>		
<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>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They present nearly all of the components of a high quality plan to scale up the reforms; their plan includes these effective strategies: employment of highly qualified personnel, increased collaboration with a university, replication of their successful middle school model, expanding partnerships, expanding professional learning communities, expanding their digital learning platform and increased family and community engagement. The plan supports their</li> </ul>		

six goals to achieving reform and change. Lead staff/parties responsible (Appx. A) and departments are identified and they have the appropriate qualifications.

- The plan has overall credibility and includes clear and specific objectives related to each goal. It is likely to achieve the stated goals because they are rigorous and doable.
- They do state that each of the Projects will also have deliverables

Weaknesses:

- The only Plan component that was not clear was deliverables, although several of the objectives (i.e. 4.4 implement state iCap model, etc.) appear to constitute deliverables even though this term was not visible.
- The Plan Timeline is only minimally addressed by brief and redundant annual codes: IO (Implement and Ongoing). No specificity is provided by calendar months or quarters.

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

Strengths:

- Crit. a: Detailed charts are provided with projected performance assessments for various areas, such as Reading/language arts, math and science and by sub-groups.
- Crit. a: Some of the projected annual performance goals seem ambitious, such as LEP and IEP math and Science (up 4-6 percent annually).
- Most of the annual achievement goals are achievable and ambitious because they are based on state ESEA targets.
- Crit. c: Graduation rate data is provided and achievable; because it is projected to increase annually only about 2%, it does not appear to be ambitious.

Weaknesses:

- Crit. b and d: Several of the data charts (college enrollment and most of the decreasing achievement gaps) lack data. Many entries are coded: NRTR (no results to report at the time of grant application).
- Crit. d: No college enrollment data was provided, not even baseline data.

In summary, they provided some ambitious and achievable goals, but in other cases had data missing, which makes this only a medium response to the criteria.

**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>4</b>

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

Strengths:

- Convincing school-wide performance data is included for some schools, such as one inner city elementary school significantly outperformed the state in reading, math and science and received a school rating of A. A middle and high school performance data was similar. However, none of these schools included their past four years of data.

Weaknesses:

- No record of success (i.e., student learning, lowest achieving schools) for the past 4 years was located, criteria a and b.
- Crit. c: Little information is provided about how student performance data has been made available to students, educators and parents to improve and inform participation.

In summary, the overall score is in the low-medium range because no data could be located for the past 4 years, as specified in this criterion.

<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>
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**(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

Strengths:

- They describe ways they intend to (in the future, if the grant is funded) become more transparent in a variety of investments and expenditures p. 76

Weaknesses:

- Current documentation and practice do not provide evidence that any of the four sub-criteria (a, b, c, and d) are available by school or at the school level, as called for in the criterion.

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

**10**

**10**

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

Strengths:

- Several appropriate and convincing examples of successful state conditions, policies and actions to support personalized learning environments are described, such as Common Core Standards, new personnel evaluation processes, and state plans to create a world-class education system

Weaknesses:

- None

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

**15**

**11**

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

Strengths:

- They include evidence that various stakeholders had opportunities to be engaged in the proposal development. This included feedback link on their web site, Appx.
- Results of a comprehensive Needs Assessment are also provided as evidence of input (Appx.)
- They also used other unique and innovative strategies to obtain input such as radio broadcasts.
- Crit. a.i: The Assoc. president signed the Application Assurance form approving the proposal.

Weaknesses:

- The needs assessment states that 1,155 individuals responded, but there is no analysis of what roles these included, Appx.)
- Crit. b: No support letters were located from students and few were from significant other local organizations. Their "Building Stronger Schools Together Plan (Appx)" states that one of their 5 major goals is to improve community engagement with key community groups, such as churches and other external entities.

Summary: This is in the high-medium range because they provide solid evidence of stakeholder engagement and support, with the exception of students and few more organizations.

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

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

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

Strengths:

- They propose several learning strategies and activities that are highly aligned with providing rigorous courses/programs for college and career ready outcomes, such as: AP, IB, Dual Enrollment, Career Pathways, ACT, AP STEM Access, Blended Learning, and Early College HS (crit. a.i, ii and v; b.i, ii, iii and c). These strategies are widely recognized as proven examples of rigorous courses of study.

- The requirement to have each student prepare their own student e-portfolio (learning plan) is a positive and effective way to meet crit. b.i, personalized instructional sequence.
- Crit. b.v, accommodations for high need students, was well documented, albeit in Criterion 2

Weaknesses:

- They do not have a clearly identified high quality plan that includes all of the specific components in the grant definition; these were not located: timeline, deliverables, and parties responsible
- Information related to crit. a.iv, diverse cultures/contexts, was sparse.
- They do not provide a solid rationale about how their K-6 Montessori programs is aligned with the college/careers emphasis (see criterion C1 introductory paragraph).

Summary: Overall, the score for this section is in the high range because of the quality of their proposed rigorous courses of study and student learning plans. The cited weaknesses result in a few points being deducted.

<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>
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**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

Strengths:

- The plan to use RtI, Response to Intervention, is a strength because this is a research-based and effective strategy (with several intervention tiers) because it is well-aligned with these grant criteria, such as: a.i (meeting each student's needs), a.ii (adapting content/instruction), and a.iii (frequent student progress measures)
- Most of their six proposed projects or strategies are highly aligned with this overall criterion, particularly blended learning, college/career readiness, and professional learning/growth. Meets criterion b (access to tools, data and resources for student progress), and c (quality training) and c.i (using evaluation system results).

Weaknesses:

- A high quality plan (to support college/career ready and increase the number of students who receive instruction for highly effective staff in math, science and special education (crit. d) was not fully completed. These plan components were not located: timeline, deliverables, and parties responsible

Summary: Overall, the criterion is scored in the high range because of the several strengths cited above. The lack of a complete high quality plan results in a few points being deducted.

**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>5</b>

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

Strengths:

- Crit.a: They have reorganized the central office to be more effective and to parallel the instructional needs of the LEA. As described, this should provide staff and organizational support and services to participating schools.
- Crit. c: Most of their technology plans are noteworthy because they should allow students opportunity to demonstrate individualized mastery and be customized to different student proficiency levels.

Weaknesses:

- Crit b: They do not provide evidence that they school leadership teams composed of the membership (and authority) as defined in the Notice.
- A high quality plan with all required components was lacking.
- Crit. e (resources/practices accessible for all students) emphasizes the availability of various learning resources, but does not clearly describe how or what instructional practices will be used for special populations. Moreover, the fact that the SEA required the LEA to reorganize to serve students with disabilities more effectively raises concerns about this structure and practices in this area.
- Crit. c and d. These are weak because they do not clearly state that credit will not be linked to seat time or that

students will have multiple ways and times to demonstrate mastery of standards.

Overall, the findings place the overall score in the low-medium range because of the several weaknesses and few strengths.

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

Note: it appears that D-2 is labeled as D 1 in the proposal

Strengths:

- Their technology plans clearly documents several appropriate components and steps to be taken to support personalized and blended learning and other planned strategies. It will be merged with the current on line district system, SAM. Crit. b and c and d
- They provide solid evidence that students, parents and educators will have appropriate technical supports (Crit. b) by hosting parent meetings throughout the year, implementing a parent notification system and providing immediate access to student progress and needs.
- The blended learning model will further be supported because the IT infrastructure is responsible for various key data provisions.Crit.a and c.

Weaknesses:

- None

Summary: The overall score for this section is the highest possible because no weaknesses were identified and because of the quality and thorough responses to the four sub-criteria. They provide convincing and comprehensive evidence.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>

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

Strengths:

- The Implementation Plan (in A.3) provides clear summary of goals and detailed objectives.
- They do state that they will revisit and review the alignment of curriculum, instruction and assessment systems and correct areas in need of improvement.

Weaknesses:

- They do not have a complete and thorough continuous improvement high quality plan that includes most of the required specific components. Specifically, they do not have a timeline, deliverables and responsible parties.
- In section/criterion A.3, there is a detailed Implementation Plan with six major goals and many specific objectives. These goals and objectives are not referenced in section E.1. The goals/objectives are the core of the project and their continuous improvement plan does not describe how they will monitor and measure their progress nor secure timely and regular feedback about their Race investments. Crit. E.1.

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

Strengths:

- It is noteworthy that the district Building Stronger Schools plan (Appendix) does cite “community engagement” as goal 5 and has some promising, briefly-described components, such as a communication audit, regular meetings with key stakeholders, creating feedback loops, meetings and feedback with external entities.

Weaknesses:

- A high quality plan is not provided.
- They do not describe specific actions for on-going communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders.

Summary: The overall score is in the low-medium range because a high quality communication and engagement plan was not located.

<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>
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**(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

Strengths:

- None

Weaknesses:

- For most performance measures, no targets are proposed for 2013 and any future years. A major weakness. The exception is grades 4-8, math and iCAP, which do have targets to 2017-18.
- They do not provide any rationale why their performance measures are ambitious.
- They do not provide clear rationale (crit. a)
- How they will review and improve measures over time (crit. c) appears to also be absent from the narrative.

Summary: The fact that most measures have no projected data is a major weakness. The insertion of NRTR (no results to report at this time) throughout nearly every table is extremely inadequate. Thus, the score is in the lowest range.

<b>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>
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**(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

Strengths:

- They state that a system will be implemented to evaluate the effectiveness of their grant investments by: gather data and evidence from multiple sources, conduct a comprehensive, research based improvement process and it will include a diagnostic component.

Weaknesses:

- A high quality plan is not provided.
- They intend to use AdvancED as their continuous improvement model, but little detail is provided about why this is appropriate and/or rigorous, as specified in the criterion.

Summary: They provide a positive intent to carry this out and identify a model (AdvancED), but insufficient details are presented that are expected in a high quality continuous improvement plan. Thus, the overall score is in the low range.

**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:**

Strengths:

- The budget includes excellent, detailed descriptions and rationales for their 7 major “projects”, crit. c.
- Most costs seem reasonable, crit. b.

Weaknesses:

- Crit.iii: There is little discussion in this section about funds that will be allocated for sustainability strategies.
- Crit. i: It appears that all project funds will be only from the federal grant funds requested. This would be strengthened if they projected some additional, external sources of funds

Summary: Because of the above combinations of strengths and weaknesses, the overall score is in the medium range.

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

**10**

**4**

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

Strengths:

- They intend to employ a national evaluator and they emphasize that their plan will be built around the stated goals and objectives in the Vision section. An expert evaluator is a strength because it should strengthen several of their weak criteria areas, such as continuous improvement, quality performance measures, stakeholder involvement and feedback and sustainability needs.

Weaknesses:

- A high quality sustainability plan is not provided. This is critical because it would better ensure that they will start to determine how and which of the projects can continue and expand in the post-grant period.
- They state that a detailed plan will be prepared within 100 days of the Race award. This plan is required as part of the proposal.

**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:**

Strengths:

- The possible partner organizations list is extensive and comprehensive.
- A few of the performance measures (crit. 6) are stated in clear and measurable outcomes, such as 100 % of graduates will enter college and achievement gaps will be eliminated. These are highly ambitious.
- Crit.5: They provide a sound description of how such partnerships will strengthen school staffs and have increased capacity to meet student needs.

Weaknesses:

- The description of planned activities says “will” several times; this gives the impression that most of these have not yet been planned or identified. The intent of this priority is that the applicant has formed the partnership and has sufficient details about how various required actions will be carried out (crit. 5) and integrate their services with education (crit. 4)
- Crit. 6: Most of the performance measures (population desired results) are stated very generally so it is difficult to determine whether they are ambitious or achievable. Examples: Eight simply say will improve or decrease without any specific outcome, such as improve by 90 percent.
- Crit 2 states identify not more than 10 desired results. They have sixteen listed.

**Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments**

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

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

Overall, their plans are comprehensive and coherent and, therefore met. The four assurance areas are clearly integrated in their seven major projects. These are aligned with the purpose of establishing personalized learning environments that improve student achievement and college-career readiness.

Total	210	126
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

### Application #0214MS-3 for Jackson Public 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>
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The district articulates a comprehensive and coherent reform vision. The district's vision is to attain equity and excellence in education through the use of student focused and holistic approaches that are based on the four core educational areas and the Board of Trustees blueprint for success entitled Building Stronger Schools Together. The district articulates its vision to create an assessment system that builds a pathway to college and career readiness for all students, create high-quality assessments that measure the full range of the CCSS, support educators in the classroom, make better use of technology in assessments and advance accountability at all levels. Clearly articulated is the need to improve educator effectiveness by recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals where they are most needed and turn around lowest achieving schools.</p> <p>The district articulates a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning and increasing equity through personalized student student support. Their goal is to create learner-centered environments with aligned curriculum and assessment system that provides a mastery of college and career readiness across the district where students at every level will have personalized learning experiences based on their need to obtain mastery in each core, content area, which will be monitored both by teachers and the focused instructional teams within each school.</p> <p>The applicant describes what the classroom experience will be like for students and teachers participating in personalized learning environments to support their vision. Whole child student supports to meet high expectations that encompass cognitive, emotional, home environment, motivation and real time responsiveness to student failures in a personalized learning classroom with effective teachers and principals where they are needed most will be the norm in classroom.</p> <p>The applicant articulates a comprehensive and coherent reform vision for this criteria.</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 applicant's approach to implementing its reform proposal will support high quality LEA level and school level implementation. The applicant will be supporting all children within the district schools from Pre-K through grade 12 while also emphasizing that SWD's, homeless students, migrant students and neglected and delinquent students will be afforded full supports. The applicant provides a complete list of the 60 schools that will participate in grant activities with grade levels served by each school and other application required data.</p> <p>The applicant provides the total number of participating students (29,495), participating students from low-income families, participating students who are high need students and participating educators. The district has a staggering high number of</p>		

participating high need students as well as a high percent of those students from low income families. Just over 89% of all students are from low income families indicated by eligibility for free or reduced price lunch subsidies.

The applicant has developed learning goals that are ambitious and hold high expectations for student performance that go beyond the minimum. These are enumerated for ELA, Science, Algebra, Biology, as well as improved instructional models and interventions for diverse learners.

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

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

The applicant provides for a quality plan in describing how the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district wide change. The applicant's model call for specific inputs, activities and outputs to reach their goal. Steps to support these actions include partnering with the College of Education of Jackson State University in the creation of the first laboratory school in the one of the most lowest performing middle schools in the district, state and nation. Clearly presented to support a high quality plan include short-term outcomes, intermediate outcomes and long term sustainable outcomes. The applicant also provides the reader with potential barriers to reform which they cite as poverty, inadequate preparation for college and limited career pathways.

In support of their reform efforts, the district will revise is current graduation requirements to reflect state adopted college and career pathway options and provide expanded advanced placement program, an International Baccalaureate Program, a Montessori Program for Pre-K-6, dual enrollment programs in community college and a Career Pathways to Success Program. The reform effort will be scaled up and include holding schools more accountable for addressing learning gaps and redesigning of practitioner preparation.

While the applicant cites relevant and specific application of a high quality plan and scaled up activities, it does not describe what will be different in how this reform proposal will implement and use programs listed above to actually bring about the desired outcomes. The plan provides for goals, but does not provide the timeline and the parties responsible for implementing activities associated with this reform effort.

The score reflects missing components described above for a high quality plan for this criteria.

<b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
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**(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goals that are equal to or exceed State ESEA targets for LEA's. The applicant's annual goals meet and exceed the ESEA requirement for performance on summative assessments determined by the MS Department of Education. Target state assessment requirements for example set a high bench mark. For example baseline year for mathematics for IEP students has a base year of 40% and rises to 72% for 2017-18, and scores for ELA go from a baseline of 56.5% to 78.7% for all students.

Data is not provided to show goals set for decreasing achievement gaps for all subsets of students including those for college enrollment. In support of decreasing achievement gaps, the applicant does provide data with effective teachers, baseline(s) and goals for the four project years. Included in this data is the number of National Board Certified Teachers at grade and subject levels.

The applicant's vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goal but needed to include these for all subsets of students.

**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>5</b>
<p><b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant provides examples of four schools within the inner city school district with 96% of its students receiving free or reduced lunch, that have achieved higher student learning outcomes. This data is provided for two elementary, one middle and one high school within the 60 schools in the district. Scores from George Elementary School dramatically surpass the state norms for language arts, mathematics and science. The district does not provide the school components for the high achieving schools that make them a standout from the rest of the district's schools and why these elements of effective schools were not pushed. The applicant does not discuss the resources, leadership, teacher element, parent involvement or other components of what makes these few schools achieve at such high levels and how these elements will be transferred to improve student learning outcomes within the district.</p> <p>The district provides information on what it will do with RTTT funding in the areas of teaching leadership, class instruction, and curriculum and assessment to increase student learning and performance, but does not provide a clear record of success in the past four years or demonstrated evidence of achieving ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest achieving schools.</p> <p>The district has not provided a description, charts or graphs, raw student data and other evidence that demonstrates the applicant's ability to improve student learning, achieve ambitious and significant reforms and make student performance data available to parents, educators and students. The district does provide components such as small class size (25) for most classes, an improved teacher evaluation plan and compensation plan to attract staff and the incorporation of technology to identify achievement gaps.</p> <p>The score reflects the applicant not providing details to support this criteria as described above.</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 by their own admission at this time does not provide for a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices and investments, but does plan to collaborate with an educational body or agency in the future that will provide education supports to the district to increase its fiscal and operational transparency. The applicant indicates that at this time individuals seeking salaries at the school level as well as remuneration for non instructional personnel and schools' administrations as well as pupil support, would have to file an open records request. School budgets with broad categories such as total salaries, instructional expenses and per pupil expenditures are available in the public budget document upon request.</p> <p>The district's plan to increase transparency is evolving and does not demonstrate a clear track record of success at this time.</p> <p>The score above reflects the information that is not provided as part of this criteria.</p>		
<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The district provides some details to support successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in the applicant's proposal. There is mention by the applicant that the State of Mississippi Department of Education has adopted CCSS as college ready and career ready standards in the areas of Mathematics, ELA and Literacy in History and Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects in 2010. The district lists under the blueprint for Building Stronger Schools Together a vision for reform, but does not provide parallel state laws or regulations that may support this effort.</p> <p>The applicant has not cited sufficient and particular statutes, laws, regulations, resolutions that promote sufficient autonomy under State legal and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in this proposal. The score reflects the lack of sufficient responses to this criteria.</p>		
<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant demonstrates stakeholder engagement opportunities throughout the development of the proposal. For a district the size of the applicant's, there does not appear to be letters of support and engagement from a range of</p>		

community based organizations, the business community and early learning programs to name a few categories of stakeholders not represented.

Key in the initiation of this proposal was a development team spearheaded by the Superintendent of Schools. A web page for RTTT-District Proposal created an online feedback form and an email account to enable multiple stakeholders within the education community and outreach to community and parents. Dissemination of the concept was made by PowerPoint broadcast on local television stations. There is evidence of letters of support from stakeholders listed in the criteria including institutions of higher learning. The district reached out to teachers through the MS Association of Educators and at least 70% of educators support the proposal. An outcome of the outreach, were specific changes that were incorporated which included the need for extended learning activities, staff accountability issues and the need for a district advisory council with multiple representation of stakeholders.

The district has provided evidence of stakeholder engagement, but lacks involvement from a wide range of the business community, early learning programs, civil rights groups and community based organizations that currently provide direct service to the catchment area.

The score reflects the applicant's limited range of stakeholder engagement in the development of this proposal.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>8</b>

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

The applicant provides elements of a high quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment to provide for all students to graduate college and be career ready. These include, according to the applicant, AP courses, IB program, Montessori Program, Dual Enrollment Program and Career Pathways to Success Program, ACT Quality Core and AP STEM Access Program. These programs are examples of personalizing student learning opportunities, but do not speak to the district's ability to raise students' academic readiness levels to participate in these accelerated options as well as the district's ability to implement this instructional approach to these programs as they claim for grades 3-12.

With large percentages of students within the school district not graduating high school, coupled with less than satisfactory ratings for almost half of their district schools (Ratings of D and F) by the State, the applicant has not illustrated the capacity to structure programs and learning to implement successful personal learning options. Describing program such as IB to encourage personalized learning does not necessarily translate to the district's readiness to implement such programs with details that support the attributes of a high quality plan. This is true of initiating a gifted education program for grades 3-8, the first of its kind in the state, according to the applicant, raise questions about implementation that are not presented in the proposal with high quality plan components that are linked to college and career ready graduation requirements.

The applicant does not provide plan components that illustrate how student participants have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning or how students in a defined plan will master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communications, creativity and problem solving.

A high quality plan that provides specific details on activities to be taken, the timeline, the deliverables and the parties responsible for implementing the activities are not provided that enable the student to achieve his or her goals and ensure he or she can graduate on time and college and be career ready.

The applicant describes an RTI model that will be introduced to professional educators district wide to represent a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable the student to achieve her or learning goals through tool kits that contain a variety of programs including RTI, co-teaching and differentiated instruction. While these measures can be considered high quality instructional practices, the plan for actual implementation and the criteria for a high quality plan are not detailed that include activities to be taken, the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables and the parties responsible for the implementing the activities to achieve the outcomes.

The applicant provides seven key projects which they label, for example, blended learning and college career readiness as well as named assigned professionals to lead each project. While each component of each project lists activities or desired outcomes, the components of a high quality plan that should include time line and parties responsible as well as the actual deliverables are not described. For example: Ensuring that proven-successful, educational safety nets are

implemented to decrease the number of high school graduates needing remedial course work at the postsecondary level, is a component of the project, but without the specificity needed for a high quality plan. The district, regarding digital approach to learning, provides limited information in the form of reviewing and selecting digital learning content approaches to learning that include learning tools, materials and resources are displayed on an electronic device and shared electronically with other users, which does not constitute a high quality plan for this criteria.

Under the Blended Learning Project, the applicant desires to facilitate the exchange of information about e-Learning and e-Portfolios and ensuring optimal performance of the district's interoperable data system for data flow, but it does not list the goals, activities to be taken, the rationale for the activities, timelines and parties responsible for implementing the activities. For example, the applicant states the college and career readiness program to personalized learning will ensure students' e-Portfolios are monitored regularly by college and career readiness counselors, but does not contain the specific timeline and personnel to do the job. The applicant does not describe the specific mechanisms in place to provide training to students so they understand how to use tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage learning.

The applicant has not provided details that include a high quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the supports to graduate college and be career ready. The score reflects the applicant's requirement to provide information based on the criteria.

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

**20**

**10**

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

The applicant has not provided a high quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college and be career ready. The proposal, as the applicant asserts, will require schools to redesign and realign its curriculum and instruction to achieve improved student outcomes but omits key goals, activities to be taken, the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables and the parties responsible for implementing the activities. Statements such as: The lead teacher or principal of each school and all teachers must improve their actions to improve student students' actions, which in turn will lead to student achievement, is not supported with elements of a high quality planned as defined. The applicant does not provide information on how students will be provided with opportunities to engage in individual tasks in response to their academic needs, academic interests and optimal learning approaches through collaborative work and project based learning. The applicant does not include the components of a high quality plan that includes details related to frequently measuring student progress toward meeting outcomes.

To address the area of improving teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness via the evaluation systems, the applicant lists for example, to ensure that the teacher evaluation system is used for the continual improvement of instruction, for the identification and facilitation of professional growth and development needs and to inform personnel decisions. There is not a sense that personnel evaluation system outcomes are reflected in the proposal's reform vision to impact student achievement and learning. The same statements are repeated for the principal evaluation. A high quality plan includes a description of key goals, activities to be taken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables and the parties responsible for implementing the actives as specified within the criteria. This has not been provided for this criteria.

The responses of the applicant to the remaining C-2 items reflect global desired outcomes, as above, but do not provide a high quality plan that describes by using the tool, resource or concept they use as the product to produce desired results. The score reflects the need to provide the information requested within the criteria.

**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>5</b>
<p><b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant provides information on the restructuring of the district central office in terms of reorganizing to ensure more efficient performance and to parallel the needs of the district as well as conducting a personnel study to revise job descriptions to reflect the work done by the staff member. However, the applicant does not specifically detail the administrative and organizational patterns in place to provide support and services to all schools in the district to facilitate outcomes for this project.</p> <p>Site councils for each school and a school health council that ensures that community values are instituted in each of the district's schools appear to be in place. The applicant refers to a site based management board policy in the development of their school based management efforts and the formation of cite councils in each school. They cite that this policy area is currently under review. The applicant has not provided evidence that participating schools have sufficient flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school schedules, school personnel decision making and school level budgets.</p> <p>The applicant has not provided evidence there is a mechanism in place district wide that affords students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic. The district addresses the issue that in their new environment, students will take ownership of their learning using resources aligned with their needs and interests, but does not specifically address the criteria. The applicant does not provide for how students will have the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways. The applicant does not illustrate that there is learning resources and instructional practices that are part of their plan that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students including students with disabilities and English Learners. SWD should alreadybe afforded an IEP based on student need in terms of the availability of assistive technology to benefit from their current special education program.</p> <p>The applicant does not provide evidence of a high quality plan and its components by definition that support project implementation. The score reflects the applicant's need to provide the information requested for the criteria.</p>		
<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>
<p><b>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The district illustrates a commitment to improving access regardless of income to tools and other learning resources both in and out of school. They plan to increase the computer ratio in each school to 1:4 students, institute a bring your own device policy, and allow education related faith based and community based centers to become WiFi hot spots during evenings, weekends and extended school break. They also mention instituting a 1:1 technology initiative to enable each students to benefit form personalized learning opportunities, but do not provide specifics on how that would implemented. Technical support, as stated by the applicant, will be provided to teachers, counselors, principals, and district leadership team members who will become turnkey trainers to then provide training and technical assistance to students, parents and community partners. Online video tutorials will also be available.</p> <p>The applicant indicates that the SAM system provides parents with student data, but it does not explain how parents and students can export their information in an open data format and to use the data in other electronic learning systems. The applicant does not describe to the extent known, what proportion of families have access to computers in their homes. The applicant does not provide information on interoperable data systems that will provide human resource data, budget data and instructional improvement data a described in the criteria.</p> <p>The applicant does not provide information on a high quality plan to support project implementation through infrastructure that supports every educator and student with the support and resources where they are needed. The score reflects the above issues of concern.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>
<p><b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Responding to this component, the applicant has taken its seven Project topics presented early on and responded to how they will provide for a continuous improvement process with timely and regular feedback on progress, by describing the components of each project title such as Transparency and Sustainability and Communication and Engagement. The district provides information on the project topic, but it does not reflect how adjustments and revisions will be made, nor does the applicant have a clear and high quality approach to continually improve its plans. While the district indicates that it will benefit from a highly efficient and streamlined decision making strategy that is consistent and responsive to changes in the plan, it does not describe the plan with components that include activities to be taken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline and the parties responsible for the implementing the activities. The applicant does not discuss how it will publically share information on the quality of its investments funded by RTTT, although it mentions the importance parents have placed on this issue.</p> <p>The applicant has not provided a high quality plan for this subset and the score reflects the gaps in responding to the criteria.</p>		
<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>
<p><b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant does not describe components of their plan for ongoing communication with internal and external stakeholders and therefore cannot be considered a high quality plan as defined by the criteria. The applicant, instead, describes the programs and services that will be provided as part of the project with statements such as :The district will personalize clearing by expanding and strengthening partnerships with family, school and community to improve identification of early waning signs of dropping out. The actual activities involved in ongoing communication formats and vehicles are not detailed.</p> <p>The applicant has not provided the components of a high quality plan for this criteria and the score reflects the need to describe the activities related to this component.</p>		
<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>
<p><b>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant has not provided ambitious yet achievable measures overall by mandated subgroup with annual targets for required and applicant prepared performance measures as requested by this criteria. The applicant used the term NRTR to mean that there were no results to report at the time of submission of this application. The applicant may not have realized that they were to include, if the state has not set the bar for future years, their locally proposed increases in performance for the categories they have included. The district only reported scores for a baseline year and no further data is reported for four project years.</p> <p>The score reflects the need to provide the information requested to meet the criteria for this section.</p>		
<b>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>
<p><b>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>This section requests that the applicant evaluate the effectiveness of investments in funds for professional development and activities that employ technology for example. The applicant does not provide information on evaluating the effectiveness of its investments. The applicant provides an Improvement Life Cycle diagram which has arrows and lists the following: Analyze Data, Set Goals, Plan, Implement and Evaluate, but there is no plan that specifically evaluates the effectiveness of the project's investments.</p> <p>The score reflects the responses provided for this criteria and the need to respond to the effectiveness of investments in funds for the project.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>
<p><b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant's budget identifies the total amount of all funds that will support the project. The applicant does not identify the actual funding source from funds from other than RTTT. This amount is provided as a total dollar figure for the four years of \$18,031,576, which includes the following sources, but without a dollar amount attached to each source, and listed as not limited to ESEA, Title I, exceptional education and grant funds expressly designated to reimburse training and educational expenses and pay salary incentives and salary supplements to its employees. Funds that will be used for one time investments versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs are not described. There is no specific evidence and detail provided within that supports long term sustainability of the personalized learning environment being established for this project. This reviewer cannot make a determination if the budget is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the proposal. The deployment of grant staff and other resources within the entire district and school levels that would explain personnel and resource distribution among and between 60 schools for project implementation are not detailed.</p> <p>The score reflects the need for the applicant to provide the information requested within this criteria.</p>		
<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>
<p><b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant has not provided a high quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. There is no detail provided that shows resource support from State and Local Government leaders, and how the applicant will evaluate the effectiveness of past investments as well as an estimated budget for three years after funding. Funds from other sources and community agencies or private sources are not listed in support to continue the project beyond grant funding. The plan does not include activities to be taken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables and the parties responsible for implementing the activities associated with a plan for sustainability after the term of the grant for this project.</p> <p>The score reflects the missing components in response to this criteria.</p>		

## Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>
<p><b>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>This competitive preference calls for the description of a coherent and sustainable partnership to support the plan described for Absolute Priority 1 that it has actually formed with public or private organizations. The applicant in their own statement proposes to expand partnerships that will provide crisis intervention, conduct a needs assessment and identify partnerships based on the needs assessment results. A sustainable partnership has not been documented by the applicant at this juncture. The work plan for community partnership, according to the applicant, will be a work in progress largely developed by the project director. The applicant does list reform partners and school programs in terms of what they do and how the applicant wants to strengthen their relationship with them but it is not directly detailed or related to personalized learning and Absolute Priority 1.</p> <p>The applicant provides 16 population levels desired results for students in the LEA that align with and support the applicants broader RTTT District Proposal and included in these are both educational results and family supports.</p> <p>The applicant does not provide narrative support for this section from number (3) moving forward through (6) which are integral components of this criteria section.</p> <p>The applicant has not demonstrated that they have met this competitive preference priority to integrate public and private resources in a partnership designed to augment the schools' resources by providing additional student and family supports. The score reflects the district's response to the particular criteria requested in this section.</p>		

### Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>		<b>Not Met</b>
<p><b>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant provides text on the components of personalized learning and the progressive movement it wishes to see for their vision to create a better school system. The applicant does not however provide a plan for implementation of personalized learning in an urban district with 60 or more schools where a very high rate of schools are low performing as rated by their State Education Department. The district does not provide a systematic plan on how they will significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools and support for students and educators that are aligned with college and career ready standards and standards. The applicant has also not shown how they will increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers. The specific expectations for student growth beyond the baseline year were not provided, yet required, to illustrate the project's goal of meeting or exceeding the state's academic achievement goals for the target population population. The district has not met the requirement for Absolute Priority 1 as needed in this application.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>102</b>



## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

Application #0214MS-2 for Jackson Public 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>
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant provides a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that builds on its work in the core four core assurance areas in order to implement a personalized learning environment. The vision seeks to change classroom practice and models from school success to student success. By addressing the barriers to learning, the plan is able to confront the systemic challenges that have persisted. The goals to accelerate student achievement in order to decrease the persistence existing achievement gap, the plan creates a foundation grounded in effective teaching and student learning. This model will allow reform efforts to be brought to scale ensuring students in low performing schools and classrooms have access to multiple learning opportunities based on their needs and ensure access to academic equity and excellence through personalized learning environments. The plan emphasizes the shift from creating successful schools to successful students, which lead to improved student achievement and decreased achievement gaps. By shifting the focus from school performance to student performance, students in this urban school district face will have multiple opportunities for success.</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 applicant has presented a reform proposal that will support high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All schools and teachers are participating.</li> <li>• 29,495 students from grades PreK to 12 and percentage of students will participate.</li> <li>• 27,075 students are low-income; 25,506 students are identified as high-need.</li> </ul>		

- This effort ensures that 3 high schools are provided with support and programs to graduate students who are college- and career-ready.

This approach ensures that all participating students are afforded access to personalized learning environments that will improve student achievement and decrease achievement gaps. Overall, the applicant has demonstrated their approach to implementing its reform proposal will support high-quality LEA-level and school level implementation.

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

**10**

**3**

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

The applicant plans to expand successful reforms throughout all district schools so reforms will eventually be scaled up district-wide. The reforms are designed to directly impact learning outcomes by providing students with multiple opportunities to graduate high school college- and career-ready. The district's framework for change is intended to result in meaningful reform and successful students, teachers and leaders. Although, the applicant's plan includes a framework for change as a result of a collaboration between the school district and Jackson state University to form the first laboratory school in the area, the plan does not discuss how this instructional model will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform beyond the participating schools.

Overall, the extent to which the applicant's LEA-wide reform and change is of a high quality plan has been satisfied because the applicant did not include the key goals for the scaled plan, the activities that will be implemented to support the goals, the rationale for the proposal, a timeline, deliverables and parties responsible, resulting in a low score.

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

**10**

**8**

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

The applicant's LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes is achievable. The district's targets are ambitious and go beyond the state's performance standards. The methodology being used to determine student performance is based on state accountability index that measures student achievement. The applicant provides a comprehensive chart on the students' summative assessments for proficiency status and growth for student's achievement

The chart includes baselines and goals. The chart shows their goals of improvement for all students' learning performance, which demonstrate the goals are ambitious and achievable. The applicant proposes a goal of increasing the overall achievement objectives for mathematics by 16% over five years. and for RLA by 19% over five years. The annual graduation rate goal (2% increase each year) . Although the applicant plan includes plans to increase college enrollment, the proposal lacks data for enrollment rates. Overall, the extent to which the applicant has submitted a plan whose vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity has demonstrated by the ambitious yet achievable goals to improve student learning and performance.

**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>8</b>

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

The applicant's narrative presents a structured and sound approach for improving student learning outcomes and closing the achievement gap. The district recognizes that in order to have meaningful reform the must be an LEA-wide focus on the essential elements that lead to sustained improvement. Some of these changes have been implemented in some schools. The narrative does demonstrate the district's ability to take the steps necessary to advance and increase equity in learning and teaching, for example:

- Fifty percent of teachers in the district have been teaching less than five years and are amenable to changes in the classroom environment
- Six schools in the district have been recognized for earning the designation as being either High Progress, High Performing or Distinguished for exceptional student performance and making strides in closing the achievement gap.
- Effective teaching leadership leads to increased student achievement when teachers are able to personalize learning experiences for students
- Class size ratio less than 25:1 allows for improved student outcomes

- Improved curriculum and assessment improvements have been put in place

The applicant's narrative supports and demonstrates quality efforts to advance and increase equity, the proposal does not provide details to demonstrate a clear track record for the past four years. Although, the applicant provides evidence to demonstrate how they are meeting the criteria, the proposal lacks the additional data to support how the reforms have impacted schools over the past four years to demonstrate their ability to advance student learning, resulting in a high-low score.

<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:**

The applicant's narrative demonstrates transparency by having information on the Mississippi Department of Education website as well as on the district website and the District's website.

District website contains:

- Financial information on school budget that contain pupil, personnel and non-personnel expenditures
- Federal/state/local grant funding
- Policies and procedures, organizational charts and staffing categories
- All school board meeting agendas and minutes

The applicant has demonstrated a high level of transparent in LEA processes, practices and investments.

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

The applicant's proposal demonstrates sufficient autonomy and successful conditions to ensure a successful implementation of a personalized learning environment. The state has provided a flexibility waiver to school districts, that will enable them to:

- Adoption of college- and career-ready standards
- Develop and administer statewide high-quality assessments that measure student and school growth
- Increase student access to high-quality teachers and building leadership
- Schools will be given flexibility to design and implement reform plans

The applicant context for implementation is in-line with four core educational assurances and implementation of personalized learning environments.

<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>
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**(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant demonstrates some evidence that key stakeholder support was received during this proposal process. The engagement process consisted of Public Service Announcements to local television and radio stations, Partnering with Parents for Public School, and Jackson Federation of Teachers, and feedback from students, parents, principals, and the community was used to revise the proposal.

The applicant mentions that over 35 partners were contacted for letters of support, however, less than 1/3 responded by the submission of this proposal, and 70% of educators responded by the submission deadline, the applicant received a total of eleven letters from key stakeholders expressing their support for student's personalized learning environments in this district. Although, the applicant mentions parent and student engagement in the revision of the proposal the proposal, the applicant did not provide documentation from students and families in participating schools to demonstrate their level of engagement during the development of this proposal and how their feedback was used to revise this proposal.

Additionally, the proposal is lacking letters of support from critical stakeholder groups, including students, parents, business community, and community-based organizations. Overall, in spite of the documentation provided regarding the involvement of teachers and administrators, the applicant has not provided adequate evidence to demonstrate meaningful engagement with all key stakeholders who will be impacted by this proposal, resulting in a low score.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>
<p><b>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant has a high quality plan as it focuses on a learning centered approach that includes quality strategies to improve teaching and learning in a highly personalized learning environment. This approach allows students to be involved in a progress cycle that allows them to: monitor their progress, adjust the plan that best fits to their learning pathway, and obtain content mastery that will allow them to reach their post-secondary and career goals. Many of projects proposed in this plan will provide students who a large window of opportunity to deepen their learning experiences that will prepare them for college and career readiness by providing them with targeted and relevant approaches to learning in order to prepare them to become college and career ready.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students involvement in learning plan begins early so that students and their parents are actively engaged in the learning process from grades PreK to 12.</li> <li>• Revising graduation requirements to reflect state adopted college and career options.</li> <li>• Offering dropouts an opportunity to reconnect to traditional classes while attending community college courses that focus on workforce development.</li> <li>• Implementing personalized learning environments with multiple learning options that challenge, support and prepare students to be college- and career-ready.</li> <li>• Create an AP STEM program in order to Increase participation in AP courses in which minorities are traditionally underrepresented. For example, African-American and female students lag behind their counterparts in AP courses and careers that involve math and science.</li> <li>• Multiple options to provide students with access to college level courses while in high school (e.g.. dual enrollment, Early College High School, IB program, and Advanced Placement)</li> <li>• Career Pathways will lead students to postsecondary certificate, industry-recognized certification, and postsecondary degree attainment.</li> <li>• Study the effectiveness of gifted education programs methods and techniques that can be scaled up for all students, and a focus on identifying students who have traditionally been excluded in gifted and talent education programs (e.g. English proficiency, individuals with disabilities, and individuals living under economically disadvantaged conditions).</li> <li>• Ongoing and regular feedback with students and parents to discuss academic progress ensures that students are deeply involved in this learner centered approach.</li> <li>• The plan does not provide a timeline that includes the deliverables from the proposed activities, and parties responsible.</li> </ul> <p>Although, the applicant's plan meets some of the criteria, the plan lacks detailed information and components of a high-quality plan, making it hard for the reviewer to assess the quality of the plan, resulting in a medium score.</p>		

<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>19</b>
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<p><b>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant's approach to teaching and learning is built on improving student outcomes through the creation of personalized learning environments. The role of teacher is to facilitate the learning for students to graduate college- and career-ready. The plan has seven projects that will be implemented in prepare and support highly effective teachers and principals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide all educators with high-quality professional development learning opportunities to build and improve capacity through workshops, conferences, institutes and job-embedded coaching.</li> <li>• Specialized professional learning opportunities and supports for teachers of learners identified as at risk learners (exceptional learners, English learners, homeless, migrant, neglected, other at-risk sub-groups)</li> <li>• Mandating system-wide training for all teachers, administrators and support personnel on using a three-tier instructional model (Response to Intervention) in order to improve the quality of instruction delivered to student.</li> <li>• Integrating the Mississippi Department of Education Tool Kit for Success in order to ensure that students with disabilities receive instruction by educators who are trained on using effective instructional practices.</li> <li>• Implementation of Common Core State Standards ensures students are college- and career-ready when they graduate high school.</li> <li>• Provide ongoing technical assistance at each school to blended learning (e-Learning and e-Portfolios)</li> <li>• Training for all counselors through College and Career Readiness Program will use a scaffolded approach to</li> </ul>		
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support all students. The focus areas are: academic development (Engagement), career development (Achievement) and personal/social development (Inspiration)

- Implement and provide quarterly and yearly training to teachers and parents on personalized learning in early childhood education to increase high-quality PreK classrooms as well as collaborate with local child care center and Head Start centers.
- Teaching and Leading project evaluation system will be used to ensure the continuous improvement of instruction by highly effective education professionals and paraprofessionals.
- Data systems will be used to effectively monitor effectiveness of supports and student achievements in order to provide timely and relevant adjustments and feedback.

The applicant does not provide specific details in this plan to address how schools will increase the number of effective and highly effective teachers and principals in hard-to-staff schools, subjects, and specialty areas.

Overall, the applicant has 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.

#### 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>

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

The applicant's plan to support project implementation through its practices policies and rules that facilitate personalized learning is of high quality.

- Recent reorganization for exceptional education department provides more support to teachers, principals, students and families in order to better serve students with disabilities more effectively with appropriate strategies in order to increase and improve achievement.
- Since 2005-2006, District Schools have flexible autonomy to adopt site-based management policy in order to improve student performance, this policy grants greater decision-making authority by a school's parents, teachers, counselors, principals and surrounding community.
- Provide students with opportunity to progress based on demonstrated mastery rather than time spent on a topic.
- Integrating technology through the use of digital learning platforms, which will provide students access to multiple opportunities to take ownership for their learning using resources suited to their needs and interests using technology.
- The high quality plan will allow district to institute additional policies and practices that may be barriers to student success in order for them to broaden their learning experiences by increasing access, The plan proposes to:
  - Provide transportation accommodations for students to attend dual enrollment-credit courses off campus
  - Revise district grading policy to remove "zero" grades for incomplete assignments thus providing students with a greater opportunity to pass rather than fail a course.
  - revising electronic technology policy in order to allow students to "bring your own device" to create a technology friendly environment.

Overall, the extent to which the applicant's plan to support project implementation through comprehensive LEA policies and rules to facilitate personalized learning environments has not been satisfied because the applicant failed to provide details for the timeline, deliverables and parties responsible in order to implement a high-quality plan, resulting in medium-range score.

<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
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**(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant plan for LEA and school infrastructure supports personalized learning by ensuring that students, educators, parents have access to technology and support in order to overcome existing barriers that urban school districts often face

- Increasing access to computer technology in classrooms
- Instituting "bring your own device policy"
- Increased access to Wi-Fi accessibility in schools, resource centers and community partners
- Create Wi-Fi hotspots within the community in order to provide students with access when schools are closed (after-hours, weekends, extended breaks)

- Utilize new technology "advances such as video-on-demand" to provide parent, teachers, and students with access to content, tools, and other learning resources
- Proposal is fully supported by IT department to provide the support and resources schools to use interoperable data systems to share information and monitor student's progress.

The applicant has not provided a specific timeline on how this plan will be implemented over time. Overall, the applicant has developed a well thought plan to provide the support project implementation.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant's builds on its existing practices of continuously monitoring of student achievement and efforts will be enhanced through RTTD funding by streamlining decision making strategy that is consistent and responsive to changes.</p> <p>The plan identifies six projects that are the chief components for a personalized learning environment and the necessity for continuous improvement and assigns the Projector Director with the responsibility to provide updates on student achievement, instructional methods and grant performance, and will implement and monitor student academic progress using multiple strategies.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant plan for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process is not of high quality. The applicant fails to provide a timeline, deliverables and responsible parties for this continuous improvement process during the terms of this grant. The applicant's plan lacks the details of a high quality plan, resulting in a low score.</p>		
<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
<p><b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant plan commits to using proven and effective strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders and the rationale for the approach, however, the applicant's plan does not provide the details to describe the details.</p> <p>For example, the applicant 's narrative states that proven and effective strategies will be used to communicate with stakeholders, however, it does not provide details to describe the strategies, the form(s) communication will take place, and the frequency of the communication. The plan does not include a timeline or the intended deliverables as a result of communication and engagement, and the parties responsible. Overall, The proposal lacks the components of a high-quality plan, resulting in a low score.</p>		
<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>
<p><b>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant's plan fails to provide the rationale used to select the performance measures. The data submitted is incomplete as it does not provide annual targets for the life of the grant proposal, or how the targets will be measured. The applicant 's narrative states that ambitious and bold targets were set for each performance measure that is realistic and achievable. The narrative states the performance measures were selected based on the vision for a successful personalized learning environment based on the criteria for base year 2013-2014 only.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly effective teacher and principal (all students)</li> <li>• Early growth indicators (PreK)</li> <li>• District Assessments and SAT10 (Grades K-2)</li> <li>• State Assessments MCT2 (Grade 3, 4-8)</li> <li>• State Assessments MST2 and Algebra 1 (Grades 4-8)</li> <li>• iCAP completion by grade 8 (Grades 4-8)</li> <li>• ACT score for ENG and MATH (Grades 9-12)</li> <li>• iCAP completion (Grades 9-12)</li> </ul> <p>The applicant's rationale for these performance is directly tied to the goals of this proposal , which includes the need to decrease the achievement gap while improving student performance for students in the specified subgroups. Although, the</p>		

applicant has provided details to support how they will accomplish these key goals, the data tables submitted to support decreasing the achievement gap. Although, the applicant provides the student growth data meeting the criteria, the proposal lacks completed data tables for achievement gap in order for the reviewer to interpret if the performance measures are ambitious yet achievable, resulting in a low score.

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

**5**

**3**

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

The applicant's plan to evaluate the effectiveness of RTTD investment includes:

- involvement of all stakeholders input in the process for continuous improvement measures of input
- Selected AdvancED continuous improvement model to monitor school improvement
- Sound rationale that expresses its commitment to evaluate the effectiveness of investments for personalized learning environments

However, the proposal lacks the details of a high-quality approach that describes how RTTD funded activities will be monitored in order to evaluate the effectiveness of RTTD funds.

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

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

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

The applicant's budget for the project identifies all funds that will be used to support this plan and is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of this proposal. The applicant provided a breakdown of all the funds that are necessary for the development and implementation of personalized learning environments, as well as funds from other sources. The plan does not identify funds that will be used for one-time investments versus costs that will be incurred after the life of the grant. The seven selected projects ensure the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments.

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

**10**

**4**

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

The applicant's plan for sustainability and growth is not fully developed. There are no details to support how the applicant will evaluate improvements in productivity and outcomes to inform a post-grant budget. The plan does not include an estimated budgets, budget assumptions nor does it identify sources and uses of funds for the three years post grant. The applicant's personalized learning environments focus on creating and building human capacity to lead this reform, the plan lacks the information to support a high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals.

**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:**

The applicant's plan for Competitive Preference Priority defines its overarching goals for public and private partnerships based on the needs of the students, families and community. The applicant has identified six reform partners for school programs in order to support student achievement.

The applicant's plan for building the capacity of staff in participating schools through partnerships is evident by the focus on college and career readiness, working collaborations to provide teachers with educational support services to improve student achievement.

The applicant's plan lacks details to support how this the reform partners and school programs listed in this proposal will support the social, emotional and behavioral needs of mobile students and their families.

### Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

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

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant's proposal provides personalized learning environments for students in grades PreK to 12. The students are from in low income and low achieving urban school district that has many challenges and barriers to success. The project will provide students with greater access to technology so they can manage their own learning, improved data systems gives teachers the opportunity to evaluate and assess student performance, as well as the appropriateness of strategies. The proposal demonstrates the applicants's commitment to build on the four core assurance areas to provide students and families with personalized learning environments that will increase equity and achievement for low-income and high needs students.

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>136</b>
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