



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0004ID-2 for Madison School District #321

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant has articulated a comprehensive and reform vision. The evidence details a comprehensive and coherent reform vision includes a plan that weaves in each of the four core educational assurance areas. The plan describes a systems approach from cradle to career pathway centered on a personalized learning environment. For each of the core areas and the approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning and increasing equity, the applicant proposes a vision that is clearly articulated. Examples of this approach include: implementing state standards based on common core, aligning curriculum across grade levels and using assessment systems to track progress, mapping curriculum expectations across all schools, creating individual "dashboards" of achievement that will provide students an ability to self-advocate, providing decision-making guidance through End-of-Course test scores and the district's Smarter Balanced assessment system, implementing a college and career-ready focus, and developing a better data management system. Moreover, the district proposes to be fully invested in mining teacher and principal talent by efficiently and effectively investing appropriate professional development and support in their teachers and principles. Finally, the plan proposes to turn around lowest performing schools and extend successes by creating a systems of care approach. The applicant determined a link between social and emotional wellness and academic success. Thus designed plans for building strong community partners, families, and a child-centered approach, create transparency of educational expectations, extended learning opportunities, provide a strong foundational start for children 0-5, provide evidence-based interventions and support systems and a safe and secure climate, and address disparity and equity issues.</p> <p>The plan very creatively describes the proposed classroom experiences of its students by presenting different scenarios that detail the experience of the students and the teachers. The approach, as noted in the various scenarios presented, proposes to eliminate the current approach to teaching and learning from the traditional silo to a comprehensive movement centered on the student as the learner. The classroom experiences presented via the various scenarios demonstrated the transformative approach in a very holistic environment where everyone, student, teacher, the Child Assistance Teams, parent educators, etc. are all participating in the personalized learning environments. The classroom teacher no longer works in isolation; classroom teachers now interact with numerous support teams. Teachers share concerns and strategies with same grade teachers, instructional teams, and other student support professionals. Thus the teacher, no longer working in a silo, draws on all this additional training and support. These new personalized learning environments is now more centered on the student and on his or her needs.</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 reform proposal includes appropriate evidence and provides sufficient data and information demonstrating a high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation of the proposed project. The process employed is a model previously established by a number of community agencies inclusive of the school district. This model, Youth Search Conference, was used to help identify participating schools, the students to be involved and the identified needs. The transformation systems approach coupled with the Leadership Transformation Team is focused on having all schools and students participating in the project. The plan also includes a list of all the involved stakeholders: educators, administrators, community persons, etc.</p> <p>The description of the process was included and is considered appropriate for how schools and students were selected. This process included asking the Development / Leadership team and district administration to evaluate the district capacity for implementation. The review also included teachers and parent input and a review of the district improvement plan. Thus, the proposed process for identifying schools and the decision to include all students supports a high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation of that proposal.</p>		

Participating school data presented by the applicant includes the list of each school to be participating, the percentage of free and reduced lunch as a demonstration of poverty levels for each school and for the district, the total number of students by school and by district, the rural isolation of the county compared to the state and the nation, and the ethnic background of which the largest group is non-Hispanic white and the largest minority is Hispanic, 6.3%.

The applicant proposes to serve 5,132 students and will include all of its schools, K-12. The overall free and reduced lunch rate for the district is 41%, thus meeting the poverty eligibility.

<b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
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**(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The extent to which the applicant includes a high-quality plan is appropriate. The plan identifies a number of student needs and challenges which supported the need to implement a meaningful reform plan. The proposed plan has identified a model of change to achieve rigor (horizontal and vertical alignment with state's common core), track growth (the introduction and use of dashboards will become models for the rest of the state), mining talent and extend success to all students especially those in the lowest performing schools (sharing this expertise nationally). Because the applicant includes all of the schools in the project, the applicant proposes to scale up by sharing the lessons learned and expertise as well as acting as a demonstration site for neighboring school districts with similar demographics. Also, the applicant states that it will become a demonstration site and has an ability to move reforms forward when needed; consequently, a scale up plan is feasible.

The process outlined provides all the elements to be considered a high-quality plan (context, strategies, goals/outcomes, and activities) that includes a visual of important milestones which supports the transformation effort described in the proposed plan. The proposed logic model, Appendix B, provides an illustration for reaching the goals for improving student learning and student achievement that includes appropriate supports, relevant data, and educator evaluations.

<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 extent to which the vision will result in improved student learning and performance is likely to succeed, although it is not easily determined whether the goals are achievable. It was not made clear, given the evidence provided in both the narrative and the tables, whether the applicant's goals would be considered ambitious and achievable. At this point in time, the applicant is experiencing a mixed and complicated assessment system that creates confusion and appears to be problematic when trying to address whether the proposed goals would be considered achievable. The district is moving from administering the Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) to the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC) but will not have full implementation until 2015. The end-of-course tests given to students in grades 5-12 have not been updated for some time; therefore, they are not aligned with the curriculum and students state not being prepared for these tests. Furthermore, the district predicts a 50% drop in the current ISAT proficiency rates when compared to the SBAC proficiency rates. Given the current status and this reviewer's evaluation of the evidence provided, a score in the middle range is appropriate.

The applicant does include a vision for implementing the transformational change using the four core areas and includes appropriate detail demonstrating activities, timelines, responsible personnel, deliverables, and evidence of success. The applicant also identified performance measures for each of the areas: performance on assessments, closing achievement gaps among all sub-groups, graduation rates, and college enrollment rates. The measures were given for all students and for the identified subgroups. These measures provide data for how the district will measure ongoing progress and success for its 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>11</b>

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

The applicant provides information via charts with student data indicative of having advanced student learning outcomes and achievements in some areas such as graduation. Data provided shows six year trends in high school graduation that ranged from 88.35% to a current graduation rate of 98.7%. Using test results from the Idaho Standards Achievement Test, the applicant provided six year trend data that demonstrates improvements in student achievement in reading, math, and

language arts, thus raising scores for all students. The applicant did not, however, include college enrollment data to assess increased rates. Furthermore, data provided reflected changes to the overall population but not to sub-groups; consequently, it was not possible to assess whether achievement gaps were reduced or whether equity in learning and teaching was decreased.

To demonstrate record of success, the applicant describes how the district has made significant changes in its curriculum, instruction, assessment and leadership and has implemented a college and career readiness program. Examples of the proposed changes include increasing advanced placement and dual enrollment courses and mapping out four year plans for high school and college. Regarding efforts to reform the middle school, labeled as a low-performing school, and to close the achievement gap, the district created an intensive intervention program for students at-risk of not graduating due to lacking proficiency in the Idaho Standards Achievement Test for reading, math, and language arts. To improve college enrollment rates, the district implemented a program that focused on increasing the number of students taking the ACT/SAT and PSAT.

To make student performance data more accessible and have it available in one place, the district describes how it has created a longitudinal data system that has increased student data transparency. District and school-level data is available online and parents receive student data during parent-teacher conferences.

<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 extent to which the LEA has demonstrated evidence of having a high-level of transparency is well documented. As part of the Idaho Public Records Act, the district provides a high-level of transparency in their processes, practices, and investments through Idaho Accountable.com. Examples of the transparency include, online access to school-level and district budgets and salaries of all personnel by name and title, per-pupil and professional development expenditures. The hard copy information is also provided upon request when online access is not available.

<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 extent to which the LEA has sufficient autonomy is well documented. As a public school district that is recognized by the state and with conditions and autonomy granted by the state, the district provides appropriate assurances that it will implement the proposed personalized learning environments described in the proposal. The plan outlines how the district school board, through its legal authority, will implement the four projects of the proposed design. The proposed narrative provides sufficient evidence and examples that demonstrate the conditions, current board policy and board autonomy for implementing the project.

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

The extent to which the LEA demonstrates stakeholder engagement and support is appropriate. The plan has identified key stakeholders, superintendent, collective bargaining unit, teachers, administrators, parent support groups, and numerous community service groups and agencies. These individuals and groups were involved in the development of the proposal. A unique and meaningful stakeholder support was the inclusion of over 150 youth who were given an opportunity to discuss issues affecting the youth of the community. Engagement was obtained from all via the distribution of information, the collection of feedback and sharing information with all key stakeholders. Letters of support were obtained, included in the appendix section, from all key groups and individuals including from the collective bargaining unit.

**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 extent to which the applicant has proposed a high-quality plan that will successfully prepare students for college and careers is comprehensive and a very good plan. The applicant proposes a high-quality plan centered around a learner-centered approach for improving learning and teaching. The proposed approach creates personalized learning plans and

curriculum learning maps that provide benchmarks from the common core standards and are dovetailed with the newly aligned curriculum. Throughout the high-quality plan, the applicant provides detail for how instructional strategies will be tied to the needs and interests of the students such as providing cutting edge practices that allow students to pursue multiple pathways and more appropriate use of technology including software with access to e-portfolios and to map college and career pathways. This is an appropriate venue that will help students understand what they are learning and how to structure their learning to achieve their goals. The following are examples related to how activities have been designed to help student involvement in deep learning experiences and exposure to diverse cultures and perspectives: 5th graders will develop e-portfolios that identify academic areas of interest. The applicant calls its plan a targeted learning process that is directed by the students and aligned to the common core standards; provides students access to mobile computing devices, virtual field trips and scientific research assignments. Throughout the plan, the applicant provides sufficient information addressing how students will master critical content and develop appropriate skills and traits. Examples of this include cooperative learning experiences, creating a learner-centered environment, providing professional development opportunities, improving school climate, and having students engaged in learning.

Through a combination of scenarios from kindergarten to high school, the applicant outlines how students will be given access to a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development that map out how students at different grade levels will be allowed to achieve learning goals and will be able to graduate college and career ready. These same scenarios provide examples of high-quality instructional approaches and environments as well as providing a demonstration for how communication will be ongoing with frequent feedback between all concerned. One of the scenarios contains an example of a strategy for a high-need student and includes tracking outcomes toward college and career ready graduation requirements. Throughout these examples, the plan supports an agenda of learner-centered outcomes and opportunities that provide assurances for understanding how to use the tools and resources that will help them track and manage their learning.

The proposed learning plan includes sufficient narrative to have identified the goals, activities, rationale, timelines, deliverables, and responsible personnel.

There were several areas where the applicant does not sufficiently provide conclusive evidence for which an appropriate assessment can be made. These areas are in the parent support and support for the early learning group.

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

**20**

**15**

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

The extent to which the applicant proposes a high-quality plan for teaching and learning is well documented and appropriate. The proposed high-quality plan proposes to establish personalized learning environments that are transparent to both teachers and students. The proposed plan clearly demonstrates how three professional development components: curriculum and assessments system, new or revised end-of-course assessment, grades 5-12, and professional learning communities, create the plan's teaching and leading framework and will help educators improve instruction and increase their instructional capacity. The proposed plan provides sufficient evidence demonstrating how all will be given training and guidance to support effective implementation of the personalized learning environments, will be able to adapt content and instruction to students' needs and interests, and will be given the tools needed to track progress and to determine teacher improvement needs. The plan also includes information for how and when teachers and principals will be evaluated with appropriate strategies for improvement. Imbedded throughout are the goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible personnel to effectively implement the plan. The proposed plan presents a number of examples for how educators will have access to data and resources (tool box) and will have appropriate training that includes readily available technology personnel. Assurance for continuous feedback was demonstrated through the professional development opportunities and the professional learning communities.

School administrators will receive training on how to effectively evaluate teachers and will have access to information gathered from the teacher evaluation system. As stated, the resources and tools identified provide appropriate documentation that enable school leaders and leadership teams to structure effective learning environments. All administrators have access to the teacher evaluation system and will be able to use this data for the entire teaching staff. The applicant appropriately describes a plan for measuring continuous school improvement and has identified training and practices to improve school progress for increasing student performance.

It is unclear nor does the plan specify how achievement gaps will be closed. That is to say no evidence was provided to suggest what the difference is in the performance between subgroups within the school, the district, or the state's highest-achieving subgroups or how comparison of progress will be determined.

The high-quality plan for increasing highly effective teachers and principals called the Pay for Performance plan provides a measurable goal (financially rewarding teachers who become highly effective teachers), local and state assessment timelines, deliverables (student growth percentages) and responsible personnel (principals and leadership transformation

teams). Pay for Performance rewards are also being given to hard-to-staff schools, subjects, and specialty areas. The plan for numbers of effective teachers and principals to increase to highly effective teachers rests on student achievement on the local and state assessments. The project will also be providing bonuses to teachers in hard-to-staff positions.

#### 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>

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

The extent to which the applicant provided a high-quality plan to support implementation through policies and infrastructure is appropriate. The applicant has identified a high-quality plan that supports a district-level leadership transformation team whose responsibility will be to oversee and to provide support and services to all the participating schools. The plan also describes a number of teams working at both the district and school level that includes appropriate stakeholders and responsibilities. At the school level, the applicant has identified the school administrator with support from a school-based implementation team; together these two units have responsibility and sufficient autonomy over schedules, calendar, staffing models and ways to improve the school and the school budget. The applicant has identified a structure that, when implemented, will allow students a number of opportunities to progress and earn credits based on mastery. By providing students a number of opportunities such as personalized learning plans, digital dashboards, aligned curriculum and an opportunity to easily view scores on the end-of-course exams, a student can progress and move forward at his or her own pace rather than the prescribed amount of time spent on a topic. Further, students in consultation with parents will be given opportunities to skip a grade after demonstrating mastery of grade content. The applicant provides evidence for how teachers will provide students with numerous opportunities to demonstrate mastery through the learning maps and the curriculum alignment. The applicant also describes how the learning maps will be used to scale up or scale down depending on the mastery level of the student. The learning maps will include strategies and practices specifically targeted to students with learning disabilities and English language learners.

Throughout the proposed narrative regarding this criterion, the applicant has identified goals, activities, timelines, deliverables and responsible personnel to make this a high-quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructures. This section may be strengthened if the applicant were to include a clearer statement about school-based leadership autonomy.

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

The applicant provides evidence that it supports personalized learning environments by indicating commitment to creating a digital one-to-one computer initiative available to all students. Creating a digital one-to-one computer initiative affords students opportunities that will help them complete assignments and access their e-portfolios. The library will offer extended hours to both students and parents. Other examples of the commitment include afterschool programs and bus schedules that accommodate afterschool activities. For parents, the program will provide parenting seminars and seminars on the digital dashboard and the common core standards. Evidence was provided that ensures all key stakeholders are given appropriate levels of support. This will be through a project-hired, technology implementation specialist whose responsibility will be to conduct classes on the use of digital tools including monitoring academic progress and college readiness.

The applicant supports having digital systems in open data formats although will not rely on any commercial formats currently available. Instead, the applicant states that it will create its own in a format that will allow its use in other electronic learning systems. This same rationale has been provided to address assurances for the LEA and the use of interoperable data systems. While articulating activities and personnel charged with carrying out this criterion, the narrative discussion about goals, timelines and deliverables is not substantiated with appropriate detail. Beyond these statements, this sub-criterion appears to lack depth. It does not provide sufficient information to determine whether the plan would be considered high-quality.

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

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	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
<p><b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant has presented a high-quality continuous improvement plan that outlines expectations for program, services, and process improvements. The plan also will be identifying a number of groups / teams whose role and responsibility is to review and evaluate the continuous improvement process. Teachers, parents and students will be members in some or all of the teams. Their purpose will be to provide timely and regular feedback. The plan allows for the project to identify opportunities and for planning changes and avenues for change to be implemented. It describes the use of data to analyze the results and to determine whether the results made a difference. And finally, the plan provides timelines, deliverables, and responsible personnel charged with continuously assessing results and progress. Information will be shared with the project leadership transformation team as well as with the evaluation oversight team comprised of the leadership team, the evaluator and consumers. Additionally, the applicant will be surveying teachers, parents, and students on a regular basis to evaluate how the process is working.</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 high-quality plan provided by the applicant articulates some of the required detail for how ongoing communication and engagement will occur. The plan will hire a social marketer who will work with a community advisory council to create the ongoing communication for both internal and external stakeholders. It includes the goal (awareness of the project), activities and deliverables to communicate with and engage stakeholders (campaign and a variety of marketing tools such as traditional media, Facebook, twitter, and a quarterly newsletter). Except for the quarterly newsletter, the applicant did not include specific timelines for implementing the communication plan.</p> <p>The applicant has not provided specific deliverables and goals, thus falls short for making this a successful high-quality plan. The applicant's plan lacks depth; having a social marketer to carry out its communication an engagement activities appears to be a narrow plan for supporting this initiative.</p>		
<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The extent to which the applicant has provided ambitious and achievable measures is well documented. The applicant has identified ambitious and achievable performance measures overall and by subgroups and includes annual targets and rationale for the required performance measures. Timely and formative information gathered as a result of the assessment used will help measure mastery toward college and career readiness. For example, K-4 children will be administered the Idaho Reading Indicator given twice each year. The stated purpose for the assessment is to indicate which children are most likely going to be at-risk of failure with skills that are prerequisite for being successful readers throughout life.</p> <p>The applicant's plan is not very explicit for how it will monitor effectiveness or improve measures over time.</p>		
<b>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The extent to which the applicant includes a high-quality plan to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of the funded activities is appropriate. The applicant intends to engage in a number of methods - external evaluation, student achievement and growth scores, technology integration, to name a few, that will help evaluate the effectiveness of investments. Furthermore, for each of the funded projects or units, the applicant provides a sound description of the project / unit and how each will be evaluated. The table includes the evaluation methodology, the activities, timeline, rationale, and deliverables. For example, the after school program will be evaluated to show increased student achievement in the program and for its effectiveness of investment. However, the applicant's plan is not very explicit for how it will monitor effectiveness or improve measures over time and does not include personnel who will be involved in evaluating the effectiveness of its investments.</p>		

**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>
<p><b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The extent to which the budget for the project identifies all the funds needed to support the implementation is reasonable and sufficient. The applicant provides a detailed budget that includes a budget narrative and tables for each of the four components, academic rigor, tracking growth, mining talent, and extending success. The budget tables also differentiate between funds that will be used as one-time investments and funds for ongoing operational costs. The budget includes federal funds and district funds to support the project and is appropriate for what the applicant would like to accomplish. While the proposed budget represents a thoughtful rationale for the investments and priorities the applicant is requesting, maintaining sustainability with respect to the proposed technology initiatives may be problematic when the budget identifies only one individual responsible for tracking data, creating data bases, and submitting state reports. These responsibilities appear to be huge and identifying only one individual for this may be problematic. Thus, a strategy for having only one individual carrying all these responsibilities may be problematic when considering the long-term sustainability of the project. For this reason, a score in the middle range is being given.</p>		
<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The extent to which the applicant has identified a high-quality plan to demonstrate sustainability after the term of the grant is appropriate. The applicant has provided a 3-year sustainability budget that identifies an activity funded by the grant and future sources of funds. It identifies areas that will be maintained without funds due to the nature of the product such as the curriculum alignment. The applicant also identified both local and state funds for areas where actual funds will be needed to continue the support. These funds include per pupil state revenues, Title I and Title II funds. For other more difficult areas, the district indicates that it will seek funding through a number of possible sources such as the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid reimbursements and federal grants that will be developed.</p> <p>The proposed plan, however, falls short by not providing a description for how it will evaluate past investments to inform future investments or for how the applicant plans to evaluate improvements in productivity and outcomes to inform a post-grant budget.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The extent to which the applicant proposes to integrate public or private resources in a partnership designed to augment the schools' resources is appropriate. Madison County Community Council is a partnership with numerous groups and individuals and in existence for over 15 years and one that supports the integration of public and private resources. It is this partnership that supports the Absolute Priority 1 of creating learning environments designed to improve learning and teaching. Other groups also supportive of a sustainable partnership in support of Absolute Priority 1 include the Parents and Teachers program and the afterschool programs. These partnerships provide additional support to students and families and help the district address the social, emotional and behavioral needs of the students.</p> <p>The applicant has identified six population-based results for its students that demonstrate an alignment and support of the broader RTT-D proposal. Each of the proposed results demonstrates an educational outcome or result. For example, the applicant proposes to provide emotional support for children suffering from mental illnesses and for children exiting third-grade reading below grade level. For each of the population-desired results, the applicant has provided appropriate tracking indicators. By disaggregating data for specific groups, the applicant together with its numerous partners describes how it will specifically target its resources by first identifying a concern, developing an action plan, securing funding and implementing the plan. This proposed action presents an appropriate use of data to support targeted-services. Because the project expects to serve all the students, there is no need for a scale-up plan. However, the applicant plans to scale the model to high-need students from neighboring school districts. The applicant provides an appropriate plan for improving results over time outlined in the continuous improvement process and intends to regularly review data on targeted students and families.</p> <p>Throughout the proposed project plan, the applicant has succinctly described a number of initiatives and components such as services addressing the social-emotional needs for participating students. These represent a comprehensive partnership plan for integrating education and other services. The applicant includes evidence with</p>		

supporting detail to demonstrate how it will assess the needs of students that may include home visits for the early childhood students, or classroom teacher assessments for the in-school population. The applicant provides a feasible solution for how it will identify and inventory the needs and assets of the school and community by enlisting the support of the Madison County Community Partner which provides a commitment to identify the needs and implement an action plan to support high-need students and families,

The proposed decision-making process is a sound plan that places at the school-level a Child Assistance Team whose responsibility it is to address concerns and ideas brought by teachers and to develop interventions. Additionally, the process is also supported by the personalized learning goals that support strategic decisions. The plan for engaging parents and families with decision-making about improved solutions is strongly supported via a parent involvement specialist whose task will be to involve and engage parents. The applicant has identified assessment and data measures appropriate for assessing progress of project implementation. The task for resolving challenges and problems is appropriately given to the leadership transformation team with support from the community leadership advisory council.

The applicant has identified six performance measures that are ambitious and achievable. Each measure identifies a desired result that includes an action plan with activities, timelines, deliverables, responsible parties.

### Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>		<b>Met</b>
<b>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The design of the proposed plan presented by the applicant is comprehensive and appropriately addresses a plan that will build upon the four core educational assurance areas. The plan provides sufficient narrative indicative of how the proposed activities, strategies, and initiatives will improve learning and teaching and includes tools and numerous student support services for students and educators. Throughout the document, the applicant is cognizant of creating strategies that are aligned with college and career-ready standards and that will accelerate student achievement. The plan also identifies a number of training opportunities that will have positive impacts on educator effectiveness.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>172</b>



## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

Application #0004ID-3 for Madison School District #321

#### 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>
<b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant laid out a clear vision for reform which included addressing the four core educational assurance areas. The applicant provided details of the vision for personalized learning plans through e-dashboards, which will be available to students, parents, teachers, and administrators. The district is adopting college and career ready standards and related assessments. Realistic expectations for the implementation of new assessments from the Smarter Balanced Consortium to align with the Common Core State Standards were discussed. Details were included for mining talent to address the hiring, professional development, and retention of effective teachers. The vision also includes plans for extended learning day,</p>		

home visits, early education and bullying prevention. Description of the classroom experience was provided through fictionalized case studies for an early childhood student and a middle school student. These descriptions included insight into both the students' and the teachers' experiences, highlighting how the dashboards will provide information to the teachers to assist in planning instruction for the students, and for matching the students' instruction to their goals, as well as the benefits that the project will provide, including instructional coaching for the teachers and extended day opportunities for the students.

The applicant's thorough response laying out a vision that provides credible plans to reach their goals led to the high-range score.

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

**10**

**8**

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

The applicant has provided detailed information regarding the needs of the community including data on poverty, farm workers, isolated families, and a growing community due to a change in the status of the local higher education institution. The request for additional educational support and opportunity originated from the youth of the county through a unique Youth Search Conference. The ideas from this conference were used in the development of this application, and youth continue to serve on the Leadership Transformation Team.

It was determined that the entire district should participate. The whole process outlining this decision was not included, although it was stated that this decision was based on the district's past experience with implementing transformational change. A list of schools, including total population and students from low-income families, was included. Information about participating educators was not included in the application. Other than students from low-income families, other high-need populations were not addressed specifically by school site.

The applicant's response describing the district's approach to change and identifying populations to benefit should have them started in the right direction to lead to high-quality implementation of their project, and led to the high-range score.

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

**10**

**10**

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

The applicant has included the details of the high-quality plan identifying members of the Leadership Transformation Team, their timeline for meetings and an overview of their responsibilities, as well as a chart outlining the high-quality plan organized by each of the four goals, outlining the activities, timeline, deliverables, personnel responsible, and the evidence of success of each activity. The applicant provided a clear visual of their logic model, and a narrative supporting their strategies of achieving rigor, tracking growth, mining talent and extending success.

The application refers to previous success with children's mental health systems, which is an ongoing effort recognized for its systemic transformation, leadership, and family and community involvement. This effort appears to have laid a foundation to build on with the efforts required under their Race to the Top proposal.

This plan addresses implementation in the district, but not beyond participating schools, however, all schools in the district are included in the proposed implementation. The applicant stated that the district will be willing to serve as a demonstration site for the state if any other districts would like to implement components of their plan.

The applicant's inclusion of the details in their high-quality plan and their logic model provide evidence that they are prepared to implement their plans in a manner that is likely to help them reach their goals. This led to the high-range score.

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

**10**

**6**

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

The goals identified are realistic in that the state's expectation is that there will be a drop in achievement levels upon implementation of the new assessments from Smarter Balanced Consortium. Goals set are certainly ambitious in bouncing back from the initial drop, perhaps too ambitious initially, but clearly the applicant is anticipating great results from the reforms implemented with this project.

Summative assessment proficiency and growth data charts are provided only at a district level, not broken down by individual grade level participating in the testing process. No state comparison targets for achievement under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act were provided.

Decreasing the achievement gap. The narrative states that the Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) is implemented in grades 3-10, but the data charts outlining the projected growth goals are only provided for grades four and eight.

The narrative stated that fewer than 30% of students are estimated to be graduating from college, but the data chart for goal setting for degree attainment starts with 40%.

The applicant provided data on district achievement levels, but no comparison data for the state was included.

The lack of detail provided without the state comparison achievement data and the individual grade level achievement test data and goals led to the mid-range score.

## 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>9</b>
<b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>Madison School District has described previously undertaken projects which have changed they way the district operates and has involved the community. The Madison CARES project has been ongoing focusing on mental health and involving developing partnerships and strong leadership. This appears to have laid a solid foundation on which to build future reform efforts, including this Race to the Top proposal. The district was also involved in creating the Madison County Community Council, which is a inter-agency effort to provide resources to families in the community. This group is also the sponsor of the Youth Search Conference, during which leaders work with youth to focus on needs from their perspectives, which have been included in this proposal.</p> <p>The applicant has also outlined and described efforts to improve graduation rates at the high school, which included a system wide look at assessment and instruction as well as teacher development, and achievement levels at the junior high school. Improvements in organization and communication of student data were also explained.</p> <p>Data provided supported a 10% gain in graduation rates over the past six years, although a history of the district's college enrollment of graduates was not addressed. Achievement levels at the junior high school have also improved, although data was provided only in the aggregate, not by grade level. Madison Middle School was noted as the district's lowest performing school, with a statement that it has not yet achieved Adequate Yearly Progress. Nothing specific was noted for the middle school to note ambitious and significant reforms undertaken for this school site.</p> <p>The district has increased its transparency of student achievement data.</p> <p>Overall, the district has focused on areas of need and demonstrated that they are capable of implementing change in some instances, but they have not shown evidence of implementing reform at their lowest performing school site, and have not provided enough detail regarding their past record of success, leading to a mid-range score.</p>		
<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant has explained the improvements in transparency regarding financial transactions for the district by making the information available monthly through the district website, and by request for patrons not having internet access. Other reports are also available through the state department of education. Information was listed for how patrons can access the salary information through public records in the states. It was not clarified whether the district financial information was posted in aggregate for the district or by school site, as required, leading to the score of 4 out of 5.</p>		
<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant has explained that the implementation of their Race to the Top District proposal fits within their operational regulations in the state of Idaho and under the state's Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) waiver. This ESEA waiver includes the regulations overseeing the implementation of the new state teacher evaluation system. The district will also work with the local bargaining groups during implementation of the new evaluation process. The district is also implementing an updated administration evaluation process. The district has an elected five-member school board, which words within the regulations of the state of Idaho under the Idaho Board of Education and the Idaho Department of Education.</p>		

<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>
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**(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant explained that they delayed this application process for a year in order to gain input from stakeholders. They are to be commended for this as it has surely improved their process and product. It appears that a cross section of personnel and agencies representing the community have been included, although parents are only listed specifically thought the Madison CARES agency, not specifically parents from each school. Letters of support are individualized and express support for the reforms planned in this proposal.

While the Rexburg Education Association has included a letter of support, stating that they were involved in the discussions surrounding the changes to the evaluation system, there are no individual or group letters from teachers from across the district. Since the REA is listed as a collective bargaining unit that may be permissible, but additional letters of support from teachers could have strengthened the application. Ideas from the youth conference were included in the application, but no letters of support were included from any of the students, and only one from a parent involved in the planning process. These omissions led to the score of high range score of 14 out of 15.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>

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

The applicant has included aspects from (C) (1) in their high quality plan as well as in narrative form in the application.

Students will be involved in tracking their own progress through the use of learning maps aligned to the college and career standards used in the district. Students will be trained on the use of their personalized learning devices and the tools available to them during their advisory class periods, which is also when they will interact with the learning maps and track their progress. Parents will also be involved in tracking their children's progress toward their academic, as well as college and career, goals though the electronic dashboard and e-portfolio system.

Technology will also be used to help students learn deeply about content areas and to learn about other cultures, providing virtual experiences that are not available to the students locally. Common Core State Standards are referenced throughout, as well as teachers' increased content knowledge, but specifics about the curriculum development were not included to demonstrate the rigor for the students. Fictionalized accounts of students in each grade span were used to describe what the project will look like for students at different levels, but detailed information about the digital curriculum and how students will have access to a personalized sequence of content and skill development were not addressed in an overall plan.

It has not been specified how frequently the dashboard and e-portfolio will be updated. While the summative assessments (Smarter Balanced Consortium Assessments and end of instruction tests) have been discussed at length, other references have included pretests, early childhood assessments and ongoing assessments, although no timeline has yet to be laid out.

This appears to be something that will be developed through the professional development process, as it was stated that the instruction should be based on the data, which can only happen if more data than end of instruction is included.

The grade span that has not been described fully is the elementary grades, through fourth grade. It has been mentioned that all students will have dashboards, but e-portfolios do not begin until fifth grade, and at that time more focus starts with goal setting and student involvement in planning and tracking their learning. More explanation of how the younger students fit into the plan would strengthen the proposal, although there is a fictionalized elementary situation included in the descriptions of how this project would look across the district.

It is expected that the needs of diverse learners will be addressed through aspects of the electronic personalized learning devices provided through this proposal.

Students are able to participate in an acceleration program, earning high school credit as early as eighth grade, and having the opportunity to earn up to two years of college credit during high school. They can graduate with AP credits, or an associate's degree, helping them enter post-high school life college or career ready.

Balancing the strengths of the dashboards and e-portfolio plans with the details which were omitted from the proposal led to the high, mid-range score assigned.

<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>
<p><b>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>This proposal is heavily invested in helping the teachers develop the curriculum and assessments that they need, and providing professional development to help them be effective in the implementation of the digital environments and new strategies for teaching, intervening and accelerating learning.</p> <p>Teachers will be involved in updating district curriculum to meet Common Core State Standards (CCSS), as well as end of instruction assessments. Professional development will help teachers delve deeper into content themselves, to benefit the students. It is stated that district teachers need to gain deeper content knowledge, and while working through the process of developing curriculum and assessments can be terrific professional development opportunities, it needs to be guided or facilitated by professionals knowledgeable enough in the curriculum. Perhaps there are some district teachers prepared to lead this process, but that is not made clear in the application. If the teachers are developing the curriculum to match the standards, there should be a process in place for checking that there is a solid match to the content, intent and rigor of the CCSS.</p> <p>Personalized learning will require new management and instructional strategies from the teachers, which will be addressed through professional development and supported through professional learning communities. Teachers will need to rely on the data in the dashboard system to provide intervention as well as extend instruction for some students through research and independent or small group projects. Flipped classrooms were also mentioned as a new way to support engaged learning. Part of the professional development will also focus on how to assist the students with goal setting and use of their e-portfolio as a tracking and goal setting tool, as well as a way to communicate with parents.</p> <p>The teacher observation tool is in the process of being updated to meet requirements and fit within Idaho's waiver under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). In addition to the formal evaluation process, the district is implementing short walk through observations for more frequent feedback to teachers.</p> <p>The high quality plan addressed increasing the number of effective and highly effective teachers in the district, as well as how the evaluation system will add methods of rewarding teachers through their evaluation process. The narrative supports this by defining effective and highly effective teachers, which can be cross referenced to the high quality plan. There is less focus on principals, except to state that the superintendent will be involved in evaluating the administrators in a similar fashion as the teachers.</p> <p>The elementary grade span is again the level that is hardest to understand in the process as those students do not seem to be involved in the personalized learning system themselves, although their teachers will have access to the students' achievement data through the electronic dashboards, and be involved in the professional development, professional learning communities, and the development of curriculum to meet CCSS.</p> <p>The proposal addressed the use of the dashboard for tracking student progress and using that data to inform instructional decisions, specifically addressing closing achievement gaps of subgroups was not addressed.</p> <p>While the district plan is heavily invested in professional development for its teachers, the lack of specificity in the rigor of the curriculum being developed and addressing the closing achievement gaps for subgroups led to the high, mid-range score for this section.</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>Aspects of these implementation components are addressed in the district's high-quality plan, including development of the students' personalized plans through their dashboards and e-portfolios, as well as their goal setting to determine their path to college and career readiness. The District level Leadership Transformation Team (LTT) will provide support to the schools from the district level, and the work of this group is highlighted in the district's high-quality plan. However, school based leadership teams working on components such as schedules and calendars were not addressed in the high-quality plan, but are included in the narrative. On an administrative level, Ways to Improve School Effectiveness (WISE) teams were identified as school level committees authorized to oversee hiring, firing, scheduling and budget issues at the site level, and Child Assistance Teams (CAT) work with individualized learning and are charged with the responsibility of the day to day implementation of the instructional program at each site.</p>		

The district has past experience implementing reform efforts and has leadership for this project outlined in the proposal. The applicant has stated that schools use site-based management for decisions to best meet their students' needs, including control over the calendar, but no further explanation was given about the calendar and how different school calendars are handled throughout the district, causing a need to wonder whether this area is under site control.

The district is moving toward mastery learning as opposed to seat time to complete coursework. A newly passed policy allows students to test out of high school coursework, but this is so recent that there is no data on the implementation. The district is counting on the plans in this proposal to move them further into implementation of student mastery learning and progression through curriculum. Students in the district also have the opportunity to begin earning high school credits in the eighth grade, and take advantage of Advanced Placement (AP) coursework and/or concurrent enrollment in the local junior college to graduate from high school with college credits and/or an Associate's Degree.

It is expected that the personalized learning environments will allow intervention and accelerated learning to meet the needs of diverse learners in the district. The proposal also discussed Response to Intervention and the CAT meetings to assist teachers in meeting students' needs.

The high-quality plan addressing most of the requirements of this section led to the high-range score for this section.

<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
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**(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

Implementation and training of teachers, administrators and students for the devices and use of the personalized learning systems was addressed in the high-quality plan for the project implementation. Inclusion of parents for training and the opportunity to use district resources was not addressed in the high-quality plan, but is addressed in the proposal's narrative.

The applicant has plans in place for students to have mobile devices for administrators, teachers and students to use for home and school use. The applicant also has planned for extended technological access time at the schools for students and parents to come utilize computer access in selected school sites to access the dashboard data and work on their e-portfolio.

The applicant stated that they will "make every effort" to make the data available in an open data format to be able to be downloaded. It was stated that they want to develop the tool themselves and not use a commercial product, which is admirable, but no explanation of their capacity to do so was included. The application does not address the need for district level support for the ongoing technical support necessary to the number of educators, students and parents may need assistance. Only one "data base developer" is included in the budget for the project. Programs used will be user friendly and interoperable to increase access and transparency.

Concern for the plan to lead to development and implementation of the applicant's plan led to the high, mid-level score for this section.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>

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

The applicant has addressed ongoing monitoring in the timeline in their high-quality plan through the end of the grant funding period, but not beyond, and has provided additional details regarding the organization of the leadership transformation team to be responsible for some of the ongoing monitoring. A social marketing campaign is planned to share information and updates about the grant progress publicly, but specific timelines for this are not included. Some details of the ongoing monitoring and communication will be finalized after the district learns of the funding decision.

The lack of detail for some of the aspects included for the ongoing monitoring and communication led to the low, high-range score assigned.

<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
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**(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The high-quality plan portion of the application addresses monitoring and includes teachers, students and other district personnel. Monitoring meetings with external stakeholders, including parents, are addressed in the narrative, but not in the high-quality plan. However, the high-quality plan does include ongoing communication efforts to be undertaken by a hired social marketing director, but without specifics in the timetables. The proposal does include plans for ongoing communication with parents and the community, as well as plans for meeting with stakeholders.

The lack of specifics in the timeline and social marketing details led to the mid-range score.

<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
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**(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The district has identified a range of assessments for kindergarten through 12th grade students. Some of the assessments included in this section are new to the proposal (Saxon Math, "effort grades,") and some that have been discussed already in the application do not show up as part of this process.

The applicant has provided incomplete or conflicting information about the assessments. The Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) indicated for grades K-4, only has examples of data for grades K-2; the Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) in math and reading is listed because they have a history of data with it, but it is not going to continue to be implemented, so it will not be a useful assessment for monitoring; and the end of year "effort grades" are not fully explained, and state that they include some subjectivity, but are reliable, with no further explanation.

The data charts are confusing due to several factors:

The chart aimed at tracking student access to effective and highly effective teachers and principals appears to be summarizing student math achievement with a baseline from the ISAT and goals based on the upcoming Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) assessments. The percent of students without effective and highly effective teachers and principals for the baseline and first year of implementation have zero for most of the subgroups. They have ambitious goals of increasing this over the course of the grant, but that seems to be a very big deficit to overcome which has not been adequately addressed in the narrative of the application.

All achievement data is presented in the aggregate for multiple grade levels, which could mask achievement gaps which need to be addressed in the planning and monitoring process.

The goals for the Ages and Stages Developmental Screening has no baseline and projects a 100% goal in 2017-2018. This does not seem to be a reasonable expectation given that it is measuring developmental milestones.

ISAT Reading proficiency baselines for grades 4-8 (reported together) and grade 11, moving to SBAC assessments, show some areas with ambitious goals, but for all participating students the goal is 92% by 2017-2018, while the baseline starts at 93%; so even with changing the assessment used in the state of Idaho, and the district specifically, the goal is only to get back to within 1% of the proficiency that the district has currently achieved.

The applicant did not specifically address reviewing the selected assessment measures throughout the course of the project and adjusting the measures chosen if necessary.

The concerns regarding the data charts and the lack of explanation of (c) above led to the mid-range score assigned.

<b>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
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**(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant's high-quality plan includes attention to monitoring the implementation of the personalized dashboards and e-portfolios as well as professional development and professional learning communities. The overall evaluation is not addressed in the applicant's high-quality plan, but is described in the narrative, although some areas do not specify which specific personnel are responsible for certain aspects of the evaluation plan. The applicant will need to develop this plan further if the project is selected for funding to assure rigorous evaluation.

**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>
<p><b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The budget for this proposal is detailed and explained, The budget is well organized, laying out the expenditures according to the four goals of the proposal.</p> <p>The budget does identify expenditures in each section by year, demonstrating which are ongoing and which are only in place for the first year or two.</p> <p>The budget included the purchase of 5,000 mobile devices for all district student, including the elementary students, but not much detail has been explained in the proposal about how the elementary grade span teachers and students will make use of these devices.</p> <p>The budget includes funds for food for family events and incentives for students, which may not be allowable under federal funds.</p> <p>In determining whether the budget is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal, one detail that stands out is the inclusion of only one data base developer to handle this whole project. One FTE not appear to be enough capacity to ensure timely development and ongoing support of the online database and curriculum outlined in the proposal.</p> <p>Another staffing concern is the part time Cultural and Competency Specialist, (.5 FTE), who will also serve as a Family Liaison. This appears to be quite a bit of responsibility for a half time position. Working with the teachers might work, but developing relationships with students and families at all district sites seems like it would need much more time in each building.</p> <p>Consideration of the balance of these aspects led to the high, mid-range score assigned.</p>		

<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant's high-quality plan did not address the sustainability of the project. It is addressed in the narrative as well as a chart outlining potential funding sources for portions of the project which should be in place in order to ensure the project is sustained. The applicant has experience with the mental health project and the community collaboration, so they have a track record of project sustaining, which strengthens their application.</p> <p>The lack of a high-quality plan addressing the important aspect of having a plan for sustainability led to the mid-range score assigned.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<p><b>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant has a long standing partnership already which it proposes continuing to provide support to families and students. The district has provided appropriate goals for this continued partnership. This section includes a high-quality plan outlining the collaboration with families and the community as well as extended learning time.</p> <p>The applicant has, for the identified populations, identified appropriate goals leading to support for the whole child, with the ultimate goal being on grade level academic achievement. A neighboring school district is interested in learning from the applicant to implement a similar program.</p> <p>The same continuous improvement process in place in the district will oversee this portion of the project.</p> <p>The Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) used to determine 3rd grade reading proficiency was noted in the assessment section to be labeled for K-4, but the examples only extended through 2nd grade. The district should consider whether this is the most appropriate measure for this goal.</p> <p>Ambitious yet achievable goals have been set for each performance measure, with the exception of the noted concern for</p>		

the IRI.

### Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>		<b>Met</b>
<b>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant did a masterful job of connecting their vision throughout the application with their acronym title and vision for their district. The goals were addressed throughout the application. Their vision of implementing personalized learning environments was supported throughout the application proposal with a focus on moving from teacher-centered to learner-centered instructional settings, with the students being more involved in tracking and following their progress toward reaching college and career ready standards. Options for students to obtain credit and show mastery are in the process of being implemented. The applicant noted that it is currently moving to a new evaluation system for teachers, with a similar plan in process for administrators, to increase the students' access to effective and highly effective teachers and principals. The proposal includes focus on professional development to improve the teachers' effectiveness in providing in depth content instruction and using, and supporting the students' use of, the personalized learning devices. The applicant has plans to address the existing achievement gaps, although some deficits were noted throughout regarding their inclusion of data and detail regarding this important aspect.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>160</b>



## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

Application #0004ID-4 for Madison School District #321

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

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant clearly develops a quality plan for addressing the four core assurance areas. The applicant has appropriately renamed these areas as: achieving rigor, tracking growth, mining talent, and extending success.</p> <p>The applicant defines a well-developed plan to use a personalized learning plan that will include an individual dashboard for each student. The student individual plans will include identification of learning goals and monitoring of individual growth that are based on individual tasks. This effort provides for a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement and deepening student learning.</p> <p>The applicant does not clearly define the vision for the processes that will be used as a basis for identifying and utilizing the student's academic interests.</p> <p>The applicant includes a clear definition of what the classroom experience will be like for students by providing vignettes of several students and educators. These vignettes define how the changes in the classrooms will promote individualized</p>		

instruction based on the needs of individual students. For example, the student identified as Brianna was not meeting her goals as defined on her "dashboard", but through appropriate interventions including assistance from the instructional coach and the CAT (Child Assistance Team), Mr. Jones was able to redirect Brianna's learning. If this is a typical classroom situation after the implementation of this project, more students should find success based on appropriate individual interventions.

This section scores at a medium range because the applicant does not specifically address student's academic interests as part of the individualized instruction. Without this information, it is not clear how student's interests will be integrated into the individual student plans.

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

**10**

**8**

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

The district is addressing all school programs in the district. It appears that all selected programs meet the competition's eligibility. These programs include elementary and secondary programs that demonstrate an overall percentage of 41% poverty level rate based on free and reduced lunch. There is no specific selection of school programs. There is no defined method that would support the selection process for including all school programs.

The applicant includes a clear identification of the leadership team that will be part of the project including the roles of the district's transformation team as part of the participating educators.

The applicant does provide in an outlined table the number of students who are low-income and in high-need.

The applicant does provide in an outlined table the number of participating educators as part of the implementation of the proposal for each of the selected schools.

This section scores at the high level because the approach to the LEA-level and school-level implementation is of high-quality.

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

**10**

**7**

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

The applicant describes in a clear logic model the reform that will occur in the district with a continued focus on the four core assurance levels. These levels are: achieving rigor, tracking growth, mining talent, and extending success.

This plan includes a reformation of the data systems that will provide for individual student learning plans.

The applicant comprehensively defines the Goals and Objectives, Timelines, Deliverables, Responsibility, and Evidence of Success as part of the high-quality plan. The planned reform proposal is for the entire district; therefore, the scale up of the reform is not addressed. Because of the Evidence of Success element of the high-quality plan, it would appear that this reform will produce meaningful reform for this district.

The applicant plan does not include activities that link directly to each of the goals. For example, Goal 2. Obj 5 indicates that data will inform instruction. However, the applicant does not directly link activities that would define how that objective will be achieved. Due to the lack of this linkage a middle level range score was given for this section. The overall plan with this exception is likely to be successful.

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

**10**

**7**

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

The applicant outlines clearly nine identified elements that will be used to address the performance on summative assessments. It appears that the applicant's leadership team has developed the assessment plan based on current trends at the state level as well as adaptations for the district. For example the use of the Idaho Reading Indicator which will be integrated into the student's dashboard and individual growth plan is an element that will provide baseline data.

The applicant does not provide a comprehensive approach to decreasing the achievement gaps. There is an indication that a wraparound team-based approach will be used; however, it is not clear as to how and which students will be involved in this approach. The lack of a clear definition of this approach makes it difficult to determine if the approach will

be successful in decreasing the gaps.

The applicant does not provide information regarding the district's annual goals that are equal to or exceed State ESEA targets. Without that information it is more difficult to determine if the district goals are ambitious.

The applicant does provide a unique approach to the issues regarding graduation rates. The identification of the issues unique to the community involving of a religious group help to define the problem area of the low percentage of college attendees. Since the students of that group have church obligations immediately after high school, college attendance is offer delayed or canceled. This problem is clearly outlined and addressed by Goal 1 Obj. F.

The applicant defines clearly in a table how the goals and objectives will produce evidence of success. This approach assures the implementation of the objectives.

This section is scored in the medium range because although the applicant's vision supported by a quality plan is likely to result in improved student achievement for all students, those students in the sub groups may not have specific interventions that will assist them in finding success.

**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>11</b>
<b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The district has supported positive, ambitious, and significant reforms in dealing with persistently lowest-achieving schools. For example, during the work at Madison Junior High, the academic testing indicates raised scores for its student population at those grade levels in the areas of reading, math, and language arts. This improvement was attributed to leadership interventions including improving student learning climate and implementing End of Course assessments.</p> <p>The applicant does not specifically address the increasing equity in learning as the sub-group data does not indicate improvement. Therefore, it is difficult to determine if the district has had success in closing achievement gaps.</p> <p>The applicant does identify how the student performance data has become more available to students, educators, and parents, through the use of school-level data that is available on line. Also parents will be receiving individual student's data.</p> <p>Because of the lack of clear information regarding the closing of achievement gaps, this section was given a score in the medium range. The applicant does provide a clear record of success for advancing student learning and achievement through interventions that address assessment, instruction, and interventions for the improvement of school learning climate for the students of the district. These efforts provide support for the potential of successful interventions as outlined in this proposal.</p>		
<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant demonstrates evidence of transparency by providing monthly updates on financial issues based on school board reports. Annual reporting devices are used for budgets and financial information.</p> <p>The applicant uses Accountable Idaho.com to increase transparency regarding personnel salaries. The applicant indicates that this is a comprehensive data base.</p> <p>The applicant does indicate how actual personnel salaries at the school and district level will be reported.</p> <p>This section was given a high ranking due to the inclusion of strong evidence of transparency.</p>		
<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b>		

The applicant demonstrates the extent to which the LEA has sufficient autonomy under state requirements to implement the proposed plan. The applicant addresses each of the four core elements and then demonstrates how that core element is both addressed by the district and either supported by or required at the state level. For example, the state of Idaho currently requires that the teacher evaluation system be based 66% on teacher effectiveness and 33% on student achievement. This approach has been adopted at the district level with close work with the bargaining groups to provide for the improvement of the teacher evaluation system.

This section was given a high ranking as the element was comprehensively addressed.

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

15

12

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

The applicant provided a unique approach to getting stakeholder engagement and support as the district used a Youth Search Conference to bring powerbrokers including students to the table to discuss the needs of the student population. This effort included mayors, commissioners and superintendents and provided for meaningful engagement.

In the letters of support the key stakeholders demonstrate appropriate support for the project. This also includes a clearly defined effort of the collective bargaining group, the Rexburg Education Association, in both participating in the development of the project as well as supporting the efforts regarding teacher and principal evaluations.

The applicant stated that the development team collected feedback and shared information; however, without specific information on what issues were shared and collected, it is difficult to determine the effectiveness of this input.

This section was given a high ranking due to the extent of the meaningful support that the LEA has received. This is clearly evident in the letters of support which included major stakeholders. These letters included support from Brigham Young University-Idaho and the Rexburg Education Association. These are two key partners needed to provide for the possible success of this project.

**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>

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

The applicant provides for the key elements of approaches to learning and engages and empowers learners; however does not specifically address how the overall efforts are different from those that are outlined for high-need students. The applicant does not clearly identify how the support of the parents will be involved directly in student learning. For example, the development of learning maps is a key component of the district plan to address learning. This appears to be a one-size fits all approach rather than individually addressing students with special high needs and does not appear to include any parental involvement.

Also the applicant does not identify the parental role in the learning plan other than access to the plan. Without this direct parent involvement, it is difficult to determine the success of accomplishing the student goals.

The applicant stresses the use of an e-portfolio for individual students. This element appears to offer students opportunities to deepen learning and to provide more access and exposure to diverse cultures.

The applicant indicates that through the use of a learner-centered model that teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity and problem-solving will be addressed. The plan includes clearly defined specifics as to how each of these elements will be addressed to support the students' efforts. These efforts are likely to be successful.

Although the applicant does provide several defined scenarios for students in PK-12 as to how the students may be served with a variety of instructional approaches, it is not clear if these efforts are of high quality. For example at the elementary level the third grade student in the scenario is provided with aligned curriculum however it is not clear if this curriculum supports high quality, rigorous work. Without that information it is difficult to determine the possible success of this learning at a high level of rigor.

In order to provide mechanisms for training and support the district plans to offer professional development and training for key stakeholders including parents, teachers, and students. This part of the plan appears to provide adequate resources to

provide them with the ability to track and manage the learning.

The applicant does provide elements of a high-quality plan for tracking growth of students. In the plan, Goal 2. Obj.1, and Goal 1. Obj. F includes activities, timelines, deliverables, responsibilities, and evidence of success for the career and college pathways. However, due to the missing elements such as parental involvement as responsible parties, the plan is not totally credible and is less likely to succeed.

Due to the lack addressing the parental support components of the learning and the lack of a clear definition of rigorous learning, this section has a medium ranking.

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

**20**

**15**

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

The applicant provides three main components of the professional development plan that will be used to improve learning and teaching. Those elements include addressing curriculum and assessment systems using professional learning communities. These efforts appear to be part of a high-quality plan for implementing instructional strategies that work. These efforts are based on some of Marzano's work. These efforts appear to provide support for successful teaching and leading.

The applicant indicates that the use of digital dash boards and e-portfolios will provide ample support for frequent measurement and feedback on progress toward student goals.

However, the applicant does not reflect how the digital dash boards and e-portfolios will ensure all students can graduate on time and college and career ready because there is no direct linkage provided between those electronic measures and the college and career ready goals.

The applicant provides a clearly developed plan to address appropriate feedback to teachers and administrators through the planned evaluation systems which are developed using the Charlotte Danielson Framework. These efforts should produce a successful approach to improving instruction.

The teaching and leading plan includes the creation of a toolbox that will be available to teachers. This electronic component will provide learning resources for the teaching staff. The applicant does not clearly indicate how these resources will be of high-quality. Without that assurance, it is difficult to determine if the tool box will be successful.

The plan includes training for administrators in the evaluation system as well as continuous improvement practices based on surveys that are completed regarding school climate.

The applicant defines a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals. This includes the Pay for Performance element. Also included is a proposal to study the turn over issues in the district and provide a bonus for hard-to-staff positions.

The applicant clearly outlines a high-quality plan as defined by the notice for this grant. It includes activities, timelines, deliverables, responsibilities and evidence of success. Although the plan has some elements that could be improved as defined in the above comments, the plan appears to be credible.

Due to some missing elements as is defined by the above comments, this section is ranked at the medium range.

**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:**

The applicant has included a Leadership Transformation Team as well as a Community Advisory Team, Technology Integration, and an Administrative Council to provide the leadership for the schools participating in the project. These efforts appear to be adequate to provide for success of the proposed programs.

The school leadership teams for each participating school are clearly outlined and the local schools appear to have

adequate flexibility and autonomy to address the goals of the project. This leadership team works with school schedules, calendars and staffing models. The administrators have hiring and firing authority.

The district has begun to provide some opportunities to progress and earn credit in a variety of ways. This includes an early start to college course work. As part of the project's plan mastery rather than seat time will be a goal of the project.

Although for the most part the applicant has provided support for the organization to achieve the goals of the project, the applicant does not provide a high quality plan for these efforts. The plan provided for most of the elements of the project does not link the school based leadership teams to any of the objectives. Without this link it is difficult to determine if the plan is credible. The applicant does not provide timelines and deliverables for this section. Due to the lack of these links, this section is score in the medium range.

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

**10**

**3**

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

The applicant includes in the plan efforts that will assure that parents and students have access to the necessary technology after school if there is not access in the home. The plan also provides for transportation for students home after the after school programs. These are excellent efforts to meet the needs in the rural, isolated areas.

The plan includes a Technology Integration Team that will be responsible for technical support for the digital aspects of the project. There will be a specialist/liaison position created. It is not clearly established if the one position will be sufficient to meet the needs of all of the elements of the project. The project's digital success will rely heavily on this position.

The applicant does not clearly define the open, interoperable data systems that will be utilized. The applicant indicates that open data formats will be created, but does not define the technical requirements of that system.

Due to the lack of some very essential information, this section has a score in the mid to low range.

Although the applicant provides the elements of a high-quality plan that includes activities, timelines, deliverables, responsibilities and evidence of success, the plan lacks credibility due to the weak definition of the activities that would produce open-data formats and interoperable data systems.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>

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

The applicant includes a thorough plan for internal and external evaluation. Brigham-Young University-Idaho will be providing the outside evaluation for the grant. The internal process will be directed by an internal evaluator position. With these elements the proposal should have a clear and high-quality approach to continuously improve its plans.

The applicant does provide a high-quality plan as defined in the notice. This includes providing goals and objectives, activities, timelines, deliverables, and persons responsible for the processes. This plan appears to be credible.

Although the applicant indicates that information regarding professional development results will be shared with administrators and administrative council, the applicant does not identify a clear plan as to how these results will be publicly shared.

Because the applicant presents a high-quality plan for the continuous improvement process, this section has been scored in the high range.

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

**5**

**2**

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

The applicant will be hiring a social marketer to implement a quality communication plan. The advisory committee will also play a key role in providing feedback. These are strong elements for a high-quality plan.

However, the applicant does not include any specific deliverables regarding this communicating plan. Therefore it will be

difficult to determine the success of the communication plan.

Because the applicant does not include any specific deliverables for the communication plan, the plan does not meet the criteria for a high-quality plan as defined by the notice.

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

The applicant does indicate a clear rationale for selecting the measures including the change from the Idaho Standards Achievement Test to the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium..

The applicant does provide some ambitious yet achievable performance measures. For example, using the estimated change in baseline data using the Smarter Balance Achievement Consortium Assessment, the applicant indicates that in Grades 4-8 all participating students will increase the scores from 46% proficient to 60% proficient in one year in the area of reading.

Although the applicant appears to have included an adequate number of performance measures at each required grade level, the selection of the "effort on grade" assessment may not produce useful data that applies to the goals and objectives of this project. This assessment is a subjective teacher assessment based on student's effort. However, without that performance measure there would not have been an adequate number of performance measures. It appears that the applicant may have added this assessment to meet the number of required performance measures; however, it is not a quality measurement of student academic success.

The applicant did not address how it will review and improve the measures over time.

Except for the minor weaknesses this section was acceptable; therefore, the score is in the high range.

<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 includes professional development as one of the elements of the high-quality plan to rigorously evaluate effectiveness. The evaluation includes attendance sheets for the meetings. For the quality of the intervention post-training assessments will be used to verify teacher mastery. It appears that both qualitative and quantitative data is being collected to support the evaluation of the effectiveness of investments.

Although the applicant includes some examples of quantitative and qualitative evaluation processes it is not clear who is held responsible for each of the efforts. For example, the applicant indicates that the afterschool program will be evaluated by increased student achievement. However, the applicant does not define exactly which student achievement and who will be responsible for those efforts. Without that information, this part of the plan is not of high-quality as defined by the notice.

**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:**

The applicant provides in the budget reasonable and sufficient support for each of the four core elements of the proposed project. For example, the section on Achieving Rigor includes the funding of the Project Director and a full time administrative assistant.

The budget includes supplies and materials for a welding and health occupations courses; however, those items are not specifically addressed in the goals and objectives of the project. Without that connection it is difficult to determine if those expenditures are appropriate for this grant.

In the section of the budget regarding "Achieving Rigor", "Tracking Growth", "Mining Talent" and "Extending Success", the applicant does clearly define the funds used from other sources. For example in the "Extending Success" project, the applicant indicates that a Madison Cares Grant for one million dollars will support this program. This data will help to support the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments.

The applicant does not clearly identify which expenditures will be used for one-time investments and which expenditures will be used for ongoing operational costs that will be incurred during and after the grant period. For example, the personnel to support the project including the Instructional Coaches and the Career and College Liaison positions appear to be ongoing throughout the grant. However, there is not an indication that those positions are one-time investments or if these positions will be part of the operational costs after the grant has been completed. Without the information it is difficult to determine the long-term sustainability of those elements of the project.

Due to some missing information this section is scored at the medium range.

<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>
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**(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

Although the applicant included a three-year sustainability budget that indicates some planning went into those processes, the applicant does not include a comprehensive plan that includes deliverables and persons responsible for the sustainability efforts. Without that information it is difficult to determine how successful the sustainability plan will be.

The applicant does include specific activities and timelines to support the sustainability plan.

Because the plan does not address all the elements of a high-quality plan this section was scored in the medium range.

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

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant relies effectively on past history and current support of several strong partnerships within the community.

The applicant includes six population desired results for the proposed interventions. However, the applicant does not provide specific quantifiable results levels. Therefore, it may be difficult to determine the success of a specific effort. For example, the result statement, "Children participating in the Parents as Teachers program will be prepared to succeed in school", does not include the number or percentage of participants and how that success will be measured.

The applicant provides a clear action plan for the partnership that this proposal is supporting. It includes the goals, activities, timeline, deliverables and responsible parties.

The applicant indicates that the successes of their program would be shared with neighboring schools.

The applicant provides adequate tracking indicators for the population-desired results.

The applicant will be relying on the Madison County Community Council to address results over time. This appears to be an appropriate venue for this process.

At each school level the Child Assistance Team will be used to refer students and provide additional supports. This appears to be appropriate.

The applicant provides performance measures including Reading and Math assessment outcomes. These appear to be both ambitious and achievable. For example, for the Kindergarten through third grade students, all participating students will move from 60% proficient on the Saxon Math Summative Assessments to 100% at the end of the grant period.

Although the applicant does provide some performance measures that are measurable, several of the goals of the project are not. For example, one of the outcomes is to have families treated as full partners in the academic process. The deliverables indicate that the family involvement will increase; however that is no quantitative data for that effort.

Therefore, it is difficult to determine if that goal will be achieved or if it is ambitious or achievable.

### Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>		<b>Met</b>
<p><b>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Throughout the applicant the district has coherently and comprehensively addressed how it will build on the four core education assurance areas. The use of the dashboards and e-portfolios will address the personalization of learning and teaching and support the improvement of student achievement and increase the effectiveness of educators. The plan for evaluation of educators will produce more effective and more highly-effective teachers and administrators. Due to these efforts the absolute priority is met.</p>		

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>148</b>
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