



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0139NY-1 for New York City Department of Education

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that builds on its work in four core educational assurance areas. The applicant has built its vision around the four core assurance areas of RTT and RTTD. NYCDOE has adopted the Common Core State Standards. The district went further and developed college and career readiness “benchmarks” that describe the skills and experiences that the students need at each grade level to succeed in college and careers. These benchmarks provide coherence and consistency to inform multiple systems and structures specific to New York City, ranging from citywide instructional expectations, performance measures, parent and student communication, and policy development within schools.

The proposal describes how personalized learning environments, with dedicated and intensive support, would help all school leaders, teachers, parents, and students in the proposal progress toward the reform vision.

Presently, the NYCDOE has an Innovation zone or iZone (Office of Innovation). This zone serves 158,000 students (in their lowest achieving schools) with a higher percentage of students on free and reduced lunch, students that require special education services and English language learner than compared to other 6-12 non-iZone schools. The piloted programs empowered teachers, administrators, students and parents with cutting edge resources and strategies for personalization such as online content, real-time data, and a suite of robust educational practices like flexible scheduling and staffing to expand opportunities on how, where and when a student can learn. Early results also show promise for student growth in key cognitive strategies and intrinsic motivation, as well as for teachers who say the more they were engaged in innovative work, the more positive they felt about the impact of the iZone on their teaching practice and their students.

The proposal presents a redesign program. Redesign would require approval by the school's staff, the UFT District Representative and the President of the UFT through a school-wide vote consistent with the procedures of a School Based Option. In addition, schools participating in Redesign will also be required to use the College and Career Ready Benchmarks to define the qualities and achievements required of students, including the Common Core State Standards as well as personal and academic behaviors. With delivery of the Benchmark elements through personalized learning, the iZone will help accelerate learning for every student towards being college and career ready. This redesign helps schools achieve radically higher gains in key metrics such as college and career readiness, academic motivation, student's capacity for self-directed learning, passage rate on the Regents exam, and graduation rates.

The applicant proposes two new school designs as personalized learning environments. The first model will incorporate a service design method, which focuses on designing around the “end user” to find innovative solutions to chronic problems. The new school model will incorporate user-centered design to build the school around student needs, and will put real-world experiences at the heart of the college and career-ready curriculum in a seamlessly integrated co-working space. The model will reimagine curriculum and pacing; space and time; and staff and student roles.

Online and blended learning is yet another way in which the applicant proposed to improve instruction and personalize the learning environment for each student. Online and blended learning pedagogies are a key lever in creating a personalized learning environment because they enable these fundamental changes in the roles of the teacher and learner and support a culture of student-centered learning. Online and blended learning facilitate the transition to a fully personalized learning environment and require significant investments of time, effort and resources.

Another important reform effort was the creation of the New York City Teaching Fellows program, which is an alternative certification program that recruits and prepares high-quality, dedicated individuals to become teachers in high-need NYC schools, usually in high-poverty communities and in difficult to staff subject areas. This initiative along with the Blended Learning Institute (BLI) which helps teacher integrate digital tools and online content into their classrooms will help provide personalized learning opportunities for students.

The Education Return on Investment (eROI) is a tool to estimate the cost of a specific educational outcome will help assess the efficacy of new PLE models calculating costs to student outcomes.

The proposal describes the student’s classroom experience. The proposal has tested some of the various personalized learning models for students and has had feedback through surveys and focus groups, as well as formal observations of the students.

Lacking in the proposal is a way of rewarding and retaining the staff, not just the training which is in the proposal.

(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)

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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states that the school recruitment strategies for RTT-D funded initiatives will fall into three categories:

1. A cohort of 70 schools validating the whole-school redesign approach
2. A cohort of six new schools
3. The pipeline of nearly 1,000 schools introducing online/blended learning and Response to Intervention

At this time there is no list of schools because the schools will have to apply for participation in the pilot program. The application process is rigorous as are the agreements to abide by to be sure that the pilots adhere to the RTTD five core strategies of the proposal and a commitment to the core personalization elements in the redesign proposal.

The applicant has assured the reader that the 100-day deadline would be met should they be selected and that at least 40% of the participating student would be from low income families. The district has a total of 1,036,148 students in over 1,800 schools, 67% are students on free or reduced lunch, 15.9% are students with disabilities, and 14.1% are English language learners.

The proposal estimates a total of 46,980 students in all grade bands will participate in the grant which exceeds the amount necessary for the application.

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

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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal’s high quality plan for personalize learning focuses on five core strategies: 1) Whole-school redesign for personalization; 2) New school design; 3) Teacher and school leader development; 4) Online and blended learning; and 5) Continuous improvement. Each has activities and rationale for the activities, timelines, deliverables and responsible parties for implementing the activities, as well as how each strategy will be scaled up to ensure that the strategies can be used district-wide or replicated within the district to help meet the goals of the strategy.

For example, the whole-school redesign (Redesign) effort will be implemented across a new cohort of 70 schools drawn from both existing iZone participants and schools new to the iZone over the four-year life of the RTT-D grant. The various stages will encompass:

- Ensuring schools are “ready” for PLE implementation using a framework developed for the NYCDOE by iNACOL (a sliding scale of school readiness);
- Designing and testing PLE models through the “iZone School Challenges” process (innovative ideas, implementation, impact, and scalability);
- Validating the models that show likelihood of success using the “eROI” methodology (a rubric to determine which PLE model should be scaled through the process); and
- Scaling the most promising models through cohorts of iZone Redesign schools.

Schools chosen for scaling up the Redesign will have to apply and will be those most “ready” to participate. The schools would have to have a school-wide vote. The schools would use College and Career Ready Benchmarks to define the qualities and achievements required of students, as well as personal and academic behaviors. This is to assure that there is personalized learning and to help accelerate learning for every student toward being college and career ready.

For the Redesign strategy there is a detailed timeline for implementation of the strategy and people responsible and their titles. Having the timelines, activities, and people responsible in one place in the proposal would make thier proposal more clear and the information is easily accessible.

Each strategy has all of these elements including how each will improve student learning through circulating and scaling meaningful reforms to support district-wide change.

The applicant’s proposal has strategies so that schools can engage in PLEs starting at a “low-intensity” such as online and blended learning to more full scale, such as whole school redesign.

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

The applicant’s vision as stated seems likely to improve student learning. The goals of the proposal are ambitious for some of the subgroups while deficient for others and are creating further achievement gaps. For example, the percent proficient or advanced on NYS 4th grade ELA Assessment; the white students begin with 47.8% proficiency and within five years are expected to gain 27 percentage points to 78.8% proficiency. The students with disabilities begin with 6.5% proficiency and within five years are expected to gain only 6.6 percentage points to 13.1% proficiency. This increases the achievement gap by 13.9 percentage points. The same is true of English Language Learners and Economically Disadvantaged Students.

The same achievement gap problem occurs in the percent proficient or advanced on NYS 4th grade Math Assessment, percent proficient or advanced on NYS 8th grade ELA Assessment, and percent proficient or advanced on NYS 8th grade Math Assessment.

High school graduation rates had goals that all subgroups except Economically Disadvantaged Students would gain 11 percentage points in five years. Economically Disadvantaged Students would only gain 8 points and white student graduation rates were not defined. This would widen Economically Disadvantaged Student’s achievement gap.

College enrollment rates were even for all subgroups, there was no subgroup for white students to make comparisons to the other groups.

The methodology for postsecondary degree attainment was that the students were continuously enrolled for four semesters after graduation. The baseline was for 75% for the students in NYCDOE. This is a good number of students for such a large district. It is a fair goal for only a one percent increase every year.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	10

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant uses a variety of assessments to demonstrate a record of success in the New York City schools over the last decade. There is a clear record of success in advancing student learning and achievement. On the NAEP test scores were significantly increased. The gap between white students and black students was narrowed on all exams. Low-income students are outperforming their peers throughout the nation. However, other subgroups such as students with disabilities and English language learners scores on the NAEP test were not discussed.

On the past few years, all subgroups made gains on the New York State exams in English and math except ELL learners in English, whose scores have been declining in the last three years. The low income student data was not presented in the subgroups in these examples.

High school graduation rates have steadily risen over the past several years, while dropout rates have steadily declined. Disaggregated data for ethnicity was presented. All ethnicities had risen in graduation rates. However, the subgroup (as defined in the notice) data was not disaggregated. There is no way to determine if gaps between the subgroups exist and if they need to be closed.

The applicant has opened 611 “new schools” since 2002. A study has shown that these smaller schools have made a difference among all students by helping students graduate, being better prepared for college, completing required Regents exams, and earning credits at a higher rate than schools created before 2002. The overall graduation rate increased from 35.7% at the large high schools in the building in 2002 to 68.0% in the new schools in the same building in 2011.

Another reform effort was the creation of the New York City Teaching Fellows program, which is an alternative certification program that recruits and prepares high-quality, dedicated individuals to become teachers in high-need NYC schools. Strong recruitment initiatives have played an instrumental role in closing the achievement gap between poor and minority students and their more affluent peers in NYC.

The NYCDOE has a very in-depth School Report Card. The district has student and parent surveys and a Quality Review. All of the information is published on the website. The School Report card does not inform instruction because it is too broad and not specific per student. There was not an example of what a student might receive.

Periodic Assessments are given to students for teacher to determine where students may need more help and plan targeted instruction. It is not clear from the proposal if the assessments are shared with students and parents.

Knowledge Sharing is a practice to help educators share knowledge and expertise among other educators to help student achievement which is an excellent way for educators to share information to improve student learning.

Children First Intensive is a PD programs to support educator in using data to inform instructional and organizational decision-making. Supporting the work of teacher teams engaged in collaborative inquiry was a process of deep self-study using quantitative and qualitative data to improve teacher practice and increase student achievement.

Achievement Reporting and Innovation System (ARIS) is a secure on-line platform to consolidate a view of student achievement data and collaborative instructional resources. Teachers can use it to accelerate and improve student learning, share learning, and take part in blogs. More importantly, parents can log into ARIS through a parent link and access their student’s attendance, periodic assessments, and New York State test results. It can be translated into 9 languages. Middle and high school parents can view report card grades, unofficial transcripts and high school graduation requirements. The portal also has activities for parent to do at home with student to improve student’s academics.

However, the NYCDOE does not discuss how all parents will gain access to the internet.

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

The proposal has a high level of transparency for the NYCDOE. The formulas used for allocating money among schools and the implementing policy guidance for each school year are made available to the public through the NYCDOE web site. Each individual school’s budget allocations and expenditure reports are made available, on a searchable basis, through the same web site. In an effort to make school budgets more transparent, the NYCDOE instituted Fair Student Funding in the 2007-08 school year, which enabled the elimination of multiple, complex funding streams and provides most funding to schools in a single, simplified budget allocation. Fair Student Funding is designed to cover basic instructional needs such as principals, teachers, textbooks and supplies. Fair Student Funding is allocated to each school based on the number and need-level attributes of students at the school, adjusted for the school’s funding percentage.

The principal of the school, along with the School Leadership Team (SLT), develop the budget ensuring it is aligned with their school’s Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP). The SLT discusses the budget with their constituency (for example, parent representative meets with interested parents). The principal sends the budget along with a justification to the Chancellor of Education.

An example of the funding formula was in the proposal. An example of the School Based Expenditure Report was in the proposal revealing a line item for the amount for all funds spent on Classroom Instruction, Instructional Support, and Leadership/Supervision/Support. Under each line item there were specific amounts for personnel salaries at the school level for teachers, paraprofessionals, and other classroom staff. There were line items for non-personnel expenditures at the school level also.

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

New York was one of the states to receive a Race to the Top grant which impacted the entire state. After being awarded the grant New York enacted legislation to support personalized learning environments. The following quote from the New York state RTT application demonstrates the clear extent to which the NYCDOE has the successful conditions and

sufficient autonomy to implement the PLE in the proposal: "New York State encourages and supports LEAs in establishing and operating innovative, autonomous public schools. This section describes several program and policy efforts that the State has undertaken in this regard, and the legal support for such autonomous schools. The board of education of each school district has the authority to prescribe the course of study, employ teachers and other staff, exercise budgetary control, and otherwise exercise the superintendence, management, and control of the school district (e.g. Education Law §§1709(3), (16), (20), and (33); 2503(3), (4)(c), and (5); 2554(2), (11), (13)(a), and (15)(a)). Some board decisions are non-delegable, but New York law generally leaves it to the discretion of the board of education to determine how much autonomy to grant to a school within the school district in exercising its authority to manage and control the school district."

The statements from the RTT application clearly indicate the autonomy given to NYCDOE in matters of curriculum, employment, budgets, and management and control of the school district to the local superintendent. The superintendent in turn would give the control to the schools within the district. The schools that apply to participate would gain the autonomy they need from the superintendent depending on the particular project in which the school participates.

NY State Education Department also enacted regulations allowing online and blended courses and authorizing courses to grant credit for online courses and blended learning based on mastery. Both will enable the applicant sufficient conditions to implement PLEs in the proposal.

New York state education laws were amended to provide flexible use of instructional materials, to include computer software and instructional computer hardware. This amendment strongly supports the applicant's proposal.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	8
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The leadership team engaged feedback by meetings with principals and teachers from participating schools, union partners, parents and representatives from parental organizations, representatives from community-based organizations, members of the business community, and members of the philanthropic community. This series of meetings were conducted in a variety of locations and at various times of the day, thereby ensuring that any stakeholder who desired to could attend. However, the proposal does not explain **how** the team engaged the various stakeholders or **what** they did with the feedback from the groups.

Other stakeholders were engaged by having a summary of the proposal presented to them. The groups could provide feedback through an e-mail address. The applicant states that the feedback was reviewed and the proposal was revised to include suggestions from a number of stakeholders. No examples were given as to how the proposal was revised because of the suggestions.

The United Federation of Teachers was part of the planning and grant process and signed off on the proposal. The applicant mentioned in an earlier section that in order for schools to participate in the proposal, the teachers would have to vote and be willing to abide by the proposal's guidelines.

The proposal has letters of support from a wide range of stakeholders. There are letters of support from Philanthropic Partners, External Stakeholders and Partners, a City Councilman, and a US Senator. Missing are letters of support from students and parents. These are key stakeholders and should be included.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	15

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

A high quality plan includes goals, activities, deliverables, timelines and persons responsible. The iZone Framework has four approaches to learning that are discussed in this section. Not all of the approaches have the elements of a high quality plan.

In order for students to understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals, the applicant will introduce teachers as coaches or mentors approach. The goal is to have teachers work with students on their personalized learning plans so that regular communication breaks down barriers between teachers and students to allow

the teachers to act like mentors. No timeline is attached to the project at this time.

The iZone schools will continue to run demonstration “introduction to academic coaching” sessions for parents and caregivers. The students run the simulated sessions with their parents, in which the student plays the teacher. Parents gain insight into what students experience during a personalized coaching session. Parents can gain the nature of the child’s progress in school and find a roll for themselves. This again has no timeline attached to the project.

Students led conferences is a practice that the applicant is going to use with teachers and parents. Students learn more about their progress as they have to share their results with others.

To identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college- and career- ready or college- and career-ready graduation requirements, students understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals, the proposal will use grant funds to purchase College Navigator to allow students to explore careers, prepare for the SAT and ACT, perform scholarship searches and matches, manage their FASFA applications and have access to step-by-step financial aid guides. There is a person responsible for the project, but does not explain how the students will gain access or timelines for the project. However, the NYCDOE is piloting a program of full mastery based learning and scheduling. Students would progress from one class to the next irrespective of their classmates. The timeframe is three years to roll out to 100-130 schools. In both projects there seems to be no parent involvement.

City-As-School is an innovative NYCDOE high school model that the proposal envisions students to be able to be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest and have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning. The model allows students to earn academic credit toward graduation by completing work-based experience and in-class reflection aligned to the standards. The success of the program resulted in graduation rates rising from 18% to 70-72%. Although the pilot was for overage students, the RTTD will be for the appropriate students in the application. There is no explanation about diverse cultures. Cisco’s Telepresence technology will power virtual connections with others to give students access to diverse contexts as one of the many online content tools of iLearnNYC. Students in iSchool will have an individualized, developmentally approach to high school that prepares them for college and beyond. These students will also use Cisco Telepresence technology for students to have dialogue with individuals from around the country and the world. Again, there is no timeline for this project or persons responsible for the project. Parental support is not involved either.

The applicant is clear that part of the iZone Framework is that it is critical that students master competencies and skills to achieve college- and career-readiness, including the Common Core Standards. What is not clear is if and when students develop traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, problem solving, etc.

The applicant ensures that all students, including high need and students with disabilities have a personalized learning plan that is developed by the student, parent, and coach. The PLR has regular feedback and progression analysis to ensure students progress on time and graduate in a timely manner. The monitoring is regular, but is not defined. The person responsible for the monitoring is not defined. A timeline would be useful to see how the PLP works over time.

The NYCDOE used the CCSS, but also have guidelines of their own in selecting instructional resources and tools. Since it is a large district NYCDOE has a wide variety of vendors to choose from because there will be many purchases in the district. The district has two innovative practices that may yield strong results to obtaining high quality resources. The first is the implementation of a federal Investing in Innovation (I3) grant. Designed as a “challenge,” the iZone uses a supply-side, crowd-sourced model with vendors to create these resources. By describing the iZone’s educational goals, the district “challenge” content and assessment vendors to meet these criteria with their products, which are then reviewed by the NYCDOE before being purchased or used. This method ensures the district that the vendor’s product is high quality and supports the projects PLEs. This idea is very innovative and can only be done in a very large district or state. The person responsible or timeline for the review of the materials and selection was not included.

The second innovation is Common Core Fellows. This group of teachers and implementation managers review and refine instructional materials to support the implementation of high quality and rigorous resources in blended and online learning environments. This project has a timeline and person responsible for the project. Again, this is a very innovative idea and can produce some very good teacher leaders and curriculum coordinators.

The applicant suggests that students use data to track their progress toward mastery of academic content and learning plan, including non-academic college- and career- ready standards. This is timely and actionable feedback for students, teachers and caregivers. Again, timely is not defined. Although some data is real-time data that both students and teachers can access. Teachers are having professional development on the interpretation of the data and to make it actionable. There is not timeline or person responsible for this. Caregivers are provided key indicators and benchmarks about whether their student is mastering his PLP in a timely manner. Caregivers are given supporting material to understand about student learning and also the coaching model helps them to understand. Again, timelines and persons responsible are missing from this piece.

All students have a PLP. All progression needed to realize mastery of college- and career-ready standards and graduation requirements are built into their plan. The NYCDOE is using Universal Design for Learning which allows all students to learn the same curriculum in an inclusive classroom environment. Training on instructional and behavioral supports for all learners is made available to all educators in the district. The district started the training two school years ago and should be fully implemented by now.

Schools with ELL students complete Language Allocation Policy to analyze the school's demographic and performance data. Schools have to plan for materials, resources and instructional methods for differentiating instruction for ELL students. The proposal will support the development of the Redesign schools in this effort.

Students are trained to use the tools and resources through three way: a course called Digital Literacy, a course for students called "How to Learn Online," and a third being developed by the district but not specified in the proposal.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	13
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

All elementary literacy teachers in the proposal will participate in the Response to Intervention (Rtl) which ensures that all students have high-quality, differentiated instruction to match their needs to prevent small learning challenges from becoming gaps in the later years. Teachers must be trained in order to use the components of Rtl effectively. The applicant proposes to use grant funds to provide professional development to support the teachers. Secondary teachers will be supported through an Adolescent Literacy professional development series to support accelerated learning. A timeline was provided. Rtl has been proven effective in helping to prevent many students from being referred to special education services and will be a good fit for the program.

Teachers will receive extensive support for the effective implementation of PLEs. The training will be done before or after school, on weekends, or holidays. iZone will pay for the training. Through RTTD support the professional development of teachers will need to be increased their capacity in order to realize full implementation of personalized learning and teaching for all students. The proposal's idea is for in-service training for educators to have peer to peer interaction and training to create the career lattice. The pre-service training will focus on developing a pipeline of qualified teachers who will work in high needs schools. The applicant will work with higher education to better train those students coming out of school. The proposal has a few creative ideas to help in this area, especially to train students coming out of college to be prepared to teach in personalized school environments.

Adapt content and instruction, providing opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks, in response to their academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches (e.g., discussion and collaborative work, project-based learning, videos, audio, manipulatives) was discussed in the proposal for teacher, but only about blended learning. Teachers will be given professional development about online and blended learning using online and webinars, further increasing their understanding of these modalities. No other adapting of content and instruction was provided in the proposal.

There is a PD plan for participating schools. There is face to face training, Push-in Mentoring, Lab School Monthly PD Series and Webinar Series. The trainings may fit all teachers' modalities, but they cannot receive all training in each modality.

Digital Ready helps middle and high school student's progress be tracked in granular, real-time fashion so that teachers, students, and parents know what the student has accomplished and what needs to be done. With RTTD funding the Scheduling, Transcripts and Academic Reporting System (STARS) will be enhanced to have customizable mastery-based report cards for students and their families. There are people responsible for the timeline to have STARS developed and running for the district. For a district going to mastery-based learning having a scheduling and reporting system like STARS is a wonderful tools. It will help everyone involved understand the process and make it go more smoothly.

With NY in the RTT, the state has passed legislation to include 20% of the evaluation on state assessments or other comparable measures, 20% on locally selected measures of student learning, and 60% on other measures of effectiveness which must include a research-based teacher/principal practice rubric. The last 80% in NYCDOE must be collectively bargained. The pilot schools in the proposal have tested a Teacher Effectiveness range of supports to be implemented in schools. This has proven effective in helping teachers improve student achievement and parent surveys had higher satisfaction results. This kind of result is impressive and should be followed up on.

iLearnNYC and Jumprope enable students, teachers, and caregivers to access data in real time regarding progress being made. The teacher can help individual students with the information and to customize teaching and learning accordingly. Again, these are good items to have, but parents may not have access to computers to get information that the teachers have. The parents will be out of sync if they are to participate in the teaching also.

The applicant states that the student-educator interaction is a critical element for assessing the effectiveness of the resources being applied to meet the student's needs. This process is supplemented by the data systems in place for progress tracking, which provide both the student and educator with actionable information and feedback. NYCDOE is piloting more automated ways for obtaining feedback and the RTTD funds will enable the applicant to continue this. It would be a cost savings if the applicant can find a way of accomplishing the task and not having to invest in a third-party contract.

As stated in a previous section, data from the evaluation system will be available to school leaders and non-individual data will be available to the School Leadership Teams (SLT). The SLT is the primary vehicle for developing school-based educational policies and ensuring that resources are aligned to implement those policies. The SLTs are required to produce an annual Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP) that assesses and prioritizes the needs of the school and identifies goals consistent with priority needs. In addition, the SLT must develop action plans reflective of effective strategies and activities to meet goals that are aligned with available resources (budget and staff). This is a good way for leadership teams to ensure that the resources are aligned with staff needs and budget.

The proposal refers to section C (1) (d) for a high quality plan for the number of students receiving instruction from effective and highly effective teachers. There is no section. This does not make for a high quality plan.

There was not many ideas mention for elementary school teachers, students and parents. The goals in the proposal address 4th grade. The reader did not see how the 4th grade students were to understand their progress or how the teachers were going to help them track their progress. There was no mention of how the parents could track their student's progress if he/she were in 4th grade. Rtl was the only program that would involve elementary students discussed. The proposal lacks teaching and leading in this area.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	11

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The NYCDOE's Office of Innovation leads all efforts to develop, test and diffuse innovative practices and strategies. The Deputy Chancellor of the Office of Innovation reports directly to the Chancellor, who leads the NYCDOE with the leadership team, Panel for Educational Policy, and the Community and Citywide Education Councils. The Deputy Chancellor meets with the leadership team biweekly. Deputy Chancellor will assign the CEO of the Office of Innovation to chair the RTTD Steering Committee.

The Division of Academics, Performance and Support (DAPS) are responsible for the CCSS, Benchmarking, and Quality Review and Progress Reports. The Office of New Schools will open the new schools and be involved with Teacher Recruitment, School Facilities, and the Division of Information and Instructional Technology.

The RTTD Steering Committee will meet monthly to review progress toward benchmarks and issues related to personalized learning. The iZone Leadership Team will meet six times per year. The team members are elected by their peers (students, principals, and teachers) to provide feedback and inform decisions on initiatives.

The Deputy Chancellor receives monthly reports.

This structure is straightforward for such a large district. The teams report regularly enough that it will not inhibit progress or meet too much to burden those who answer to the upper echelon.

Again, since NY State received RTT, NYCDOE will have sufficient flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school calendars and schedules, school personnel decisions, and staffing models. School budgets are decided by the school leadership teams and the principal. Some roles and responsibilities for educators will have to be negotiated with the UFT in NYCDOE. This still gives the applicant plenty of flexibility.

The proposal's plan for giving students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways is clear. Students will be given a list of competencies as well as criteria that will be used to

determine if mastery is demonstrated. Teachers will be constructing multiple ways for students to demonstrate mastery and ensure that students have multiple ways and avenues to demonstrate mastery.

Universal Design for Learning is a good model for all students to learn the same curriculum in an inclusive setting; however, this practice does not work for everyone. The proposal uses UDL for teaching students, but does not mention any other learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English Learners. The District should have other practices in place to facilitate personalized learning.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	7
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

A high quality plan has goals, deliverables, persons responsible, and timelines. Unfortunately, the proposal does not have all of the parts to a high quality plan in section D2. The proposal calls for a high quality plan ensuring that all participating students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders, regardless of income, have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of the application. The proposal assures the reader that all platforms are web based with secure log ins. The tools and systems can be accessed from any computer with an internet connection. Students have access at school, the library, community based organizations and the like. Parents have to access the tools and systems at these locations if they do not have a computer or internet at home. The proposal did not address any other options for low-income students or parents.

To ensure appropriate levels of technical support, a "Service Desk" is available to staff members, technicians are in the five boroughs, and schools receive data and IT support from their school support network. The proposal does not relay how technical support comes to the students, parents, or other stakeholders. Without the technical support, students and parents can get frustrated and not want to use the tools that may very well help themselves or their student. The proposal should address this issue.

Two of the information technology systems in the proposal are Gradebook and the iLearnNYC platform. All student data can be exported in a .csv format which is a widely used format. In iLearnNYC student portfolios can be exported into a variety of industry formats. All of which are user friendly as long as the parents have the knowledge to download. Support may be needed at first. Training for parents may be something that each school should put into their plans.

Since receiving NY's RTT grant, the applicant has worked to ensure that student data systems achieve interoperability with all appropriate state-run systems. NYCDOE has spent approximately ten million dollars to make their system interoperable and requires every new vendor to build deep integration data flowing in an interoperable clean manner. Interoperable data is great not only within a school district but throughout a state. This will help the district when one student transfers to another school. No information will be lost. No extra burden will be placed on the parent, especially migrant or students who are homeless.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	10

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a Research Advisory council that guides and provides critical feedback on the iZone research and evaluation efforts. The council is comprised of researchers from around the country. New members will be added to reflect the priorities and initiatives in the RTTD. Having an unbiased group of researchers evaluate the project is a sound way to gauge the effectiveness of each project.

NYCDOE innovations are meant to change at all levels, including the classroom, school, system, market, and policy. They achieve the goals by lowering the cost system-wide, building seed investments to encourage innovation through continuous improvement, and piloting and scaling promising innovations. The Office of Innovations initiatives are monitored and measured by looking at the education return on investment (eROI). eROI equals the cost divided by the student outcome. The formula is a very feasible way to see the return on investment to see if the project should continue.

The applicant also will employ other methods to monitor and measure the investments made, including gathering both qualitative and quantitative data which will happen in rapid cycles to encourage reflection and iteration of initiatives. The

timeframe in which the data will be collected is not clearly defined.

Student accountability data will be collected, but the proposal was not definite on a timeframe of how often the data will be collected or by whom the data will be collected.

NYCDOE will also employ measures across all schools regarding college and career readiness by continuing to use college readiness metrics. Again, there is no timeline for collecting the data or who is collecting the data which would help the reader understand how the metric will help in the initiatives.

iZone will require participating schools to employ their own measures, both formative and summative, to meet each schools own initiatives and personalization model. Guidance will be provided to the schools not only for design, but to facilitate improvements in the innovation work.

iZone requires each new cohort to have a reporting cycle both mid-year implementation and end-of-year implementation detailing progress on traditional student and teacher measures as well as data on pre- post-test changes in measures of academic and personal behaviors. Two reports a year may not appear like enough reporting to find problems in implementing change, but the proposal also has ongoing correction and improvements.

iZone envisions employing “rapid prototyping,” where potential improvements can be developed and tested. Rapid prototyping will validate the tools and strategies used in personalization of learning. The Research Advisory Council will evaluate the effectiveness. This is a very useful tool in the field and can give quick solutions to problems that may arise at any school. Once a solution is found at one school, it can be deployed to others and used without having to test at every school.

Implementation of sound management processes is the NYCDOE’s plan for managing the RTT-D award and the projects funded thereunder includes clearly defined roles and responsibilities for all of the key personnel as well as ongoing performance measures such as timelines and efforts towards continuous improvement by which the project will ensure it remains on task, on time and on budget. To effectuate the award, the proposed project includes both regular internal controls as well as the use of an external Advisory Board to monitor, review and advise the NYCDOE on progress toward goals.

The internal controls of the steering committee will meet monthly with the management team and other personnel to assure progress is being made according to timelines. Quarterly progress reports will be reviewed with the Program Officer at the NYDOE for adherence to timelines and budgets. These are sound practices which are needed in such a large district.

The advisory Board meets four times a year to keep members apprised of the project's tasks, progress towards benchmarks, and to ensure member the ability to offer feedback and advice in a timely manner.

In order to publically share information of the quality of its investments funded by the RTTD, the NYCDOE will regularly release both interim and annual reports and make these reports widely available via the Internet. In a large district, the internet may be the way to disseminate the information, but for those low income families, this may not be a way to ensure they receive the information. The information may need more “low tech” ways of getting to this population.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The RTTD Steering Committee will meet monthly to share updates and guide strategies. The committee will share updates with the Chancellor’s Cabinet quarterly.

NYCDOE is improving a website known as iZoneSHARE which allows educators and parents to voluntarily share information about the challenges they face and the successes they have realize in personalizing learning.

iZone will continues with Innovation Conferences, inter-visitations, parent “Open Houses,” and parent-engagement-focused communities of practice. There is no timeline, deliverables or persons responsible for these events. Parent engagement is a huge part of this process. There is insufficient evidence of real parent engagement and ongoing participation and communication.

Most of the on-going communication to stakeholders is through the website. More face-to face communication with all stakeholders to ensure understanding of all parties of the prpsal and any updates needed.

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

The NYCDOE has ambitious goals for the students. There are some goals that may widen the achievement gap instead of closing them for the subgroups.

The performance measures for students with effective and highly effective teachers are reasonable at this time. There seems to be not discrepancies in the subgroups.

The performance measure goals for Math and ELA Grades 4-8 Common Core Exams are widening the achievement gap. The gap between the overall population and the SWD in the baseline measure for math was 21.5 percentage points. The projection for SY 2017-18 leaves a gap of 42 percentage points. Therefore the gap is widening. The same is true for ELL students. The gap between the overall population and the ELL baseline measure for math was 18.7 percentage points. The projection for SY 2017-18 leaves a gap of 36.3 percentage points. In math the gap for SWD by SY 2017-18 rises from 20.7 to 43.4 percentage points. The gap for ELL students, the gap for SY 2017-18 is 24.5 and rises to 49 percentage points.

The measure for the number and percentage of participating students by subgroup who are on track for college- and career-readiness based on the applicant's on-track indicator again widens the achievement gap between students with disabilities and English Language Learners and those of the overall population.

The measure using a rubric and portfolio for college- and career-readiness significantly widens the gap between all participating students and ELL students while only slightly widening the gap between students with disabilities and the overall population. The applicant has limited expectations for the English Language Learners.

The performance measures for Key Cognitive Strategy Diagnostic and Academic Motivation Scale have achievable goals without widening the gap between subgroups for all grade levels. These measures are critical to providing a successful personalized learning environment for students because the interests and desires of students help to keep them motivated; and in the long run will help the applicant gain the knowledge to improve the student's and others personalized learning plan.

The number of students taking and passing AP exams is a very ambitious number of students to be successful on the exams.

The goals chosen and the rationales provided were sound and fit into the overall scheme of the Office of Innovation's present and continual goals for the district.

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

5

3

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal will employ the eROI method to evaluate innovations and costs, as well as their outcomes. This method is a strong evaluation method given timelines for each evaluation necessary.

All participants in professional development sessions will be surveyed as well as the staff who presented the professional development to help determine its effectiveness. The method, person responsible and timeline for the results were not established clearly in the proposal.

Principal Satisfaction Surveys, Observation and Focus Group Data, Online and Blended Course Usage Data, Teacher and Student Satisfaction Surveys, Pretest/Posttest Surveys, School Data Records, and eROI Calculations will all help determine the effectiveness of the RTTD funding activities. Each had explanation as to what each method of collecting data was and why it was collected. There were not timelines or key offices attached to the collection items to determine all the effectiveness of the whole process to make a high quality plan.

The deliverables are the various summary reports used by the iZone staff to assess the RTTD funded programs which include Case Student Reports, Interim Reports, and final reports. Again, the persons, responsible for these items, are not known and timelines to make an evaluation of their effectiveness are not included.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

Available

Score

(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	6
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(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's budget, including the budget narrative and tables identifies funds given by RTTD grant. None of the tables identify funds that came from other sources, such as the LEA, external foundation funds or other Federal funds to help with the project.

The funds are reasonable and but may not be sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal without the additional support from the LEA. The grant suggested that some of the projects were in process so; there must be some project leaders that the LEA will be paying for and will continue to do so if the applicant receives RTTD grant funding. The external evaluators on the Research Advisory Committee are a source of external foundation support that should be mentioned in the proposal's budget, among others.

The proposal provides a thoughtful rationale for investments and provides a description of all the funds which are all RTTD funds that will be used. The funds are identified as ongoing or on a one-time basis, but no focus on strategies to ensure long-term sustainability of the PLEs was included.

The Overall Budget Summary Project List total budget lines did not match what was in the Project Summary Tables for two of the budgets. Redesign for Personalization had a total budget on the Overall Budget of \$7,887,099.62, but on the Project Summary the budget was \$5,717,999.62. Wrap-Around Support Services Overall Budget was \$4,845,450.75, but on the Project Summary the budget was \$7,014,750.75. There was not an explanation for this in the narratives.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

A high quality plan has key goals, activities, rationale for the activities, timelines, deliverables, and persons responsible. The applicant did not write a high quality plan for the sustainability of project goals using the guidelines presented.

The proposal intends to support the project by adding schools that are interested and have the capacity for technology. Facilitating productive communities of practices with current and graduated iZone schools to get other schools excited about the projects. Embedding the goals and strategies of PLEs into pre-service teacher training and new school design process will create ways in which teachers and leaders can learn the strategies.

The proposal suggests that "The Fund," Funds for Public Schools, will continue to give them money to support projects as they have in the past. There was no high quality plan in place for this to occur.

The proposal needs a plan that is specific, at least for each of the five project and how the projects will be sustained, who will be responsible, and what is the timeline for getting this done.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	3

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has two plans. The first is to provide wrap-around services to children and build family and community support in all levels of school. The New York City Community Learning Schools Initiative already provides the services by connecting service organizations to schools. The RTTD grants with the support of NYC Community Learning Schools Initiative will support resource coordinators at school sites that already have Community Learning Schools and will work to expand the program. This is a good model if it can be sustained after the funding period.

The second plan is an Integrated Service and Resource Alignment in partnership with Good Shepherd Services, a community-based organization that is a leader in youth development and family services. The plan is to provide direct and technical advisory services by engaging overage, under-credited students in their education, goal setting, and future preparation and through staff capacity building so this work is sustainable beyond the grant period.

The plan has only five goals and they are aligned with the broader RTTD initiatives in the fact that all goals are to get students-college- and career-ready and to graduate from high school. How the partnership would track the goals was not discussed in the proposal. Special emphasis was not placed on the students because the population that the points were about is a specialized population.

The integrated Services and Resource Alignment (ISRA) Model, which is working with overage, under-credited youth, is a new scalable model based on their original transfer schools, YABCs, and other models that have been successful. The ISRA staff will meet weekly to review data on each student, covering classes passed, credits earned, Regents needed, attendance patterns, extra-curricular activities, and the student's general performance and well-being. This still does tell the reader how data will be track on the desired results.

The applicant does not address how parents and families of participating students will be engaged in both decision-making about solutions to improve results over time and in addressing student, family, and school needs. More parental involvement would make the proposal more personalized for a students because families are involved in their lives also.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The proposal meets the Absolute Priority 1 criteria because the plan clearly articulates the comprehensive and coherent vision of the overreaching premise of Personalized Learning Environments that builds on the four core assurance areas to significantly improve student learning and to make students college- and career-ready. The selection of schools process was explained in depth and met the criteria for the grant. The proposal is based on a high quality plan for personalized learning focused on five core strategies to produce wide-LEA reform and change. The district has a policy that lends itself well in providing the schools sufficient flexibility and autonomy over local decisions. The district has data systems which will allow data to be tracked in real-time to get information to teachers in order to ensure student success.

Total	210	144
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Race to the Top - District Technical Review Form

Application #0139NY-2 for New York City Department of Education

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	6

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

A.1. The applicant, a school district located in the State of New York, proposes to develop a student centered approach which includes a rigorous curriculum based on standards. Included are five core strategies such as whole school redesign, new school design, teacher and school leader development, online and blended learning, and continuous improvement of all programs. It intends to personalize learning through a program it refers to as Innovation iZone which includes both the redesign of existing schools and the building of new schools specifically intended to develop a personalized learning environment. The overall plan is appropriately focused on the Common Core Learning standards, academic improvement and programming, and college and career access. The applicant is following a personalized learning model to redesign 70 current schools. New schools will be designed using one model which focuses on end-users such as the healthcare and

transportation industry, for-profit and nonprofit organizations, and other potential users of graduates. A second model will develop personalized schools which focus on closing gaps in college and career readiness, particularly black and Latino young men and women. These are reasonable and feasible designs. Key components in the personalized learning approach are both online and blended learning pedagogies which will impact on 200 schools throughout the district. It will also build on its Blended Learning Institute to train and support teachers and educators in the district. The applicant also describes its Education Return on Investment concept which focuses on cost and student outcomes. Included in this process are the use of Dashboards which provide benchmarks and indicators of student progress, college readiness, and costs. The district has described its vision clearly in terms of its proposed programs, but it is unclear how it will address the four Core Educational Assurance areas required by the program. While it has focused on preparing students for college and careers, it is not clear how it will recruit, develop, reward, or retain effective teachers and principals. In addition, the applicant does not identify specific strategies to turn around its lowest performing schools. The Education Return on Investment includes the collection and analysis of data for two components of the overall proposal, Whole School Redesign and Teacher and School Leader Development programs. It is unclear if the concept will impact on the other elements of the proposed project. Also unclear is how the proposed programs will change the school day of the students participating in the project.

(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)

10

8

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

A.2. The applicant indicates that it will recruit participants in the project on a school basis. It will recruit a cohort of 70 schools for the whole school design, a cohort of six new schools, and a process that will impact on 1000 schools using the online and blended learning programs. Potential participant schools will apply to take part in the program. The application process will be comprehensive and will include the development of goals and activities as well as show evidence of support from the school leadership team and teacher organizations as well as parents and staff. Schools are expected to strive for personalization and be committed to the five core strategies. The district will support the process and will ensure that schools already participating at some level on implementing personalized learning will be involved. The district will support the process with information and support efforts. Upon award of a contract, the district will verify that at least 40% of participating students are from low income families coming from the 1800 schools in the district. The 20,000 students required for participation will come from a student body that is 67% eligible for free or reduced price lunch, 15.9% with disabilities, and 14.1% English Language Learners. While these statistics indicate that the district has a large number of low income students, they do not indicate if the individual schools are low performing. The criteria lack affirmation on whether the district will give priority to its lowest performing schools when selecting participating schools for the project. Nonetheless, the selection process will generally assist the project in implementing its innovative activities.

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

10

5

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

A.3. The applicant describes a three pronged approach in its reform efforts for district wide change. Included are the use of personalized strategies, tools, and supports, structured communities of practice, and multiple approaches using online and blended instruction to bring about personalized learning environments. In addition, the district will scale these processes to include more schools and students in the district. While these activities represent reasonable approaches, they do not include the elements of a high quality plan. Missing are specific objectives, a timeline, specific deliverables, and personnel who will carry out these activities. The narrative provided is very general and lacks specific information related to the impact on student learning as a result of direct or indirect participation in the project.

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

10

5

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

A.4. The applicant provides performance measures showing proficiency and mean growth percentiles by New York State tests. The tests, aligned with the Common Core Standards, focus on grades four and eight in math and English language arts. In addition, the applicant provides information on decreasing achievement gaps for all students as well as specific student subgroups. Also included are performance measures related to graduation rates as well as college enrollments. In terms of proficiency, the applicant projects that all students will reach 49.2% in 2016–17 from a base of 27.2% in 2012–13 in English Language Arts, grade 4. In math, all students will achieve 57.2% from a baseline of 35.2% for the same years. Providing data for each student subgroup, the applicant indicates that the overall graduation rate will climb to 72.7% in 2016–17 from the current 64.7% rate. For Black or African American students, the rate will climb about 10 points during the same timeframe. Similarly, the applicant projects a 10 point increase for students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and Hispanic or Latino students. College enrollment projections indicate that the applicant expects 79% of all students in 2017–18 will enroll in college as compared to the current level of 74%. Over all, the college enrollment

projection for all student subgroups is about 4-5%. A 5% increase is projected in post secondary degree attainment for 2017–18 as compared to 75% for 2011–12. In reviewing these performance measures, the projections appear to be more practical than ambitious. In particular, the projections for graduation, college enrollment, and degree attainment appear very modest. It is possible that the district may achieve these outcomes without the investment of grant funding. More information is needed from the applicant to document the ambitiousness of these projections. While they are achievable, the measures seem less than ambitious.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	10
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>B.1. The applicant sites a partial record of success based on the results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress tests between 2003 and 2011. The results showed an average of eight points gained in math at the fourth grade level, six points at the eighth grade level in math, and seven points in fourth grade in reading. The applicant also indicates that the average score in both math and reading for Black fourth graders is higher than those same students nationally and statewide. In addition, the applicant describes its adoption of Children First, an educational reform program creating new, small secondary schools. In support of this program the applicant provides academic and achievement gains for a diverse population of the students. Also cited by the applicant is the New York City Teaching Fellows program, an alternate teacher certification program designed to provide more teachers in high need city schools. The information provides some indication that programs have been successful in the district. However, the information is less than comprehensive and complete. These examples in themselves do not provide a clear picture of any record of success throughout the district and in low performing schools specifically. The applicant needs to provide more comprehensive information about academic success for a more representative body of students. It is unclear how successful other programs have been and why these two programs were identified for discussion. The applicant describes a number of processes it employs to share knowledge and data with parents. In addition to periodic assessments, the district uses a computer based system, ARIS Connect, which includes a "Parent Link" with detailed performance information about their child. Included are screenshots which show how parents log in and can review the data by subject area. While the information reflects potential access, it is unclear how many parents actually use the system and how user-friendly it is. More specific information about its utilization is needed to assess its transparency.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>B.2. The applicant describes its overall financial reporting processes and practices, indicating that each school reports allocation and expenditures which are made available on the district website. In addition, it describes its Fair Student Funding initiative which identifies funds allocated to each school based on the number and need levels of the students at the school. It indicates that it uses school-based budgeting and reports this expenditure in progress reports and school report card documents. It is unclear from the material provided in the application if actual personnel salaries at the school level are made available. While most budget documents at some level include salaries, fringe benefits, and other expenditures it is unclear what the applicant makes available to stakeholders and how accessible that information is. More specific information confirming that it does report these required salaries is needed.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>B.3. The applicant indicates that it has clear authority and sufficient autonomy to seek and use funds available under this grant program. In the application, the district cites laws, rules and regulations from the New York State Department of Education supporting this contention. In providing this information, the applicant specifically indicates how this information enables them to effectively implement the project and exercise its decision-making process concerning the various components of the project.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	15
(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>B.4. The applicant reports that the proposal was reviewed by various stakeholders and supported with appropriate</p>		

documentation. For example the applicant describes meetings with administrators, parents and representatives from parent groups, members of the business community, and members of the philanthropic community as well. These meetings provided feedback to the school leadership teams and the iZone Leadership Council, who also met with both the Chancellors Parent Advisory Committee and the Chancellors Student Advisory committee. These activities demonstrate an effort to involve stakeholders and use their feedback. After review by these groups, the proposal was revised and shared with the United Federation of Teachers for their consideration. After their review, the teachers union signed the certification in support of the project. While the union indicates some differences in footnotes throughout the application, their final statement or letter indicates a commitment to the project. In addition, the applicant cites letters of support from a number of organizations and groups throughout the city. The applicant indicates that it feels that this support will assist in the implementation of a personalized learning environment. Overall, the input by stakeholders was very positive and supported with appropriate documents.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	10
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>C.1. In its narrative, the applicant describes its commitment to providing all students with a rigorous course of study aligned to college and career readiness. In addition it is committed to implementing instructional strategies for personalizing learning for all students. The description includes a discussion of the curriculum and assessment processes, personalized learning plans and progression, new student and staff roles, and flexible and real world learning environments. While the description discusses appropriate items, the narrative does not meet all elements of a high quality plan. For example, the applicant does not provide a timeline for implementing the various components of its proposed program. While personnel are identified, it is unclear who is responsible for implementing the various activities and services. Also missing are specific goals related to these activities.</p> <p>The applicant provides a description of how it plans to personalize learning and apply it in the district. For example, the applicant indicates that students will be engaged in an authentic assessment by presenting their project and what they have learned before an involved audience. Included is a general description of parent engagement and involvement. However, the information is very broad and does not address specific schools, grade levels, or subject areas. From this general discussion, it is unclear how students will master critical thinking, communication, problem solving, teamwork, or perseverance.</p> <p>The applicant indicates that personalized learning plans will be developed through personalized coaching, moderated through feedback, involved caregiver and educator engagement, and systematic uses of data and analysis tools. It is unclear from the materials if there is a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development. More specific information is needed in order to determine how the applicant will provide high quality content. The district plans to develop its systems further so that students will be able to track progress on their entire learning plan as well as their college and career readiness. It is unclear what stage of development the system is currently at.</p> <p>As part of the proposed activities, each student will have a personalized learning plan which will identify individual needs and interests. For high need students, the district is committed to using Universal Design for Learning for professional development of teachers and administrators providing training in inclusive practices for both instruction and behavioral areas.</p> <p>The applicant indicates that it is currently reviewing a number of programs to help students track and manage their learning. One program is Digital Literacies which is designed to build digital literacy skills such as online research, communications, and production. It is unclear when this project would be in place and how it will specifically assist students in accomplishing this task.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	10
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>C.2. The applicant intends to focus on personalization of learning by creating professional learning opportunities for teachers and other educators in an effort to provide effective programs for students, focus on standards, and use feedback to promote effectiveness. The cornerstone of the process is to develop skills in the use of Response to Intervention, a multi-tiered instructional and intervention adopted by schools for students to have equal access to high quality differential instruction. Included in the process as well is the development of a program to develop more effective science and math</p>		

teachers as well as developing approaches to online and blended learning in the initial pilot program. While the applicant provides a number of interesting and significant programs, the overall focus is unclear as a result of a less than complete high quality plan. The applicant does not provide objectives or specific personnel who will implement the various activities. More information is needed on how these programs will be provided at specific grade levels and in specific schools.

The applicant indicates that it will use a Digital Ready model to enhance mastery learning. It is supported by STARS which is a tool to track student progress against specific standard strands. To develop feedback skills, the applicant will continue to develop a new educator evaluation system based on Danielson's Frameworks for Teaching designed to model quality teaching, conduct frequent classroom observations, and provide teachers with formative feedback and professional development. Feedback from parents indicated that this model was successful.

Personal learning plans developed for each student will become the basis for tracking students and customizing teaching and learning. The plan will become the basis for measuring student progress, making recommendations for accelerating growth, and ensuring that they remain on course to graduate in a timely matter. These plans will also assist educators in identifying optimal learning approaches which will assist the student in improving achievement. Both student – educator interactions and regular feedback will provide an indication that the project is developing high quality learning resources.

The applicant indicates that the School Leadership Teams will be a key organization in structuring an effective learning environment. The teams are required to produce an annual Comprehensive Education Plan that assesses and prioritizes the needs of the schools and identifies goals consistent with these needs. The team will have appropriate training that will enable them to structure an effective learning environment that meets individual student academic needs, accelerate student progress, increase student performance, and close achievement gaps.

The applicant indicates that all educators will have ongoing training and professional development available to them. They will also receive feedback from the evaluation system. All of these will assist them in conducting school-based, shared decision-making. The process will also be assisted through external experts and coaches. While the process seems promising, it is unclear exactly how these activities and services will be provided on what basis and frequency.

The applicant lacks a high quality plan which addresses the issue of how it plans to increase the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals. While encouraging teacher participation and leadership development opportunities, the applicant does not specifically address how it will provide teachers for hard to staff schools, key subjects such as math and science, and other areas such as special education.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	8
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>D.1. The applicant describes how it has organized several offices in the district to enhance the focus of the project and improve its overall implementation. Specifically, it describes the work of the Office of Innovation, the Division of Academics, Performance and Support, and the Office of New Schools. In addition, an RTT-D Steering committee will meet monthly to review benchmarks, an implementation timeline, discuss issues, and project data. While these changes seem appropriate, it remains unclear what the district will be doing without a high quality plan. The narrative does not contain specific objectives, nor does it identify the roles or functions of the various project personnel.</p> <p>The role of the school leadership team is defined as a requirement through state and local laws and policies. Though it cannot hire personnel, the school leadership team must be consulted in the appointment of the principal or assistant principal. The applicant indicates that the school leadership team has as much flexibility and autonomy as state law and collective bargaining agreements a permit.</p> <p>The applicant indicates that the proposed program will have a real world learning environment through the use of internships, apprenticeships, and fieldwork outside the school. These activities will assist the student in earning additional credits. It is unclear in the statement if the student has the ability to earn extra credits based on demonstrated mastery. Equally unclear is the level of opportunities provided for students to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparative ways outside of coursework.</p> <p>The applicant indicates that it has adopted Universal Design for Learning and supports educators and meeting the needs for all children specifically English language learners. While they assure students and parents that they have equal access to quality schools, it is unclear how specifically this is accomplished.</p>		

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>D.2. The students, parents, and educators have access to all aspects of the educational process and the district. The applicant indicates that computerized systems provide access to educational resources as well as online and blended learning systems so the students can access their work at any time and from any setting. In addition, similar specific portals and web pages are available to other stakeholders for use in gaining information about programs and students. These facilities will continue to be updated during the project and enhanced with additional features. While these accesses are available, is unclear what the current level of usage is. Information on current utilization by students and parents would greatly enhance an understanding of the participation levels.</p> <p>The applicant provides a "service desk" for all staff members and others using the system. It is unclear whether other services are available to students, parents, and staff in terms of assistance to access the systems, find information, and use them to provide feedback.</p> <p>The applicant indicates that it uses a variety of programs such as Gradebook and theiLearnNYC computer programs to make available grades, test scores and other mastery tracking information. Much of this data can be loaded into other learning information and management systems. Once again, while these services are available, it is unclear how frequent and often they are used by students and parents. Such information will enable reviewers to assess their ease of use and user-friendliness.</p> <p>The applicant indicates that it uses interoperability as a key element in its data strategy. The district has ensured that its computer systems interface with all appropriate state run systems. The district indicates that it is the first district to impose IMS data interoperability standards for system providers in the online curriculum space.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	13
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>E.1. Implementation of the project involves an examination of the project using questions and measures that are aligned with and targeted to the core goals of the activities and services. The project has a Research Advisory Council that guides and provides critical feedback. Overall, the district seeks to lower the cost to innovate system wide, build seed investments to encourage innovation, and pilots and scales promising innovations that emerge from seed investments. This effort is overviewed by the district's Office of Innovation. To monitor and measure innovation, the district uses an educational return on capital investment concept which seeks to determine the cost of making gains associated with innovation. The use of these metrics provides timely and regular feedback which enables ongoing corrections and improvements. Resulting from this process are monthly meetings of the management team and quarterly progress reports to track implementation. Specific instruments that will be used in the process are the Academic Motivation Scale, the Self-directed Learning scale, and the Online Learning Readiness Scale. Information gathered in the process is shared through interim and annual reports which are available via the Internet. While the applicant provides many well accepted evaluation activities, the applicant does not include all elements of a high quality plan. One aspect missing is a timeline for these activities. A timeline would provide staff with a means to measure progress against benchmarks to determine progress and effective implementation.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>E.2. The applicant will communicate on a regular basis with both internal and external stakeholders in order to create, evaluate, and infuse innovative solutions. Internal communications include regular updates at the Chancellors Cabinet meeting and the use of the website which allows educators and parents to voluntarily share information about challenges they face. This website is open to external educators as well. In addition, the district holds Innovation conferences, inter-school visitations, parent open houses, and parents- engaged communities of practice. The applicant will also add on a continuing basis information featuring best practices and case studies, networking between participating schools, newsletters, and videos. The range of communications is very broad and will be beneficial.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

E.3. The applicant includes as set of performance measures that consists of the specific population and a measurable component. The measures were chosen to provide both timely and accurate statements assessing program achievement, the ability to make improvements, and other issues related to the project. These decisions reflect a reasonable means of defining subgroups and projections. They will be used as formative assessments for continuous improvement. The data used in the measures were created by the New York State Department of Education to examine the growth of students on their assessment test. The district will begin a new teacher and principal evaluation system, based on the New York State educator evaluation law. The percentages of teachers who are effective or highly effective are based on the overall distribution of ratings for teachers. For example, it projects that approximately 85% of all students will be taught by effective teachers. In addition, the applicant provides twelve achievable performance objectives focused on all grade levels. As soon as data is received from the new system, the applicant will report that information. The performance measures provided by the applicant will enable them to determine if they are meeting their targets for the overall student population and the various subgroups. The measures are ambitious and achievable through the implementation of the project.

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

E.4. The applicant plan is designed to assess the effectiveness of the project information system and the professional development services. The plan includes professional development evaluation forms and discussions with trainers throughout the year assessing their activities. The applicant has developed a number of questions which it will use to collect data and determine the effectiveness of the implementation. An outcomes analysis will provide information about the activities funded by the grant. The activities will focus on students, teachers and schools. Additional information will be gathered about teacher attitudes and behaviors and their productive use of time, staff, money, and other resources. Included in the evaluation is an outcome analysis which focuses on academic achievement as well as student attitudes and engagement. Specific activities will include principal satisfaction survey, observation and focus groups, school visits, and other assessment functions. Usage of data for online and blended course work will be gathered and assessed. Implementation will include both pretest and posttest surveys and analysis of student records. Overall the process is very comprehensive.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

F.1. The total federal grant funds requested amount to \$29,699,092 which will support 21 staff positions and extensive professional development. The applicant breaks down the cost of the project in terms of whole school design (\$5.7 million), six new schools (\$4.5 million), online and blended learning strategies (\$4 million), and mastery-based learning support (\$1.3 million). The allocations assigned to each are reasonable and responsible in light of current costs and salaries. The amounts included are both reasonable and sufficient to meet the various activities and services of the project as indicated in its descriptions and allocations. One-time investments which are included in the allocations for the projects are primarily in computer hardware. The funds as described in the budget narrative focus on personalizing student instruction and support accomplishing this outcome.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

F.2. Applicant indicates that it has designed activities intentionally so that they require an upfront investment which reduces over time. The project will work with the individual schools to realign current budgets which will reflect in the future these new priorities and programs developed with federal funds. The financing for sustaining and scaling the program will come from several sources, including the state and city government operating and capital funds. The applicant expects to attract a wide variety of private and philanthropic funding in partnership with the Fund for Public Schools. The Fund has raised more than \$17 million since 2009 for activities which nurtures strategies for personalized learning. This information is less than effective without a high quality plan. While there are some specific activities and deliverables, missing are a timeline for activities and the specific personnel who are responsible for the activities. This information would increase the likelihood that the district will sustain the project activities and maximize their impact on student achievement.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	4

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes how it has developed sustainable partnerships with a number of organizations. One of the partners is the New York City Community Learning School Initiative working with 16 schools across the city which focuses on educational, medical, social and health programs. The project creates unique service hubs at the schools providing communities with a broad range of services. Another partnership described is that of the Integrated Service and Resource Alignment developed in conjunction with Good Shepherd services, a community-based organization focused on youth development and family services. Functioning in 14 schools, it serves 4649 students and is a vast network of resources, expertise, and experience. These initiatives have an appropriate foundation to form partnerships and use them effectively in developing the project.

The applicant identifies five population level desired results for the Integrated Service and Resource Alignment project which will interrelate with the proposed RTT-D project. The desired results focuses on students and families and are supported with a timeline in the appendix. Overall the desired results are relatively modest. For example, daily school attendance has a desired result of only 75%. It is unclear how these measures will be applied to special needs students and will be scaled beyond currently participating students in this aspect of the project. As a result, the performance matters are achievable, but not ambitious in nature.

The applicant indicates that the local program directors at each site will ensure support services are designed, delivered, and evaluated in collaboration with schools and are aligned with the common core curriculum. Based on the information provided it is unclear how the services will be integrated into the other educational programs and serve students with special needs. Equally unclear is how the partnerships will identify and assess needs and assets of the community, create a decision-making process, engage parents, and assess progress.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes to develop a student centered approach which includes a rigorous curriculum based on standards. Included are five core strategies such as whole school redesign, new school design, teacher and school leader development, online and blended learning, and continuous improvement of all programs. It intends to personalize learning through a program it refers to as Innovation iZone which includes both the redesign of existing schools and the building of new schools specifically intended to develop a personalized learning environment. The overall plan is focused on the Common Core Learning standards, academic improvement and programming, and college and career access. The applicant is following a personalized learning model to redesign 70 current schools. New schools will be designed using one model which focuses on end-users such as the healthcare and transportation industry, for-profit and nonprofit organizations, and other potential users of graduates. A second model will develop personalized schools which focus on closing gaps in college and career readiness, particularly black and Latino young men and women. Key components in the personalized learning approach are both online and blended learning pedagogies which will impact on 200 schools throughout the district. It will also build on its Blended Learning Institute to train and support teachers and educators in the district.

The applicant describes its commitment to providing all students with a rigorous course of study aligned to college and career readiness. In addition it is committed to implementing instructional strategies for personalizing learning for all students. The description includes a discussion of the curriculum and assessment processes, personalized learning plans and progression, new student and staff roles, and flexible and real world learning environments.

The applicant intends to focus on personalization of learning by creating professional learning opportunities for teachers and other educators in an effort to provide effective programs for students, focus on standards, and use feedback to promote effectiveness. The cornerstone of the process is to develop skills in the use of Response to Intervention, a multi-tiered instructional and intervention adopted by schools for students to have equal access to high quality differential instruction. Included in the process as well is the development of a program to develop more effective science and math teachers as well as developing approaches to online and blended learning in the initial pilot program.

Total	210	144
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0139NY-3 for New York City Department of Education

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- a. The applicant has comprehensively demonstrated evidence that they are building their work on three of the four core educational assurance areas through the submitted plan. The submitted plan includes a scaling up of online and blended learning, teacher and school leader development support, implementing college and career ready benchmarks and focusing the iZone reform plan on students with high needs. However, the applicant has not presented a vision of how they will recruit and retain effective teachers and principals.
- b. The applicant has submitted a comprehensive plan that details a credible approach though the iZone model that will accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning. The applicant has submitted evidence that through this reform model school have been accomplished extensive models for real-world learning and authentic projects to challenge students to solve real world problems in their communities.
- c. The applicant has provided comprehensive evidence of what the classroom experience has been like for students and teachers participating in the personalized learning environments. The applicant provided evidence of feedback from students from surveys and focus groups on the efficacy of the personalized learning environments. Additionally, the applicant provided samples of the types of experiences of teachers in the personalized learning environments.

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

- a. The applicant has provided comprehensive high quality evidence of the process that will be used to select schools to participate. Participating high needs schools will complete a comprehensive application process, that includes teacher support, to be accepted in the reform model. b. The applicant did not present a list of schools that will participate, because schools will be selected based on the completion of the application process, if the grant should be awarded to the applicant. However, given that the applicant participated in RTT process for the past two years because their state was chosen for the state grants, they have provided sufficient evidence that they are capable of selecting the schools if awarded. c. The applicant did not present evidence of the total number of students who will participate, because schools will be selected based on the completion of the application process, if the grant should be awarded to the applicant. However, given that the applicant participated in the RTTD for the past two years, they have provided sufficient evidence that they are capable of selecting high needs students that mirror the demographics of the district if awarded.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has described a high quality comprehensive plan that describes how the reform proposal will be used to scale up existing tools and strategies, that will increase the pipeline of iZone schools beyond the existing schools currently participating in the cohort of IZone schools. The described plan will allow the applicant to learn from the development of mastery based learning rubrics and the tracking of college and career ready standards as a way to improve student learning outcomes for all students who will be served in the program.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	4
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>a. The applicant has submitted evidence of an achievable but not ambitious plan for increased student learning as demonstrated by performance on summative assessments. Within all subgroups, the applicant has not demonstrated that more than 56% of that subgroup will be proficient by 2017-2018.</p> <p>b. The applicant has submitted a plan that is achievable but not ambitious to decrease the achievement gaps that exist with the subgroups. In particular, the achievement gaps across all areas exist very starkly with respect to students with disabilities and English language learners.</p> <p>c. The applicant has presented an achievable plan but not ambitious plan to increase the graduation rate among all subgroups. In particular, the applicant has indicated that only 43% of students will graduate by 2017.</p> <p>d. The applicant has not submitted an ambitious plan although achievable to increase the college enrollment rate. The plan submitted does not expect for an increase for more than 5% for each subgroup.</p> <p>e. The applicant has submitted an ambitious and achievable plan to increase postsecondary degree attainment among district graduates from 75% to 80% at the end of the grant cycle.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	15
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>a. The applicant has submitted comprehensive high quality evidence of improved student learning outcomes and decreased achievement gaps by raising student achievement scores, high school graduation rates and increased college enrollment among all subgroups. The applicant has made great progress in the past few years through significant educational reform efforts that have included increasing outcomes for average 9th graders that has increased student learning and decreased the gaps that did exist.</p> <p>b. The applicant has submitted comprehensive high quality evidence of a history of achieving ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools. Through the Children First reform agenda, the applicant has created many small high schools that has resulted in increased graduation rates, and higher outcomes on achievement tests. In addition to replacing low performing schools, the applicant also introduced a teaching fellow program to prepare high quality teachers to serve in high needs schools.</p> <p>c. The applicant has submitted comprehensive high quality evidence that demonstrates that student performance data is available to all students, educators and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction and services. School level evaluations are publicly available, school report cards, and periodic assessments are all available. Educators are able to access a consolidated view of student achievement data and collaborative instructional resources.</p>		

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

- a. The applicant has provided comprehensive high quality evidence that actual personnel salaries at he school for all school level instructional and support staff are made available to all on the applicant's website. More over, each individual school's budget allocations and expenditure reports are also available on this website.
- b. The applicant has provided no evidence that information with respect to actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff only is made available.
- c. The applicant has provided no evidence that information with respect to actual personnel salaries at the school level for teachers only is made available
- d. The applicant has provided comprehensive high quality evidence that actual non-personnel expenditures at the school level have been made available on the district website.

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

The applicant has provided comprehensive evidence that successful conditions and sufficient autonomy exists under the State's legal, statutory, and regulatory requirement to implement the personalized learning environments described in the proposal. The clearest evidence of the State's support of such autonomy is in the implicit in their education law "encouraging and supporting LEAS's to establish and operate innovative, autonomous public schools."

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	12
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- a1. The applicant has provided unclear evidence of direct engagement for the proposal from the collective bargaining unit through the letter of support from the teachers' union. Although the applicant has indicated that the union was involved in the in the planning of the proposal, the applicant has indicated that the union does not agree with with all of the assertions made by the applicant with respect to the track record of success that has been reached and therefore has not indicated full support of the proposal. The union's continued assertions that they are not in total agreement of the submission of this plan makes the evidence of support from teachers very nebulous and unclear.
- b. The applicant has provided complete evidence of engagement for the proposal from many stakeholders through many letters of support from a broad spectrum of educational partners and stakeholders across the community in support of the proposal.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	15

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- ai. The applicant has provided evidence of a comprehensive and high quality proposal with a set of high quality personalized learning plans and progressions that will help students understand that school and what they are learning in schools key to their success in accomplishing life goals. These include learning plans, coaching and data and other feedback that are personalized to each student.
- ii. The applicant has provided evidence of a high quality plan that will enable students to have access to the tools they need to track their progression toward mastery of the academics, non-academic behaviors and other college and career ready standards they need to master as part of their personal learning plan. The applicant has indicated that they intend to develop a high quality support tool that will allow students to explore careers, prepare for college entrance exams and complete financial aid forms.
- iii. The applicant has presented evidence of a high quality plan that evidences that students will be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest through the practice of experiential learning, where students will be

placed in a variety of internship experiences outside of school.

iv. The applicant has presented evidence of a high quality plan that evidences that students will have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts and perspectives that will increase student learning through the Izone's extensive use of technology to connect students to non-school based experts.

v. The applicant has presented comprehensive and high quality evidence that through the iZone's Framework and College and Career Readiness Benchmarks that the applicant will use, that students will master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking and problem solving.

bi. The applicant has presented a comprehensive and high quality plan that evidences that through the iZone Framework, each student will develop a personal learning plan that is tailored to meet their own needs and interests. This plan will be developed with direct involvement by parents and teachers.

bii. The applicant has not provided evidence of the use of a variety of high quality instructional approaches and environments.

biii. The applicant has provided comprehensive evidence that high quality learning content, including digital learning content will be offered to students through the development of their Common Core Fellows who will be charged with implementing high quality instructional resources in the form of blended and online learning environments.

biv. A. The applicant has provided comprehensive and high quality evidence that students have access and are able to use data to track their own progress toward mastery of academic content.

bivB. The applicant has provided comprehensive and high quality evidence that allows students to obtain personalized learning recommendations based on their current knowledge and skills as part of the iZone Framework implementation.

v. The applicant has provided comprehensive and high quality evidence that accommodations are made for high-need students to ensure that they are on track toward meeting college and career ready graduation requirements through the personalized learning plans that will enable students to demonstrate progress and receive help in specific areas of difficulty.

c. The applicant has provided comprehensive and high quality evidence that through their Digital Literacies program that will allow students to build their digital literacy skills. Through this program, and interactions with their teachers and peers, students become proficient in various technologies, to improve their writing and presentation skills to learn how to monitor their own learning.

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

20

15

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

ai. The applicant has provided comprehensive high quality evidence that educators will be provided with sufficient training to effectively implement personalized learning environments and strategies that meet each student's academic needs and be able to help ensure that all students can graduate on time, college and career ready. Through the use of RTi educators in the district use data to assess the academic strengths and needs of students in order to determine academic support and interventions.

a.ii. The applicant has provided comprehensive and high quality evidence that through the use of iZone teachers will be provided with high quality professional development and training to help them adapt content and instruction in response to the individual needs of their students based on student academic needs and interests, as well as be able to identify optimal learning approaches to meet students' needs.

a.iii. The applicant has provided comprehensive and high quality evidence that through the use of Digital Ready, the applicant will have a high quality means by which to frequently measure student progress in meeting academic goals, and provide personalized learning experiences that address individual interests. Students, teachers and parents will have real time access to student progress on assessments.

a.iv. The applicant has provided comprehensive and high quality evidence that through the use of Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching, teacher practice has been enhanced through frequent classroom observations and formative feedback and professional development support.

bi. The applicant has provided comprehensive and high quality evidence that through the iZone that high quality tracking tools such as iLearn Learning Management System and Jumprope will enable teachers to access to data in real time to identify optimal learning approaches that respond to individual student academic needs and interests.

bii. The applicant has provided comprehensive and high quality evidence that high quality learning resources including,

instructional software, and web-based content, that are aligned with college and career ready standards are available for students.

biii. The applicant has provided comprehensive and high quality evidence that they utilize high quality processes and tools, such as instructor led assessments matched with technological progress tracking to provide both students and educators actionable academic information to improve the effectiveness of resources to meet student needs.

ci. The applicant has provided comprehensive and high quality evidence that through the use of data from the evaluation system, school leadership teams assess and prioritize the needs of the schools and identify goals that are consistent with priority needs. In addition the school leadership teams must develop action plans that are reflective of effective strategies and activities to meet goals that are aligned with resources.

cii. The applicant has provided comprehensive and high quality evidence that they provided ongoing high quality training and professional development for school leaders and teacher for the effective implementation of personalized learning environments to empower school based shared decision making.

d. The applicant has not provided a plan to increase the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	12
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>a. The applicant has provided comprehensive high quality evidence that the LEA central office is highly capable of providing high quality support to develop and test innovative practices and strategies throughout the district. The design of the central office will enable the support that teachers and schools will need.</p> <p>b. The applicant has comprehensively demonstrated that through state law and city regulation, school leadership teams in every school are mandatory and flexibility is afforded to them through practice and law.</p> <p>c. The applicant has comprehensively demonstrated that the iZone Framework is a high quality mechanism that will allow students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on mastery not amount of time spent on a topic.</p> <p>d. The applicant has not demonstrated what the multiple ways students will be able to demonstrate mastery of standards will be.</p> <p>e. The applicant has demonstrated that all students will have access to high quality learning resources and instructional practices through iZone. This practice will accommodate the special needs of all students including students with disabilities and English Language Learners.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	7
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>a. The applicant has provided insufficient evidence that all stakeholders have access to the web-based learning tools and platforms for the delivery of academic content and the tracking of student progress. The applicant has indicated that families who do not have access to the internet at home can access the internet at community libraries and open lab hours at schools, however, has not indicated whether or not parents will have access to use the lab at schools.</p> <p>b. While the applicant has provided high quality evidence that staff have access to technological assistance, there was no evidence offered with respect to the technology needs of parents or students.</p> <p>c. The applicant has provided comprehensive high quality evidence that parents and students will be able to export information in open data formats and other easily accessible electronic learning systems.</p> <p>d. The applicant has provided comprehensive evidence that schools will use interoperable data systems that will allow all data within the system to be made available for export to the district office. The district has made a large investment in</p>		

financial and personnel resources to ensure that the flow of data will be reusable.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has provided comprehensive high quality evidence that the district will use high quality methods to monitor and measure the investments made including gathering both qualitative and quantitative data to encourage reflection and progress of initiatives. The applicant also provided high quality evidence that they will have both mid-year and end of year data reporting based on research-based methods for data reporting. The applicant will regularly release interim and annual reports available on the internet. Through iZone, the applicant has provided evidence of a high quality continuous improvement process to make continual changes to the programs implemented in the RTTD schools. This plan will likely result in ongoing corrections and improvements throughout the term of the grant.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has provided evidence of a high quality plan that not only enables for the sharing of information but also facilitates ongoing dialog with stakeholders, including but not limited to the stakeholders engaged in the grant application process. Through the use of their iZoneShare website, the district office will have access to information to make revisions shared by educators and parents voluntarily whereby they share information about the challenges and successes with personalized learning.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>a. The applicant has provided comprehensive evidence of high quality and well thought out rationales for each goal for each measure offered, that includes the needs of highly mobile student population they have.</p> <p>b. The applicant has provided comprehensive evidence of a high quality tool that will be used to determine which students are on track for college and career success. These data will be real time in order to allow staff to use these data to support students immediately.</p> <p>c. The applicant has provided comprehensive evidence of how it will use the Academic Motivation Scale, a high quality tool, to measure intrinsic and extrinsic motivation levels of participating students. Using highly researched methods such as these will allow the applicant to target individual students' academic performance levels and skills and also interests and self-efficacy.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Through the use of a principal, teacher and student satisfaction surveys, pretest and posttest surveys, online and blended course usage data, observations and focus groups, the applicant has provided evidence of high quality plan to that the district office will use to evaluate the effectiveness of RTTD activities.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	5

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- a. The applicant has only identified that RTTD funds will support the project. It is unclear if there are other funds that will be used to support the project.
- b. The applicant has provided evidence of a budget that is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal. Project costs are reasonable given the technological needs involved with the project and aligned with the goals of the project outcomes.
- c. 1. The applicant has provided a complete budget that describes the RTTD funds that will be used to support the implementation of the proposal, because the applicant has only identified that RTTD funds will be used for all of the project implementation. There are no other funding sources that have been identified.
- c. ii. The applicant has not identified which funds will be used for one time investments versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	7
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has provided high quality evidence of a high level of support for the plan from the state and city government systems. In fact, the legislature changed relevant laws to allow for the creation of the iZone personalization tools. The applicant intends to rely upon the state and city to support the program after the grant cycle has ended with additional support from philanthropic organizations. However, the applicant has not provided evidence of a high quality plan for sustainability, although they have provided evidence that they have implemented some aspects of this plan already.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	3

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

- 1. The applicant has provided evidence of a high quality and sustainable partnership with the NYC Community Learning Schools Initiative that will bring together a coalition of schools, philanthropic organization, civic groups and other community based organizations that will identify and meet the needs of the communities to align goals to improve the educational outcomes of students and increase family and community supports.
- 2. The applicant has identified four high quality population-level desired results for students in the LEA that will support the applicant's broader RTTP plan. The results include educational plans such as providing adding an advocate counselor that will work individually with students on engagement and motivation to develop more personalized schools and goals that support family and community supports by developing greater greater collaboration between families and community and the schools.
- 3a. The applicant has identified effective ways of to monitor and measure each result at the aggregate student level including by tracking daily student attendance and monitoring the percentage of students that participate in monthly individual counseling.
- b. The applicant did not identify how they will use the data to target their resource to improve results for participating students.
- c. The applicant has not provided a plan to scale the model beyond the participating schools.
- d. The applicant has not provided evidence of how they plan to improve result over time.
- 4. The applicant provided evidence of a cohesive plan that would integrate education and student engagement, post graduation planning and enhanced student support for the participating schools.
- 5. a. The applicant did not provide evidence of this criterion.
- b. The applicant did not provide evidence of this criterion.

- c. The applicant did not provide evidence of this criterion.
- d. The applicant did not provide evidence of this criterion.
- e. The applicant did not provide evidence of this criterion.
- 6. The applicant did not provide evidence of this criterion.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has provided a high quality plan that comprehensively describes how they will build on the core educational assurance areas in order to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve teaching and learning through personalization strategies that are aligned with college and career ready standards. The applicant has demonstrated that through the iZone the schools involved in the program will allow the district to improve, develop and scale up their current models for personalization. The applicant has demonstrated that a high quality component of their model is the personalized learning plans in order to meet each student's needs and interests. The applicant has provided a plan that shows evidence of a commitment to developing great school leaders and teachers in order to improve instruction and decrease achievement gaps among student groups and increase the rates as which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.</p>		

Total	210	166
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