



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0760LA-1 for Batiste Cultural Arts Academy at Live Oak

A. Vision (40 total points)

| | Available | Score |
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| (A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points) | 10 | 9 |
| <p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's stated reform vision focuses on reportedly foundational work already begun over prior years. The reform focuses on preparing students for college or career, turning around the lowest achieving schools, closing the achievement gap, developing robust data systems, recruitment and retention of effective teachers and administrators, and personalization of instruction for individual learners. applicant consortium was structured through a central office that oversees 35 schools previously labeled failing. The schools still were matched with charter operators whose charter applications were vetted and approved by a state board. The applicants stated mission is to provide a rigorous, college preparatory education to historically underserved students; believing that every child deserves a free, high quality, college focused public education. The student body is 98% African American with 94% to 97% receiving free or reduced lunch. The applicant has a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that's imbedded in the existing structure as well as to expand and enhance this structure. The vision is heavily embedded in personalized blended learning with the use of online learning and technology. The applicant appears to have the experience and structure in place to facilitate this approach. An additional aspect of the closing the historic "achievement gap" between students.</p> | | |
| (A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points) | 10 | 9 |
| <p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant consortium was selected according to what would "make the greatest impact on the city's lowest-achieving schools, those with the greatest academic highest need, and high populations of minority and low-income students." This includes three 'Type 5 public charter schools serving PK-8'. The Type 5 schools are those in the Department of Education's Recovery School District (due to low performance) and authorized by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). The Type 5 charters of each consortium school is a separate LEA and has the authority and capacity (within state and federal regulations) to engage in innovative approaches to school improvement. These factors allow the applicant consortium collectively meet the competition's eligibility requirements. It also means the total number of participating students, and participating students are from low-income families and are high-need.</p> <p>The applicant states that in years 2-4 of the project, the consortium will add one additional PK-8 Type 5-charter school to the project (one per year), adding roughly 625 students each year. Additional schools in years 2-4 will follow the Restart model, with the closing of each campus and reopening of each as a public charter school. In year 4, there will be roughly 3908 participants, all of similar demographics and levels of need to the original three Consortium schools. The applicant reports that the majority of students at all sites as well as all expansion sites are in need of increased academic and social-emotional supports.</p> <p>The applicant appears to have an established network of selected schools. However, the need to select remaining schools and implement the program raises some concerns.</p> | | |
| (A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points) | 10 | 9 |
| <p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant states that the project will be scaled each of years 2, 3, and 4. This requires approval of charters by the State</p> | | |

Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. The applicant has budgeted to scale-up the project. The applicant appears to be approaching sustainability by cultivating school leaders through the consortium and proposed project. An additional approach to sustainability is the allocation of supplies utilized in blended learning. While the proposal has a significant plan to scale-up and sustain the project, the ability to translate their meaningful reform into district-wide change beyond the participating schools is less clear. This seems potential hindered by the structures needed to implement the plan. The applicant has provided details of a plan and specified their goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties. The applicant describes its mission as serving the most at-risk students in their city. The applicant has a stated goal of making student performance data available to students, educators and parents to inform and improve participation, instruction, and services. The applicant reports that to make student performance data more accessible and available to all stakeholders relevant LEAs have customized all reports and presentations of data to align with college and career readiness. The applicant reports that students and educators can access student progress in reading and math from a variety of source. According to the applicant parents receive data on attendance and behavior, and achievement data formatted in college readiness bands.

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| (A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points) | 10 | 8 |
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant consortium has made significant improvement in grade level performance measures. The applicant is unable to provide data on percent proficient for the following subgroups: white, not economically disadvantaged, and English language learners due to under-enrollment in these areas, as the applicant consortium is predominantly comprised of African American students. The applicant indicates that dramatic increase in assessment scores on the College Readiness graph was not evident. Furthermore, schools had several grades in which past ELA and math performance was in the teens (i.e. less than 20% Proficient); leading the applicant to report that, "...there is still a mixed bag of results and much room to improve student outcomes." These issues notwithstanding, the applicant's vision appears likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goals. The annual goals appear ambitious yet achievable. The applicant has established reasonable goals based on baseline data derived from annual performance measures that are reportedly directly tied to the students within a certain super-subgroup. The applicant's proficiency goals for performance by grade level and subgroup on ELA and math were formulated based on a review of historical data from the State Department of Education showing annual achievement trends of various "subgroups" from 1999 to 2011. The applicant reports that according to this historical data, it would not be enough to accelerate students' learning, decrease the achievement gap, and increase college readiness quickly enough. The applicant's consortium stakeholders reportedly agreed to ambitious, yet realistic goals of five percentage point increases annually in Proficiency across math, ELA, grade levels, and subgroups as a long term goal to get all students performing on grade level or above. The applicant reports no historical data from SY 2010-11 to make full or partial comparisons of decreases in the achievement gap demonstrated by subgroup. This is reportedly due to the fact that the applicant's LEA has only three major subgroups, with African American, and Low SES groups being so large that other races and ethnicities, non-economically disadvantaged, and ELL subgroups cannot be reported separately due to FERPA.

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

| | Available | Score |
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| (B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points) | 15 | 14 |

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant consortium reports their involvement in attempting to reform schools with a long history as persistently low-achieving schools. In relation, the applicant demonstrates a potential to close the achievement gap for economically disadvantaged students and African American students. This is evidenced by their history of increasing the number and percent of all students achieving proficiency in ELA and math. In addition, the applicant states they increased their School Performances Scores (SPS) by 19 and 20 points. The mission of ReNEW is to serve the most at-risk students.

The applicant has taken steps to make student performance data more accessible and available to all stakeholders. They report customizing all reports and presentations of data to align with college and career readiness, as indicated by achievement on grade level or above. This includes the ability of students to access their progress in reading, ELA, and math from a variety of sources, such as digital learning programs, benchmark assessments, teacher-made assessments, and universal screenings. According to the applicant, parents receive data on attendance, behavior, and achievement data formatted in college readiness bands and CCSS mastery. The applicant also reports interaction and dialog with parents on the manner of disseminating information, which is important. Communicating with stakeholders appears to be a strong point.

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| (B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points) | 5 | 5 |
| (B)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant reports a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments. For example, they report that all consortium LEAs have 100% compliance in making available all four categories of school-level expenditures from state and local funds. The applicant's state law requires this. The reporting of expenditures relates to personnel salaries for all school level personnel, instructional and support staff. The applicant makes this information available online, through a website. | | |
| (B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points) | 10 | 9 |
| (B)(3) Reviewer Comments: The applicant reports having the “freedom from the bureaucracy and red tape of large, traditional school districts. Again, this can be read as advantageous, but also potentially problematic in that safeguards and policy structure might be lacking. Nonetheless, the applicant is part of a major reform initiative as a solution to persistently low-achieving schools. The applicant reports being expected to implement bold reform strategies to increase and accelerate student achievement. They also report having increased accountability to meet rigorous achievement and management goals. The applicant reports having unprecedented flexibility in budgeting, operations, calendar, daily schedule, enrollment, marketing, and staffing. The applicant reports that their school day schedule is flexible and created by each small school leader to maximize opportunities for student choice. Though the applicant report this flexibility, there are not significant details regarding the capacity or willingness of staff to implement the personalized learning environments. The applicant provided the state basis and regulatory requirements that give the LEA autonomy. | | |
| (B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points) | 10 | 10 |
| (B)(4) Reviewer Comments: The applicant reported meaningful stakeholder engagement, and reports that the grant writing team worked with students, family members, and educators. The applicant was able to provide data on various programs, such as 88% of parents stating that they valued extended school day. This feedback also included criticism or suggestions for changes. The applicant also provided extensive narrative and annotated data. The applicant reported programmatic changes based on stakeholder feedback. According to the applicant, none of the Type 5 charter schools that make up the ReNEW Consortium participate in collective bargaining; but the applicant provided evidence (Appendix E) that 77% of Consortium LEA's educators support the reform proposal. The applicant provided letters of support from key stakeholders. The letters and other related documents are listed in the appendix. The applicant provided letters of support from key stakeholders. | | |
| (B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points) | 5 | 5 |
| (B)(5) Reviewer Comments: The applicant has provided details of a plan and specified their goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties. The applicant describes its mission as serving the most at-risk students in their city. The applicant has a stated goal of making student performance data available to students, educators and parents to inform and improve participation, instruction, and services. The applicant reports that to make student performance data more accessible and available to all stakeholders relevant LEAs have customized all reports and presentations of data to align with college and career readiness. The applicant reports that students and educators can access student progress in reading and math from a variety of source. According to the applicant parents receive data on attendance and behavior, and achievement data formatted in college readiness bands. The applicant reported conducting a needs assessment for each LEA, which identified current strengths and areas for improvement that impact implementation of personalized learning environments via blended learning. The quantitative and qualitative data was reportedly used to shape the reform program goals and action plan. The needs assessment listed in the appendix does align with the goals. For example, the needs assessment reported a lack of available laptops, and the first goal listed was to “increase the number of laptops with current technology in existing and future Consortium LEAs...” | | |

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

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| (C)(1) Learning (20 points) | 20 | 19 |
| <p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has provided details of a plan and specified their goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties. The applicant describes its mission as serving the most at-risk students in their city. The applicant has a stated goal of making student performance data available to students, educators and parents to inform and improve participation, instruction, and services. The applicant reports that to make student performance data more accessible and available to all stakeholders relevant LEAs have customized all reports and presentations of data to align with college and career readiness. The applicant reports that students and educators can access student progress in reading and math from a variety of source. According to the applicant parents receive data on attendance and behavior, and achievement data formatted in college readiness bands. The applicants organizational vision was reportedly designed to include a high quality plan for teaching and learning. The stated focus is on highly effective educators, data-driven instruction, job-embedded professional development, research-based curriculum, differentiated learning and tiered instructional strategies aligned with Response to Intervention. In addition, they have incorporated a series of intervention strategies used to work in urban, high-minority, high poverty schools. The applicant states that 80% of learners in the consortium were academically behind when the schools were restarted under charter management. This required the acceleration of learning personalized for each child. The applicant has a stated aim to pursue learning and development goals linked to college- and career-ready standards. The applicant has also focused on goals with Positive Behavior Supports. The applicant has a stated aim of promoting college and career, through such things as banners and motivational sayings. In addition, the applicant has linked college and career goals to academic activities, such as collaborative research projects asking students to identify a career and work backward to determine what skills are needed. The applicant has taken positive steps toward promoting potential college pursuits. For example, having students examine the requirements for scholarships and analyze how their current achievement impacts their eligibility for non-competitive tuition scholarships. The applicant has incorporated many college and career ready practices such as having students predict how well they will score on the ACT. Perhaps, more importantly, these activities are also geared toward supporting first generation college students from low-SES backgrounds. On example of this is family nights used to educate parents and students on options, including scholarships and financial aid. Personalizing the learning environment and individualized student learning are developed through universal screenings and blended learning assessments. Students are evaluated against their on-grade level state assessment, setting goals at the high end of a student’s current instructional level. The applicant reports that educators assist students in creating long term goals and then breaking them up into smaller, more manageable short-term goals. Another positive approach to this system is that the teachers in this program hold one-on-one conferences with students, at least once every two weeks, to review portfolios and assess progress. Data and ongoing evaluation feedback are a major component utilized in this system. The applicant has provided a chart outlining timelines, goals, responsible parties, and deliverables. The applicant states that to meet reform program targets and determine the effectiveness of the project, that a project director will be hired and a performance evaluation will be created with the project director’s job description. A copy of the project director’s job description is included with resumes in Appendix N. The project director will reportedly be expected to meet annual performance goals for each year of the project. The applicant states that this will include such items as communicating progress against reform goals, targets, and investments with all stakeholders, daily monitoring of all program activities, accurate reporting to staff, supporting professional development activities for blended learning, guiding study of performance measures to data on grade, subgroup, school, and consortium levels to identify program strengths and weaknesses, and facilitate action planning for continuous program improvement. A table describing the plan to evaluate effectiveness of each resource and activities was provided.</p> | | |

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| (C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points) | 20 | 19 |
| <p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has listed various approaches to engaging student interest. For example, providing choices in learning projects, learning centers, electives courses, and additional learning experiences aligned with personal interests. Students have access to “high interest courses,” such as visual arts, dance, drama, general music, vocal music, instrumental music, computer lab, study skills, STEM, and service learning. Individual student learning in high interest classes is tracked and analyzed, to customized learning and increase achievement. The applicant reports that, in each class, literature and digital content are easily accessible for learning about other cultures. Partnerships with non-profits allow for other opportunities, such as volunteer groups that work in each school monthly to engage students through reading and service learning. To develop a variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments the applicant has expanded the length of each school day. In addition, according to the applicant each student experiences multiple learning environments, including whole class classroom instruction, small group collaboration, and small group and individual interventions. Students have access to enrichment classes, computer labs, and outdoor team activities. Students work individually and collaboratively in learning centers. To address high-quality content, including digital learning content, aligned with college- and career-ready standards, the applicant states that students can access learning content from a variety of materials and resources. The applicant has established reasonable goals based on baseline data derived from annual performance measures that are reportedly directly tied to the students within a certain super-subgroup. The applicant’s</p> | | |

proficiency goals for performance by grade level and subgroup on ELA and math were formulated based on a review of historical data from the State Department of Education showing annual achievement trends of various “subgroups” from 1999 to 2011. The applicant reports that according to this historical data, it would not be enough to accelerate students’ learning, decrease the achievement gap, and increase college readiness quickly enough. The applicant’s consortium stakeholders reportedly agreed to ambitious, yet realistic goals of five percentage point increases annually in Proficiency across math, ELA, grade levels, and subgroups as a long term goal to get all students performing on grade level or above. The applicant reports no historical data from SY 2010-11 to make full or partial comparisons of decreases in the achievement gap demonstrated by subgroup. This is reportedly due to the fact that the applicant’s LEA has only three major subgroups, with African American, and Low SES groups being so large that other races and ethnicities, non-economically disadvantaged, and ELL subgroups cannot be reported separately due to FERPA. The applicant has provided a chart outlining timelines, goals, responsible parties, and deliverables. The applicant states that to meet reform program targets and determine the effectiveness of the project, that a project director will be hired and a performance evaluation will be created with the project director’s job description. A copy of the project director’s job description is included with resumes in Appendix N. The project director will reportedly be expected to meet annual performance goals for each year of the project. The applicant states that this will include such items as communicating progress against reform goals, targets, and investments with all stakeholders, daily monitoring of all program activities, accurate reporting to staff, supporting professional development activities for blended learning, guiding study of performance measures to data on grade, subgroup, school, and consortium levels to identify program strengths and weaknesses, and facilitate action planning for continuous program improvement. A table describing the plan to evaluate effectiveness of each resource and activities was provided. The applicant has developed performance measures regarding the percent of students who are career and college ready calculated by % scoring on level or above, divided by total # of students, using a specific assessment. The applicant has developed reasonable goals for these measures based on baseline data. The applicant’s reported goals include both academic and social-emotional growth for students and keeping them on track to graduate. The applicant reports behavioral supports for all students in grades PK-8 at each participating school. The applicant believes that community educators provide additional, high-interest classes such as art, dance, theater, music, STEM, and sports that are integrated into the lengthened school day. The applicant reports that these courses will “help to develop the whole child, increase physical activity and health, promote teamwork, collaboration, problem solving, creativity, and self-esteem.”

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

| | Available | Score |
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| (D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points) | 15 | 14 |

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant’s governance structure is connected to the non-profit ReNEW-Reinventing Education charter management organization (CMO). The applicant claims that the ReNEW CMO is, “composed of individuals with extensive experience, talents, and turnaround capabilities.” Members of the group have served as Louisiana Department of Education “Distinguished Educators” and have experience with failing school reform. The group has a professed commitment to serving historically underserved students. The applicant has proposed hiring a project director to help implement and monitor program activities, assess process toward goals, and develop staff. A job description for the project director is included in the appendix. Although the applicant suggests a lack of bureaucracy, there is a finance office that will continue to support each school. In addition there is a director of data to support LEA and CMO staff in receiving, storing, formatting, sharing, and reporting data. There is a “Human Capital Department” that assists with hiring; this department also helps with the coordination with school leaders on needs, recruiting, interviewing, conducting preliminary observations of teaching, and coordination of salaries and benefits. The applicant has a operations department which help ensure meals, transportation, and facilities are well organized to maximize learning. The applicant reports having already developed procedures, structures, and personnel in place for staffing, procurement, tracking expenditures, communication, and progress monitoring, and that the consortium governance structure will continue to collaborate within existing structures. The applicant reports that the finance office will continue to support each school, with one staff member assigned as lead support for each site. The applicant reports that the curriculum and instruction department will continue to provide professional development, conduct daily monitoring at all schools, support curriculum sequence, alignment, and high quality implementation at the classroom level, and participate in school reviews. The applicant reports that the directors of data will continue to support LEAs and CMO staff in receiving, storing, formatting, sharing, and reporting data to help educators and policy makers craft informed educational decisions. The applicant reports that the ‘human capital department’ will assist with hiring candidates and help with the follow up work once an individual joins a team. The applicant reports that the operations department ensures meals, transportation, and facilities are well organized to maximize learning and set a positive learning environment. The applicant reports that the development department coordinates with each small school to locate and raise funds to support identified educational and support activities. The applicant states that they have increased flexibility to meet the needs of their student body and families. The applicant reports that there are no longer are schools subject to top-down

decision making and that they have increased autonomy in scheduling, hiring, budget and resource alignment with increased accountability to improve student achievement. The applicant reports flexibility and autonomy over their daily management of the school. This flexibility includes determination of daily schedules, determination of enrichment and remediation classes, how to best provide interventions, small school budget, staffing, and educator assignments. According to the applicant, school leadership teams have the autonomy to impact enrollment, by creating targets for how many students they would like to enroll at each grade level. The applicant reports they can hire educators to meet their students' greatest needs and interests. The applicant reportedly believe that blended learning opportunities, scheduled intervention classes, extra time provided by the intersession model, laptops available for students to work at home, and extended school day will provide students with additional time to spend in mastering content, regardless of how much was already spent in a traditional class setting. The applicant reports that its consortium LEAs will continue to use differentiation within core subject classrooms, supplemented by enrichment courses, to personalize learning for those students who are below level, on level, or who have demonstrated mastery. The applicant reports a desire to get all students college and career ready and states they will provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery.

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

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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a stated aim to increase access to high quality content, tools, and learning resources regardless of socioeconomic status. The applicant also utilizes a Response to Intervention approach. The applicant states that information is provided in a variety of formats including increased font size, auditory, and pre-speech. In addition, the applicant uses a variety of equipment and technologies such as text-to-speech devices, e-reader support, universal design for learning, and so forth to increase student access to content. The applicant allows families to check out loaner laptops. The applicant has incorporated a variety of approaches to help ensure that students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders have appropriate levels of technical support. For example, stakeholders have ongoing, abundant, technical support from a variety of LEA and CMO departments and staff members. The stated function of school leaders is as instructional coach. Teachers also have support from school-based operations, which help manage student transportation, facilities, and lunch providers. The applicant reports that curriculum and instructional support comes from a "chief academic officer" and "directors of curriculum and instruction" who support content teachers daily by observing and coaching in classrooms. The applicant also reports assistance from school-based support personnel, such as counselors, social workers, nurses, therapists, special education directors, and other contracted service providers. The applicant reports opportunities for professional development sessions that are provided for free. The applicant has parent centers, PTO meetings, small school parent-teacher conferences, and individual parent conferences. There seems to be technical assistance to families, for example each school site has a parenting center and liaison to offer parental assistance. The applicant is also aligned with non-profits such as Stand for Children. The applicant reports support for curriculum and assessment programs. For example, there is a "director of blended Learning." There is also professional development and technical assistance to support instructors. The applicant reports that consortium LEAs collaborate and use common systems that allow easy data collection and sharing in a non-proprietary, open format. The applicant also reports being able to share data among project based schools, with data being easily uploaded and downloaded from the State Department of Education and matched with each individual PK-8 student and educator. The applicant reports that this includes student achievement data, demographics, assessment history, ELL services, and special education services, and educator effectiveness. The applicant reports that to assist LEAs in managing their data, they will receive, match, and share data with the State Department of Education and community partners. The applicant proposes a student behavior tracking system, and that teacher-created assessments are rolled into one data storage warehouse. The applicant reports that live data can be accessed in a unified view that includes attendance, demographics, and achievement.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

| | Available | Score |
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| (E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points) | 15 | 14 |

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant reportedly engages in aligned instructional performance management cycles that include educators, school leaders, and other staff. These cycles seemingly allow for adjustments and revisions during implementation, and an approach to continuously improve their plan. The applicant also has a stated commitment to data-driven instructional practices to personalize learning, measure, and monitor progress toward goals and take action to improve. The applicant also utilizes the nationally normed "Best Practice Rubric" to personalize instruction and

increase student achievement. The applicant also has a system to monitor leader and teacher improvement at the school level on a quarterly basis. The applicant reports having already developed procedures, structures, and personnel in place for staffing, procurement, tracking expenditures, communication, and progress monitoring, and that the consortium governance structure will continue to collaborate within existing structures. The applicant reports that the finance office will continue to support each school, with one staff member assigned as lead support for each site. The applicant reports that the curriculum and instruction department will continue to provide professional development, conduct daily monitoring at all schools, support curriculum sequence, alignment, and high quality implementation at the classroom level, and participate in school reviews. The applicant reports that the directors of data will continue to support LEAs and CMO staff in receiving, storing, formatting, sharing, and reporting data to help educators and policy makers craft informed educational decisions. The applicant reports that the 'human capital department' will assist with hiring candidates and help with the follow up work once an individual joins a team. The applicant reports that the operations department ensures meals, transportation, and facilities are well organized to maximize learning and set a positive learning environment. The applicant reports that the development department coordinates with each small school to locate and raise funds to support identified educational and support activities. The applicant states that they have increased flexibility to meet the needs of their student body and families. The applicant reports that there are no longer are schools subject to top-down decision making and that they have increased autonomy in scheduling, hiring, budget and resource alignment with increased accountability to improve student achievement. The applicant reports flexibility and autonomy over their daily management of the school. This flexibility includes determination of daily schedules, determination of enrichment and remediation classes, how to best provide interventions, small school budget, staffing, and educator assignments. According to the applicant, school leadership teams have the autonomy to impact enrollment, by creating targets for how many students they would like to enroll at each grade level. The applicant reports they can hire educators to meet their students' greatest needs and interests. The applicant reportedly believe that blended learning opportunities, scheduled intervention classes, extra time provided by the intersession model, laptops available for students to work at home, and extended school day will provide students with additional time to spend in mastering content, regardless of how much was already spent in a traditional class setting. The applicant reports that its consortium LEAs will continue to use differentiation within core subject classrooms, supplemented by enrichment courses, to personalize learning for those students who are below level, on level, or who have demonstrated mastery. The applicant reports a desire to get all students college and career ready and states they will provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery. The applicant reports that it has a system to compare progress by participating school, subject, and grade with an automated Academic Index Report. This reportedly allows school leaders to identify which teachers need support in teaching particular standards. The applicant reports that the 'data directors' will work with others to customize reports to the needs of each LEA and share dashboards with stakeholders each month. The applicant reports that "dashboards" inform educators, families, community members, partners and investors. The applicant reports that staff and school educators take conscientious steps to ensure all data shared by these interoperable systems complies with FERPA to protect students and families privacy

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

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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has developed structures and strategies to communicate feedback and progress goals and corrections, for example, the use of newsletters (a copy is displayed in appendix-l). In addition, leaders hold weekly meetings between superintendents and school leaders provide for feedback on progress toward student goals on achievement, attendance and behavior. The applicant reports that weekly meetings between site coordinators, host school leaders, and administrators ensure that reforms are implemented with fidelity services are aligned to student individual and collective needs. Communication appears to be a strength, as families receive communications weekly. Communication is also customized to initiatives and progress at those grades. Monthly meetings allow families to review goals and engage in discussion with school leaders on students' progress toward the goals.

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

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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a stated commitment to employing highly effective teachers and leaders. The applicant also has a number of performance measures, including one to increase student attendance across the consortium. Performance measures for early childhood include literacy and math development. The applicant used behavior referrals to set targets to improve social-emotional development of students. Data is tracked using the actual number of referrals by subgroup. The applicant reports that through a

partnership the consortium LEAs will engage in aligned instructional performance management cycles that include educators, school leaders, and staff. These ‘improvement cycles’ will reportedly begin with diagnosis and goal setting. According to the applicant there will be quarterly reviews with all levels of management ensure alignment on what is working, areas of focus, and supports needed. According to the applicant conversations will be supported by detailed reports on progress towards goals in both fidelity of implementation and proficiency of practice and student achievement. The applicant believes that annual and quarterly management cycles ensure alignment between educators at the school. The applicant reports it will benchmark, data study, and create an easily available resource bank. The applicant proposes to provide a vision of excellence through a nationally-normed best practice rubric on how to use learning standards and student achievement data to personalize instruction and increase student achievement, diagnose schools to determine the quality of practices at the principal and teacher level and determine appropriate professional development, set yearly and quarterly prioritized action goals with schools to focus on specific practice improvement through on-going coaching and training, model professional development for leaders and teachers to show them how to do the work, monitor leader and teacher improvement at the school level on a quarterly basis to reflect on improvements and areas in need of support, and create actions plans based on the progress monitoring and tailor professional development to meet the schools’ needs. The applicant reports that through the newly hired project director the consortium will set up a monitoring plan to assess process toward goals, measurement tools and frequency, expenditure of funds, and so forth.

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

The applicant has a stated commitment to employing highly effective teachers and leaders. The applicant also has a number of performance measures, including one to increase student attendance across the consortium. Performance measures for early childhood include literacy and math development. The applicant used behavior referrals to set targets to improve social-emotional development of students. Data is tracked using the actual number of referrals by subgroup. The applicant reports that through a partnership the consortium LEAs will engage in aligned instructional performance management cycles that include educators, school leaders, and staff. These ‘improvement cycles’ will reportedly begin with diagnosis and goal setting. According to the applicant there will be quarterly reviews with all levels of management ensure alignment on what is working, areas of focus, and supports needed. According to the applicant conversations will be supported by detailed reports on progress towards goals in both fidelity of implementation and proficiency of practice and student achievement. The applicant believes that annual and quarterly management cycles ensure alignment between educators at the school. The applicant reports it will benchmark, data study, and create an easily available resource bank. The applicant proposes to provide a vision of excellence through a nationally-normed best practice rubric on how to use learning standards and student achievement data to personalize instruction and increase student achievement, diagnose schools to determine the quality of practices at the principal and teacher level and determine appropriate professional development, set yearly and quarterly prioritized action goals with schools to focus on specific practice improvement through on-going coaching and training, model professional development for leaders and teachers to show them how to do the work, monitor leader and teacher improvement at the school level on a quarterly basis to reflect on improvements and areas in need of support, and create actions plans based on the progress monitoring and tailor professional development to meet the schools’ needs. The applicant reports that through the newly hired project director the consortium will set up a monitoring plan to assess process toward goals, measurement tools and frequency, expenditure of funds, and so forth. The applicant reportedly engages in aligned instructional performance management cycles that include educators, school leaders, and other staff. These cycles seemingly allow for adjustments and revisions during implementation, and an approach to continuously improve their plan. The applicant also has a stated commitment to data-driven instructional practices to personalize learning, measure, and monitor progress toward goals and take action to improve. The applicant also utilizes the nationally normed “Best Practice Rubric” to personalize instruction and increase student achievement. The applicant also has a system to monitor leader and teacher improvement at the school level on a quarterly basis.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

| | Available | Score |
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| (F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points) | 10 | 8 |

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's budget is divided into four projects with the suggested aim of supporting personalized learning environments, project management, and interoperable data systems. The budget contains extensive program partner contracts. This includes project support for blended learning, and is comprised of student licenses for digital learning content, laptops, and laptop carts. The budget also supports the hiring of a project director to oversee and coordinate all grant related planning, activities,

monitoring, and reporting. The project budget has three categories, contractual, indirect costs, and funds from other sources. The contractual costs include reoccurring contracts with community partners. Indirect costs were reoccurring and calculated by applying the approved LEA rate of 7.33% to the RTT-D allowable first \$25,000 of each contract each year.

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

10

9

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant claims that continued reform project work will be met through the life of the grant and in the years following it. The applicant claims that they will continue to use the funding from state and local government to implement blended learning. The applicant also receives financial assistance from non-profits and grant funding from groups such as the National Association of Music Merchants, New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival and Foundation, and the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities, School Turnaround Arts, and others. The applicant claims it will continue to revive support through various other agencies, such as the Digital Opportunity Trust, and Communities in Schools of Greater New Orleans. The applicant has also planned cost-saving initiatives, included in each LEA’s charter and business plan, include collapsing small schools over time. The applicant has provided details of a plan and specified their goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties. The applicant describes its mission as serving the most at-risk students in their city. The applicant has a stated goal of making student performance data available to students, educators and parents to inform and improve participation, instruction, and services. The applicant reports that to make student performance data more accessible and available to all stakeholders relevant LEAs have customized all reports and presentations of data to align with college and career readiness. The applicant reports that students and educators can access student progress in reading and math from a variety of source. According to the applicant parents receive data on attendance and behavior, and achievement data formatted in college readiness bands. The applicant has established reasonable goals based on baseline data derived from annual performance measures that are reportedly directly tied to the students within a certain super-subgroup. The applicant’s proficiency goals for performance by grade level and subgroup on ELA and math were formulated based on a review of historical data from the State Department of Education showing annual achievement trends of various “subgroups” from 1999 to 2011. The applicant reports that according to this historical data, it would not be enough to accelerate students’ learning, decrease the achievement gap, and increase college readiness quickly enough. The applicant’s consortium stakeholders reportedly agreed to ambitious, yet realistic goals of five percentage point increases annually in Proficiency across math, ELA, grade levels, and subgroups as a long term goal to get all students performing on grade level or above. The applicant reports no historical data from SY 2010-11 to make full or partial comparisons of decreases in the achievement gap demonstrated by subgroup. This is reportedly due to the fact that the applicant’s LEA has only three major subgroups, with African American, and Low SES groups being so large that other races and ethnicities, non-economically disadvantaged, and ELL subgroups cannot be reported separately due to FERPA. The applicant has provided a chart outlining timelines, goals, responsible parties, and deliverables. The applicant states that to meet reform program targets and determine the effectiveness of the project, that a project director will be hired and a performance evaluation will be created with the project director’s job description. A copy of the project director’s job description is included with resumes in Appendix N. The project director will reportedly be expected to meet annual performance goals for each year of the project. The applicant states that this will include such items as communicating progress against reform goals, targets, and investments with all stakeholders, daily monitoring of all program activities, accurate reporting to staff, supporting professional development activities for blended learning, guiding study of performance measures to data on grade, subgroup, school, and consortium levels to identify program strengths and weaknesses, and facilitate action planning for continuous program improvement. A table describing the plan to evaluate effectiveness of each resource and activities was provided. The applicant has developed performance measures regarding the percent of students who are career and college ready calculated by % scoring on level or above, divided by total # of students, using a specific assessment. The applicant has developed reasonable goals for these measures based on baseline data. The applicant’s reported goals include both academic and social-emotional growth for students and keeping them on track to graduate. The applicant reports behavioral supports for all students in grades PK-8 at each participating school. The applicant believes that community educators provide additional, high-interest classes such as art, dance, theater, music, STEM, and sports that are integrated into the lengthened school day. The applicant reports that these courses will “help to develop the whole child, increase physical activity and health, promote teamwork, collaboration, problem solving, creativity, and self-esteem.” The applicant reports that an adult-centered dashboard will allow parents to review their children’s learning and support them as they work through content. The applicant proposes as part of its reform proposal, that participating LEAs increase the number of laptops and blended learning subscriptions to further increase access to content for every student with less dependency on sharing. The applicant believes that by expanding the length of each school day, each student experiences multiple learning environments, including whole class classroom instruction, small group collaboration, and small group and individual interventions. The applicant states that students will attend enrichment classes, learn in computer labs and centers, and participate in outdoor team activities, and work individually and collaboratively in learning centers. The applicant states that students can access learning content from a variety of

resources.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant details a sustainable partnership with organizations to support the plan described in Absolute Priority 1. The applicant plans to implement an expanded school day. The applicant will partner with local intermediary Partnership for Youth Development, and believe that their schools will benefit from a grant from The After School Corporation to implement an extended day model. The applicant report that to support the proposed project the three LEAs will implement an expanded school day. The applicant claims that added learning time positively impacts student achievement, especially for disadvantaged youth including those experiencing low income, low-achieving, and minority students. The applicant believes that partnering with local agencies schools will benefit. The applicant states that students will get more personalized instruction and adult mentorship, make choices to pursue their passions, and receive a more well-rounded education. The applicant claims it's focused on strong partnerships that focus on academic, social, emotional, and physical development of students, with the goal of making comprehensive, daily after-school programs available to all children who could benefit. The applicant claims it can give students at least 35% more learning time at 10% additional cost to the school day. The applicant reports support from the Wallace Foundation, Open Society Foundation, and Consortium's Batiste Cultural Arts Academy. The applicant reports working to refine a model for longer learning day that improves student outcomes and give students a wider range of opportunities to develop their talents.

Absolute Priority 1

| | Available | Score |
|---------------------|-------------|-------|
| Absolute Priority 1 | Met/Not Met | Met |

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant comprehensively addresses how they will build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments designed to improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards. The applicant had proposed methods to accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student. The applicant has established an approach to increase the effectiveness of educators; expand student access to the most effective educators; decrease achievement gaps across student groups; and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers. The applicant reports that to support the proposed project the three LEAs will implement an expanded school day. The applicant claims that added learning time positively impacts student achievement, especially for disadvantaged youth including those experiencing low income, low-achieving, and minority students. The applicant believes that partnering with local agencies schools will benefit. The applicant states that students will get more personalized instruction and adult mentorship, make choices to pursue their passions, and receive a more well-rounded education. The applicant claims it's focused on strong partnerships that focus on academic, social, emotional, and physical development of students, with the goal of making comprehensive, daily after-school programs available to all children who could benefit. The applicant claims it can give students at least 35% more learning time at 10% additional cost to the school day. The applicant reports support from the Wallace Foundation, Open Society Foundation, and Consortium's Batiste Cultural Arts Academy. The applicant reports working to refine a model for longer learning day that improves student outcomes and give students a wider range of opportunities to develop their talents. The applicant reports the ReNEW CMO will work closely each participating school to support continued data collection for student behavior, attendance, and achievement for each individual student, and aggregated to match and allow for progress monitoring against the performance measures. The applicant reports an LEA data collection and tracking systems already in place. The applicant reports use of a tool to identify students' progress toward graduation in the elementary, middle school and high school grades. The applicant reports that participating schools collect and analyze data on student achievement, attendance and behavior. The applicant reports it can identify whether students are on track to graduate, closing in on that status, or not on track based on attendance, behavior, and coursework and assessment grades. applicant reports that community educators will use data to target tutoring and supports and to redeploy resources to help students at high risk. The applicant is reportedly piloting

the use of new measures of student behavior, positive and negative, that are early indicators of long-term success, including self-efficacy, grit, school engagement, and motivation. The applicant reports that to track increased student programs addressing physical health, increase time spent in learning each day, and increase levels of student learning based on personal interests, the partnership will review archival data on school programming to set baseline data and continue to track student services over years 1-4 of the program.

| | | |
|-------|-----|-----|
| Total | 210 | 196 |
|-------|-----|-----|



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0760LA-2 for Batiste Cultural Arts Academy at Live Oak

A. Vision (40 total points)

| | Available | Score |
|--|-----------|-------|
| (A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points) | 10 | 4 |

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates that their mission is to provide a rigorous, college preparatory education to historically underserved students in the New Orleans area, which traditionally has a history and reputation of poor performance. The ReNEW consortium, a 501 (c)(3) charter management organization, believes that every child deserves a free, high quality, college focused public education. The plan is to close the achievement gap in the consortium's largest two subgroups, African-American students, and those receiving free or reduced lunch. Though blended learning programs, which are primarily on-line computer based curriculum, the consortium uses this curriculum to maximize personalization of learning in the classroom.

Although classroom intervention is mentioned, the focus seems to be an emphasis on computer based learning after school and at home, with assistance given to students and parents in this initiative.

The applicant mentions that they intend to recruit and develop highly effective educators through talent searches and partner organizations, but do not give any information as to how this will become a reality.

The applicant intends to use a variety of research tested learning software, that will be used PK-8 grades. This software is their solution to rigorous, college and career ready preparatory instruction.

For those students that exhibit more substantial academic deficiencies and need to accelerate learning, the consortium provides laptops for home learning; scoring an average of 34% on objective-based tests, and 60% on lesson quizzes. 40% of each of the schools in the consortium are invited to intersession school to decrease the achievement gap. They use blended learning programs in these sessions as well.

The Expand ED is the second strategic focus of the ReNEW consortium that provides opportunities for the student to personalize their learning. They are partnering with non-profit organizations that help to develop the social, emotional, academic, and physical development of students. Expand ED does provide staff to lower the student to teacher ratio during the school day, and provides afterschool courses.

Overall, the applicant seems to rely on technology to address decreasing the achievement gap and accelerating achievement. Standards are not mentioned in this section. It relies on data from software systems to measure student growth and success, and does not address how they will develop and retain effective teachers. This places the applicant in the low range.

| | | |
|---|----|---|
| (A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points) | 10 | 8 |
|---|----|---|

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates that the consortium that is part of this application is composed of three Type 5 public charter schools serving PK-8. A type 5 school is a low performing school that was transferred to the jurisdiction of the Department of Education's Recovery School district, due to low performance. The applicant indicates that each individual school is a separate LEA, with the authority to create innovative approaches to school improvement. This is a total of 2033 participating students, with additional schools being added to the grant project in years 2-4, adding around 625 students a year. All grades PK-8 are included in this proposal.

The applicant did list the three schools in the consortium in Appendix A of the application.

The total number of students was listed in part A, and they identified 100 percent of the students participating are considered high needs students. The table in appendix A lists the number of participating educators.

Overall, this places the applicant in the lower part of the high range.

| | | |
|---|----|---|
| (A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points) | 10 | 6 |
|---|----|---|

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant plans to support district wide change by adding additional schools, meeting the same student criteria determined by the Recovery School district in years 2-4 of the term of the grant. The budget will reflect supplies and contracts needed so that each new school added has the same resources needed to implement blended learning and ExpandedED. This does not indicate how this will be a high quality plan, although they do use the same components that exist in the first three schools, using the money from the grant to expand.

The applicant is relying on results that have been already achieved from the first three schools in the consortium, apparently believing that this model has shown success, with students achieving 60% on lesson quizzes.

Overall, the applicant does show how reform will be made meaningful, relying on strategies that are already in place, with some clarity lacking in the criterion. This places them in the medium range.

| | | |
|---|----|---|
| (A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points) | 10 | 7 |
|---|----|---|

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates that since they have taken over the three schools at risk, substantial gains in achievement have occurred over the two years that the state and the ReNEW consortium have been in charge. (from a 20 percent start, with a 70 percent rate of achievement this year).

The applicant demonstrates by the use of a table their methodology for determining the achievement gap, using the iLEAP and LEAP assessments, with the goal to close the gap on an average of 20% by the end of the grant term. They have a beginning baseline, and do set goal for each of the four years and beyond on summative assessments. The applicant gives evidence of the two years that they have been in charge of the schools, and projects where the schools will be at the end of the grant.

Since the consortium only goes from PK-8 grades, there is no mention of graduation or college enrollment rates.

Overall, the applicant is able to define ambitious but achievable annual goals, with a score in the high medium range.

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

| | Available | Score |
|--|-----------|-------|
| (B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points) | 15 | 12 |

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has only had control over the three consortium schools for one year. Prior to their assuming control, the state had taken over control over the schools in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, with the creation of the Recovery School district by the state. In the year that ReNEW has had ownership of the consortium, the scores as indicated by a table of growth of school performance, percentages went from an average of 20 percent to around 50 percent.

All of the schools that are a part of this consortium were failing schools in Louisiana, so 100% of the three were on the list of the states lowest-achieving schools. After one year with ReNEW, school performance scores increased an average of 20 points.

The applicant has demonstrated through a variety of ways that they have made student performance data available to students, educators, and parents. Both students and educators can access student progress from a variety of sources; digital learning programs, benchmark and teacher made assessments, and universal screenings. This allows both student and teacher to set goals and create action plans. Parents receive data on attendance and behavior, and have access to their child's digital learning on each program's dashboard. They also make the data transparent at Board meetings as well.

Overall, the applicant demonstrates that although they have not had four years to track data using their initiatives, they have made good gains in the first year of their assumption. They also demonstrate that data is made available to all stakeholders in this grant, with a score in the bottom of the high range.

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

5

5

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates that there is a high level of transparency in making all expenditures readily available. They annually submit their school level expenditure data to the Louisiana Department of Education, and is also available on the Louisiana Department of Education website. They show evidence of this in this applicant in Appendix C, using screen shots. They also (since the consortium is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, they have their 990 tax form available on the Guidestar and ReNEW website. There is also a public records request form that can allow all stakeholders direct access to information.

Overall, this places the ReNEW consortium in the high range.

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

10

9

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates that the ReNEW consortium has sufficient autonomy to implement the learning environments described in their proposal. Due to the fact that each school is a charter school, it has freedom from the bureaucracy and red tape of traditional school districts. The school leadership teams have great flexibility in the operational and curriculum structures of their schools. The applicant states that since they have this great autonomy, the school leaders have great latitude as well to align their programs and resources to support personalized learning for their students. Each of the schools has their own budget that gives each school the autonomy to hire teachers and staff.

Overall, the applicant scores strongly for this criterion.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)

10

7

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrated that all stakeholders were included in the writing of this proposal. The consortium grant writing team worked with students, parents, and educators, interviewing them to get feedback on how the program initiatives (blended learning and expanded school day) were working. All parties did give feedback to this initiatives. They also gave suggestions on how the strategies of the grant might be improved, such as extending the learning day for PK-8, instead of grades 3-8 as the program currently stands. They have also decided to expand on-line course offerings due to the feedback of their stakeholders.

The ReNEW consortium does not have a collective bargaining unit, but gave evidence that 77 percent of the Consortium's LEA educators support their reform proposal. They show examples in the appendix of letters of support from stakeholders, community partners, the Mayor's office, the LDOE, and the federal government.

Overall, the applicant did a through job on how they were revising their proposal. The applicant did not involve them in the development of this proposal, since the program initiatives that they are currently using are already in place. This places the applicant in the medium range.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)

5

5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrated that they addressed the criterion in this section by an initial needs assessment completed by each LEA. This assessment identifies current strengths and areas for improvement that will affect implementation of personalized learning environments, using blended learning and ExpandedED. They also plan to provide additional modeling and coaching of best practices in blended learning, by school reviews and walkthrough observations. This will help to customize professional development for teams and individual teachers. They list key goals, a clear timeline, and responsible parties as is required in

a high quality plan.

Overall, the applicant scores strongly for this criterion.

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

| | Available | Score |
|---|-----------|-------|
| (C)(1) Learning (20 points) | 20 | 16 |
| <p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant demonstrates through this section of the application the facets they have in place for a high quality plan for improving learning and teaching through the use of personalized learning environment that assures their students are college and career ready, although the consortium only goes to eighth grade.</p> <p>Since these schools were low performing schools taken over by the state, the ReNEW consortium made it a priority to clean up, and to build a new culture and climate that will reflect high expectations, student responsibility for learning, and increased parental support. The educators aligned content to focus on college and career. They have collaborative research programs that require a student to identify a career, and backwards plan to see what skills they will need in core content areas. The applicant feels that it is vital to establish strong school-family relationship, and gives families cell phones to communicate, planning family nights that educate families on viable options for colleges and careers.</p> <p>They taught the students how to set short term and long term goals, and to progress monitor these goals. Student goals are based on baseline universal screenings, and the student monitors this data and their progress throughout the year. Every two weeks, a student has a one-to-one conference to review their data folders and monitor progress. The use of student-led conferences is also part of this process.</p> <p>The applicant provides the student with choices in learning projects, and they engage in high interest courses that develop the whole child. They bring in outside groups to expose the students to the world outside their doors, and have field trip experiences as well.</p> <p>The applicant uses the model of blended learning, with the support of additional educators, to develop an individualized learning plan for each student. Purchased laptops let the student continue their studies outside of school, and give their parents access to data. They extend the school day, and offer enrichment activities Digital learning throughout the grades provides content that aligns with CCSS. Data is updated, and every seven weeks, benchmark assessments demonstrate CCSS mastery. The blended learning software programs adapt as the student learns, and educators can track their progress. The ReNEW staff uses the RtI model to address the needs of high-need students.</p> <p>Overall, this places the ReNEW consortium in the bottom of the high range. Although the high-quality plan is already in place, it has strong components which merit this score.</p> | | |
| (C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points) | 20 | 15 |
| <p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant demonstrates that 100% of the consortium's teachers participate in professional development for 3 weeks before the school year. This professional development gives time to review the consortium's model and expectations, and time for teams to plan together. With the implementation of Common Core, additional training has been added. They also meet weekly to study live student data, and work across schools to study data trends. There is no mention of increasing the number of students who will receive instruction from effective teachers and principals.</p> <p>With blended learning being the math focus of this consortium, teachers are given many digital resources to meet the needs of their learners. They also use hands-on tools to support varied modalities of learning. The assessments that are mandated by the Louisiana Department of Education are given, and a partnership with ANet helps to provide benchmark assessments, with ANet providing the data to teachers. Teachers are evaluated quarterly, and principal and administrators have measures of evaluation as well. Walkthroughs are done monthly by staff, parents, and community members. ANet also identifies resources that align to the CCSS, and give them online resources to manage teaching. Professional development is held in the summer for school leaders as well.</p> | | |

The applicant thoroughly describes each facet of this criterion, with examples of each of their strategies, scoring in the low high range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

| | Available | Score |
|---|-----------|-------|
| (D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points) | 15 | 11 |
| <p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>With the organization of the ReNEW consortium, the charter organization has a back office support model, using the personnel that were already in place in the three schools, and adding a leader position to work with all the stakeholders over the term of the grant. The premise is to use personnel to relieve teachers and leaders of school related, non-instructional work. All staff members are located within the three schools. The schools, due to the mandates of the charter bill, have autonomy over the daily management of the school. They work through afterschool time, and technology at home, to give the students additional time to master content. The students work online, at their own pace, and with feedback from the programs about mastery of content. There are modifications for students with disabilities and English learners, basically relying on the adaptability of the blended learning software.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant has flexibility and autonomy to service the students in the way they deem best; and they use online resources to support mastery and to adapt curriculum. There are clear goals, with resonsible parties, and some timelines being given. This places the applicant in the top of the medium range.</p> | | |
| (D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points) | 10 | 8 |
| <p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant states that 100% of each of the consortium's students have access to high quality content, tools, and learning resources. Rtl, SE, ELL services, and social-emotional supports are available to all students. They speak to altering content as needed, and using techology equipment to support the learner, with families able to check out loaner laptops. Use of ExpandedED to support the school day and expand it are available to all students, therefore giving them the same resources that a higher income student would have.</p> <p>The applicant states that all stakeholders have access to technical support, from freeing up the principals to be instructional coaches, to Directors of Curriculum supporting educators. Social services, such as counselors, social workers, nurses, and therapists deliver specialized support for all families as well. Since their Blended learning program is based on technology, they have a director in place to oversee the programs and give the teachers professional development. This director also assists students and parnents with needs during after school hours.</p> <p>IT systems in the school form an information technology system that allows students and parents to download data, creating a learning profile. The consortiums do use common systems that allow for data collection and sharing . This data is also uploaded from the Louisiana Department of Education, and matched with each student and educator. The consortium uses different systems that converge into one data storage warehouse; which compares progress by school, subject, and grade.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant demonstrates strongly for this crietion, with a score in the high range. They demonstrate that they have methods in place that will that the infrastructure will support the stakeholder's needs.</p> | | |

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

| | Available | Score |
|--|-----------|-------|
| (E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points) | 15 | 10 |
| <p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The partnership with the Achievement Network (ANet) assists the consortium in instructional management cycles that include setting a diagnosis and goals, quarterly reviews on progress, which continues throughout the students life at the school. The ReNEW consortium shows that this process, coordinated by the RTT Project director, will have a monitoring plan in place , that will be shared quarterly with their Board of Directors.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant shows that they have some adjustments place to track and modify data and learning, and a director that</p> | | |

will share information with designated stakeholders; putting them into the medium range.

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

5

5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant relies on a newsletter to keep stakeholders within the school setting up to date with the Race to the Top plan. Leaders have weekly meetings to discuss feedback towards student goals. Families receive weekly communication through the school and teachers, and student led conferences between students, parents, and teachers show individual progress towards goals. They also have monthly meetings in which academic and financial subcommittees and the Board of Directors in which they share successes and areas of improvement.

Overall, the applicant shows that they have strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with all stakeholders in place, giving them a high score.

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

5

2

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicants all think that quality educators are the single most important ingredient to high student academic achievement, so the Tables that the applicant enclosed in this section showed their current status in employing highly effective teacher and principals, although no criteria is given to how they determine this. They used this measure for their target to increase student attendance across the consortium, with a goal of 94%. Their baseline is currently at 88%. Performance measures (which are not stated in this application) will be used to show if students are making the target.

The applicant uses data as indicated in a table that for students scoring at level or above, divided by the total number of students from the indicated assessment, that they will be designated as college and career ready. For example, for PK-2 in literacy, their baseline shows that 74% of all participating students are in this category in grades PK-2. Although this does provide a snapshot for the path the student may be on, it seems less than credible to assume they are career and college ready at such a young age, based on one assessment. The Consortium's Director of Data will use the multiple measures of data to compare teacher effectiveness against the targets in the table included in this application. They state that this will help to make informed decisions about support for teachers.

If the applicant finds that achievement against student performance is not at proficiency, action plans will be put in place. Action plans can consist of removing or replacing teachers, adding intervention classes, additional professional development, visits to parents.

Although the applicant has many things in place to demonstrate that they will be able to adjust and modify the plans as the term of the grant continues, there is a lack of solid follow through and definitive measures and steps to make this a high quality plan, placing the applicant in the higher end of the low range.

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

5

3

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates that their plan will be aligned to the Blended Learning and ExpandedED activities, and digital programs that are already in place in the ReNEW consortiums. They plan to monitor the use of laptops, expanding their use during the term of the grant. The Project director will work with community organizations associated with the consortium. There will also be an annual evaluation of the Program Director, based on the job description of this position. The timelines are clear in the implementation of this initiative, and clearly outlined how they would track, monitor, and evaluate the components of this grant.

Overall, the applicant gives a clear and concise picture of how they will evaluate the effectiveness of this grant, placing them in the high medium range. 3

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

| | Available | Score |
|--|-----------|-------|
| (F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points) | 10 | 4 |
| <p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant breaks down the budget by the components of the personalized learning program (Blended learning, EdNOW, Program Director, etc). and does identify the funds that will support the project. Each budget does list the external foundation or organizations that contribute to the budget. There are funds that are one time investments (laptops) . All the components of this grant, excluding the Program Director, and additional supplies and software are in place with this project, but no mention is made of strategies that will continue the growth of this grant after its term expires.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant explains its present plan used for budget well, and projects the costs over the four years, but sustainability is not a factor in this section, giving a score in the low medium range.</p> | | |
| (F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points) | 10 | 7 |
| <p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant demonstrated that through the way that they allocate personnel, and the way that the grant is implemented with the "Train the Trainer" model, they feel as if they will be able to shift personnel needed for the implementation of the grant out and use it in other areas to sustain the reform.They speak of their partnerships with community organizations, and how they will sustain this partnership and the monies attached to sustain the grant. Cost saving initiatives are also in place, helping to sustain the ongoing components of this reform.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant is in the low high range for this section.</p> | | |

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

| | Available | Score |
|--|-----------|-------|
| Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points) | 10 | 7 |
| <p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>By partnering with the local Partnership for Youth Development, the ReNEW consortium plans to expand the afterschool programs that one of the schools in the consortium is already implementing, forming the basis for the ExpandedED model of inclusive programs for all children, meeting social, emotional, physically, and educational needs in an extended school day. The plan is to include 100 percent of the students in the consortium in this ExpandEd model, providing a table that demonstrates the goals to get students at proficiency, and to support goals in attendance and behavior. The community partnership plans to use a tool called GradTRacker, a program that will identify students' progress towards high school graduation. They plan to expand from the orginial three schools in the consortium, and to add a school each year of the project, with 3, 908 students by the final year of the grant. The Partnership for Youth Development will monitor these initiatives to study current progress and make adjustments to improve results.</p> | | |

Absolute Priority 1

| | Available | Score |
|--|-------------|-------|
| Absolute Priority 1 | Met/Not Met | Met |
| <p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant demonstrates that they have a clear and comprehensive plan on how it is going to build on the core educational areas, to create learning environments though their e-portals, and the components that go along with it. This system will help</p> | | |

provide a comprehensive ways for students, educators, and families to view, track data, use it to modify and provide instruction. Each student has a personalized learning plan that follows him/her through high school with curriculum supports that will have the student career and college ready. The applicant has a clear and coherent plan in place to increase the effectiveness of educators and administrators. They show proof that this reform has decreased the achievement gap by 20 points in the two years the plan has already been in place.

The applicant meets the criterion of Absolute Priority 1.

| | | |
|-------|-----|-----|
| Total | 210 | 151 |
|-------|-----|-----|



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0760LA-3 for Batiste Cultural Arts Academy at Live Oak

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

1. The ReNEW Consortium articulates a reform vision that was promulgated on reorganization implemented by the Louisiana Legislature and Department of Education.

a. The 3 consortium charter schools were created through the closure of existing schools that had been identified as some of the lowest achieving in the state. Under the state's direction, the charter schools were created and serve high needs at-risk students in grades PK-8. The consortium schools are tasked with the responsibility to "accelerate and deepen learning and get below-level students caught up."

b. The applicant states that "ReNEW's mission is to provide a rigorous, college preparatory education to historically underserved students."

c. Specific academic supports, to build personalized learning environments, are listed, including " recruitment and development of highly effective educators through partner organizations and talent pipelines; increased instructional minutes for students through extended day and extended school year; increased time scheduled for reading, ELA, and math; use of research-supported curriculum materials aligned to CCSS; strengthened school culture and climate; consistent use of behavior interventions and student celebrations and reward; greater parent engagement and increased reliance on community partners; the school-within-a-school model to divide and conquer; flooding buildings with adults to provide stabilization and greater individualized supports to at-risk youth; reconfiguration of the central office; high levels and investments in technology infrastructure, equipment; support for whole class and individualized personalized learning; and strong transition plans to assist students and families between programs and schools."

2. Personal(ized) learning environments are evident and supported as noted below.

a. The personalized learning vision is aligned with the "Shared Learning Collaborative (SLC) in which all resources, infrastructure, and storage and sharing of data are aligned and interconnected to support customization of learning for each child."

b. Two strategic focuses, blended learning and the ExpandedED Model, are utilized.

c. Learning is monitored and programs are adjusted for all students across grade levels at all consortium schools.

d. Partnerships with specific local and national organizations strategically address multiple areas of concern, such as lowering student-teacher ratios and assessing student and family needs.

e. Students are surveyed to inform course offerings; programming is student-centered.

f. Extended learning opportunities are offered: afterschool, online courses with on and off site log in and variable pacing, and internet connected laptops for home use.

3. A lab facilitator and Director of Blended Learning assist in accessing data to monitor progress and work with stakeholders to track student progress and inform/support learning. Stakeholders have access to data (accessed through blended learning program reports and consortium personnel) and can compare progress against goals.

This section is rated in the high range.

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

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

1. The ReNEW Consortium is comprised of 3 charter schools. The process used to determine the schools selected centered on determining "a way that could make the greatest impact on the city's lowest-achieving schools, those with the greatest academic highest need, and high populations of minority and low-income students." As stated in the application, the schools exceed the 40% or higher low socio-economic threshold.

2. The consortium schools are listed: Batiste Cultural Arts Academy at Live Oak (formerly Live Oak), SciTech Academy at Laurel (formerly Laurel), and Sarah T. Reed Elementary.

3. The table/chart provided lists the participating LEA's, schools, total number of participating students, participating students from low-income families, participating students who are high-need students, and participating educators, as required in the application.

This section is rated in the high range.

| | | |
|---|----|---|
| (A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points) | 10 | 5 |
|---|----|---|

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

1. The applicant plans to scale up and translate meaningful reform beyond the participating schools in the following ways.

a. Under the existing educational structure in Louisiana, additional schools are projected to become part of the ReNEW Consortium (through year 4 of the grant). This will increase the number of students served.

b. The budget for years 2-4 has been developed to meet the needs of educating additional students under the proposed plan.

c. Leader talent is being "incubated" to fill needs when school expansion occurs. While the types of skills that the future leaders will attain are listed, it is unclear how these leaders are being prepared/trained to fill the new positions since no process or training plan is mentioned.

2. While it is stated that new (scale up) consortium schools will be held to the same expectations as first year schools, the start up process for scale up schools is not clear. More information is needed.

3. In section (A)(1), a chart is provided that details activities, timelines, deliverables, and person(s) responsible for implementation of the reform efforts. Activities included tie back to the vision and support credibility of the proposal.

This section is rated in the medium range.

| | | |
|---|----|---|
| (A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points) | 10 | 2 |
|---|----|---|

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(4)(a)

1. The applicant states that, as a Type 5 charter under restart, strategic interventions were put in place (i.e. focus on data driven instruction, differentiated instruction) due to the fact that schools targeted for closure had School Performance Scores (SPS) ranges in the mid-forties (out of 200) and 80% of the students were one or more grade levels behind in reading, ELA, and math.

2. While the graph provided in section (A)(4) compares the overall performance of each school under the guidance of NOPS (New Orleans Public Schools), RSD (Louisiana Department of Education Recovery School District), and ReNEW (respectively), it is unclear what data was used (no population or subgroup demographics reported) or how the data was interpreted to make the comparison. The applicant states that baseline data from ESEA assessments (LEAP and iLEAP) in grades 3-8 for ELA and math are used for the comparison. There seems to be no information regarding the performance of PK-2 students.

3. The ReNEW Consortium achievement scores are inconsistent, as noted by the applicant in section (A)(4). Pockets of growth are evident (i.e. Batiste 8th ELA 32% in 2010-11 and 42% in 2011-12; Reed ELA 32% in 2010-11 and 51% in 2011-12). However, the overall lack of progress is a concern. Further explanation regarding the mixed results is needed.

(A)(4)(b)

1. The applicant notes that there is no historical data to make full or partial comparisons in subgroups, as relates to achievement gaps.

2. According to the applicant, increasing the ALL Students category will in turn decrease the gaps between Caucasians and African Americans, and economically disadvantaged versus non-disadvantaged subgroups. This premise would seem inaccurate as students in one subgroup could make progress while the other remained static or very slightly decreased causing the overall "look" of making progress (until subgroups were disaggregated).

3. Due to the applicant's premise regarding the impact of the ALL Students category on decreasing achievement gaps, insufficient information is given regarding addressing decreasing achievement gaps (since specific subgroups are not addressed).

(A)(4)(c & d)

1. At the present time, there are no graduation or college enrollment figures since the consortium schools have not been in place long enough for such data to be available. However, graduation and college enrollment targets have been set for 2016-17 (post-grant) to establish a goal for students progressing through the system.

(A)(4)(e)

This section was optional and not submitted or rated.

This section is rated in the low range.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

1. The applicant states that all consortium schools were on the state's list of Tier I, II, and III persistently lowest-achieving schools. As reported, in one year, the SPS for the consortium's schools increased by 19 and 20 points. While this statistic shows growth, the point of reference is vague since it is unclear which schools progressed at which rate and what process was used to determine how the SPS was applied to the newly constituted schools.

2. The graph comparing performance under the guidance of NOPS, RSD, and ReNEW (respectively), indicates that the largest gains have been under ReNEW's leadership. However, according to the applicant, some of the schools in the consortium are newer than others. It is unclear which ReNEW schools are included in the data provided in the graph's comparison. It is also unclear what data was used and how it was disaggregated to determine the comparison made.

3. Stakeholders have access to data to inform or improve student participation, instruction, and services through:

- a. customized reports,
- b. classroom charts based on mastery of standards,
- c. reports on such areas as attendance, behavior, and achievement in relation to college and career readiness bands,
- d. report cards with grades and performance-based measures,
- e. access to digital learning progress and performance (DreamBox), and

f. public LEA board meetings where performance is reviewed.

This section is rated in the medium range.

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

5

4

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

1. The ReNEW Consortium's transparency compliance is implemented as required by state law and includes a) actual personnel salaries for all school level personnel, instructional and support staff, b) actual personnel salaries of instructional staff only, c) actual personnel salaries of teachers only, and d) actual non-personnel expenditures by object code. Information is submitted to the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE), and is accessible by the public on the LDOE website. Since the consortium LEA's CMO (ReNEW Reinventing Education) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, the organization's tax form 990 is available online at GuideStar (www.guidestar.org). ReNEW's website (www.renewschools.org) also contains access to a public records request form so that stakeholders can request information.
2. While transparency compliance is met in multiple ways, it is unclear how stakeholders know about accessing the information.

This section is rated high.

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

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

1. Under state law, the following is in place for each consortium school.
 - a. Each school is designated as its own LEA.
 - b. Schools have expansive operational flexibility (i.e. determining personnel options, scheduling, budgeting) within the boundaries of compliance with state and federal regulations.
2. The existing autonomy provides the ability to extensively implement the personalized learning environments through such avenues as pooling resources by "sharing bus routes, sharing the services of support staff (school psychologist, physical therapists, speech pathologist, etc.) and specialized programs for students with extreme behavioral challenges and a unique in-house program for students who would otherwise be expelled."

This section is rated in the high range.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)

10

8

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

1. Evidence of stakeholder engagement in developing and receiving support for the proposal includes the following:
 - a. student interviews with examples of student responses and how the responses resulted in adjustments,
 - b. family member interviews and surveys, examples of feedback received, and explanations of how feedback was utilized,
 - c. teacher and leader input, examples of the responses, and how the input was applied, and
 - d. an explanation of how the proposal was revised due to stakeholder feedback.
2. The applicant noted that, at the School's Leadership Roundup Support session, stakeholders were informed how feedback was used.
It is unclear if other stakeholders were provided communication about the use of their feedback.
3. The consortium schools do not participate in collective bargaining.
4. The consortium reported that 77% of its educators supported the reform proposal; this exceeds the 70% threshold required. It is unclear why 23% of the educators did not support the proposal.
5. Letters of support from students, parents, educators, and support organizations are provided. It is unclear why additional letters of support from local businesses, civic groups, institutions of higher education, or educational support agencies were not present.

This section is rated in the low end of the high range.

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| (B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points) | 5 | 2 |
| <p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>1. Evidence regarding analysis of needs and gaps includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. completion of a needs assessment to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement by each LEA and CMO staff, and b. feedback utilized to "shape" the reform program goals and action plan in 4 ways, as noted in section (B)(5). <p>2. Evidence provided addresses overall needs and how the changes will impact personalize learning environments through quarterly Data Day activities to address data trends and collaboratively establish action plans (chart in (A)(1)). However, there seems to be no direct linkage to/explanation addressing specific gaps in learning.</p> <p>3. The extended day component, use of technology in and out of school to support and expand blended learning, and monitoring of teacher effectiveness tie back to the vision and support the plan.</p> <p>This section is rated in the medium range.</p> | | |

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

| | Available | Score |
|--|-----------|-------|
| (C)(1) Learning (20 points) | 20 | 20 |
| <p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(C)(1)(a)</p> <p>1. The applicant demonstrates use of multiple, layered opportunities for students to engage in and manage their learning through a supported, personalized approach. Evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. establishing a climate for cultural shift (i.e. promoting college themes and where possible, including college and career references in instruction), b. making content connected and relevant, such as having students identify a career and work backwards to determine the core subject area skills needed for it, c. having students learn to set their own short and long-term goals and review their own achievement levels in order compare them to requirements for receiving scholarships and entering college, d. having students conference with teachers at least every other week and engage in taking ownership of their learning, e. engaging families to build a support network (i.e. open door policy, use of LEA purchased cell phones, family night activities), f. student-led conferences with educators and parents, g. planned celebrations to maintain focus on achievement (i.e. pizza parties, trips to the museum), h. local and out-of-state college tours to further college and career readiness, i. information regarding graduation from high school and linkage with high performing Louisiana high schools, j. student choice/selection/input in learning activities, k. availability of high interest, non-core courses aligned with content (i.e. arts, dance, drama), l. tracking and analyzing student learning in high interest classes, m. exposing students to diverse cultures and perspectives (i.e. WW II veterans, South African dancers, choirs and orchestras), having speakers/performers engage students in global dialog, and utilizing volunteers with varying life experiences, and | | |

n. having students participate in field experiences that have a culturally focused purpose (i.e. Jazz and Heritage Festival, German Heritage Foundation).

(C)(1)(b)

1. Parental and educator support are evident in the following ways.

a. All students, including ELL and SWD, have individualized learning plans and review their own mastery against college and career readiness.

b. Parents receive weekly reports and support to help students at home through quarterly literacy and math events and internet accessible laptops, with training on how to access online learning and reports required before check out.

c. Extended day activities and multiple, interactive, customizable learning tools are in accessible (Blueprint for Learning, Fast ForWord, Accelerated Reader).

d. Materials and resources for PK-8 are aligned with CCSS.

e. Every 7 weeks, Achievement Network (ANet) benchmarks report students' CCSS mastery.

f. Diagnostic tools allow customization of each student's learning, including adjustments for mastery.

h. The Schoolzilla data integration system stores student data in real time.

i. Rtl and UDL are used to meet the needs of all students, including SWD, non-SWD, ELL, and those with 504 plans. Whether there is parental involvement in the Rtl process is unclear (based on the description of the process and the listed entities involved).

(C)(1)(c)

The applicant states that direct instruction from educators ensures that students understand how to use the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning. The resources, activities, and actions in this section support a credible plan and mesh with the vision and goals established by the applicant.

This section is rated in the high range.

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

20

16

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

1. The applicant demonstrates proficiency in teaching and leading to improve learning through

a. specific professional development (PD) and training to personalize learning for students (i.e. teachers-3 weeks of PD in July on topics such as analyzing data and resource selection, twice quarterly-targeted, across consortium PD for specified grade levels, etc., weekly embedded PD; leaders-weekly and monthly PD with the managing organization's leadership team, 2 weeks of summer PD; Brown Bag software and optional Wednesday night PD on various topics),

b. utilizing an array of learning tools to meet students' needs, particularly ELL and students with disabilities (SWD) (i.e. manipulatives, technology, project-based activities/assessments,

c. measuring student progress toward college and career ready standards, including ELL and SWD (i.e. CCSS assessments (PARCC), state-mandated assessments-DIBELS, ITBS, LEAP, ILEAP LAA),

d. continuous use of data from benchmark assessments, universal screenings, state assessments, and blended learning program outputs to monitor and inform instruction,

e. evaluating teachers and leaders with ongoing observations, monitoring (i.e. walkthroughs and data reviews), feedback through the use of state-approved evaluation tools (i.e. teachers-state-approved evaluation rubric and Louisiana's value-added teacher evaluation system by building administration; leaders-state-approved Compass rubric by the Superintendent; Superintendent-High Bar process by the Board of Directors),

f. use of digital learning resources, such as blended learning and US ED's What Works Clearing House,

g. applying systems in place to address student performance and close achievement gaps (i.e. graph in section (C)(2)(c)(ii),

h. employing strategic, targeted actions to assure that effective and highly effective teachers are in place (i.e. replacing 50-

70% of the teachers under the restart plan, utilizing a systemic plan for evaluating teachers (see e. above), and

i. incentive pay for educators exhibiting improved student achievement or for working with the most high needs, at-risk students.

2. It is unclear how aspiring leaders are trained or if there is a succession plan for ensuring high quality leadership.

3. It is unclear if there is a process for matching students with teachers (how students are assigned to classes) in order to maximize instructional impact.

4. Items a-i above link to the applicant's vision, goals, and overall reform plan. The chart in (A)(1) provides supporting evidence for the implementation and evaluation process to be used.

This section is rated in the high range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(D)(1)(a)

The applicant describes a governance structure that is in place and how, through the additional personnel, a RTTT-D Project Director (hired under the grant) would provide support and services to the ReNEW Consortium schools.

(D)(1)(b)

Under the state's direction, the charter schools were created and given expansive operational flexibility over their "daily management of the school (within state and federal guidelines). These include determination of daily schedules, determination of enrichment and remediation classes, how to best provide interventions, small school budget, staffing, and educator assignments. School leadership teams even have the autonomy to impact enrollment, by creating targets for how many students they would like to enroll at each grade level. They can hire educators to meet their students' greatest needs and interests."

(D)(1)(c, d, & e)

1. The applicant states that Louisiana does not require seat time for course completion.
2. Extended opportunities are provided for students to master material/content/ standards (i.e. extended day, access to online coursework at home, provision of laptops with Internet access, scheduled intervention classes).
3. Examples of multiple opportunities for students to exhibit mastery of standards in multiple ways are provided: informal and formal measures, such as quizzes, learning projects, daily exit tickets, team games, and collaborative activities. Rubrics are provided to students prior to non-traditional assessments.
4. Daily differentiation of instruction is prioritized across grades and subjects. UDL resources are utilized for specific needs (i.e. textbooks for ELL students, Kurzweil software for non-readers or students with visual needs). As has been noted in the application, RtI is used to address the needs of learners, as needed. Special Education educators are in place to work with students with disabilities.
5. The applicant attests that 100% of the consortium's blended learning programs are adaptable for all students and that LEA personnel seek out resources and adapt them to meet the needs of all students.
6. Items 1-5 support the applicant's goals and vision. They assist in molding and supporting the infrastructure necessary for the plan's implementation.

This section is rated in the high range.

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

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

1. Evidence that the applicant's LEA and school infrastructure supports personalized learning are presented in the plan and include:
 - a. "Response to Intervention, special education, ELL services, and social-emotional supports are available to all students and their

families. Content is altered as needed, and provided in a variety of formats including increased font size, auditory, and pre-speech."

b. "Kurzweil, text-to-speech devices, and e-readers support Universal Design for Learning to increase student access to content."

c. Loaner laptops (after training and deposit) are available. " Those families who cannot afford a deposit are able to have parent or child perform community service at the school site in lieu of payment. Take-home laptops have Internet access with the required content blocker to keep students from accessing harmful and inappropriate content."

d. Technical support and training are provided and ongoing assistance is available from specified personnel.

e. ReNEW Consortium's "information technology systems each use CSV files to allow students, families, and educators to download data and make it readily available to use in other programs and create a single learning profile for their son or daughter."

f. All digital content licenses can store individual student data securely. 'Currently, stakeholders can view and print reports from each program. The IT team's Blended Learning Coordinator prepares all CSV requests for students and their families. Consortium LEAs collaborate and use common systems that allow easy data collection and sharing in a non-proprietary, open format.

2. Items a-f provide evidence that the applicant has a viable plan that meshes with the goals and vision established.

This section is rated in the high range.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

| | Available | Score |
|---|-----------|-------|
| (E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points) | 15 | 13 |
| (E)(1) Reviewer Comments: 1. A strategy for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the term of the grant is presented and includes: a. diagnosis and goal setting through the use of blended learning reports and additional formal and informal data sources, b. annual and quarterly reviews of performance measures, implementation, progress, and next steps (i.e. six actions (listed in section (E)(1)) for ensuring that practices are in place to measure and monitor progress), and c. hiring a RTTT-D Project Director to oversee implementation components and publicly report findings, at least quarterly, in open meetings to Community Board Directors. This section is rated in the high range. | | |
| (E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points) | 5 | 5 |
| (E)(2) Reviewer Comments: 1. The applicant states that strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders are in place; evidence includes: a. a monthly newsletter (ReNEWsletter) for educators, b. a bi-weekly newsletter from the Director of Curriculum and Instruction for educators, | | |

- c. weekly meetings for leaders, with Superintendents,
- d. follow up emails to personnel after data collection events,
- e. weekly meetings between ExpandedED partners (Partnership for Youth Development (PYD) site coordinators and administrators and host school leaders),
- f. communication to families through PTA meetings, quarterly student-led parent conferences, LEA-funded cell phones, and open door policies, and
- g. monthly meetings of academic and financial subcommittees and the Board of Directors.

This section is rated in the high range.

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| (E)(3) Performance measures (5 points) | 5 | 1 |
|--|---|---|

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

1. Multiple performance measures, with annual targets, are provided. While the enclosed chart clarifies the alignment of the performance measures to grade levels and student populations, the narrative is unclear about which early childhood grade levels and students fall under the 80% target and which grade levels and students fall under the 3% target.
2. The following targets, as listed on the chart, are deemed reasonable.
 - a. Increasing attendance consortium-wide to 94%
 - b. Setting an 80% attainment score on the STEP for early childhood literacy in grades PK-2
 - c. PK-8 discipline/behavior referrals declining by 5% annually
3. The target for K-3 math seems inconsistent from the narrative to the chart. The target is set at 80% in the narrative; however, the chart shows that all students, in the baseline year, scored 80% or better and that in subsequent years targets exceed 80%.
4. In the narrative, an annual target of 5% across subgroups is stated. While the chart shows that the 5% target applies to all subgroups in grades 4 and 8, the narrative is unclear if the target is meant for grades 4-8, grades 5 and 9, or grades 4 and 8.
5. Alignment of the narrative and charted information would increase the clarity of the applicant's performance measures and targeted outcomes.
6. The applicant provides a rationale for the following performance measures and targets.
 1. Attendance impacts loss of instruction and is correlated with increased performance.
 2. Behavior impacts learning. Students remaining in a classroom, with behavior and learning supports, are more likely to achieve.
 3. Targets for grades 4 and 8 are established due to high stakes testing and skills attainment levels mandated at the 5th and 9th grades. In addition, there is a need for increased improvement in grades 4 and 8 in all subgroups.
 4. Students in grades PK-3 are performing better than those in subsequent grade levels. By expanding the progress in the lower grade levels, there will be a decreased gap in learning as students progress through the grade levels.
 5. Measuring student progress toward college and career ready standards, including ELL and SWD (i.e. STEP, TerraNOVA, LEAP) will take place.
 6. Continuous use of data from benchmark assessments, universal screenings, state assessments, discipline, attendance, and blended learning program outputs to monitor and inform instruction and adjust performance measures or targets will be utilized. Internal (consortium personnel, RTTT-D Project Director) and external evaluators (School Turnaround Office, Office of Departmental Support) will also be utilized to this end.
 7. It is not evident that 12-14 performance measures have been established.

This section is rated in the low range.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points) | 5 | 5 |
| <p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>1. The applicant presents an explanation of the process to evaluate effectiveness of investments and provides a chart (in section (E)(4)) for clarity. The chart breaks out the process in terms oversight initially, daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annually; listed are timelines, evaluation activities, and the responsible party for each activity. The basic steps involved include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. monitoring, b. review of data, c. review of implementation and intervention effectiveness (i.e. laptops, ExpandedED impact), and d. determining the effectiveness of the RTTT-D Project Director through a performance evaluation. <p>This section is rated in the high range.</p> | | |

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

| | Available | Score |
|---|-----------|-------|
| (F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points) | 10 | 9 |
| <p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>1. While a rationale for the budget was not included as a separate section in the application (F)(1), an explanation of the expenditures was included with the actual budget.</p> <p>2. Budgeted expenditures seem in line with the overall plan. (i.e. RTTT-D Project Director's salary, laptop purchases to expand access to at home technology for families).</p> <p>3. Items are noted in terms of one-time or recurring expenditures. Narrative that provides an explanation of the 4 projects budgeted is provided. ("The budget has been made into four projects to support personalized learning environments, project management, and interoperable data systems. The first supports the ExpandEd program partner contracts at all year1 and expansion participating schools. The second project supports blended learning, and is comprised of student licenses for digital learning content, laptops, and laptop carts. The third budget supports a Race to the Top Consortium Project Director, to oversee and coordinate all grant related planning, activities, monitoring, and reporting. The final project budget supports ongoing Consortium data integration to continue to provide effective tools for educators and inform stakeholders on students' success in reading goals for career and college readiness, attendance, and behavior.")</p> <p>4. The bulk of the funds are designated for and support the primary initiative (ExpandedED) which will provide the extended day opportunity for students and allow for additional personalized learning time and alternative avenues to attain knowledge and skills. The second largest funding piece is blended learning which is an integral part of the existing structure.</p> <p>This section is rated in the high range.</p> | | |
| (F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points) | 10 | 7 |
| <p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>1. The applicant states that grants, funding from the managing organization and state and local government, support from existing partnerships, fundraising, planned cost-saving initiatives, and leadership incubation will be implemented to sustain the plan after the 4 year grant period ends.</p> <p>2. The applicant provides multiple avenues of support measures (such as the managing organization's funding, building a budget for post-grant growth) and potential support measures (grants) for sustainability; most post-grant measures to be used seem to be embedded in the existing structure. Further articulation of the strategy/plan for sustainability would provide a clearer understanding of the steps the applicant will take.</p> <p>This section is rated in the medium range.</p> | | |

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

| | Available | Score |
|---|-----------|-------|
| Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points) | 10 | 8 |

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

1. The ReNEW Consortium provides an explanation for the plan it will implement to gain results, align resources, and integrate services. Its ultimate partnership is with the Partnership for Youth Development (PYD), in conjunction with a grant from The After School Corporation (TASC) to implement the ExpandedED expanded day program. The program emphasizes strong community partnerships to assist in "planning and executing balanced day." Students are provided 35 weeks of expanded programming options 4 days a week (Monday through Thursday), with PYD providing school, student, and family supports from 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

2. Evidence for the plan includes,

- a. implementation of an expanded school day (under the ExpandedED Schools Model),
- b. a comprehensive partnership with the Partnership for Youth Development (PYD), in conjunction with a grant from The After School Corporation (TASC),
- c. recursive and reiterative measures (as documented throughout the plan/proposal) to establish, implement, monitor, review, analyze, and adjust learning goals and utilize data, align resources, and determine outcomes based on continuous improvement actions,
- d. efforts to communicate to and with all stakeholder groups (i.e. students, parents, and educators in particular),
- e. expansion of reform efforts beyond the present population served (i.e. adding students each year),
- f. implementing a process to address challenges of the reform plan,
- g. providing access to technology and learning supports to stakeholders, and
- h. providing optimal opportunities for students to be successful through the establishment and continued support of personalized learning environments.

3. Of the 8 population-level desired results for students, 2 (discipline and attendance) replicate the performance measures previously established and one (increase academic achievement scores in academic classes) directly ties back to the performance measures. The other desired results provide learning support. Several of the population-level desired results for students seem to be subjectively measurable or do not have an explanation of how they will be measured (i.e. provide safe, supervised, educational after-school programming for students).

4. "GradTracker, a tool based on Robert Balfanz's research from Johns Hopkins University, to identify students' progress toward graduation in the elementary, middle school and high school grades" will be used to monitor and assess students' college and career readiness and determine interventions for individual students. Previously mentioned data sources are being used to support evaluation of progress.

5. Parents and students will be surveyed to assess needs and interests.

6. Ongoing assessment and monitoring will be in place and will be communicated to stakeholders.

This section is rated in the high range.

Absolute Priority 1

| | Available | Score |
|--|-----------|-------|
|--|-----------|-------|

| Absolute Priority 1 | Met/Not Met | Met |
|--|-------------|-----|
| <p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Throughout the application, the ReNEW Consortium focuses on accountability for accelerated learning of high needs at-risk students through: blended learning; providing a personalized learning environment that focuses on mastery of standards; adapting and adjusting learning resources and opportunities for students; engaging stakeholders; providing stakeholder access to technology; providing multiple opportunities for student engagement and success; and collaboratively sharing and building on strengths in existence across the ReNEW Consortium districts.</p> <p>The applicant has provided information and evidence that document and support the reform proposal and that mesh to build a cohesive plan.</p> <p>Through the examples listed above, and other components of the plan, the applicant meets Absolute Priority 1.</p> | | |

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|-------|-----|-----|
| Total | 210 | 170 |
|-------|-----|-----|