



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0240LA-1 for Caddo Parish Public Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Caddo presents a bold vision utilizing a major acceleration of technology to personalize instruction. The district aspires to having one computer for each student but in the near term future to expand dramatically the use of computer tools. The district displays a strong commitment to Common Core standards, more powerful assessments of students and educators, use of student achievement data, developing effective educators and greater transparency to stakeholders. One example is the use of the Teacher Advancement Model because it brings teachers together using data analysis to transform low performing schools. They will purchase computers and employ twelve more technology specialists to achieve the vision. This proposal dramatically commits to personalized learning and to using data to drive that agenda.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>All 62 public schools are mentioned and declared eligible to participate which is acceptable if they are all equally needy. The data indicates that 88% of them serve low income children. Still there are low performing schools which presumably deserve top priority intervention and support which is one purpose of this federal award program. The district commendably intends to expand the TAP program to more schools, which builds learning communities among educators committed to use data to improve instruction. One the whole this is a constructive attack on low achievement but lacks a clear strategy to focus on "academically unacceptable" schools.</p> <p>The timelines are not sufficiently clear. Beginning dates are included for several components of the plan without listing any checkpoints or completion dates.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The detailed descriptive data on high need students is explicit and excellent. However, it seemed that all schools would get technology and other help without concentrating first on the highest need schools and students. The scaling up process assumed that all schools were equally needed but the data displayed did not justify equal treatment of all schools. On the other hand, almost 90% of the schools serve low income students which is the strong argument for working in all schools, scaling up what only four technology specialists provide at this time. The extensive use of computer technology and hiring of more technology specialists makes personalization possible. However, it is not clear enough on how these technologists will work with teachers of those students most in need.</p> <p>Elsewhere in the proposal there are listed turnaround schools, one third of the 62, and other schools which have been performing below expectations. The process of selecting schools according to greatest need is not well-defined or explicit.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	6

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The plan provides detailed, explicit goals set by grade levels, gender, economic status, race and ethnicity, SpEd status, and achievement gaps (by key grades and graduation and college persistence rates). Not until B (5) does the proposal reveal that one third of the schools need the most help. The black-white achievement gap would be reduced by about 25% which appears to be achievable. The quantitative goals are ambitious yet achievable, generally adding a few percentage points in the right direction each year. The objectives for college enrolment are modest in ambition and achievable over four years. Again, the concern is that this plan does not prioritize or provide additional resources to the schools with the lowest scores and greatest needs so as to increase equity.

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	8
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Caddo has achieved gains, some of them from 2006-10 very modest (ELA and lower grade math) but more robust in 8th grade ELA and Algebra I. There were insufficient baseline data on African American student scores to evaluate the improvements asserted. High school graduation rates increased by 4% but without displaying the baseline data or the possible gaps, so this was inconclusive.</p> <p>What was the strongest assertion was the district willingness to change the staffing and leadership at low performing schools and add an hour to the school day and four days to the teachers' year. Also, Caddo makes data on student attendance, discipline and achievement available to teachers and parents through a student data system called JPAMS which is a strong component of the proposal because it allows parents and students as well as educators to review a student's progress.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district asserts a transparent and public comprehensive budget for the entire school district but does not say whether data are displayed by schools as well. All staff personnel salaries are made public in various media. But it is not clear that they are displayed for each school. School level data are not promised in this proposal.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The state has changed from a regulatory mode to a posture of assistance and helping local schools, The state has demonstrated flexibility by approving use of mastery rather than seat time requirements for course completion and has made available help in implementing this policy through its state RTT grant. Caddo has successfully begun to experiment with a Turnaround Zone and blended learning and the TAP teacher accountability system, all of which demonstrates sufficient autonomy from the state agency.</p>		

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	8
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district conducted a thoughtful and thorough survey of teacher and administrator priorities for improvement, which included the expanded use of technology. Parent input is mentioned in one sentence only which raises a question about the extent of their engagement in decision-making about this plan. Community agencies, area colleges and local public libraries were informed, and submitted strong letters of support.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	4
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This proposal explicitly states that one third of the public schools are low performing. The proposed focus is on technology, TAP accountability, and software to keep track of each students' performance and interests. The logic is sound, but this proposal lacks sufficient analysis on the interventions needed. Missing was a highly explicit plan on how the technologists will support the teachers of low achieving students.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	15
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The use of an Individual Graduation Plan and a blended learning model that tracks individual interest and growth is a strong component of the Caddo plan. There is a plausible plan for a full disclosure of pupil progress through use of JPAMS which is available for use by parents. The district creatively offers magnet schools and programmatic theme choices leading to different careers. They endorse and provide a variety of high quality program choices from Advanced Placement to self-paced learning, after school tutoring, effectively serving gifted and special needs students. The AP courses prepare for college as well, and advance personalization opportunities for talented students. The heavy reliance on tablets, computer files and technology makes this possible.</p> <p>There is no mention of exposing or employing different cultures and perspectives or of team work and creativity. The proposal allows for frequent feedback on student progress and teachers will be trained to help students use various tools especially technology to manage their learning.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	11
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This section of the proposal mainly discusses the strategy for helping teachers improve their effectiveness mainly through TAP training, accountability and extra compensation. They commit to Common Core and PARCC evaluations but candidly and appropriately confess that those alone will not assure readiness for college or career, They propose a teacher professional development system (PD360) with many offerings, and other evaluation tools such as EAGLE and COMPASS to provide continuous and appropriate information. The focus is on improving teachers but there is little discussion here of offering personalized learning for students.</p>		

This proposal is silent on what principals should do and need other than support TAP for teachers. This high quality plan relies on tools that are listed here: Compass, Eagle, TAP, Blended Learning.

There is no discussion of assigning highly effective teachers and principals to hard to staff schools or subjects such as math and science or special education.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Most of the central office is organized in a conventional fashion except for the appointment of a TAP professional development specialist and Director of Professional Development and Grants. Caddo allows principals sufficient freedom to assign staff and create schedules while holding them accountable for results which is where the responsibility for results should be placed.</p> <p>The district experimented with mastery learning in two schools successfully and now proposes to expand the concept to other high schools and middle schools, a scaling up aligned with this federal initiative.</p> <p>The Blended Learning model allows for multiple opportunities for students and teachers to check on progress appropriately. The robust assessments previously described will serve well special education and English language learners.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	10
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Previous sections of this proposal document how many resources will be available to teachers, which is responsive to this criterion. The JPAMS system already described provides students and parents and other stakeholders, including administrators with information on each student. This proposal dramatically accelerates the use of technology including tablets to make individualization and support available and multiply learning opportunities. The commitment to human resource systems and student data is immense, as well as the emphasis on instructional improvement for all schools. This shows a strong commitment to a systemic approach to quality and personalization, and not just to expanded teacher and student access to technology.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The commitment to continuous improvement is exceptional. They propose to use a Balanced Scorecard (invented at Harvard) to track the impact of the work on all parties as well as a Project Management model (University of Virginia) designed to record progress and problems to correct. They will be able to make adjustments and corrections as needed. The basic plan calls for adding TAP specialists and a dozen technology specialists eventually serving all 62 schools. The proposed budget invests heavily and appropriately in the technology and staff needed to make this new approach work.</p>		

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal calls for making and disseminating progress reports four times each year to all concerned stakeholders, both to educators and to students and their parents. Data on each pupil's progress will be available to teachers, and student achievement data shared properly with parents each quarter.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal lays out 18 measures or checkpoints at various levels from the early grades through college in a compelling and well-reasoned sequence. Each measure is grade or age appropriate and assures an appropriate measurement of progress. Two examples that showed good judgment was the use of DIBELS to document early learning and iLEAP in grade four to document learning systematically. They effectively propose capturing outcomes data for each educational level right up to Advanced Placement courses at the pre-college level.</p> <p>What is especially impressive is the commitment to identifying highly effective teachers and principals through their use of assessment and measurement data because that will be so important in transforming the bottom third of schools needing the most help.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This proposal includes multiple checkpoints, quarterly and annual, for evaluating the effectiveness. Their number is impressive: EAGLE, HCIS, JPAMS, PARCC, Compass, and the use of the Balanced Scorecard and PMOC for reviewing project management. The variety of data will inform local, state and federal agencies far more than usually available. They positively commit to using data to modify service delivery, structures and compensation, which is already tied to the TAP system of accountability. This section is compelling and convincing because they will use sophisticated systems such as PMOC for management and reporting.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	7
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This is an honest and open proposal: The district aspires to accelerate the acquisition of tablets and hire another dozen tech specialists, the key implementation strategy for improving achievement and personalizing learning. The other objective is to expand the TAP program to additional schools, and eventually to the entire district.</p> <p>There is strangely no mention of allocating state Race to the Top funds to this large district. The budget might be criticized for trying to serve all schools on an equal basis, rather than focus primarily on the one third of the schools that are classified as underperforming and serving the most low income children. Also, there is a nearby military base yet no mention of federal DOD funds.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	3
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

There really is no plan other than an offer to seek additional local, state or Federal funds. There is no stated interest in seeking corporation or foundation assistance. They are committed to increased use of technology and view this district RTTT request as essential in the near term future.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

This section of the proposal includes a long list of helpful partners but no strategy to expand or scale up their services to make the plan more effective. Only three specific programs are described in limited detail. The community involvement tactics are soft and vague, mainly outreach to parents of students making transitions. There is no comprehensive strategy for integrating services with schools beyond what exists. There is no inventory of assets which might contribute substantially to the implementation of the plan. There are a few measures but they are not linked closely enough to the specific contributions of partners.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

This proposal would measurably improve learning environments for children, improve learning and teaching, create new tools for students and teachers, allow greater personalization of learning, align with college and career choices and potentially decrease achievement gaps. It relies heavily on the greatly accelerated use of technology and a sophisticated teacher accountability system to achieve those objectives.

Total	210	154
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	0

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

No comments.





Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

A. Vision (40 total points) Application #0240LA-2 for Caddo Parish Public Schools

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(A) (1) The applicant plans to use RTT-D funds to build on its plan, initiated almost four years ago, to create "World Class Schools for World Class Students." Their 62 schools are in the midst of implementing the CCSS, K-12. There is a functioning and accessible system for collecting and analyzing data, although there is no information about the extent of its use or how teachers and schools actually use the data.</p> <p>The comprehensive Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) model holds promise and is in place in three low-performing high schools; RTT-D funds would be used to expand its implementation into about 12 more high needs schools. The applicant plans to infuse more technology, add more professional development, and expand the number of tech. integration specialists who will serve the 12 additional schools.</p> <p>There is only modest evidence in this section that the applicant has a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that would actually increase equity, accelerate learning, and deepen student learning.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	4
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(A) (2) Although the applicants states that "All 62 Caddo Parish schools will have the opportunity to participate in [its RTT-D] initiative," it is not clear how many will actually do so. Thus the total student population of the parish of 41,667 may or may not benefit from RTT-D projects.</p> <p>The applicant already has a data system capable of individual teacher identification with a teacher student match in a Pre-K through 12th grade as well as higher education data -- but there is no information about the extent this system is utilized or its impact on instructional improvement.</p> <p>The deliverables and the process for selecting high needs schools are lacking in specificity. The proposal general approach to implementation of its reform proposal is lacking in specifics beyond suggesting that schools will enhance or extend programs and/or strategies already in place. There is a list of sensible activities related to accelerating student growth including transitioning to the CCSS, expanding EOC exams and AP courses; increasing the use of EAGLE on line assessment system and the district's JPAMs data information system; increasing professional development focused on LDS, CVRP & HCIS; recruiting, training and retaining effective teachers and principals; turning around low/lowest performing schools through the implementation of HPSI, TAP and LSTS; infusing more technology into classrooms and providing more online courses and eLearning Tools; and expanding web based progress monitoring and benchmarking tools. These are all research-based strategies and tools that have the potential to increase or enhance personalized learning but specific targets for increasing use are not in evidence.</p> <p>Among the Parish schools, the percentage of of students from low income families varies from 19-20% (in magnet schools) to 97-98% (Barret Paderia Academy; Caddo Heights Math/Science; Cherokee Park; Newton Smith 6th; Queensborough; Sunset Acres; & Oak Park Microsociety School). It is unclear why the magnet schools, with far fewer students from low income families, would be receiving the same attention and support from this proposal as schools that have close to 100% of its students from low income families. That is, there is no evidence that the applicant has targeted the schools where the needs are the greatest.</p>		

Collectively, the applicant's schools do meet the RTT-D eligibility requirements; overall 65% of its 41,667 students are from low income families. However by including all schools in the proposal the applicant is limiting the potential impact on the schools where the highest percentage of students need the most intensive support to become college/career ready.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	5
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(A) (3) There is a lack of clarity concerning what students will benefit from RTT-D funds since all 62 schools will have the opportunity to participate but there is no information about how that opportunity will or will not be realized. The ones that do participate can then implement the plan "in one or more grade spans." Thus it is unclear that the schools and grades that actually do participate are the ones that need the most support to improve student performance levels.

The applicant plans to scale up successful changes by replicating success of TAP strategies and procedures and examples of successful technology integration. In addition, TAP trained teachers will eventually consult and coach teachers in non-TAP schools. The challenge remains to see if the learning from RTT-D projects will impact change in the low/lowest performing schools or translate into support for district-wide changes.

Of the four major focus areas for this RTT-D initiative, two are based on programs that have already been adopted on a state-wide basis: the Common Core State Standards (+ PARCC assessments) and Louisiana's COMPASS teacher evaluation system. The TAP model will be expanded into more schools and most students will have "at least one digital learning device." The infusion of computers will be augmented by site based support "to maximize the impact of digital learning on student achievement." It is not clear if the RTT-D tech. specialists will be educators who will have a strong background in instruction, curriculum, and assessment, or are mostly trained to just keep the technology up and running.

The applicant's theory of change is "Building success upon success," that is, building capacity in terms of human resources (through professional development), PLCs, programs such as TAP, and adding more materials, equipment, and supplies. The TAP and Blended Learning Initiative programs do hold potential for strengthening teacher and principal effectiveness and meeting the individualized needs of students but there is no evidence of their present impact in the schools where those programs have already been implemented.

In this section the applicant does not offer compelling evidence that the expansion of present activities and the addition of iPads and laptops will lead to improved student learning outcomes.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	2
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(A) (4) The applicant's student Strategic Academic Goals are equal to or exceed its state ESEA targets; however neither appear ambitious. For instance the LA state goal of 50% of 8th grade students "passing" the ELA & Math LEAP assessment by the fall of 2014 is surpassed by the Parish's goal of 60% in 2016, but only are equal to the state's own goal of 50% by 2014, a less than ambitious benchmark. Currently only 39% of the applicant's 8th grade students "pass" both LEAP tests with "Passing" defined as achieving a Basic [not Proficient] score or above on the state grade level assessment (LEAP). "Basic" is not an ambitious benchmark, and having only 50% of students in 8th grade passing ELA/Math assessments is a far from ambitious goal. That is in effect giving up on the other 50% as those students will already be off track for college/career readiness.

There are significant gaps in the achievement levels of different sub-groups as well as in the projected annual growth for different sub-groups. For instance in SY 2011-12 there was a 47 point difference between the 97% of Asian 3rd graders who are "Proficient" in ELA (defined here as Basic or Above) and the 50% of Black students who were Proficient (Basic or Above). By SY 2016-17, the applicant's goal is to decrease this particular gap to 36 percentage points -- again, a less than ambitious goal.

There are similar goals to decrease the achievement gap by increasing the Pass percentage rate of other low performing subgroups. The SPED subgroup lags behind the achievement rate of all other groups, and is expected to improve at a much slower rate. For instance the percentage of 8th grade ELA SPED students passing in SY 2011-12 is 21% -- and that is only expected to improve to an exceedingly modest 23% by SY 2016-17. On the other hand, 8th grade Black students on the same assessment are expected to gain 43 percentage points (from 52% to 95% pass rate between SY 2011-12 and

SY 2016-17). This raises serious concerns about the surprisingly low five year growth target of only two percentage points for students on IEPs, the lack of equity in expectations between and among subgroups, and the lack of "achievability" of the goals for black students since the applicant's plan does not specify extensive or intensive interventions/supports for that particular subgroup.

End of Course (EOC) pass rates for 9th gr. Algebra I also portray significant gaps among sub-groups and worrisome variability in the rate of projected improvement. For instance, from SY 2011-12 to SY 2016-17 the percentage of Hispanic students passing Algebra I: 32% to 40%; Black students: 28% to 36%; and SPED students from .08% to 4%. By SY 2016-17, it is projected that for this same EOC, there would be a difference in pass rates of 35 points between Black students (36%) and White students (71%) -- which is actually greater than the 30 point difference in SY 2011-12 when 28% of Black students passed and 58% of White students passed. This portrays a projected increase in the racial achievement gap in pass rates on the 9th grade EOC assessments and stands in stark contrast to the expectation of decreasing achievement gaps for RTT-D applicants per (A) (4) (b). This discrepancy is also significant as pass rates of Algebra I are often correlated with high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates.

The table labeled 'Decreasing Achievement Gaps' shows a projected overall decrease in achievement gaps between different sub-groups on the composite of iLEAP state tests in ELA and math at 3rd, 8th & 9th grades but this table is difficult to comprehend given the data in the preceding tables. The gaps for the past school year vary in size from 3 points (Male/Female 8th gr. Math, SY 2011-12) to 94 points (Sped/Non-Sped., 9th gr. Math, SY 2011-12).

The average high school graduation rate for students who graduate on time, overall, was 61.6% for SY 2011-12, projected to increase to 86% in SY 2016-17. The applicant states that high school graduation information is not available for subgroups yet should be easily tracked and reported -- and is crucial in understanding the applicant's profile and its target goals for different subgroups.

In sum, this section lacks important data (e.g., on graduation rates by subgroup) and the data that is provided does not demonstrate ambitious yet achievable annual goals for student subgroups.

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	5

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(B) (1) The applicant cites a selection of grades and sub-groups in various content areas that have improved since 2006; however, without seeing the entire profile of data for all grades, sub-groups, and subjects, there is no evidence that the examples cited are idiosyncratic or if they're indicative of overall improvement. This is also true for the examples cited regarding the extent to which the achievement gap has been decreased. For instance, it is not clear which sub group African American students are being compared to re: ELA and Math achievement "gaps." Nor is it clear what percentage points remain as gaps between various sub-groups.

In 2009-2010 the applicant implemented a comprehensive turnaround plan for seven of its low performing schools, including vacating all staff and administrative positions, providing incentives for new hires, extending the school day and school year and implementing scheduling changes at the high school to accommodate RTI interventions and supports. SINI schools have increased the use of instructional technology; formative assessments and TAP/ Pre-TAP programs are being piloted and will then be fully implemented. However, there was no evidence provided as to how these changes have generated more personalized learning environments, more effective teaching, improved school cultures, or (most important) more success for the students in these schools.

In 2009-2010 the district also developed a Vision 20/20 strategic plan that included an array of school improvement initiatives; however it is not evident how many or to what extent the 20/20 goals have been addressed in the past three years. Evaluative information on the impact of those initiatives could also have provided important information about "what

works" to accelerate learning/achievement for all students in this district, but especially those in high poverty/ high need schools.

Student performance data is made available through the state's DOE website as well as through report cards, ILPs, progress reports, JPAM (for parents to view students' attendance, grades, test info. and discipline reports), parent-teacher conferences and newsletters. There is no evidence provided as to teachers' access and utilization rates; that is, the district needs to know to what extent teachers access JPAM data and actually utilize it to improve participation, instruction, and overall student progress. Similarly, the state of Louisiana's website offers student performance data at various levels (grade, school, district, state) and this is augmented by the LEA's more specific student data -- but no evidence is provided on how these will inform and improve participation, instruction and services.

While the chart in (B) (1) shows an improved 'Performance Score' of 11.3 points from 2007 to 2012, it does not specify what this improvement represents by assessment, subject area, grades, schools or sub-groups -- and thus holds little to no meaningful information.

Overall, despite the noted improvements in isolated examples of improving student learning outcomes and in closing the achievement gaps, this section does not provide a clear record of the district's success in the past four years to increase equity in learning and teaching, nor does it demonstrate success regarding its ability to achieve ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently low performing/ lowest achieving schools. While some of its plans are ambitious, these are not backed up by evidence of a positive impact on teachers and students if and when they are implemented.

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

5

3

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(B) (2) [Please note: The applicant's B2 narrative [refers to Appendix B2 and B3 which are not included in its submitted materials].

The applicant places general information on its websites, produces live broadcasts of Board mtgs., and sponsors public budget forums. The salary schedules for all personnel are published via the website, and salaries of all district certified and non-certified personnel are published by name in various news outlets such as The Shreveport Times. It is not clear if actual school-level non-personnel expenditures are available.

The district makes available School Board policies, meeting agendas and documents as well as the annual Comprehensive Budgets on the its website. However, with so many low income families in the district, a significant concern remains that a high percentage of parents may not have the electronic tools or internet availability to access this information.

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

10

6

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(B) (3) [Please note that this section refers to Appendix B5, Louisiana Reforms Compilation, which was not evident in the submitted materials].

This section outlines the state's plan for educational reform which serves as the framework for the applicant's past, present, and proposed reforms. To support this framework, the state DOE focuses on identifying & sharing effective practices; providing analytical tools that help evaluate program effectiveness; and providing regional and on-site assistance to implement the CCSS, Compass (the state's new educator evaluation system), TAP (Teacher Advancement Program), Blended Learning; and college and career readiness. The district is working with the state to create and maintain "District Turnaround Zones" although there is a lack of evidence provided that such zones will actually benefit the district's high needs students.

Overall there appears to be adequate local autonomy for the applicant to implement personalized learning environments, given the contextual restrictions and mandated expectations of LA as an RTT-S state. For example, RTT-S expectations

and state law now require that teachers, administrators and superintendents receive evaluations based on student achievement as well as professional practices. It is however a concern that the district is not taking advantage of the autonomy that is provided by the state, e.g., there is no evidence that the Caddo public schools have applied for or been granted "seat time" waivers or virtual schools that are now allowed by the state.

The state does appear supportive of the kinds of technology rich environments that the applicant seeks to develop and expand. For instance, the Louisiana PreK-12 Educational Technology Standards (based on the national ed. tech. standards and the state's Content Standards) notes, "All educators and learners will have access to technologies that are effective in improving student achievement." This statement reflects a state context that would provide successful conditions for the district's intended implementation of Blended Learning and its goal of offering on-line self-study modules, on-line AP courses, and dual enrollment opportunities. (Note: Although blended learning initiatives have been implemented throughout the country, with considerable recent research suggesting positive outcomes, the applicant only cites research from 2001 - 2005).

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

10

3

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(B) (4) [Please note that Appendix B6 is cited as including letters of support; however, this Appendix was not included in the submitted materials]

Teachers, principals, and community leaders "have been provided the opportunity to learn about the plans for Race to the Top in Louisiana, as well as give feedback." It is not clear if this refers to RTT-S or RTT-D, or how that opportunity was provided, or the extent of feedback received.

The applicant also describes sharing the RTT-D application with stakeholders, and states that the district "engaged multiple stakeholders in the development of this proposal" noting that the ideas in the grant began with community meetings held when developing the district's Vision 2020 plan. However, there is no information provided about the names of such stakeholders involved with actual proposal development, nor the nature of how students, families, teachers and collective bargaining units were engaged or the extent to which any feedback was incorporated into the final proposal.

The applicant indicates that teachers and administrators were surveyed and the results showed that both groups supported professional development on strategies for student engagement and more technology in classrooms. It would have been helpful to see a summary of the actual results of such surveys that would provide information about the specific number of responses, a list of survey questions, and a breakdown of the responses' content from each of the different groups surveyed.

Overall, the district has strong beliefs about the positive importance of stakeholder engagement and support. Unfortunately there is little evidence to substantiate these claims in explicit documentation.

The applicant also states that "Teacher, leader, business and community support for Race to Top in Caddo is very strong," but there is very limited actual evidence of business and community support. There is a short list of garnered writers of support letters but the actual letters are noted as in Appendix B6 that was not part of the submitted materials so are unavailable for review.

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

5

1

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

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

Almost one-third of the district's schools are labeled as Academically Unacceptable and 'value added' results show there are "tremendous gaps" in the performance levels of teachers in all of its 62 schools. The applicant plans to address this issue of low performing teachers through the implementation of the new state teacher evaluation system, COMPASS, and the implementation of TAP in its lower performing schools along with implementing a "high quality professional development program." It is not clear if the low performing teachers in the closed turn-around schools are still teaching in other district schools, and if so what particular supports and interventions are provided to them.

It is difficult to assess statements such as "Students with greater needs and who are at risk for academic failure require greater supports," but then have no information about what those 'greater supports' might entail beyond the technology will apparently be offered to all students.

The applicant notes it has purchased desktop computers for classrooms and is beginning to purchase iPads. RTT-D funds would purchase additional hardware and software, provide appropriate technical assistance, professional development, and tech. tools to "promote parental involvement and foster communication among students, parents, and teachers about curriculum, assignments, and assessments."

Overall, this section of the application is weak due to the lack of specificity, the undefined logic behind the reform proposal, and the lack of in-depth analysis of the needs and gaps that the plan will address.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	7

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(C) (1) [Please note that this section refers to Appendix C1 & Appendix C2; however these were in the submitted materials]

The applicant states that it has "a high quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college and career ready." This section describes present programs and strategies with little evidence that these have increased college/career readiness of students, especially high needs students in high needs schools, or their access to more personalized learning environments.

Some high schools have been restructured around themes such as Medical Careers, Leadership & Military Studies, and Performing Arts; however there is no evidence of a significant increase in students from low performing subgroups attending such schools or, if attending, that this has led to an increased mastery of critical academic content and non-academic skills/traits necessary for college/career success.

Some schools also incorporate the components of NOSCA's College and Career Readiness system which is described in Appendix C1 that was not in the submitted materials. The student information system, JPAMs, is being converted to align with the CCSS although it is not clear how educators, students, and parents will be trained in its access and use. In 2009 Louisiana mandated that beginning in 8th grade, students must develop Individual Graduation Plans which may be helpful in student goal-setting. Although mandated, it is not evident that IGPs are fully implemented in the district's schools.

In 2009 the state legislature also created an alternative Career Diploma, but there is no mention re: how many high schools in the applicant district now offer this option or how many high needs students actually earn such a diploma. There is also no evidence on how students working towards a Career Diploma perform on academic and non-academic/social assessments, or a breakdown by subgroup of students on this track -- or information about the percentage of Career Diploma graduates that are then 'career ready' and get jobs in line with their specific area of high school training.

For students and parents trying to access at-home Blended Learning resources and on-line self-study modules, the district plans to minimize barriers that those "in our lower socio-economic areas...will undoubtedly face." This is a worthwhile goal but there is a lack of a concrete and comprehensive action plan to increase on-line access for low income households that may not have reliable wi-fi access.

Students in only certain unspecified grades will access RTT-D funded iPads and their CCSS aligned apps. Twelve instructional technologists will be hired to work with teachers to integrate iPads into the curriculum and maintain the fidelity of technology use. Those appear to be useful steps in an overall technology plan, although it is not clear that each school has the infrastructure and broadband width to support extensive use of more tools that demand internet access.

Teachers will be "observed" re: their use of technology; this does not provide compelling evidence that teachers will be coached and trained to have the skills, knowledge, and motivation to actually implement instructional technologies in ways

that will personalize learning and improve college/career readiness. On the other hand, it is a strength that each quarter students using the new iPads would be assessed to determine the impact of the use of this technology on their academic achievement, but it is not clear how this information would be used.

The applicant makes a reference to engaging with "community stakeholders with demonstrated experience in providing college and readiness training." However these stakeholders are not specified nor are there any concrete details as to how this will actually support participating high school students beyond providing "individualized attention and planning resources." It would be more compelling if local businesses and organizations also provide opportunities for job-shadowing and internships.

There is reference to the use of digital resources and content presently in place, and a description of Caddo's Blended Learning initiative that has been designed for all high school students. This has rich potential for supporting all students. However, there is little information about the present stage of implementation or the timeline for future implementation of Blended Learning, RTI interventions, or Differentiated Instruction.

The EAGLE on-line assessment program is apparently described in Appendix C but this appendix was not among the materials submitted so it is difficult to comment on its specifics or its potential value.

The applicant plans to expand AP course offerings, especially in STEM subject areas. Although it hopes that this will increase rigor especially for "poor and minority students," it is not clear how a higher enrollment in AP courses among these students will be achieved or how high needs students might be provided with additional tutoring and support to increase the chance that they will earn a 3 or better on the AP exams.

Overall the responses in this section appear to describe existing and often state required programs. Plans for utilizing RTT-D funds to purchase iPads (and fund technology specialists) lack the necessary specificity to adequately address the requirements for a high quality approach to learning that engages and empowers all learners, in particular high-need students as described in (C) (1), (a) through (c).

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	5
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(C) (2) [Please note that this section refers to Appendices C3, C4, C5 & C6; there is no evidence of these in the materials submitted].

To improve the quality of teaching the applicant will continue to use the state-mandated Compass teacher and leader evaluation systems that includes both a Value Added (VAM) model and Student Learning Targets (SLTs). The Human Capital Information System (HCIS) provides teachers with "frequently updated effectiveness information" (unspecified) while the state's Comprehensive Learning Supports System provides supports (unspecified) to students who are ELL, gifted & talented, or in need of special education. Research-based practices will be incorporated for ELL instruction; however there is no information about how these will be implemented. Also there is a lack of compelling evidence for why the district needs RTT-D funds to continue the implementation of the programs already in place.

The district also provides all instructional personnel and administrators licensed access to PD360, a large library of on-line professional development videos that is a potentially rich resource for professional development, and as a catalyst for professional discussions in PLCs and faculty meetings. Unfortunately there is no evidence about the extent that this resource is presently accessed (beyond directives on principals' evaluations) or how specifically it is utilized to improve instruction that will improve career/college readiness for high needs students. That is, there is a lack of evidence that the district's teachers are regularly accessing the PD360 resources and using what they learn to improve instruction and accelerate student progress.

The district's master and mentor teachers are carefully selected based on their curricular knowledge, outstanding instructional skills and effective interpersonal skills. There is no information about how this professional support is leading to more effective teaching, e.g., information regarding how many more teachers are reaching their VAM targets for lower performing students.

The applicant also states that it is "taking bold action to address our lowest performing schools to create personalized learning environments for all of our students." However, the only specific interventions/supports mentioned are Louisiana's

Turnaround Model of School Reform and the Teacher Advancement Program, TAP, that is beginning to be implemented in four of its lowest performing high schools. (TAP includes multiple career paths for teachers, instructionally focused accountability, ongoing professional growth, and performance-based compensation). These do not substantiate the applicant's claim of "taking bold action..." There is reference to the state's High Performance School initiative as described in Appendix C4 but this is not in the submitted materials.

With the exception of providing PD360 licenses to its educators, the applicant is describing and implementing state defined expectations, programs and data systems including Louisiana's Comprehensive Learning Supports System. The TAP model holds promise, although there is considerable research that does not support its performance based compensation model (with 50% of a teacher's evaluation and "financial rewards" based on classroom and school wide growth in student achievement).

Overall, this section describes the district's proposal components in generalities, with little definition of an imaginative high quality plan. There is insufficient evidence for a plan that would reach beyond state requirements and expectations to envision and implement ambitious yet achievable goals for teachers and leaders to accelerate teaching/ learning for low performing teachers, schools, and students.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	5

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(D) (1) [Please note that this section refers to Appendix D2; there is no evidence of these in the materials submitted]

This section portrays the hierarchy/organization of the applicant's district. The Central Office includes four Area Directors of Performance (AD's) who report to the Chief Academic Officer who reports to the Superintendent. Principals report to the ADs who have principals from nine to nineteen schools reporting to them, perhaps an overload for appropriate levels of support given the high percentage of low performing schools and students.

Present & unspecified RTT-D funded personnel will be used to ensure implementation 'with fidelity' of Great Teachers and Leaders and Blended Learning initiatives with these people reporting to the Director of Professional Development/Grants. However there is a lack of evidence of collaborative relationships between and among principals for sharing the challenges and/or successes in creating more personalized learning environments; such collegial networking relationships are essential for the scaling up of any successful interventions and supports of low performing sub-groups.

Principals of higher performing schools are given more autonomy than principals of lower performing (Tier III) schools; thus the schools that may need the most flexibility and autonomy to create creative, innovative interventions and supports actually have the least amount of flexibility and autonomy.

This section states that all of the applicant's high schools now have 'seat-time waivers' from the state; however, there is no evidence of the extent to which all students, but especially high needs students, are accessing such waivers.

Louisiana may allow Course Choice whereby students across the state could take on-line courses; however there is no evidence for how this program would give students, especially low performing students, the access and motivation to successfully earn credit based on demonstrated mastery. Blended learning programs also have the potential to give students opportunities to demonstrate mastery of standards "at multiple times and multiple, comparable ways." These programs are described as successful, but there is no information regarding any specific increase in academic achievement rates and the percentage of participation of high need students or any overall increase of participation in high needs schools.

D1e cites the blended learning "theory" and "our robust assessment plan" (unspecified) as the means by which all students, including students with disabilities and English learners, will be provided with adaptable and fully accessible

learning resources and instructional practices. This is a very limited vision and fails to provide any evidence of practices or policies that facilitate more personalized learning options for all students.

Overall, this section does not provide compelling evidence of LEA practices and policies that facilitate learning as described in the criteria in (D) (1) (a) through (e). For instance D1e ends with the statement, "Our virtual platform and our robust assessment plan using multiple methods of evaluating student mastery of content and credit recovery ensure that students with disabilities and English language learners can achieve." Yet looking back at table A4a, it appears that the data does not support that contention: only 34% of Special Education students scored Basic or above on the SY 2011-12 Gr. 3 state iLEAP Math assessment; that same year only 21% of Sp.Ed. students and 25% of ELL students scored basic or above on the Grade 8 ELA iLEAP (compared to 81% overall).

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	5
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(D) (2) LEA and school infrastructure.

This section presents a distinct lack of specific information about how the infrastructure of the LEA and each school would actually support the improved effectiveness of teachers and leaders "to prepare all of our students for their future." There is also no evidence that the plan will ensure that all students, regardless of income, will have access to the content, tools, & resources to improve their achievement and college/career readiness. For instance, it is not clear that all schools have the sufficient tech. infrastructure necessary to support a huge infusion of tech. tools requiring a high level of consistent internet access, nor is it apparent that the students and parents will have adequate internet access and tech. problem solving assistance during non-school hours.

Caddo uses the Sungard Enterprise Resource Planning System software (ERP) and the JPAM student information system as well progress monitoring systems such as DIBELS and AIMSweb. Each one of these offers strong potential support for collecting and accessing student performance data -- if and when they are accessed and utilized. The applicant contends that "all of these systems communicate and feed data to each other." However, there is no evidence that these are actually interoperable. For instance DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) is a set of specific literacy assessments used for universal screening and progress monitoring in grades K-6. ERP, as the applicant states, integrates the district's financial, human resource and payroll systems. These are systems that are tracking significantly different types of data for distinctly different purposes.

On the other hand, the JPAMS IT system does have the capacity to allow parents, teachers, and students to access data on attendance, discipline, grades, and state assessment data. Although this system has this capacity, it would be helpful to note the extent of its use by students, teachers, and parents -- and how it has impacted improved personalized learning. There is also no evidence that parents and students can export or use the data in electronic learning systems or that students, parents, and other stakeholders have appropriate levels of technical support.

Overall, the applicant's response provides only modest evidence of a high quality plan for LEA and school infrastructure that meets the criteria in (D) (2) (a) through (d).

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	6

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(E) (1) [Please note that this section refers to Appendices E1 & E2; there is no evidence of these in the materials submitted]

Caddo uses the Project Management Oversight Committee Model (PMOC) developed at the University of Virginia to "identify, approve, and oversee the progress of projects necessary to carry out the Balanced Scorecard." This tool may be very helpful in tracking the progress of initiatives and RTT-D programs.

However what is apparent in the tables within this section is that the goals for 2016 are hardly ambitious though perhaps achievable. For instance, the goal for 2016 is that only 14 (out of 62 schools) will have implemented TAP and received satisfactory ratings provided by the state's Exec. Master Teacher assigned to each school. In the realm of technology, 20,000 iPads will be purchased -- an ambitious goal that could be achieved through RTT-D funding -- but there is no evidence regarding how the iPads will be utilized in actually accelerating student achievement, particularly in high needs schools.

The plan includes quarterly reports submitted to the Director of Professional Development as well as quarterly parent meetings and newsletters. These reports are a necessary step in monitoring implementation of the RTT-D project implementation, but they do not constitute an overall valid strategy for ensuring that such communication leads to making corrections and improvements during and after the term of the grant.

Also, the communication plan's reliance on reports, parent meetings and newsletters are described as informing parents and community; there is no evidence of plans for soliciting input ['the best thinking at a point in time'] from students, parents, educators, community organizations and stakeholders about their perspectives regarding progress towards goals and RTT-D investments." That is, providing information does not automatically involve two-way communication or the opportunity for internal and external stakeholders to provide feed-back and suggestions. While the applicant states that it will "ensure the project is implemented with fidelity," without a concrete plan for soliciting and incorporating meaningful feed-back, there is little to no opportunity for adaptation/ modification/ improvement of the project during its implementation.

Overall, this section provides modest evidence of the applicant's ability and strategies to generate and implement a rigorous and comprehensive high quality plan for on-going, continuous improvement regarding the impact of RTT-D investments. Also, the missing appendices prevent the review and assessment of the district's Balanced Scorecard for 2011-12 or the details of the PMOC process (particularly as it applies to potential RTT-D funded activities).

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	1
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:
 (E) (2) Ongoing communication and engagement

In this brief response the applicant describes its reliance on the TAP program's professional development. This plan is limited to enforced participation of teachers in participating schools who do not necessarily want the feedback they will receive. In itself TAP does not appear to meet the criteria for continuously improving the applicant's overall plan for increased students' access to a personalized learning environment and improved college and career readiness.

The applicant fails to provide a compelling plan for ongoing two-way communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders that would contribute meaningful feedback/input for continuously improving the RTT-D projects.

Key Activity 2 in the 'Engaging in an Improvement Process' illustration includes a brief reference to district leaders sharing best practices and resolving common challenges; however there are no specifics mentioned as to how this process works. This one piece of evidence demonstrates limited credibility of a plan for ongoing communication and engagement with the broad array of internal and external stakeholders.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:
 (E) (3) This section notes that the applicant is presently using the PMOC model to identify leading & lagging indicators, a potentially very helpful tool to assess the progress of the project's implementation of Balanced Scorecard elements.

By SY2015-16 10% of all students and both black & white students will be judged as having a highly effective teacher & principal and 55% of all students and those in subgroups will apparently have an effective teacher/ principal. Since these are 'forced curve' statistics mandated by the state, it is difficult to discern what this will actually mean regarding the 'rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan.'

The preK-3 performance measure targets seem unrealistic. For example, all students entering Kind. ready to learn at or above strategic levels on DIBELS is anticipated to increase from 51% in 2011 to 100% in SY 2016-17. Also there is no

evidence of comparable statistics and projections for any sub-group, critical information for understanding the extent of challenges and the rate of progress of children in each of those groups.

There are wide discrepancies among subgroups of SY 2011-12 4th-8th graders who are on track for college/career readiness, with 43% of Hispanic students on track compared to 91% of Asian students and 80% of white students. However 100% of 4th-8th graders are anticipated to be on track by SY2016-17. This is ambitious yet highly doubtful that it is achievable. Also noteworthy is that in SY 2016-17 100% of all students are expected to be on track to college and career readiness yet only 10% of White students are expected to be college/career ready.

The Performance Measure description in Table E3c appears incomplete (and no subgroups are specified as requested) and the overall table is difficult to understand and impossible to interpret.

Table 'E3 -d, e' provides the number but not the percentage of students in each category (All, Minority, White, Poverty) which makes comparisons more difficult. The % was requested but not provided.

Overall there is little to no evidence of realistic targets or how the given measures will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to the applicant's proposed plan regarding its implementation success or areas of concern

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

5

0

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(E) (4) Evaluating the effectiveness of investments

It is somewhat confusing that the E4 narrative response's brief paragraph appears before the E3 Performance Measures. Thus perhaps the charts in the E4 section labeled E3 Performance Measures. It is not clear if the performance measures noted in the E3 charts will be utilized by the district's PMOC will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of RTT-D investments.

The percentages in these charts appear to be completely arbitrary with many unrealistic &/or unreasonable examples. To reiterate and expand the previous comments in E3: in SY 2012-2013, 40% of all participating students, white students, black students, and Sped students are estimated to have an effective teacher and principal; it is not clear why students from low income families are not listed as a distinct sub-group. Four years later in SY 2016-17, only 12% of students in each of these delineated categories are projected to have an effective principal, while 60% of the same groups are all projected to have an effective teacher. Such percentages are difficult to interpret outside of the state's mandated statistical curve.

Also, 98-100 % of students are projected to be on track to college & career readiness in SY2016-2017. Yet there are precipitous unexplained increases (and one decrease) on this performance measure for grades 4-8 from SY2011-2012 to SY2012-2013, notably Hispanic students increasing from 43% to 86% in that one year. All groups have the exact same percentages listed as college and career ready for subsequent years, with all students and subgroups achieving 100% readiness by SY 2014-15. On the FAFSA completion matrix, students start off in SY2011-12 at varied points (e.g., 21% completion rate for Hispanic students and 67% completion for white students) yet all end up at an estimated 74% completion rate in SY2016-17.

Again there is a similar arbitrary quality to the chart showing the percentage of grade 9 students who enter 10th grade on time and on grade level. All participating groups and subgroups start off in 2011-12 at 54% and all end up at 2016-17 at 100%!

Note: All the cells in chart "-c" are empty.

There is a lack of meaningful evidence in this section to indicate a high quality plan to continuously evaluate and improve the applicant's proposed projects and activities in order to improve teaching/learning results particularly in high need schools.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	2
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(F) (1) Budget for the project</p> <p>This is very confusing. There is no information initially provided to respond to the criteria listed. However, after the Competitive Preference Priority X, there is a brief one page Overall Budget Summary Table with no explanation of each line item. The overall budget summary narrative is only a list (with no accompanying dollar amounts) of RTT-D funded personnel, performance based incentives, travel, and a sub list of "massive infusions of iPads and peripherals into classrooms to attain a 2:1 student to computer ratio." There is no connection made between the amounts in the Summary Table and the lists of RTT-D investments in the "narrative." There is also a lack of clear connection between the budget table & narrative and the Project List table labeled "Evidence for (F) (1)."</p> <p>The Table 4-1: Project Level Itemized Costs has blank cells for Travel, Equipment, Contractual, Training Stipends, Total Direct Costs, and Total Indirect Costs. The information that is provided in the Cost column for Indirect costs shows a figure of \$73,232. for Year 1 and an unexplained jump to \$546,643. for Year 2.</p> <p>The budget information for Great Teachers and Leaders for 21st Century Schools does not include information in the rows labeled Equipment, Supplies, Contractual, Training Stipends, or Other.</p> <p>In this section there is only the hope that projects will receive (unspecified) non-RTT-D funds during and after the period of grant funding and then only if there is "proof of positive impact on student achievement." However Table 4-1, Project Level Itemized Costs, line 12, does itemize a total of \$10,000,000 over the project's four years of non-RTT-D funds from other federal grants (Title I, SIG, IDEA) and general fund contributions.</p> <p>There is no clear distinction made between funds that will be used for one-time investments vs. those for ongoing operational costs that will be incurred during and after the RTT-D funding period.</p> <p>Overall, there is no evidence of a budget that reflects a coherent and comprehensive plan for personalizing learning beyond the ongoing implementation of TAP and the nearly \$15 million invested in the purchase of 200 laptops, 20,000 iPads with cases, apps, and peripherals, and the funding of tech. specialists. The applicant states that such investments are anticipated to 'jump start' the Vision 20/20 that is already in place. Overall, this section lacks a thoughtful rationale for its stated investments and priorities -- which in themselves do not constitute a credible high quality plan to achieve the stated goals of the RTT-D initiative.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	1
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(F) (2) [Note that there are not separate responses for sections (F) (1) and F(2)].</p> <p>The applicant states that 100% of the requested funding is slated for projects that will bear benefits beyond the grant period without further funding; however technology such as the 22,000 purchased iPad 3s and other tech. tools are unlikely to be up-to-date and still functioning after four years of projected daily use.</p> <p>In addition, there is no plan or reference to the need for post-grant support for professional development and support in the TAP model for newly hired teachers.</p> <p>The applicant states, "If projects result in positive growth, the district is committed to sustain them with Local, State, and Federal Funds." However, the applicant fails to address what course corrections would be implemented if positive growth</p>		

is not demonstrated during grant funding as well as at the end of the grant funding period. If indeed the projects do result in positive growth for students, the applicant fails to describe what specific sources of local, state, and federal funds could be re-deployed &/or re-allocated to sustain such projects.

Overall, there is little to no concrete evidence that the specific RTT-D grant funded projects will continue beyond the term of the grant, other than 'business as usual' in fulfilling the required state initiatives. This is admitted by the applicant in its statement, "After the grant period the programs and activities supported by Race to the Top will be continued as they have in the past."

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

Competitive Preference Priority:

There is a distinct lack of specific evidence regarding proposed grant-funded partnership projects to support transitions from each level of schooling to the next through a 'mixed delivery model' in which children receive literacy instruction in a variety of settings. The transition plan would involve building connections with and between students, teachers, parents, and the community. However there is a lack of evidence of a specific plan to implement such a goal, and there is lack of evidence among potential partners that they would indeed collaborate in project activities. For instance, there are no letters of support regarding the commitment of non-profits and community agencies to such partnerships with schools.

The ideas for the implementation of working partnerships are still nebulous and unfocused. The description appears to be more of an application for a planning grant than for a concrete plan/proposal. The performance measures do not appear to directly relate to the concept outlined, nor do they give high priority to high need students in specific high needs schools. There is a lack of evidence of population-level desired results for students in the Caddo Parish that align with and support the applicant's broader RTT-D proposal.

The "applicable population" for the Performance Measures are not broken down into sub-groups and there is no attempt to target students and families in high needs schools. There is no explanation for why Kindergarten, 3rd and 8th grade overall proficiency rates would universally decline between SY 2015-16 and SY 2016-17.

Overall, the criteria in (4) and (5) (a) through (e) are not specifically addressed. There is a lack of evidence that this project would improve family and community supports and build the capacity of staff in participating schools to meet the specific transition needs of students, families, and schools. There is no concrete plan for engaging parents and families of participating students other than "allowing" them to contribute ideas and suggestions via the applicant's website. There is no description of a decision-making process and infrastructure to select, implement, and evaluate supports that address the individual needs of participating students. There is a list of non-profits and community agencies with which the schools have "strong working relationships." This is all and good but falls short of establishing actual working partnerships with explicit expectations for each partner. In addition, there is also no particular focus on as yet undetermined partnerships to focus on the students with the highest needs or the highest needs/lowest performing schools. The district does have a parent and family outreach program, Project LIFT, but this does not involve a partnership with external organizations.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's proposal does not meet the criteria outlined in Absolute Priority 1, above. Although there are elements in the proposal, such as the goal of expanding TAP and increasing tech. resources in schools, there are significant limitations in the overall plan. For instance after four years TAP will still only be fully implemented in less than one-quarter of its schools, thus preventing the vast majority of teachers and students from benefiting from TAP resources and support. Also the infusion of technology may overwhelm the schools' present infrastructure capacity -- and internet access may be significantly limited in the high numbers of students and parents in low income families. In addition, the tables of data presented often do not reflect thoughtful, ambitious, reasonable, or achievable goals. Overall, there is not a coherent and comprehensive plan with specific and persuasive details to personalize educational environments in ways that will accelerate student learning and significantly increase career and college readiness, especially among students in low performing subgroups and low performing schools.

Total	210	70
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0240LA-3 for Caddo Parish Public Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides evidence indicating that there is a comprehensive and coherent vision for the proposed project. The applicant has created a personalized learning environment program designed to meet the individual needs of students and it is currently in place in four low-performing schools. The goal is to implement the program in all district schools serving K-12 students by the end of 2015. The vision clearly addresses the four core educational reform areas as required by the Race To The Top proposal guidelines. For example the district has adopted new core state standards and assessments requiring that rigorous, personalized learning environments to meet college and career standards and graduation requirements is implemented in schools. The applicant provides information indicating that aggressive efforts are in place to reform low performing schools by increasing teacher quality. In addition to implementing the blended learning program, the process includes a performance based teacher and school leader program whereby educator evaluations are based upon 50% student achievement and 50% on professional practice. The aforementioned processes further coupled by the restaffing of low performing schools with new teachers and principals and providing incentives to reward and retain them clearly indicates that the plan is comprehensive and designed to support the program goals. Currently, there are state mandated systems in place to support teacher and student progress effectively through the use of updated data systems which consistently monitors student progress and teacher performance. The systems are designed to improve teacher quality and ensure students are prepared for graduation, college and careers. The use of the data system to monitor teacher and student progress will allow for continuous feedback whereby classroom and personalized instruction, teacher professional development and/or program changes can be implemented if needed thereby ensuring that the program's vision is met.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) Weakness- The applicant does not provide any specifics regarding the process for the selection of all 62 schools within the district. Based upon the demographics provided for each targeted school and the percentage of students to be served by the project it is clear that there are schools that are more in need of the project than others, therefore the rational for the school selection process is needed.</p> <p>(b) & (c) Strengths- The applicant presents a high quality plan of approach for district and school level implementation by identifying key activities, target dates, timelines, deliverables and persons responsible. Key activities are aligned with program goals and state requirements for evaluation, implementation of the core curriculum, assessment of the program to prepare teachers and students for the change. To ensure all stakeholders are involved in the implementation process the applicant will include parents, teacher organizations and community members in trainings that support student achievement. In accordance with the state reform plan a teacher evaluation system is in place and by 2014-2015 plans to evaluate principals and superintendents within the district will be implemented. The applicant provides sufficient information the total number of students and educators who will participate in the project. Furthermore, low income/high needs students have been identified by as required by the grant application.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strength-The applicant provides strategies that will support reform and district wide change. For example, an evaluation system designed to monitor and evaluate both teacher and student progress will be implemented. The system will support district-wide change beyond the participating schools because all resources including curriculums will be made available to parents and other stakeholders who support the project. Additionally, other strategies presented such as professional development through the TAP (teacher advancement program) will ensure continual teacher quality. The TAP evaluation program will also allow teaching teams to travel and provide professional development training and one-on-one mentoring with other educators throughout the community. Furthermore, the applicant will provide opportunities for community stakeholders and parents to attend trainings that will support students outside of the classroom. This process will support district-wide change through capacity building which will exist after funding has ended. Overall, the plan presented by the applicant will support the program and improve student learning.</p> <p>Weakness-The applicant does not provide any specific details regarding the PARCC assessments and its relationship to college and career preparedness for students as indicated by the applicant. Clarification of the definition of the acronym PARCC and specific information regarding assessment components would be helpful to determine if it will enhance the quality of the plan.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strength-The goals to improve student outcomes presented by the applicant are ambitious and achievable because they exceed the State's overall current baseline data for the districts target population. For example, the applicant proposes to increase the percentage of students who are at grade level by the time they enter 4th grade to 70% by the year 2016 which is higher than the State's overall goal of 60%. (a) Goals for each sub-group population within the targeted schools are presented and the proposed goals by the applicant are ambitious and achievable based upon the baseline data presented. (b) The goals the applicant presents as related to decreasing achievement gaps amongst the targeted population is ambitious and attainable. The applicant proposes to reduce the achievement gap rate for 8th grade ELA students to 29%, the goal presented is higher that the current baseline data state rate of 22%. (c) Currently the graduation rate for the targeted population is 61.6%; the applicant proposes to increase the rate to 86% by 2006. This goal is ambitious and attainable based upon the proposed project presented by the applicant. (d) The goal to increase the rate of students enrolling in college or the workforce to 80% is ambitious and attainable based upon the baseline data of 69% presented and the proposed project presented by the applicant.</p>		

Weakness-The applicant does not provide any baseline data regarding the current college enrollment rate for high school students that will persist through college, therefore it is not clear if the goal the applicant presents is ambitious or attainable.

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
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>There is evidence presented by the applicant indicating that the state has received recognition for its standards and accountability policies. Additionally, data provided indicates that in 2007 the district school performance rate was 81.9% and the current rate for 2012 is 93.2%, which clearly indicates that the district has been successful in efforts to increase student performance. (b) Effective efforts to turn around low performing schools are clearly evidenced based upon the information the applicant provides. For example in 2011, the 3rd grade ELA achievement gap was reduced from 33% to 31% in 2012. Strategies also included removal of teaching staff and principals at low performing schools and making available opportunities for them to apply for newly opened positions. Additionally, the institution of an incentive plan and compensation package, extended school days and block scheduling for remediation, reinforcement and enrichment opportunities for high school students was also implemented. (c) There are several avenues to allow access to student performance records by all stakeholders presented by the applicant. Data is made available via test scores, individual learning plan, data systems and more. The state educational website is specifically available to access student data, performance record, attendance, newsletters and more. Weakness (a) The applicant does not provide any baseline data to support the statistical information provided to show success in closing the achievement gap for all students other than ELA students. The applicant does not provide any baseline data to support the statistical information provided to show increase in the high school graduation rate (c)The applicant does not define how performance data will be used to improve participation, instruction and services after it is made available to students, educators and parents.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides actual salaries for all school level, instructional and teacher level, and non-personnel associated with the proposed project. There is convincing evidence indicating that there is a high level of transparency in the processes presented by the applicant. For example, there is access to a public website describing policies and procedures, initiative, public meetings and salaries. Additionally, regular audits are conducted by an independent firm and financial systems are sufficient and in place.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The plan to implement personalized learning environments is described by the applicant. Several strategies provided will ensure this goal is met. The applicant proposes to identify and share strategies that will ensure effective practices are implemented, provide regional and district level assistance to schools through transition and create professional learning networks. To ensure successful conditions and autonomy state legislature has mandated that educators be evaluated based upon student achievement and professional practice. The TAP (teacher advancement program) which will ensure continual professional development, accountability based training and incentive program. The implementation of the blended learning education approach district wide will allow students the opportunity to learn at their own pace through the use of self-study modules and online learning. Additionally, teachers and educators will have the freedom to complement traditional lessons with the use of technology and data systems through the use of the blended learning model due to its flexibility. Additionally, students will be granted seat-time waivers to receive course credit and allow them to be able to receive their diploma or certification. Overall, the plan presented is comprehensive and reasonable to support the targeted population and ensure program goals are met.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	6
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

Strengths-Support for the project from teachers is evidenced by the applicant. Teachers were informed about the Race To The Top grant and surveyed to gain insight as to the tools and resources they needed to support their students. Feedback from the survey also indicated that teachers wanted to prepare their students for the workforce; one of the goals of the proposed project. The applicant successfully provides evidence that there was reasonable stakeholder engagement in the development of the propose project. Community meetings were held throughout the district which afforded opportunities for program input from parents, students and community stakeholders. District teachers, principals and administrators were surveyed to ensure their concerns and recommendations. **Weakness**-The applicant does not describe how the proposal was revised based on stakeholder feedback. Furthermore, the applicant does not provide letters of support as indicated in the project narrative.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Strength-Based upon the information provided there is evidence that student achievement has increased through the implementation of the blended learning program (personalized learning program) model in four low performing schools and as a result of the success there are plans to implement the project district wide by the year 2015. Additionally, efforts to close the gaps in the performance level amongst teachers have been made by implementing a high quality professional development program. The program is aligned with the state mandated evaluation plan whereby teachers are evaluated based on their classroom performance and student performance. The evaluation process will compensate teachers if they are successful in the classroom. Restaffing of ineffective teachers and principals in low performing schools and a new core standards assessment plan was also implemented as a part of the school reform plan. **Weakness**-There is a lack of information on the specific needs related to technology for all schools which impacts the ability to address gaps.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strength-The applicant provides an extensive plan to improve learning and teaching through personalized instruction. For example, parents, teachers, and principals have 24 hour access to student records, electronic grade books and lesson plans to help keep students on track for graduation. The plan to allow students to develop an individual graduation plan by the end of the eighth grade is innovative because it will afford students the opportunity to study areas of interest, explore various educational perspectives and career opportunities. The development of the blended learning plan and individual graduation plan will also rely on student assessments to determine the academic level of each student so that the plans are personalized and monitored. Additionally, students will gain skills in goal-setting, critical thinking, perseverance, creativity, teamwork and problem solving based upon their plan and support from parents and educators. The plan the applicant presents will give students the opportunity to experience a variety of high quality programs that include music, art, physical education, robotics and other enrichment courses, thereby allowing them to gain deeper learning experiences. The goal to incorporate Advanced Placement classes into the curriculum is feasible and will allow additional opportunities to increase learning potential and college worthiness. The applicant provides specific objectives, timelines and persons responsible for implementing the technology plan to to show that digital learning content materials will be included within the learning environment for students and teachers. The plan is logical and will support students in and out of school. For example, students will be able to checkout equipment, view on-line self instructional modules and core curriculums for additional instruction, this process will also allow students to keep up with their schoolwork and graduate. By providing students access to individual technology they will have access to their work thereby increasing the changes of high school completion and prepare them for college and careers. There is also a sufficient plan to train teachers, students and stakeholders how to use program technology and mechanisms in place to provide ongoing feedback including student data to determine student progress to ensure mastery of college-and-career-ready graduation requirements. A website will be made available 24/7 and all stakeholders will have access and teachers, counselors and educators will also be

available to speak with students and parents regarding academic progress. The approach will assist low achieving high needs students who may need additional academic and personal assistance. Overall, the plan presented will support the learning process and support college and career goals. **Weakness-**The applicant does not provide any information regarding the process to ensure students have exposure to diverse cultures. While, the applicant proposes to expand the number of AP course offerings, more information is needed regarding the process to ensure low achieving, high needs students will gain interest in taking AP courses to provide a more rigorous course of study to increase academic success and ensure they are college and career ready. The applicant refers the reader to appendix C but it was not included in the grant application.

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

20

20

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides sufficient evidence to show there are systems in place that will support the academic growth of its students while enhancing the educational experience. The plan to utilize content experts such as instructional coaches, master and mentor teachers, reading and math specialists is appropriate and will advance teacher knowledge, increase teacher quality and accountability based on the support and training to be provided. Goals to ensure students become college and career ready are defined and plans to incorporate personalized instruction for students is clearly outlined. For example, student academic growth measures will be established depending upon students grade level and a value added model will be used to assess student growth in tested grades. Consistent tracking of student progress will also be monitored through classwork, online website and state standards. Furthermore, the systems in place will ensure that teachers and other stakeholders have access to student data to ensure they are progressing academically. Educators can monitor their own progress to ensure program and professional goals are met. The addition of individual technology for students and increased use of digital resources for all stakeholders will ensure exposure to high quality methods that will further enhance the learning experience for students, allow flexibility for students who are not able to attend school and support low achieving students thereby increasing the chances of college and career readiness. It is evident the project will successfully support teachers by providing professional development through the use of a Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) model which provides ongoing training, mentoring and classroom support during the school day. Teachers will have access to the School Improvement Network which provides online instructional information and video library for additional assistance, through this process teachers learn new instructional strategies and can collaborate with others. This approach is reasonable and will ensure teacher accountability and increase their skills which will increase student achievement. The TAP (teacher advancement program) model provides additional compensation to teachers based upon their roles and responsibilities and professional practices in the classroom which is currently being implemented in four low-performing high schools in the district. Support from the teacher leadership team is evidenced and will support the process to improve educator effectiveness and school climate through the process of setting specific annual student learning goals and providing teachers with the tools needed to support both professional and individual goals. Furthermore, the use of the career mentor and master teacher model will ensure continual improvement by providing group and individual coaching for educators. Training systems will support student performance and close the achievement gap by providing ongoing professional development based upon the specific needs of the students they serve. The plans for increasing the number of students receiving services is sufficient. The applicant will expand the program to other low-performing elementary and middle schools within the district. Key activities, timelines, deliverables and responsible persons are outlined in the plan and aligned with state standards.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	13

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

a) The applicant provides a organizational chart which outlines an organized effort to ensure the central LEA office is involved with the program and will sufficiently provide support. For example, school principals will report to the Directors of Area Performance who in turn report to the Chief Academic Officer. Furthermore, the chart shows the school assignments for each area Director of School Performance who will work with the administrative staff and faculties. Overall, the chart represents a high level plan of support and clear vision of the governing structure associated with the project.

- b) Sufficient evidence is provided by the applicant to show that leadership teams have flexibility and autonomy. Teachers have access to mentors and teaching teams and classroom observations all of which will provide immediate feedback and support. Principals of each schools will be responsible for making personnel decisions, determine roles and responsibilities and school based upon their budget. To ensure accountability the state performs an evaluation to determine the principals effectiveness, this plan of action will further ensure program success.
- c) The applicant piloted the blended learning program in two schools during the 2011-2012 school year and was successful with moving students forward through credit recovery and/or course advancement which has resulted in the expansion throughout the district. The information presented by the applicant demonstrates that students will have the opportunity to succeed academically.
- d) There is evidence presented indicating that students will have the opportunity to demonstrate mastery multiple times and comparable ways. For instance, students will have anytime access to the curriculum which will allow them to apply, evaluate and create beyond the classroom learning opportunities beyond the traditional classroom. Additionally, students will be able to collaborate and interact with students who are working at or above their same pace because the blended learning model will work on their personalized assignments as compared to the traditional classroom.
- e) The applicant states that adjustments to teaching curriculums in addition to utilization of the blended learning method will support students with disabilities and English learners. Strategies include teaching language through content and themes, using native language explain difficult concepts, engaging students in a variety of language experiences and delivering instruction that develops foundational skills in English so that ESL students can perform at grade level. The plan the applicant provides is logical and will support ESL students educational needs.

Weakness-The applicant does not provide any specific information regarding the process to support students with learning disabilities.

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

- a) Based upon the success of the blended learning project currently operating in four low performing schools, the applicant proposes to implement the project in all 62 schools within the district thereby ensuring project access to all students regardless of income. All teachers and educators will be trained and capable of implementing the project.
- b) The plan to include students and all stakeholders in the training process is presented throughout the application. Plans include face-to-face and online training in addition to continuous technical support. Teachers will also receive professional development training to increase teacher quality and ensure program success. Overall, the plan the applicant provides will support the goals of the program.
- c) Technology systems are in place and will provide immediate access to student progress records by all stakeholders twenty-four hours day. Downloadable student data and assessment reports will also be made available to monitor student progress. Students and parents will be able to access core curriculums and self instructional modules through the use of individual technology (iPad). The process the applicant presents is adequate and ensures that there is a technology system in place that will provide immediate access to student records and can be used with other electronic learning systems.
- d) The applicant's information system currently integrates finance, human resources and payroll and is adequate to support the project. The district website is accessible at all times and district and school information is posted. The process will ensure that all stakeholders are able to monitor all aspects of the proposed project.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	12
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strength- The applicant provides a reasonable plan of action to ensure the continuous improvement plan is in place. The applicant proposes to utilize the Project Management Oversight Committee Model developed by the University of Virginia which was designed to identify, approve and oversee program progress through a scorecard process. In order to effectively utilize the scorecard process the applicant has created clearly defined goals, measures, baseline data, timeline and procedures. The communication plan is clearly outlined and include quarterly reports to stakeholders, quarterly parent meetings and newsletters to inform the community. The scorecard process is vital to the project because it will provide opportunities for regular feedback and provides opportunities for ongoing corrections/program improvements and ensure the project is implemented with fidelity. Weakness: The applicant refers the reader to appendix E2 for additional information, however the information has not been provided.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides sufficient evidence indicating that there will be opportunities for ongoing communication and engagement for both internal and external stakeholders. For example, the TAP (teacher advancement program) will allow immediate feedback for teachers based upon classroom observations, one-on-one teacher conferences, evaluation of student work, grades and data based information. The use of the Enhanced Assessment of Grade-Level Expectations (EAGLE) is an effective tool the applicant proposes to use to assist with the project. The EAGLE currently manages continuous instructional improvements and provides formative assessments and content assessment reporting for educators to use. Furthermore, the implementation of the engaging in the improvement process" will be used by the applicant as another mechanism for ensuring continuous student improvement. The key components presented include district leaders will work with schools to: set annual achievement goals, implement grant activities, share best practices and resolve challenges and use observations, feedback and assessment to refine the process throughout the school year. The methods provided by the applicant will also allow for continual program improvement and ensure goals of the project are met.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths-The applicant provides performance measures that are aligned with the districts overall performance measures. Rationale and methods of measurements presented are ambitious and achievable and based upon the goal of all students having the school performance scores greater than 75%; the current state rate is 75%. The applicant proposes to use school performance scores, attendance and behavioral records to evaluate student progress. Baseline data is provided and will be used to measure the projected increased goals presented by the applicant.</p> <p>Weakness- The performance measures for teachers and principals will not be available until 2013 although an evaluation plan is currently in place. Although, the applicant's performance measures will address student assessments and progress, the applicant does not describe how the process will ensure continuous program improvement.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths-The applicant will be able to utilize TAP (teacher advancement program), core standard assessments, school records and online website to evaluate the effectiveness of the investments related to the project. Teachers will be able to modify day-to-day schedules in order to take advantage of professional development opportunities.</p> <p>Weakness-The applicant does not provide any specific information regarding the process to effectively evaluate the use of money, working with community partners, compensation reform and school schedules. The applicant refers the reader to the leading and lagging indicators, however no information is found regarding the specific process. The applicant does no</p>		

define how the Project Management Oversight Committee Model (PMOC) will evaluate the effectiveness of the project as no specifics are provided.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>a) The applicant presents a budget that identifies all the funding needed to support the project and has included funds from the Race To The Top- District grant and LEA, State and other funds as required by the grant application.</p> <p>b) The budget the applicant presents is reasonable and sufficient based on the number of program participants and the services to be provided. The applicant proposes to serve over 27, 000 students in all 62 schools addition to teachers within the district. Funds will be use to provide student and school wide technology to support individualized instruction and professional development.</p> <p>c) A complete description of all funds both external and internal which will support the project is described in the budget and budget narrative and are sufficient based upon the project described by the applicant. Also included are estimated expenditures for each line item and the budget reflects 4-year cost to be used throughout the duration of the grant. Additionally, the applicant has identified funds that will be used from Title I & Title I School Improvement , IDEA and General State funds which total \$2, 500,000 to support the project.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides evidence that there is a logical sustainability plan to support the project after Race To The Top funding has ended. The proposed plan includes increasing teacher and principal capacity through professional development training and researched based strategies designed to increase student achievement and teacher quality throughout the district. The project is currently implemented in four low performing schools and will expand to all 62 schools in the district and will increase collaborative efforts for all educators and stakeholders associated with the project. The technology resources to be purchased for use by teachers, students and district is described as a one-time expenditure which is 35% of the budget. To sustain the project the applicant proposes to pursue Title I and other funds from local, state and federal entities to continue the project. The applicant states that several key personnel at the district level will be charged with pursuing,expanding and coordinating funding sources to sustain the project after funding has ended.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	8
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths-The applicant provides information regarding the development transition plan to build connections between community members, schools and teachers. The plan includes having partners assist with before and after school programming, opportunities for parental involvement and socially support the school community. It is evident that there is some support from community based nonprofits and agencies, local libraries, universities and community colleges and health centers who will provide a variety of services to assist students and educators with the program. For example, local libraries will provide materials to improve literacy programs within the schools and at home. The applicant has</p>		

provided evidence of 10-population level educational results for students within the target area. For example, consultation sessions with community partners will help to create a comprehensive literacy instruction model from birth to 12th grade and early childhood providers and community leaders will provide support to parents. The district will provide oversight, training and support for the literacy team and will assist in analyzing data and ensuring fidelity of the program. There is sufficient information provided indicating that the district provides parent and family outreach services to support the social and behavioral needs of young learners and services are provided regularly to ensure students are prepared to enter school. The applicant would like to expand the partnerships the schools currently have through the implementation of additional programs to support staff, For example, the applicant would like local universities to offer reading specialist certification to maximize resources and address the needs of students. Additionally, the district would like to increase parental involvement and expand outreach efforts to create effective community partnerships. The applicant successfully identifies performance measures for 3rd, 8th graders, kindergarten students and community partners and identifies the desired results, For example, the desired educational result for 3rd graders would be that they will perform a grade level by the end of 4th grade. Overall, the applicant provides key information to indicate that the application will address Competitive Preference Priority 1.

Weakness-While, there is evidence community partners currently support the schools, however the applicant does not provide any information to show how partners will provide resources to support the project or help students with specific challenges and high needs students or improve results over time.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's proposed project meets the Absolute Priority 1 requirement based upon the proposed project presented. The applicant proposes to implement a variety of services that will promote personalized learning environments such as the blended learning process which will allow students access to technology and work at their own pace. Additionally, students are able to choose subject matter of interest and supports college/career preparedness. Currently, the program has been implemented the project in 4 low performing schools. The project addresses the four core educational reform areas by providing services that will support student and teacher success. The district has created new core standard assessments and upgraded and created new data systems which are accessible 24/7 to students and stakeholders. Additionally, the implementation of the TAP (teacher advancement program) provides professional development, assesses accountability and teacher quality and compensates teachers with incentives for quality work and student achievement. Overall, the applicant provides a program that is designed to help students become college and career ready and decrease achievement gaps.

Total	210	173
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