



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0595AR-1 for Camden Fairview Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	3
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Consortium discusses the desire to become STEM Districts but does provide supporting data to state why and how it fits their reform vision .</p> <p>A desire to expand course offerings, new technology access, career choices, successful college graduates, deep sustained professional development, distance learning and business coalition represents a coherent reform vision.</p> <p>A clear and credible approach to the goals is represented by a four month planning period. It would be expected that the Consortium would have articulated more of a detailed plan to reach the vision that is ambitious yet achievable.</p> <p>The vision does have examples of who and what they are going to use for accelerated student achievement.</p> <p>How they are going to provide deepening student learning and increasing equity through personalized student support and individual tasks is not provided.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The consortium of school districts and their partnership with Southern Arkansas University Tech and Southern Arkansas University at Magnolia meets the participation requirement.</p> <p>75% and 70% and 81% free and reduced numbers meet the low income requirement. Some missing student demographic data for student's from Hampton.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	4
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Consortium plan provides for a 2 week long professional development training versus a typical 2-3 hours or one day training. The details of what that plan looks like would have been helpful to assist the reviewer in that the plan was ambitious and achievable.</p> <p>It is recognized that sustained classroom visits, modeling by coaches and classroom walk through by District Curriculum Coordinators and Principals will be done weekly. The reform proposal lacks support of what is expected during visits and walk through.</p> <p>The statement is made that Clinical workers and Social workers are provided in the hope that these strategies will work. It would be expected that the vision and plan would be positive, as well as convincing the reviewer that their plan is achievable.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Performance on summative assessments show growth in most areas since 2010. A few areas show a decline.</p> <p>Target goals for summative assessments are ambitious yet achievable and represent a significant increase over the five year period.</p>		

Goals to decrease the achievement gap are rigorous and provides for a significant reduction over the five year period.

Graduation rate goals are provided. A moderate plan of growth is provided.

College enrollment target goals are aggressive from 70% to 90% in five years.

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>The consortium has some positive growth gains as well as scores that decline that are reflective of the turnover of staff. Some examples are significant. An example is the growth from 2009 at 41.7% to 83.8% in geometry in 2011.</p> <p>The majority of the consortium has graduation rates higher then the state average ranging from 72.9% to 84.5%.</p> <p>One of the key reforms that stands out is to share staff among the consortium via distance learning.</p> <p>Parents and student performance data is available through parent meetings, district websites, or Normes site for State data. Comments how the Consortium would use it to improve participation, instruction and services are not presented.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Consortium reports all budgets and salaries are reported on school website, and State of Arkansas website.</p> <p>It would have been beneficial to see a summary of salaries and non-personnel expenditures in the grant application for the schools making up the consortium to include school administration.</p> <p>A reference to expenditures on personnel salaries and non-personnel expenditures would have provided support for transparency in LEA processes, practices and investments.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Evidence of reform by adopting and implementing of common core standards. Evidence of work as a governing state in the Partnership for the assessment of readiness for College Careers (PARCC) consortium.</p> <p>Letters of support from both local and state agencies are provided.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	6
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>There is some evidence of students, families, teachers and principals participating in stakeholder engagement and support. Arkansas is not a collective bargaining state, There are some signatures on file providing teacher support.</p> <p>There are Letters of support are on file from key stakeholders.</p> <p>The stakeholder engagement and support is minimal. Evidence of dialogue from students, families, teachers and principals participating in creating the proposal and involvement in revision of the proposal based on their feedback is not provided.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Gaps are identified in math, literacy and science and plans are prepared to address them with improved curriculum, in depth teacher professional development and new curriculum and technology. Drop out rates are addressed by summer school recovery and GED support.

Implementing personalized learning environments is referenced, but lacks support of definition of how the consortium will address goals individually.

A timeline is presented that reflects the plan that is ambitious and achievable.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	9

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The consortium places an emphasis on school career coaches and school counselors to assist students in personalizing the learning environment. This support will help students and parents understand how to structure learning to achieve their goals. The plan lacks direction on what specifically is going to happen with these career coaches and counselors that will help the students and parents understand how to structure learning and what assistance they will provide in order to meet this target.

An enriched curriculum will be provided in the summer for teachers by college level curriculum specialists to motivate and deepen individual student learning. Examples on what will be taught to assist this goal would have been beneficial in showing a plan that is ambitious yet achievable.

The support of the Learning Institute's interim testing for progress monitoring as well as the use of Kuder Software by Career Coaches are strong examples of providing feedback to students.

The three Science Specialist focusing on STEM activities will model lessons, order and inventory equipment and provide some remediation services are noted.

To close the science achievement gap at such a ambitious rate the consortium sets, it feels that the model does not provide enough information to understand how they will reach their target goals.

Summer recover credit program is provided for a five week course with four certificated teachers. The lack of a detailed program describing how this is going to have a positive impact on the attending students is not evident.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	15
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The Consortium will improve teachers and principals practice and effectiveness by using feedback provided by Arkansas teacher and principal evaluation system. (TESS). It is understood that this evaluation system will have a positive effect, but it would be helpful to understand why this evaluation system specifically meets the goals of this plan?

It is understood that the running portfolio of students work, lesson plans, strategies, test scores, and trainings are part of the documentation of the teacher evaluation. How it relates to the plan? How the assistance is provided to obtain the knowledge necessary to make the growth targets is not evident.

The 60 hour professional development hours for teachers and administrators is rigorous and is understood to have an immediate and positive impact on the goals of the consortium.

The rigor of the work from all parties on the improvement plans in the first 5 weeks of the school year is noted.

A project timeline that seems relevant and timely is provided with dates, activities and person responsible.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	14
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The consortium provides support for participating schools through school leadership teams, an ACSIP team which will be expanded to District Leadership teams will report to the Consortium for RTTT Goals is noted.</p> <p>Students will be allowed to graduate early with appropriate credits, students may earn credit based on demonstrated mastery. These are both evidence of high level, forward thinking strategies.</p> <p>It is reported that students with disabilities will be provided support as necessary. Identification of methods to be used for helping these students meet the plans program goals would have been beneficial.</p> <p>Research supports that all school districts have pre-k programs and understand the value of providing an early start. A strong positive reform.</p> <p>It is a positive commitment to assist students who have entered college be monitored by Career Coaches and School Counselors that will provide input to staff in addressing college readiness support.</p> <p>The focus on prepare students to be college and career ready without remediation is an ambitious goal and is commended.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>It is stated that the consortium and the school infrastructure will support personalized learning, but would have been supportive to give references and examples on how?</p> <p>Technology support will be provided by peer support, online support or local support, through laptops, Ipads, kindles and wireless modems available for student and parent check out. These examples are strong examples of uses of information technology systems.</p> <p>The TLI system and the NORMES system are both evidence of inter operable data systems that provide the necessary data to support the Consortium's personalized learning plans.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	12
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>It is understood that an Executive Director will maintain all data aspects and monitor goals and objectives.</p> <p>The Learning Institute will do interim testing, historical data, pacing guides and academic improvement plans for each student. It would have been helpful to have more information on how this was going to be done.</p> <p>It is commendable that students receiving a grade below C will see a counselor, career coach and mentor. Examples of strategies that would be used to engage the student and close the achievement gap would have been desirable.</p> <p>Monthly meetings of the Executive Committee of the Consortium and the Director going over timeline and implementation goals is noted.</p> <p>It is recognized that professional development for teachers will be implemented by principals. An example was given of portfolio review which will cause self-evaluation and focus on student mastery.</p> <p>Evidence is given of mandated summary testing, formative assessments and career folders being assessed by Career Coaches.</p>		

Additional course offerings by the University partnerships is a positive strategy.

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

5

3

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Quarterly meetings through the consortium is described. Monthly articles to be publicly produced is another strategy noted to provide ongoing communication.

Math, Literacy and Science specialists will monitor. Instructional strategies and personalized learning and grades will be monitored. It would have beneficial to provide information on how the communication and engagement would occur to provide continual improvement by those monitoring.

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

5

3

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Strong evidence of ambitious but achievable performance measures growth goals.

It is understood that the rationale for selecting the measures is focused on reducing the remediation rate.

How the measure will be used to make timely adjustments upon review as well as how the measure will be improved over time is lacking.

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

5

5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

It is understood that monitoring the AMO's is the primary focus of the curriculum, professional development and technology.

Math, Literacy, and Science Specialists will monitor instructional strategies daily to continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs.

Strategies taught during professional development will be monitored by specialists, principals and Director of Curriculum ensuring improved results.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	0
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The positions stated in the grant to be funded are not identified and costs associated for one time expenditures and ongoing operational costs. No strategy on long term sustainability is provided. No additional funds are identified. Although reference is made to Superintendent and Leadership team to make commitments of district's funds. The identification of the funds that will be used for the one-time investments are not provided.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	0
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: No plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant is provided.		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	7
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: The partnership with the two Universities are excellent examples of competitive preference priority. Lockheed Martin is seen as a strong partner in collaboration with Camden Fairview's engineering curriculum. Lion's club and other civic organizations reported does not give enough information to represent competitive preference priority. Limited discussion of the partnerships contribution to the education system, sustainability after the grant as well as integrating education in the partnerships.		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: The Consortium meets priority one by showing that the plan will significantly improve learning and teaching. The effectiveness of educators will improve with these strategies. It will decrease the achievement gap and help prepare more students for college and careers.		

Total	210	130
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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: N/A		



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Technical Review Form

Application #0595AR-2 for Camden Fairview Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a coherent vision of reform: 1) The goals are clear, limited in number, internally consistent. 2) There is an approach to meeting the goals that includes the partners that will assist them in reaching the expected outcomes. 3) The relationship among school districts and partners is sensible and well articulated (who they are and what they would do). In addition, the connection to the core assurance was established with the exception of description of how the consortium will build on current data infrastructure to accomplish the goals. Also, the demographics (racial/ethnic) of the school population is included for only one of the three districts in the proposed partnership.

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

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10

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's approach to implementing activities proposed appears thoughtful and sensible. They will focus on all schools in the three districts but only grades 6-12 and four subject areas including math and science. Given the low enrollment across districts it is reasonable to include all students and specified grades. The applicant provides list of schools in the format required and content specified. There is a logical phase-in of program development and implementation (three stages) outlined in this section. The eligibility requirement regarding participation of low income families is satisfied.

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

10

10

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's approach is likely to result in district wide implementation of the reforms advanced by the participating districts. With the exception of grades k-5, the applicant approach is district wide in all three districts at the middle and high school levels. At the k-5 level, the impact of the reform will occur indirectly as the district aligns the RTTD funded reforms with on-going district funded efforts. The applicant posits that there will be a "push down" effect of reform efforts to the lower grades. Thus, the professional development efforts, development of technology embedded curriculum, development of the technology infrastructure in each of the districts will leverage change at the lower levels of the system.

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

10

8

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not fully address the requirement of this criterion as it does not include the following:

- Missing data: One districts reports achievement scores broken out by one subgroups (poverty) vs the "all" category. The same district did not provide goals for reducing the gap, but instead provided the baseline figures.

Nonetheless, two district reported the requested data, disaggregated by subgroups, included goals for reducing the gap

- All three districts included outcome goals (performance, graduation, decreasing the gap and college enrollment) that appear attainable and ambitious. For the three districts the differentials between base line performance and scores at the end of the project funding ranged between 15-25% for math and literacy; the high school graduation and college enrollment rates were in the double digits
- The applicant did not address indicator (e) of the criterion.

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not demonstrate a clear track record of success as evidenced by (a). The applicant shows a pattern of performance over a three year year period, but performance is inconsistent by year, grade and subject areas. In all three cases, there is no upward trend in performance. The applicant claims that the achievement scores are above the state remediation rate, but there is no definition of "state remediation rate" nor is the state scores included in the appendix.

The description of the intended reforms targeting low performing schools seem consistent with best practices (building teacher capacity, diversified delivery system).

The applicant claims that districts already make data available to community members and school staffs. However, examples of what data is reported, to whom, and in what format is not included in the appendix. Although there is a table of contents for the appendix, the application did not include the contents of the appendix, except two letters of support.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not adequately meet the requirement of this criteria and its component parts. While it provides a copy of a state generated data collection template requiring data on teacher and "all personnel" salaries, the example is a district wide example.

- There is no district wide data for each of the districts in the consortium.
- The applicant does not provide evidence that the information is collected at the school level.
- The applicant refers the reader to website links that were cut off the page.
- There is no evidence that schools are reporting this information to the general public.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	5
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The LEA demonstrate to some extent that it has the authority to put in place the reforms proposed in the application. The autonomy referenced by the applicant is that given to the districts by the state, as a consequence of waivers granted under ESEA. There is no reference to autonomy from state imposed laws or regulatory requirements and how state requirements bear on creating personalization.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	8
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant partially fulfills the requirement of this criterion. Applicant asserts that the meetings with staffs and community had taken place prior to submission of the application. There is a statement regarding activities conducted to elicit community input, but it cannot be verified. There are letters of support from teachers in one school district, letters of support from the state superintendent, and the mayor. However, there are no letters of support from parents or community members other than the business sector.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	4
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant partially fulfills this requirement. There is an extensive and logical presentation of the need to undertake the proposed activities and the strategy it proposes to use to bridge the performance and remediation gap (rigorous, STEM focus, technology, career preparedness). The applicant provides a strong rationale for embarking on proposed actions in this section. There is a table that summarizes the plan (column is omitted from the table). Instead, deliverables are embedded in the discussion describing the activities. Still, they are not included consistently for each activity.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's presents a set of reform initiatives that when implemented in its totality can result improvement in teaching and learning. The proposed initiatives contain elements that support personalization such as writing curricula that is career relevant/ aligned to CCS/STEM focus; career planning/preparation for non-college bound students; counseling components; and measures that facilitate student self monitoring. In addition, the applicants proposes actions to gage progress in meeting program goals.

Although the narrative did not provide extensive elaboration of these areas, it is clear that the intent is to more deeply engage students through the curricula, supports, and variety of delivery methods. In section C2 of the application the consortium provides details regarding the types of technology tools that will be used to ensure high level of student interest.

However, it is not evident to the reviewer that accommodations for all subgroups of students are intended. The applicant defines high need students solely on the basis of high poverty group, consequently the reader can't discern if there are other high need groups (disability or EL) that would trigger particular set of interventions.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	15
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant partially addresses the elements of this criteria. Although each of the components is addressed at a high level of generality and very briefly, the applicant communicates readiness to attend to all elements of the criteria. The applicant outlines logically a plan of action that includes:

- Clear focus on professional development for teachers and principals focused on new curricula, formative assessments,
- The intent to develop and adapt the content of instruction and delivery of such content in ways that students would find engaging by using multiple modes of content delivery;
- Formative assessments that teachers can use to guide instruction
- Evaluation of teachers, principals and ultimately superintendent
- Collaboration with IHE's to leverage improvements
- Students supports in the area of college and career planning
- The intent to increase the number of effective and highly effective teachers and principals in hard to staff schools and specialty area

Finally, the applicants lays out in table format the time line for rolling out various components, activities and lead personnel. As was the case in other previously presented tables, deliverables are clearly delineated.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	10

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Although the response cannot be considered a high quality plan, the describes policies and practices in place that can support implementation of reform goals: a) schools have flexibility that allows decision making latitude with respect to areas cited in element b); b) schools have a structure (school improvement teams) that facilitates delivery of district support to participating schools including training of leadership; and c) districts or the partners have data capacity to store, and report data to the relevant to various audiences. The applicant notes is various sections of the application the intent to deliver instruction and support to students in multiple ways and via diverse delivery modes.

Where policies are not in place the applicant asserts intent to enact such policies (students to earned credits based on mastery (element c). There is also an expressed commitment to supporting personalization by facilitating access to information and tools and other supports to all stakeholders most particularly the students.

This is not a high quality plan because the level of detail is insufficient, there is no evidence provided by way of examples to judge the veracity of the statements or the capacity to deliver; and the applicant does not consistently provide a narrative (or table) containing all parts of a high quality plan.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	6
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not provide a separate response for this criteria. Instead, the elements contained in this criteria are addressed in D (1). But, they are not fully addressed---they lack specificity.

The applicant's assert its intent to provide students, parents, school community and other stakeholders with access to information and supports that further the goals outlined in the plan, which will result in personalized learning experience for students enrolled in districts in this consortium.

It is not clear that the data system in place can be connected in ways implied by the criterion in this section. However, it appears the data system can generate the various reports identified in this criteria. Moreover, the sytem in place is capable of matching k-12 information.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	10
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant describes current approach to continuously improve deliver of educational services and embark on additional training to improve reform plan. There is a strategy outlined for collecting data, monitoring implementation, feeding information back to schools staffs and project director. In addition, there appears to be a level of technology infrastructure to facilitate management of continuous improvement process.</p> <p>The process of continuous described in the narrative is not rigorous, but given the applicant's intent to consult with a regional R&D/technical assistance organization, it is likely that the quality of the process will be more strengthened.</p> <p>The applicant notes intent to share information about the RTTD investment (communication section). However, the regularity of such communication or its contents is not included in the narrative.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not include a high quality plan, but the communication and engagement activities described are adequate. The statement includes frequency of communication, means of communicating with internal audience (e-mail groups), and mechanism for communicating with the public (monthly articles).</p> <p>It is not sufficiently detailed in terms of adapting the message/communication for stakeholders such as parents. Although the word parents is in the text, no attention is given to how the districts will handle communication and engagement of low income parents.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Although the districts submitted a table of 10 overall program performance measures, there is no justification provided in the narrative for using the measure other than the "rate of remediation." There is a lofty statement regarding benefits that will accrue to the students in the districts should the effort be funded, but the section lacks details about how the measures will be used over time to provide information to stakeholders and how they align superficially to the program goals.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant states a commitment to evaluating the reform effort, but the narrative included is lacking in detail. For example, there is no information about how each key component of the reform will be evaluated. There is a timeline and reference to working with SREB on evaluation processes, but there is no letter of support the organization.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	2
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicants addresses the issue of identification of other program funds that might be realigned to support this effort but does not present a budget. Consequently the reviewer cannot judge reasonableness, rationale for investments or priorities.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	0
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant does not address this criteria.		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	3
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: The applicant does not respond adequately to this criteria. There is a statement in this section that provides a rationale for needs of the school population and the value of the potential partnership. However, there no specific goals, specific target over a period of time, and budget is included.		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: This is a generally a well written and persuasive application with major flaws that prevent reviewer from approving the application under absolute priority 1. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there are no documents in the appendix to verify statements • it is not clear that there is buying from required % of teachers in each district • it is not clear that the superintendents approved the application • there are no budgets • it is not clear that there is substantial parental support 		

Total	210	136
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0595AR-3 for Camden Fairview Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengthns

- The proposed consortia addresses the issue of college and career readiness through the research- and reform-based framework of middle/high schools that work, which has an established record of successful reform in rural communities;
- Proposed participants (middle/high schools) are appropriate populations to target for seamless career/college readiness;
- External partnership with SREB will help in the collection, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the proposed implementation of the consortia;
- The proposed vision acknowledges the need for the proposed program to address the unique challenges of rural school districts (e.g. access to technology, geographical distance, professional development, access to community services; access to advanced curriculum, etc.);
- Proposed career/college readiness is supported by a partnership with two postsecondary institutions who will offer dual enrollment are research-based practices;
- State certified career coaches who will work with business partnerships and state mandated student career folders are an appropriate strategies to support student career readiness;
- Vertical and horizontal alignment of Common Core/STEM curriculum should be able to support goals of proposal;
- Concurrent credit offerings and distance learning labs are convincing strategies for rural students who may not have access to rigorous curricula;
- Flexible GED courses and 24-hour computer labs for students and families are sound practicites for access to educational opportunites in rural communities;
- Integrated, comprehensive professional development training that includes technology, curricula, pedagogy, and current research-based practices are strong practices for delivering research-based practices;
- Proposed dta-driven professional development to include middle and high school pre-AP and AP teachers in all core subjects is an innovative strategy;
- The Learning Institute partnership's web-based tracking of assessment data by district, school, classroom, and student is a very strong proposition for the proposed project;
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Weaknesses

- The goals and objectives are not written as actionable or measureable. For example, "career readiness" is a concept or title as it is written in the proposal. How this concept will be achieved as a goal is unclear;
- Similarly, there objectives in this proposals that are not adequatly explained beyond a title. For example, it is not clear how "career coaches" or "easier access to technology" will be accomplished as an "objecives."
- It is unclear how the proposed director will be able to compile and analyze all project data and direct the proposed project;
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(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)

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8

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

- The approach of implementing the proposed intervention with grades 6-12 within the rural school districts is a sound practices for rural schools that are often for geographic reasons configured in this way;
- The use of E-Rate is is an appropriate and evidence-based practice for rural school districts;
- Stage-based implementation of curricula by grade level is reasonable and appropriate for scaling up the proposed project;
- Intensive two-week long professional development is a feasible and convincing strategy for scaling up the proposed project;
- Weekly walk-throughs provides appropriate fidelity of implementation for the proposed innovative pedagogical professional development training;
- Proposed clinical counselors and social workers for wrap around services are appropriate co-curricular strategies for implementing comprehensive educational reform strategies;

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Weaknesses

- There is no teacher count for the third proposed school district, which has the highest percentage of FRPL students;
- Not clear how students will be identified for wrap around services (e.g. IEP, FRPL, observation, volunteer, etc.);
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(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)

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10

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

- Collaborative relationship between postsecondary institutions and district is evidence-based and very achievable;
- Aligning district curricula with postsecondary curricula (e.g. college and career) are ambitious and achievable goals for creating a highly skilled rural workforce;
- Dual postsecondary enrollment (college credits or certificate credits) provides a strong research-based strategy for college/career readiness and articulation;
- Pre-diploma opportunities (college/career credits) are innovative and ambitious interventions for rural communities and workforce development;
- Pre-college/dual enrollment opportunities provides rural students with future enrollment

without the waste of remediation and provides students with an opportunity complete certificates or college diplomas more quickly;

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

Strengths

- Mean growth percentile is an achievable strategy for determining student sub-group growth;
- Proposed graduation rate data for the proposed schools and districts appear to be reasonable and feasible;
- Proposed college enrollment rates for the schools and districts appear to be achievable and appropriate;

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Weaknesses

- Unclear as to what the ACTAAP summative assessment is;
- Unclear what the TAAG designation is;
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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	14

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

- Proposal demonstrates knowledge and understanding of school/district strengths and weaknesses which will help to make the implementation more facil;
- Proposed project builds upon current unique strengths and partnerships of individual schools and districts for the purposes of the interventions;
- Current lessons learned and best practices from schools and districts will be used to help consortia members to implement successful local strategies;
- Consortia participants will focus on reducing the remediation rates through several strategies (e.g. academic interventionists, tutoring, prep courses, etc.);
- Intervention proposes to strengthen pedagogy and professional development through teacher portfolios, mentoring, graduate credits, and teacher/administrator evaluations;
- Teaching staff limitations, remediation, or shortages will be fortified or addressed through distance learning;
- Career coaches will supplement school counselor responsibilities and roles;
- Mentors will be assigned to specified students to encourage positive academic and social behaviors;
- Achievement data is available to parents, students, teachers, and administrators online;
- Paper version of website achievement data is available for families without reliable internet service;
- Achievement data is available at anytime and is available from consortia partner

through the appropriate school personnel;

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Weaknesses

- It is unclear how current (and proposed) interventions have (or will) contributed to the intended increase the percentage of students who scored proficient and advanced from 2009-2011;
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(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)

5

5

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

- State mandates that school/district personnel salaries be published on the state and school websites;
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(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

- CCSS (standards) are aligned both vertically and horizontally within the state during NCLB mandates;
- Proposed STEM-related intervention will align multiple assessment with state CCSS;
- Intervention will focus on college/career readiness through the development of a P-20 system which will align with CCSS with partners/stakeholders;
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(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)

10

10

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

- Stakeholders (consortia, parents, partners) have been meeting during the past few months to discuss school improvement;
- Consortia currently is using 21st Century grant and other resources to supplement learning needs;
- Proposed intervention will increase access to technology for rural families through distance learning laboratories;
- "Brain drain" in rural districts may be averted through the use of distance learning and technology-related access to learning resources;
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(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consortia has access to disaggregated data for state mandated assessments by subgroups; • State mandated school improvement plans are active documents that are revisited by schoolwide stakeholders (parents, teachers, students, and staff) throughout the academic year; • Consortia will be working with external partner to collect, synthesize and analyze normative and summative data; • Postsecondary courses will be aligned with CCSS to develop senior high school and college freshmen credits; • College/certificate credits will be gained through the intervention, thereby increasing college readiness/success and career readiness; • Consortia will develop PLE through the use of multiple assessments for every participant school; • Intensive professional development will be followed by walkthrough observations and follow up training for teachers; • Credit recovery strategies are proven interventions that helps enhance student achievement and reduce remediation and drop out rates; • Proposed credit recovery intervention will be available for students, families, and community members • Subgroups that suffer from achievement gap issues will be addressed through specified teacher professional development opportunities; • Community members are allowed to use consortia resources such as career coaches and technology labs; • • • 		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	20
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State standards and requirements are rigorous for college- and career-bound students; • State requires that all students take one AP course in each core subject areas; • Consortia proposes to support personalized sequences of instruction through support from parents, coaches, teachers, and business partners; • Student needs (individualized) will be assess through the TLI partnerships; • Science specialists, summer credit recovery programs will be designed to reduce dropout and remediation rates; • • 		

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	20
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student progress (individual) will be measured through the use of interim data, historical data, AIP and SAR reports in order to help stakeholders to develop college- and career-ready graduation requirements; • Proposed intervention will implement teacher and principal practice and effectiveness through individual and collective evaluation data; • Teachers are currently trained in the use of the assessment partner's data use tools and resources; • Career coaches will provide actionable information to teachers to meet individual student needs; • Proposed intervention will increase the number of professional development hours for teachers who will be trained through a comprehensive (technology, curricula, pedagogy, etc.) program; • Professional development and PLEs will be supported by the evaluation/professional development partner; • • 		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers will be provided with release time to engage in professional development; • Consortia will focus on policies that will allow students to earn credit and progress through school based upon demonstrated mastery, instead of seat hours; • Proposed intervention will focus on personalized learning by providing technical support to students, families, teachers, and community members; • High school schedules within the consortia districts will have 8 period days in order to earn more credits faster; • Career coaches will track student progress post-high school; • Pre-K-12 student data is currently available at all consortia districts; • • • 		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	10
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consortia director will support the active use of data for evaluative and diagnostic purposes through partnerships with external partners; • Student work will be assessed by consortia stakeholders during specific intervals (e.g. 5-week and 9-week) depending on student academic needs; • professional development will be monitored by external partner to determine fidelity and 		

implementaiton needs;

- Teacher evaluations will include teacher portfolios;
- Career coaches will monitor state mandated student career folders;
- Along with teaching staff, math and literacy specialists will play a role in monitoring lesson plans, pacing guides, and instructional strategies in order to support students' personalized learning environments;
- Consortia will coordinate course schedules to take advantage of shared distance learning opportunities;
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E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of student, school, teacher progress will be assessed using site-based management through partnerships with teachers, administrators, students, parents, community members and busiess partners; • Transcripts, career folders, and report cards will be monitored by school and career counselros; • Professional development implementation will be monitored through intervention and state mandated teacher/prinicipal administrator evaluations; • Teacher portfolios will be evaluated to determine student mastery of state standards; • • • • 		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with intervention stakeholders will be consistent and varied in media (e.g. email, agendas, meeting minutes, meetings, etc.); • Wrap around service providers will meet monthly with consortia staff montly; • Comprehensive goals and objectives of personalized learning environments intevention strategies (e.g. reflective data evaluation, credit recovery, dual enrollment, technology lab access, sustained professional development, career coaching, etc.), are designed to meet the needs of rural students, families, and communities. • External partnerships and intervention strategies will be implemented within the consortia long term; • Professional development and curricular changes within the consortia districts will be self-sustaining and long term; • Course changes (e.g. dual enrollments, course offerings, credit-bearing courses, distance learning, etc.) are internal infrastructure changes that can be maintained after grant funds are gone; • Evaluation timeline seems appropriate and reasonable for assessing intervention outcomes; 		

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
(E)(3) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear as to whether performance measures for participating students are actual numbers or % of participating students during target years; • Not sure how many teachers and principals at participating schools are (or will be) "highly effective," (0?); • Discipline referral performance indicators appear to reasonable; • College graduation rate performance indicators for career-bound students appear to be reasonable and appropriate; • Number of students projected to score at a 19 or above on the ACT are achievable; • • • 		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
(E)(4) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention is designed to comprehensively use the data (yearly state tests, yearly school report cards, and TLI interim tests) to diagnose gaps in curricula, programs, and professional development training; • Program strategies are designed to help subgroup members meet academic goals through focused, standards-based curricula and technology integration; • External partners will conduct ongoing and consistent diagnostic-based data collection and evaluations; • Content specialists will monitor pedagogical practices and resources available to stakeholders (e.g. lesson plans, pacing guides, etc.); • 		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consortia members will align current federal funds (e.g. Title I, IIA, NSLA, i3, and other) with RTTT grant funds; • Behaviorist personnel salaries will be offset by using state-based student insurance; • Consortia will continue to seek other external grant opportunities to support ongoing initiatives that will need additional continued financial support; • Evidence of intervention effectiveness will be used to support post-RTTT grant funds; • Improving educational outcomes for rural students will be used to gain support for future funding opportunities; • • 		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:		

- Transportation costs would be offset by the use of distance learning labs and platforms;
- Postsecondary partnerships will reduce costs for students and community members through curriculum alignment, credit recovery, and dual enrollment strategies;
- Site-based management and sharing of inter-district resources will be decrease costs of multi-site implementation;
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Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

- The consortia is an active participatory model which engages three rural school districts, two postsecondary institutions (college and career); wrap around services with social workers and career counselors; and business and community stakeholder partnerships;
- State mandates are already in place that encourage college and career readiness (e.g. career folders);
- Community members also will benefit from the distance learning and the career- and college-readiness programs;
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Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Total	210	203
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