



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0356TX-1 for Cedar Hill Independent School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	5

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a comprehensive narrative showing Cedar Hill ISD provides a 3 tiered plan to college and career readiness and educational individualization. In the primary grades the themes are exposure and awareness. In the Intermediate and Middle grades the theme is exploration of interest, while at the High School the focus becomes readiness for college.

The applicant provides a detailed narrative showing how it will develop the idea of working towards skills needed for College- and Career-Ready Students. In collaborating within the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) Program, fine arts is committed to expanding themed performances / portfolios needed for higher achievement in multiple classrooms with cross-curriculum frameworks. Fine Arts programs will continue to expanded student engagement, and promote lifelong learning as it relates to core subjects and overall learning for our students to be College and Career Ready.

In addition, the applicant provides an excellent work plan starting in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. In the 7th grade year, students can apply to join the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) preparatory academy. This continuation of STEAM further prepares students to be problem-solvers through Problem Based Learning methods. In the middle schools, students begin to choose electives and individualize their educational experience. In the 8th grade, students can take high school classes either on campus or in person. 8th graders also take Exploring Careers, the middle school CTE course that informs students on career options and aids them in preparing their 4 year plans. These plans are the true individualization tools, as they lay out the Career Pathways in which students select all of their electives. Advanced Technical Credits, Dual Credit courses, certification opportunities are then available to students via on campus, dual enrollment, or online coursework.

Section of plan are very good, for example starting STEM in 7th grade is an excellent for all levels os students. Overall, the plan is well structured but not the overall does not address three of the four core priority. This is a serious flaw.

The plan includes:

1. Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) curriculum that focuses on problem solving skills, science, math, and the arts.
2. Additionally, foreign language will be offered at each primary campus for a sum of 75 minutes per week for each student. This dedication to early language exposure is an investment in language acquisition in the future.
3. Additionally, in 2013 Cedar Hill ISD endeavors to open a K-8 Theme-based, advanced academic program at a singular campus. This school embraces humanities, technology, and the holistic approach to education.
4. The applicant includes these dynamic goals of college/career readiness and educational individualization are supported by our 1 to 1 smart tablet initiative. For the younger grades, carts of tablets will manage technology integration, while starting 6th grade students will be issued tablets to take home. The applicant addresses all the salient points of the application with ample details in a credible fashion. The applicant does not include in this section how it will insure students have access to high quality teachers and other high quality key staff. No indication is provided as to how the

program will seek these individuals.

The overall plan does not describe three of the four core priority. The application lacks cohesion and is fuzzy . The applicant does not mention anything about about core educational assurances in the section.

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

The applicant provides a very comprehensive chart with all the cogent components for the implementation plan. The chart includes participating schools, detailed figures on the educators and students as classified by need in the program; income level of students detailed and raw data. The section provides a documented view of all students participating in the program within the target schools. From the information in the chart you can deduce the schools were selected with the greatest number of students meeting the criteria of the application. For example, number of participating high-need students, number of participating low-income students, total number of lowincome students in LEA or Consortium will participate in the program. The section is very complete and detailed with ample information.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	0
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not address this portion of the application.

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

(a) The applicant provides a chart with expected gains on performance by each year of the project. The applicant indicates at the end of the project the performance differences among all students would be minimal and almost equal at all levels. The information is subdivided by groups. The projected growth in performance of all groups is ambitious

(b) The applicant provides a chart with the projected decrease in achievement between the participating groups of target students by year. The applicant provides subgroups and comparison groups. In addition, the chart provides a starting baseline and the expected goal for the first school year.I. The information is adequate and clearly describes starting point and what is to be expected at the end of the project.

(c) The applicant provides a chart with the baseline data of graduation rates for the target students and an expected increase in graduation by year of the program. The last two years of the program indicate a 99% graduation rate of all groups

(d) The applicant provides a chart of the baseline college enrollment and the goals of the program. The applicant includes the following note: "College enrollment should be calculated as the ratio between college-enrolled students and their graduating cohort." The expected enrollment rates are subdivided by groups. With the exception of the economically disadvantage baseline: 45%, goal: 60%, the expected college enrollment is between 90 and 98%

**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	11

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The applicant provides a narrative and a detailed chart indicating for the past four years the district has grown from district rating of Academically Acceptable to Recognized. Several schools within the district have been rated Exemplary according to the data provided. The applicant indicates to

determine the rating label, the system evaluates indicators of performance, including assessment results on the state standardized assessment instruments as well as longitudinal completion rates and/or annual dropout rates. The information is clear and convincing.

(b) The applicant state it has leveraged school improvement grants and professional development investments aimed at improving student performance. Cutting edge curriculum, instruction, and technology have become the resources used to engage these students in the target schools. The applicant does not provide any support information to indicate what happened before and after these resources were utilized.

(c) The applicant does not provide specific data of raising achievement data for college and universities.

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

5

2

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The applicant did not have a clear display of transparency. Salaries can only be accessed by password protected systems by the Internet.

(b) The information provided by the LEA clearly shows salaries for all participating staff as required by the program.

(c) The fact a password is necessary to access the information via the Internet does not show a clear display of transparency.

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

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(b)(3)

The applicant indicates evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under state statutes to implement a personalized learning environment by aligning goals and strategies with the Achieve Texas College and Career Initiative, as well as with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills in the core content areas, foreign language, and fine arts. The information provided indicates autonomy in structuring the program. The fact that statutes indicate the schools have freedom to create personalized learning environment provides a legal component to create the individual school environment. Basically, the district indicates it has been given the go-ahead to do what needs to be done for a successful learning environment.

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

10

7

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a narrative with details on how all stake holders were engaged in the creation of the project. Thirty educators, parents, students, and community leaders met for three days of intensive planning. The Action Teams were made up of a cross-section of Cedar Hill residents, business leaders, city employees, parents, and educators. The applicant indicates the district has identified programmatic strategies that will result in the policies, systems, infrastructure, capacity, and culture to enable teachers, teacher teams, and school leaders to continuously focus on improving individual student achievement. The approach is very strong and very inclusive and does bring in all parties to participate in the creation, implementation and assessment of the program. It is a strong plan. The applicant does not provide information on collective bargaining or letters of support. The letters are not included in the appendix or the body of the application.

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

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3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Cedar Hill ISD has identified gaps in writing across the majority of tested levels and subgroups. In 2012 Cedar Hill began a district wide writing initiative to close the gaps. The applicant provides a narrative and information in the appendix showing using STAAR results. Additionally, STAAR testing has shown gaps in World Geography. Information is included in the appendix indicating evidence of educational

gaps across all students. Cedar Hill ISD posts its compensation manuals prominently on the Human Resources web address. The applicant does not make clear what the rationale for the creation of the analysis of plan nor does it provide a timeline for achievement of goals.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

ai) The applicant provides a narrative indicating mechanisms are in place to assist students in understanding the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning and understand what they are seeking.

(aii) The applicant shows counselors will use high schools to play a critical role in preparing students for post-secondary options such as college or vocational education. The decisions students make are influenced by the culture of the school they attend. High schools will influence their students to be college ready largely by building college-readiness steps into the school culture. This will be done by offering courses and curricula that prepare students for college-level work and ensure that students understand what constitutes a college-ready curriculum by 9th grade; Utilize assessment measures throughout high school so that students are aware of how prepared they are for college, and assist them in overcoming deficiencies as they are identified The applicant does show how they will expose students from Pre-K up to the 7th grade. There is no indication of accommodations for high needs students, such bilingual students, physically challenged and the older student.

(aiv) The plan to expand cultural experiences for students will included a Personal Graduation Plan (six year plan), to provide additional feedback to students, all students will receive college and career-readiness information and complete college-readiness assessments in the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades.

(av) In the eighth grade, students will complete a Personal Graduation Plan (six year plan) that will include a four year course plan that leads to fulfilling a college-ready curriculum, each student's individual career goal, a student's plans after high school, and steps to complete toward their post-secondary option. This plan will serve as a mechanism for students to set goals for their college and/or career choices as well as gauge their progress toward their goals. This plan will be completed electronically in student information software in the eighth grade and will be updated at least two times per year via an individual meeting. The section is very complete and indicates careful planning.

(av) To master critical information and goals the applicant will make sure, starting in the eighth grade, that all students take the Career Explorations class. Using a 4 year planning software, they obtain information regarding career options, be exposed to career relevant information, and learn the necessary preparation for various career options. Students will also receive extensive information on college and career preparation. Students will become familiar with high school courses of study that will prepare them for graduation as well as college entry. Specifically, high school counselors will provide classroom presentations to students on high school graduation requirements and selecting high school courses.

(bi) The applicant has an excellent plan to assist students make adequate individual goals. For example, the applicant will provide a series of online video presentations of elective course options. Elective teachers, including Career and Technical Education, Fine Arts, and Athletics, will work with their students to prepare video presentations of their courses to help fully engage the students in this process and help them make informed decisions. During this time, parents will also be able to access their students' course options as well as the video course presentations to help provide input into their students' scheduling. Following these video presentations, students will have the opportunity to select the classes of their choice

(bii) The applicant will provide numerous environments to insure students have adequate tools for selection of courses. For example, Offering courses and curricula that prepare students for college-level work and ensure that students understand what constitutes a college-ready curriculum by 9th grade; Utilize assessment measures throughout high school so that students are aware of how

prepared they are for college, and assist them in overcoming deficiencies as they are identified; surround students with adults and peers who build and support their college-going aspirations; engage and assist students in completing critical steps for college entry; increase families' financial awareness, By the end of the eighth grade, all students will take the ACT Explore Test, which would serve as an initial indicator of college-readiness and progress. This plan will serve as a mechanism for students to set goals for their college and/or career choices as well as gage their progress toward their goals. This plan will be completed electronically in student information software in the eighth grade and will be updated at least two times per year via an individual meeting between the student and his/her high school counselor throughout high school.

(biii) The applicant makes extensive use of technology. For example, using 4 year planning software, they obtain information regarding career options, be exposed to career relevant information, and learn the necessary preparation for various career options. In this class, students will also receive extensive information on college and career preparation. Students will become familiar with high school courses of study that will prepare them for graduation as well as college entry.

(biv) The applicant will have a means to inform and included parents and students on achievement and choices on higher education. For example, Following classroom presentations, students will receive a series of online video presentations of elective course options. Elective teachers, including Career and Technical Education, Fine Arts, and Athletics, will work with their students to prepare video presentations of their courses to help fully engage the students in this process and help them make informed decisions. During this time, parents will also be able to access their students' course options as well as the video course presentations to help provide input into their students' scheduling.

(bv)(c) The applicant shows students will develop an individualized plan for their academic success. At this entry point, students' performance on college readiness indicators (i.e., reading and math performance) will be included in scheduling decisions for ninth grade. Students needing reading and math intervention will be scheduled into classes that will allow them to improve their reading and math performance in the ninth grade. Additional data, including Reveal Software for Dropout prevention, will be used to identify students who show risk factors (or factors that could potentially lead to their dropping out of school). In ninth grade, all students will take an advisory class that will serve as the ninth grade venue for college- and career- readiness information.

c. The applicant indicates appropriate steps will be taken to make sure students have the required support to use tools and resources to track and manage their learning. For example, In the tenth grade, all students will take an Academic Skills class that will allow them further opportunities to complete critical steps for college entry and career readiness. In this class, students will learn to audit their own transcripts and gage their own progress toward graduation and completion of a college ready curriculum. In addition, students will utilize their Personal Graduation Plan to determine their status toward their individualized goals. Teachers will assist students in determining the action steps necessary to complete the goals they outlined.

The applicant does not provide information as to how subgroups will be served. These groups are English as a second language, students with learning disabilities and other students with problems not adequately addressed within a normal classroom environment. The applicant does not indicate how subgroups will be assess in order to provide an individualized plan of education or if theses students would receive assistance outside of the classroom. The applicant does not provide adequate information as to the over-all plan for students with special needs.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	0
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:  
The applicant does not address this portion of the application.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	0

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not address this section of the application.

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

10

0

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not address this section of the application.

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

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a narrative showing how project will monitors the progress of the program at all levels. Information is monitored and collected from educators, staff, administrators and parents to identify unexpected results and to take adequate measures on time. However, the applicant does not provide details as to how the process will develop or staff in charge. It is also not clear what type of data will be collected. There is no time line for application of the process of data collection. The applicant provides tables with the indicated measures to be monitored for a measure of progress. Parents and community members serve on campus improvement and campus action teams. The District Advisory Team includes both internal and external stakeholders. The applicant does not provide details about the relationship between educators community stakeholders.

The applicant does not offer indications as to how it will implement corrections for improvement. No clear plan on how they are going to manage data. No information is given about strategies for measuring quality of instruments or what to do if unexpected results appear.

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

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5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a very detailed narrative indicating the district has sought stakeholder involvement in the process to continuously improve the quality of education for the students. In 2009, the district began a strategic planning process with a core group of 30 educators, parents, students, and community leaders. The team members ensured a reflection of the values and perspectives of the entire district and community. The group met for three days and created a framework of aspirations and goals designed to push the district beyond its capabilities. In 2010, over 200 stakeholders participated in action planning teams that took each of the strategies outlined by the core planning team and created specific action steps that today continue to drive the district goals, initiatives and day to day operations. The core of the plan is to provide timely feedback on the progress of the program from the perspective of different stakeholders. These activities involve committees comprised of a broad cross-section of representatives, including parents, staff, and community members. Teachers and district staff often serve as resource persons on committees, and as content area experts on committees themselves. The applicant indicates it has received excellent results in 2009 from this approach and feels the results warrant a continuation of the process in future years.

Some of information components in the plan are:

- Multiple social media outlets
- Campus newsletters
- Digital display boards and campus marquees
- Parent and staff e-newsletters
- Campus and District website updates and in-depth information
- A variety of community engagement activities
- Media news releases and announcements
- E-mail updates to parents and community members

The applicant indicates it will make theses community engagement components a permanent feature. Evaluation and management will gather the following data to address the project goals, objectives and

performance including the following reporting procedures. Quantitative and Qualitative Data - 1) annual and longitudinal documentation of participant information and their involvement in project services; 2) annual surveys of key stakeholders; 3) interviews of key administrators and teachers; 4) focus groups of parents, students, administrators, and teachers; 5) various levels of student achievement, individual student growth.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides charts showing the number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup whose teacher of record and principal are a highly effective teacher and a highly effective principal. The applicant does not accompany the charts with a narrative explaining what the charts indicate. It is very difficult to determine exactly what the goals are or if they can be achieved.

The applicant begins with a Baseline and then shows the first classification which is the number of Participating Students with Highly Effective Teacher/Principal. The information continues with the Total # of Participating Students. However, this is all that is provided. Without more narrative addressing the information on the charts, the data is just numbers and very confusing. The applicant also does not address how they seek proof of age in Pre-K.

The applicant does not demonstrate who they will increase the number and percentage of students by subgroup that are on track as career-ready based on earning ACT's National Career Certificated. In addition the applicant does not provide clear information about how measures will help increase classroom success or how will they review and improve classroom achievement.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

This section was not addressed by the applicant.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a chart with aspects of the budget. The budget is presented in general terms and does not provide sufficient information to determine if the budget is reasonable and sufficient to carry the program to its conclusion. For example, ongoing costs and one-time costs are not identified. The sources of all funding utilized in the program are not identified.

The applicant does not provide a budget narrative as required, only form 524.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	0
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not address this section of the application.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

Competitive Preference Priority not meet

## Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Through the application, the recurrent theme is the improvement of the learning environment of the target population. The improvement of the learning environment includes staff enrichment and training, the inclusion of the best possible technology within the classroom and the inclusion and participation of all stakeholders, including parents and students. Within the parameters of the application the applicant clearly meets the priority. The applicant covers all core educational assurance areas. This include plans for data collection, assessment and standards for processing data, personnel enrichment and component for turning around low achieving schools.

Total	210	91
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0356TX-2 for Cedar Hill Independent School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a three (3) tiered approach to college/career readiness and individualization. The applicant indicates that at the elementary level, the themes are exposure and awareness and will include STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) curriculum that focuses on problem solving skills, science, math, and the arts. The applicant indicates that grant opportunities will enable CHISD to personalize the learning environment for all students in the arts in the TEKS based fine arts course while collaborating in the STEAM program. Foreign language will be offered at each primary campus for a sum of 75 minutes per week for each students. During the 7th grade year, students can apply to join the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) preparatory academy. During the 8th grade year, students can take Exploring Careers, the middle school course that informs students on career options and aids them in preparing their 4-year plans.

Students are able to select all of their electives, Advanced Technical Credits, dual Credit courses, certification, and certification opportunities will be available to students via on campus, dual enrollment, or online coursework. The applicant describes the plans to open a K-8 theme-based, advanced academic program at a singular school to embrace humanities, technology, and the holistic approach to education.

The overall plan does not clearly describe a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that builds on its work in the four core educational assurance areas:

- (1) adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy (did discuss STEAM and STEM);
- (2) building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals with data about how they can improve instruction;
- (3) recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most;

and

(4) turning around the lowest-achieving schools.

The overall reform vision does not comprehensively and coherently articulate a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support.

The applicant does not provide a vision to explicitly connect student outcomes to particular reform actions. The proposal does not specifically articulate how they will envision that they will comprehensively address increasing achievement levels for all students that are grounded in common and individuals tasks that are based on student academic interests.

This criterion is scored in the medium range because the plan does not describe a comprehensive reform vision that builds on its work in the four core educational assurance areas.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	6
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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The applicant did not describe a description of the process that the applicant used to select schools to participate.

(b) The applicant provides a list of the following participating school grade levels that will participate in the proposed grant activities: PK-4 (6 schools); 5-6 (2 schools); 7-8 (2 schools); 9 (1 school); 9-12 (1 school); and 10-12 (1 school).

(c) The applicant describes the following total number of participating students (8,321); participating students from low-income families (5,471); participating students who are high-need students (2,791); and participating educators (494). The applicant indicates that the total percentage of participating students includes 100% of participating students in the school; 65.7% of participating students from low-income families; and 100% of total LEA low-income population.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	0
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not describe LEA-wide reform and change, including the extent to which the application includes a high-quality plan describing how the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools (as defined in this notice), and will help the applicant reach its outcome goals (e.g., the applicant's logic model or theory of change of how its plan will improve student learning outcomes for all students who would be served by the applicant).

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

The applicant demonstrates a vision that is likely to result in improved learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious, yet achievable, annual goals that are equal to or that exceed ESEA targets for the LEA, overall and by student subgroup, for each participating LEA in the following areas:

(4)(a) Performance on summative assessments (proficiency status and growth):

The applicant's vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance because the annual goals are ambitious, yet achievable. The applicant thoroughly aligns goal areas (Math Grade 3 STAAR meet level II; Math Grade 3 STAAR meet level III; Reading Grade 3 STAAR meet level II; Reading Grade 3 STAAR meet level III; Math Grade 4 STAAR met level II; Math Grade 4 STAAR met level III; Reading Grade 4 STAAR met level II; Reading Grade 4 STAAR met level III; Math Grade 5 STAAR met level II; Math Grade 5 STAAR met level III; Reading Grade 5 STAAR met level II; Reading Grade 5 STAAR met level III; Math Grade 6 STAAR met level II; Math Grade 6 STAAR met level III; Reading Grade 6 STAAR met level II; Reading Grade 6 STAAR met level III; Math Grade 7 STAAR met level II; Math Grade 7 STAAR met level III; Reading Grade 7 STAAR met level II; Reading Grade 7 STAAR met level III; Math Grade 8 STAAR met level II; Math Grade 8 STAAR met level III; Reading Grade 8 STAAR met level II; Reading Grade 8 STAAR met level III; Algebra I STAAR met level II; Algebra I STAAR met level III; English I Reading STAAR met level II; English I Reading STAAR met level III; English I Writing STAAR met level II; English I Writing STAAR met level III; Biology STAAR met level II; Biology STAAR met level III; World Geography STAAR met level II; World Geography met level III; Geometry STAAR met level II; Geometry STAAR met level III; English II STAAR met level II; English II STAAR met level III; Chemistry STAAR met level II; Chemistry STAAR met level III; World History STAAR met level II; World History met level III; Algebra II STAAR met level II; Algebra II STAAR met level III; English III STAAR met level II; English III STAAR met level III; Physics STAAR met level II; Physics STAAR met level III; U.S. Hisotry STAAR met level II; U.S. History met level III) subgroups (Overall, African American, Hispanic, White, Econmically Disadvantaged), baseline data; and goals (5-year goals, and post grant goals) to be attained on the following assessments:

- Summative assessments being used Grades 3-8 State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness; Grades 9-11 State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness End of Course Exams;
- Methodology for determining status (e.g., percent proficient and above): Grades 3-8 percentage meeting Level II (Standard) and meeting Level III (Advanced Academic Performance); Grades 9-11 percentage meeting Level II (Standard) and meeting Level III (Advanced Academic Performance); and
- Methodology for determining growth (e.g., value-added, mean growth percentile, change in achievement levels): Increase in the percentage of students meeting Level II performance and increase in percentage of students meeting Level III performance.

(4)(b) Decreasing achievement gaps

The applicant's vision is likely to result in decreasing achievement gaps because the annual goals for subgroups are ambitious, yet achievable. The applicant thoroughly aligns goal areas (W. Geography EOC; English I Writing; 3rd Grade Reading; 4th Grade Reading; 4th Grade Math; 4th Grade Writing; 5th Grade Reading; 5th Grade Math; 6th Grade Reading; 6th Grade Math; 7th Grade Reading; 7th Grade Math; 7th Grade Writing; 8th Grade Reading; 8th Grade Math); subgroup and comparison groups; baseline data; and goals (5-year goals, and post grant goals) to be attained.

(4)(c) Graduation rates

The applicant's vision is likely to result in improved graduation rates because the annual goals for graduation rates and subgroups are ambitious, yet achievable. The applicant thoroughly aligns goal area (High School graduation rate); subgroups (Overall, African American, Hispanic, White, Special Ed; Economically Disadvantaged; CTE; Fine Arts; Athletics); baseline data; and goals (5-year goals, and post grant goals) to be attained.

(4)(d) College enrollment

The applicant's vision is likely to result in improved college enrollment because the annual goals are ambitious, yet achievable. The applicant thoroughly aligns goal area (College enrollment rate); subgroups (Overall, African American, Hispanic, White, Special Ed; Economically Disadvantaged; CTE; Fine Arts; Athletics); baseline data; and goals (5-year goals, and post grant goals) to be attained.

(4)(e) Postsecondary degree attainment

The applicant's vision is likely to result in improved postsecondary degree attainment because the annual goals are ambitious, yet achievable. The applicant thoroughly aligns goal area (Postsecondary degree attainment); subgroup (Overall); baseline data; and goals (5-year goals, and post grant goals) to be attained.

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	9

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Cedar Hill Independent School District (CHISD) has experienced improvements in student achievement since 2008. The applicant did not provide data on increased student achievement by percentage points on its state assessments by percentage points. The applicant indicates that the State statute requires annual district performance ratings primarily based on state testing with the standard accountability labels of Exemplary (E), Recognized (R), Academically Acceptable (AA) and Academically Unacceptable (AU).

(1)(a) Cedar Hill Independent School District demonstrates strong examples of improving students learning outcomes. The applicant indicates that for the past four years CHISD has grown from a district rating of Academically Acceptable (AA) to Recognized (R) within many of its schools. Several schools within the district have been rated Exemplary (E). The applicant did not provide specific data on how CHISD has closed achievement gaps, high school graduation rates, and college enrollment rates.

(1)(b) Cedar Hill Independent School District indicates that in its lowest performing schools, it has leveraged school improvement grants and professional development investments aimed at improving student performance. The applicant indicates that it has implemented cutting edge curriculum, instruction, and technology to engage these students. The applicant did not describe the details on how it has a strong record in intervening in the persistently lowest-achieving schools to achieve ambitious and significant reforms.

(1)(c) Cedar Hill Independent School District demonstrates evidence of students performance data being made available to students, educators, and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and services. The applicant indicates that the Cedar Hill ISD has adopted policies and procedures to ensure that the teaching and learning process is based on the assessment of performance data. The district has a data system that provides real time access to standardized test information, benchmark progress, and PEIMS data

in various formats for teachers and administrators. The district also relies on state education reporting systems for student data. The district uses parent portal, a communications tool designed to enhance and increase involvement in education allowing parents to access their child's list of classes, assignments, grades, attendance, and teacher comments. The applicant describes a plan for the district to upgrade, during the 2012-2013 school year, to a more robust data dashboard system, which compiles scattered data into one system accessible via long-in for district personnel.

This criterion is scored in the medium range because the applicant did not demonstrate a clear track record of success by providing the data on how achievement gaps have been closed during the past four years or how college enrollment rates have improved during the past four years.

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

5

1

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Cedar Hill Independent School District indicates that the Texas Education Agency's Academic Excellence Indicator System provides open access and search capability for the following:

(2)(a) Actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff are not available, except by password protected system by individual personnel;

(2)(b) Actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff are not available, except by password protected system by individual personnel;

(2)(c) Actual personnel salaries at the school level for teachers are not available; the only teacher salaries that are available are average teacher salaries by years of experience, teacher salaries based on education and tenure, average actual salaries of teachers, professional support, salaries of campus administrators; and

(2)(d) Actual non-personnel expenditures at the school level are available with transparent access to budget information and check registers by year with compensation manuals posted on the Human Resources web address. It is unclear as to the information that is available in the compensation manuals.

This criterion is scored in the low range because the applicant has not demonstrated evidence of a level of transparency by making public the actual personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff, actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff, or actual personnel salaries at the school level. Therefore, the applicant does not already demonstrate evidence of a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments.

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

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant indicates that Cedar Hill ISD is required under state statues to implement a personalized learning environment by aligning goals and strategies with the Achieve Texas College and Career Initiative, as well as with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills in the core content areas, foreign language, and fine arts. The applicant indicates that the district will focus on how students receive and comprehend instruction (from elementary to high school) within a personalized learning environment.

The applicant describes the state context for implementation. Therefore, this criterion is scored in the high range.

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

10

5

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Cedar Hill Independent School District has demonstrated evidence of stakeholder engagement in the development of the RTT proposal. The applicant indicates that the foundation for the RTT instructional goals was conceived with the development of the district's strategic plan.

(4)(a)(ii) The applicant provides evidence that thirty educators, parents, students, and community leaders met for three days of intensive planning to determine the goals and objectives of the strategic action plan. This initial planning session was followed by assigning Action Teams, made up of a cross-section of Cedar Hill residents, business leaders, city employees, parents, and educators, who determine the specifics on how the district would best serve the needs of its stakeholders. The district, based on the engagement of the action teams, has identified strategies that will result in the policies, systems, infrastructure,

capacity, and culture to enable teachers, teacher teams, and school leaders to focus on improving student achievement and closing achievement gaps.

The applicant did not provide evidence that at least 70 percent of the teachers from participating schools support the proposal.

(4)(b) The applicant did not provide letters of support from key stakeholders, such as parents and parent organizations, student organizations, early learning programs, the business community, civil rights organizations, advocacy groups, local civic and community-based organizations, and institutions of higher education.

Although the applicant provides evidence of meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal, the applicant did not provide letters of stakeholder support for the proposal. Therefore, this criterion is scored in the medium point range.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	2
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Cedar Hill Independent School District briefly indicates, as a result of STAAR testing, that gaps have been identified in student writing cross the majority of tested levels and subgroups. The applicant indicates that, in 2012, CHISD began a district wide testing initiative. The applicant also generally indicates that STAAR testing in World Geography. The most recent PBMAS results identified gaps in high school math, science, and Special Education.

Although the applicant indicates that CHISD district staff and community partners are working together to analyze and improve the processes and policies that are causing these gaps, the applicant did not provide a high-quality plan for the analysis of the current status in implementing personalized learning environments and the logic behind the proposed reform. Although the applicant indicates that there are gaps in student writing and World Geography, the applicant did not provide the data on the needs and gaps that the plan will address. Therefore, this criterion is scored in the medium range.

### 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 provides a comprehensive plan that includes mechanisms in place to provide training and support to students that will ensure that they understand how to use the resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning.

(a)(i) The applicant describes a clear plan for students to understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals. The applicant plans to offer courses and curricula that prepare students for college-level work and to ensure that students understand what constitutes a college-ready curriculum by 9th grade. The applicant describes a plan to utilize assessment measures throughout high school so that students will be aware of how prepared they are for college and to assist them in overcoming deficiencies as they are identified. The applicant plans to surround students with adults and peers who support their college-going aspirations.

(a)(ii) The applicant describes a comprehensive plan for students to identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college-ready curriculum, understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals. In the eighth grade, students will complete a Personal Graduation Plan (six year plan) that will include a four-year course plan that will lead to completing a college-ready curriculum, including career goals, plans after high school, and steps to complete their postsecondary option. This plan will allow students to set goals for their college and/or career choices and assess their progress toward their goals. This plan will be completed electronically in student information software in the eighth grade and updates at least two times per year with individual meetings between counselors and students. Students, at the end of the eighth grade, will take the ACT Explore Test, which will serve as an indicator of college-readiness and will enable them to develop an individualized plan for their academic success.

(a)(iii) The applicant describes a clear plan for students to be involved in learning experiences in areas of academic interest. In the eighth grade, all students will take the Career Explorations class and become knowledgeable of high school graduation requirements, as well as elective course options.

(a)(iv) The applicant provides a plan for students to have access and exposure to contexts and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning. Students, in the ninth grade, will take an advisory class that will include critical study skills as well as the skills to engage in an in-depth study of postsecondary options. The applicant did not provide a plan for students to have access and exposure to diverse cultures.

(a)(v) The applicant describes a comprehensive plan for students to master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as

goal-setting and critical thinking. During the ninth grade, students will take a class that will include critical study skills. When students participate in the STREAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) programs, they will be introduced to critical thinking skills. During the tenth grade, all students will take an Academic Skills class that will allow them to complete the steps for college entry and career readiness.

(b)(i) The applicant thoroughly demonstrates that each student will have access to a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable the student to achieve his or her individual learning goals and to ensure he or she can graduate on time and college- and career-ready. In addition to the Personal Graduation Plan (six year plan) completed in eighth grade, all students will receive college and career-readiness information and complete college-readiness assessments in the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades. By the end of the ninth grade year, each student will be provided individualized feedback regarding their mastery of graduation requirements and college-readiness.

(b)(ii) The learning plan clearly provides evidence that students will experience a variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments. Students will be able to participate in service learning projects as well as utilize tools to help them explore options including trade/vocational schools, community colleges, and four-year universities. During the ninth grade year, students will be administered a content based assessment of progress toward college-and career-readiness that will encompass benchmarks of college readiness and an understanding of their college-ready curriculum.

(b)(iii) The applicant did not clearly describe a plan for students to experience high-quality content, including digital learning content, aligned with college- and career-ready graduation requirements. This needs to be further developed to enable students to have access to digital learning content.

(b)(iv)(A) The applicant details clear plans to frequently update individual student data that can be used to determine progress toward mastery of college- and career-ready graduation requirements.

(b)(iv)(B) The applicant demonstrates plans for students to receive personalized learning recommendations based on the student's current knowledge and skills, college- and career-ready graduation requirements.

(b)(v) The applicant demonstrates a plan to provide accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students to help ensure that they are on track toward meeting college- and career-ready graduation requirements. Reveal Software for Dropout prevention will be used to identify students who show risk factors, or factors that could lead to their dropping out of school.

(c) The applicant clearly describes mechanisms that are in place to provide training and support to students that will ensure that they understand how to use the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning. Through their Personal Graduation Plan (six year plan), students will have a mechanism to set goals for their college and/or career choices as well as keep track of their progress toward their goals. This plan will be completed electronically in student information software in the eighth grade, updated at least two times per year, and will allow students to track and manage their learning. Students will have opportunities for a mock action plan, which includes the completion of the PSAT, college placement exams, completion of college applications, college essays, and college admissions exams (SAT/ACT).

Overall, the applicant provides a 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. The applicant did not provide a plan for students to have access and exposure to diverse cultures. The applicant did not clearly describe a plan for students to experience high-quality content, including digital learning content, aligned with college- and career-ready graduation requirements. This needs to be further developed to enable students to have access to digital learning content. Therefore, this criterion is scored in the high range.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	0
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not provide a description or plan for this whole selection criterion; therefore, no points were given.

## D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	0
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant did not provide a description or plan for this whole selection criterion; therefore, no points were given.		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	0
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant did not provide a description or plan for this whole selection criterion; therefore, no points were given.		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	8
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: CHISD has demonstrated a commitment of engaging stakeholders in the school improvement and district planning process. The applicant indicates that the proposed project will utilize campus improvement and campus action teams (Site Based Decision Making); a District Advisory Team that includes both internal and external stakeholders; and membership and participation in the parent, teacher, and student organizations (PTA/PTSO).  The applicant generally indicates that the district will utilize the campus action teams and District Advisory Teams to ensure a continuous improvement process that will provide feedback on the progress toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the term of the grant. However, the applicant did not describe the specific strategies or the plan that the campus action teams and District Advisory Teams will utilize to implement a rigorous continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback on the progress toward project goals. The applicant did not describe the process of making ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the term of the grant.  The applicant generally indicates that the district web page will be used to publicly share information on the investments funded by the Race to the Top - District, including investments in professional development, technology, and student achievement.  This criterion is scored in the medium range because the applicant did not provide a plan for implementing continuous improvement that demonstrates how ongoing corrections and improvements will be made during and after the term of the grant. The applicant did not describe the strategies for monitoring and measuring the quality of its investments funded by Race to the Top - District funding, such as investments in professional development, technology, and staff.		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant demonstrates that the Student Support and Community Involvement Department works closely with the district Communications and Special Programs Coordinator in initiate programs, share information, and involve the community in all of the major programs and activities of the district.  Cedar Hill ISD uses the following methods to provide parents, staff, and the community with information regarding district programs and activities: multiple social media outlets, campus newsletters, digital display boards and campus marquees, parent and staff e-newsletters, campus and district website updates and in-depth information, a variety of community engagement activities, media news releases and announcements, e-mail updates to parents and community members, and a		

parent voice messaging system.

The applicant also lists the following opportunities for stakeholders to provide feedback and participate in decision-making processes for the district: Site-Based Decision Making Team, Campus Improvement Team, or Campus Action Team; District Advisory Committee; routine parent, student, staff, and community surveys; online suggestion box; town hall meetings with the superintendent; and student round table discussions with the superintendent.

This criterion is scored in the high range because the applicant provides clear strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes ambitious yet achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup, with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures.

The applicant did not propose, for grades PreK-3, at least one age-appropriate non-cognitive indicator of growth (e.g., physical well-being and motor development, or social-emotional development). The applicant did not propose, for grades 4-8, at least one grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan. The applicant did not propose, for grades 9-12, at least one grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan.

Although the applicant describes ambitious yet achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup, with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures, the applicant did not describe the following: (a) Its rationale for selecting that measure; (b) how the measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant's implementation success or areas of concern; and (c) how it will review and improve the measure over time if it is insufficient to gauge implementation progress.

This criterion is scored in the medium range because the applicant describes performance measures, overall and by subgroup, with annual targets, but did not describe the rationale; how the measure will provide information regarding the applicant's implementation success or areas of concern; or how it will review and improve the measure over time.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not provide a description or plan for this whole selection criterion; therefore, no points were given.

## F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	1
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant did not identify all funds that will support the project (e.g., Race to the Top – District grant; external foundation support; LEA, State, and other Federal funds). The budget cannot be assessed as to being reasonable and sufficient to support the development of the applicant's proposal because the applicant did not provide a budget narrative or a detailed account of each budget category. The applicant did not provide a rationale for investments and priorities, including--</p> <p>(i) A description of all of the funds (e.g., Race to the Top – District grant; external foundation support; LEA, State, and other Federal funds) that the applicant will use to support the implementation of the proposal, including total revenue from these sources; and</p> <p>(ii) Identification of the funds that will be used for one-time investments versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs that will be incurred during and after the grant period, as described in the proposed budget and budget narrative, with a focus on strategies that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments.</p>		

This criterion is scored in the low range because the applicant did not provide a budget narrative with a description of each line item in the budget.

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

10

0

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not provide a plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. Therefore, no points were given for this selection criterion.

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not address this Competitive Preference Priority. Therefore, no points were given.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides some general statements on how it will create learning environments that are designed to improve learning through the utilization of strategies and supports for students that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards.

- The applicant generally indicates that personalized learning environments will accelerate student achievement and deepen students learning by meeting the academic needs of each student.
- The applicant plans to offer courses and curricula that prepare students for college-level work and to ensure that students understand what constitutes a college-ready curriculum by 9th grade.
- The applicant describes a general plan to utilize assessment measures throughout high school so that students will be aware of how prepared they are for college and to assist them in overcoming deficiencies as they are identified.
- The applicant plans to surround students with adults and peers who support their college-going aspirations.
- The applicant generally indicates that students will identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college-ready curriculum, understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals.

The applicant did not address how it will build on the core educational assurance areas: (1) adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy; (2) building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals with data about how they can improve instruction; (3) recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and (4) turning around lowest-achieving schools to create learning environments that are designed to improve learning and teaching.

The applicant did not coherently and comprehensively address how it will build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching. Therefore, the Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments, was not met.

Total	210	78
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0356TX-3 for Cedar Hill Independent School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	2
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Cedar Hill ISD's reform vision is convincing in the following areas: (core met- adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>adopting standards and assessments by adopting STEAM curriculum at the Elementary Level in collaboration with TEKS fine art courses for all students.</li> <li>Including foreign languages/acquiring a second language to be college and career ready and compete in a global economy.</li> <li>Middle school STEAM curriculum, Exploring Careers course, as well as initial elective choices to individualize student learning based on interests which will all aid in developing their 4 yr plan and career option.</li> <li>Technology (smart tablets) to allow students to be college/career ready in an individualized manner.</li> </ul> <p>Cedar Hill ISD's reform vision failed to address the 3/4 core educational areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals with data about how they can improve instruction.</li> <li>recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most</li> <li>Turning around lowest-achieving schools</li> </ul> <p>Based on the insufficient vision covering all four core educational assurance areas, Cedar Hill ISD places high on the low range.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Cedar Hill ISD only provided a table for (A)(2).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No description was provided by Cedar Hill ISD about the process the applicant used to select the schools to participate.</li> <li>Based on the data of the table, (Names of the schools and the numbers of participating student), the assumption is that every school in Cedar Hill ISD will be part of the Race to the Top- District Grant, and therefore providing rational as to why there was no description for (a).</li> <li>Total number of participating students: 8321, high needs: 2791, participating educators: 494.</li> </ul> <p>Therefore, this places Cedar Hill ISD in the top of the high points range.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	0
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

Cedar Hill ISD failed to include (A)(3) in the application. Therefore, 0 points are awarded.

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

Cedar Hill ISD has included what appears to be achievable future data on their tables for a, b, c, and d that is likely to improve student learning and performance and increase equity as defined for each LEA.

However, there is no past data, or state data to compare and confirm proficiency status and growth, decreasing achievement gaps, graduation rates, college enrollment, and postsecondary degree attainment due to the fact that of new state testing. (2011-2012 data isn't available until January 2013).

Vision is solid and ambitious with probable cause to be achievable with given data and information. Therefore, this places Cedar Hill ISD in the top of the high range.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	11

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) Cedar Hill ISD has demonstrated evidence to improve student learning outcomes and close the achievement gaps by moving as a district of "academically acceptable" to a higher recognition of that of "recognized" from the state accountability system for public education in the following areas:

- Improved student achievement in core content areas
- Closed achievement gaps among student groups.

This data shows:

- 3 schools earning "Exemplarily" in the district
- There are no schools with the label "Academically Unacceptable"

Cedar Hill ISD did not included information about improving college enrollment rates

Cedar Hill ISD does not show improvement for every school, as some school remain at the same rating the past 4 years.

(b) Cedar Hill ISD states using school improvement grants and professional development investment for its lowest performing schools in the form of curriculum, instruction and technology. However, Cedar Hill ISD does not specifically indicate what schools used these resources and fails to include data in the application to support that this was successful and resulted in desired outcomes to gage if it was ambitious and significant reform.

(c) Cedar Hill recognizes the importance of making student data available to all stakeholders as evident using:

- the parent portal
- current data system for the district to allow real time access to information that needs to be pulled
- state reporting systems

Cedar Hill ISD indicates a need to upgrade these systems for teacher effectiveness to increase from pulled student data and plans to upgrade in 2012-2013.

There is insufficient evidence on how the information is available to students and how it helps to improve participation, instruction, and services-- only that a student can easily identify how he/she is progressing toward the goals of graduation and college/career readiness.

Overall, Cedar Hill ISD has a good foundation for success with what appears to be a good track record. Key evidence for specific schools is missing, although it would reflect in progress as the district accountability label from the state has improved over the past 4 years. Therefore, this places Cedar Hill ISD in the top end of the medium range.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	1
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Cedar Hill ISD indicates the following information is used for transparency:

- Open access and search capabilities using Texas Education Agency's Academic Excellence Indicator System for teacher salary, professional support, and campus administrators as well as operating expenditures for instructional and non-instructional programs and services.
- Information about budget expenditures is displayed via the District webpage by years.
- Compensation manuals are posted on HR web address

Cedar Hill ISD fails to include:

- Any data, narratives, or attachments that clearly states such expenditures and salaries by school or actual school-level expenditures to justify a high level of transparency.

Cedar Hill ISD therefore falls into the low range of points.

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

Cedar Hill ISD indicates that their aligning of goals and strategies are in compliance and are required under the Achieve Texas College and Career Initiatives, and Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills in core content areas, foreign language, and fine arts.

Therefore, Cedar Hill ISD will receive full points due to the district having the autonomy and conditions to do personalized learning environments from elementary to high school.

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

Cedar Hill ISD indicates an action plan for progress initiated in the 2010-2011 school year to start the planning process for a long-range plan:

- Included a wide variety of 30 stakeholders
- Indicates how the initial planning session resulted in action teams

Cedar Hill ISD did not include

- evidence that at least 70 percent of teachers from participating schools support the proposal.
- any letters of support from stakeholders.

Overall, Cedar Hill states that their action teams have continued to review the initiatives, but are lacking evidence on how this will improve the education process/ learning environments for all students or what the identified programmatic strategies are for the desired results. Therefore, this places Cedar Hill ISD at the bottom of the medium range.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	1
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Cedar Hill ISD utilizes STAAR results for data to identify gaps in writing and World Geography, PBMAS results to identify gaps at the high school level in math, science, and Special Education. The District is utilizing a student improvement workbook to address the gaps identified.

Cedar Hill ISD is lacking evidence of a high quality plan showing implementation of the plan at the personalized learning environment level. There is insufficient evidence of activities and timelines. The District only stated one deliverable (the student improvement workbook) and does not provide sound logic as to why the workbook is used or why/how it is of high quality.

Teachers, students and parents are not included in the analyze and improvement process as only District Staff and community partners are mentioned in the summary.

Overall, Cedar Hill has successfully identified achievement gaps, but there is no data to support prior record of success and reform in these identified gaps. Therefore this places Cedar Hill ISD in the bottom of the low range of points.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Cedar Hill ISD plan clearly identifies the 2 main barriers holding their students back from being college and career ready: lack of academic preparation and failure to complete the necessary steps for college by the end of 12th grade. The district plan is achievable and describes the importance of a college and career-ready culture within the District.

The District presents reasonable goals and plans such as college prep assessments, helping students and parents understand the financial end of college and how to apply for aid, a Personal Graduation Plan starting in 8th grade, receiving college and career-readiness information, Career Exploration class, counselor presented information on college prep courses, and video presentations and elective course options. All of these educator/District initiated approaches help to positively influence students to create individualized learning paths for themselves by learning how to gauge their own progress based off of feedback from the data gathered by the counselors. The goal setting and planning is a strength for Cedar Hill ISD.

Cedar Hill ISD indicates parent support is encouraged at:

- The 8th grade level with access to students course option and election course videos to help determine high school course selection and path to be college and career ready by graduation.

Intervention for Cedar Hill ISD high-need students include:

- The scheduling of 9th grade courses will be determined by the results of college readiness indicator (ACT Explore Test) in 8th grade. Students needing intervention for math and reading will be in scheduled for such remediation courses for 9th grade.
- Revel Software for Dropout Prevention will be utilized to identify student who show risk factors for dropping out of high school.
- Students not on track to be college and career-ready in the 10th grade year will be identified by the teachers and counselors to develop an individualized place for their accomplishment of their goals for post-secondary options in their 10th grade academic skills class required for all students.
- Lacks information/plans to include access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning

Personalized learning environments include:

- Student's six year plan and mock action plan is specific to their own goals and readiness.
- Students are able to selection core courses and electives that align to their goals and personal graduation plan based on their strengths on various testings from 8-11th grade.

All Cedar Hill ISD students are required to complete the Personal Graduation plan, Career Exploration class, provided with in class and video presentations of high school college and career ready courses and electives, ACT Explore test, advisory class, content based assessment of progress toward college and career readiness in 9th grade, Academic skills class, and a mock action plan for their 11th grade year. These strategies and courses justify:

- Understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals
- Identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements
- Understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals
- Are able to be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest
- Master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting and perseverance

Teachers and counselors will guide students through all required college entry and career readiness courses in the 8th, 9th, and 10th grade year. This, along with counselor/student meetings 2 times a year indicate mechanisms are in place to provide

training and support to students that will ensure that they understand how to use the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning.

The District has an unrealistic approach/lacks detail in the following areas:

- The plan started in 8th grade is between the counselor and student 2 times a year and lacks parent involvement and input at the conference time.
- The videos developed by the high school elective courses could be vague or of poor quality due to the inexperience of students and teachers being able to produce a video of high quality. It would be expected that the elective courses involving software editing curriculum could produce a quality video, but the elective courses that don't include video productions in the curriculum could be at an unfair disadvantage.
- Requiring students to participate in an extra-curricular activity with peers who plan to attend college is not supported by any convincing data that it will help the students be college and career ready
- There is no plan in place/discussed on college and career exposure for the prek-7th grade year of instruction
- Lacking accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students to help ensure that they are on track toward meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements. They are identified in the 8th and 10th grade year, but plan is lacking solid intervention approach to support.
- Lack of high-quality content including digital learning content
- Lacks information/plans to include access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning
- Involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest are missing from the application.

Therefore, this places Cedar Hill ISD in the middle of the medium range of points.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	0
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: This part of the application was left blank by Cedar Hill ISD, therefore no points are able to be awarded.		

#### D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	0
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: This part of the application was left blank by Cedar Hill ISD, therefore no points are able to be awarded.		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	0
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: This part of the application was left blank by Cedar Hill ISD, therefore no points are able to be awarded.		

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

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	11
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: Cedar Hill ISD demonstrates a clear track record with a current continuous improvement process to all stakeholders:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current and active campus action teams, District Advisory team, PTSO/PTA which gather feedback and share info continuously and will continue to use these pathways for continuous improvement process.</li> <li>• Successful strategic planning process dating back to 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 to determine priorities, direction, and action steps needed for the district. The results/recommendations were put into place by the board of trustees to drive goals, initiatives, and operations.</li> </ul>		

Building on these relationships and resources, Cedar Hill plans to continue this method with addition of adding:

- Use student data to monitor and measure progress from goals
- District web page will inform public of investment

Cedar Hill is unclear specifically how they will monitor student data and how they will use this data to drive the action plan of the continuous improvement process which is extremely important.

Overall, it is clear that Cedar Hill has had a strong relationship in the past with all stakeholders and recognizing the need for continued improvement. Based on above bullets, it is convincing that Cedar Hill will continue the tradition of using the student data to drive direction with the recommendation of the stakeholders, but because they failed to include how they would specifically use student data to drive change, Cedar Hill ISD scored at the top of the middle range.

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

Cedar Hill ISD has a proven track record of ongoing communication and engagement for all stakeholders as evident in:

- 2 departments working together to ensure communication to all stakeholders
- A cross section of stakeholders make up the committees for such programs and activities
- Variety of methods to provide all stakeholders with pivotal and timely information
- 2 way communication/feedback and participation for all stakeholders in a variety of different ways
- Well positioned to build on past success to further the communication

Overall, Cedar Hill ISD clearly has strong evidence of a positive track record for communication and engagement which places them in top of the high range.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Cedar Hill ISD has included 12 performance measures as required, including:

- Effective and highly effective teacher and principal data for all students
- one age-appropriate measure of students' academic growth for each level of students
- one measure of career-readiness, and college readiness
- FAFSA forms

The District failed to provide:

- one age-appropriate non-cognitive indicator of growth for preK-3, 4-8,
- one grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan for 4-8 and 9-12
- Its rationale for selecting each measure
- How the measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant's implementation success or areas of concern
- How it will review and improve the measure over time if it is insufficient to gauge implementation progress

Therefore, Cedar Hill ISD falls in the middle of the range of points.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Cedar Hill ISD failed to include this information in their application, therefore, it will receive a score of 0.

## F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	1
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Cedar Hill failed to included a narrative for F1.</p> <p>Budget Subpart 1: Overall Budget Summary sheet was included. It showed in general (lump sums) where the 20 Million Race to the Top- District grant dollars would be spent. However, without the narrative, there are no specifics to the justification of the budget. There is no further breakdown of the cost associated with the personal, travel, equipment, contractual, or training stipends to ensure this is a reasonable and sufficient budget. There is no thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities included in the table. Application fails to identify which funds are for one-time investments versus those that will be used for ongoing costs/sustainability.</p> <p>Overall, this places Cedar Hill in the bottom of the low range. While it is clear where the money where be spent, there is no rational as to why the money is spent were it is proposed.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	0
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This part of the application was left blank by Cedar Hill ISD, therefore no points are able to be awarded.</p>		

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This part of the application was left blank by Cedar Hill ISD, therefore no points are able to be awarded.</p>		

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Based on the 4 following core educational assurance areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace to compete in the global economy: Cedar Hill ISD plans to implement STEAM, STEM, foreign languages, and 8th-12th grade college and career-ready curriculum that will support and are aligned with college and career-ready standards. Their goal of a smart tablet for each student will allow this implementation to become a reality.</li> <li>2, Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals with data about how they can improve instruction: Cedar Hill ISD pans to upgrade current data system in 2012-2013 to include more student specific history and information for all stakeholders to have timely access to.</li> <li>3. Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most: Cedar Hill ISD failed to included any part of this area in their application.</li> <li>4. Turning around lowest-achieving schools: Cedar Hill ISD did not coherently and comprehensively address how it will turn around lowest-achieving schools because they did not specifically identify such schools. The District is planning the Steam program at each elementary and intermediate campus.</li> </ol> <p>Overall, Cedar Hill ISD failed to meet all 4 core educational assurance areas and therefore does not meet Absolute Priority 1.</p>		

Total	210	77
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