Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0852CA-1 for Central Unified School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	7

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district has outlined a vison that is comprehensive. It should also be achievable as some of the reform efforts are already in place. The district states that it has built this vision on stakeholders' input. The district is in the process of implementing Common Core Standards. Their vision includes the use of technology to faciitate individual student growth. The proposal also mentions that "Smarter Balanced Assessment" is to be used with the CCS as part of its continueing monitoring and improvement process. The district has included in its comprehensive vision, plans for Professional Development for teachers, staff and administrators to faciitate the use of new technologies and media to enhance individual growth. The proposal describes an innovative data management system that allows all stakeholders to have reports on students progress that is both longintudinal and in real time. This impressive system is described as having the capacity to monitor students pre-k through 12. The district plans for RTTD money to be used to enhance this system to enable goal setting, career interests and post high school environments. The district articuates in its vision that it has a teacher evaluation system in place. However, no mention is made of the system including student success as an indicator of teacher effectiveness. While the district's proposal taks in general about individualizing student learning, no specifics are avaiabbe as to how this would be accomplished. The districts vison presents a generally adequate plan.

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The district plans on using all schools and students in the district.(b) A list of schools participating in the grant activities is provided. (c)There is a table delineating the total number of students (15,331) participating as well as percentages of students participating who are from minorities, and students from other high risk groups. The tables provided evidence that adequate minority and "high risk" populations will be served by the grant.

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

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The district proposal does not present a logic model or a theory of change. The proposal does present a series of five elements as an approach to facilitate reform. This series of elements include establishing demonstration sites with model classrooms to provide a deeper professional learning model. These elements also include a robust data system to inform decisions about personalizing learning for each student. However, scant detail is provided related to exactly how this would work. There is an evaluation system in place for teachers and administrators. However, it does not include evaluation of teachers or principals based on students’ mastery of content.

	Available	Score
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	0

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

No data are provided for this indicator.

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	6

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a)The proposal provides some general statements and numbers that suggest some improvement in student outcomes has occurred across the last several years. The proposal points to growth on the state's API indicator. There is also growth on AP exam performance. However, no disaggregated data are provided. Though the proposal describes some initiatives that are being implemented to close achievement gaps; little data are provided to support the success of these initiatives. The data provided references to individual schools, but data is not provided annotating actual growth. The proposal notes some areas of growth, but there is no information provided comparing growth amongst the groups.(c) The school district has an adequate data system in place that makes student performance data available to all stakeholders.

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

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The district appears to provide "average" salaries in the district for all personnel (a, b, c). There is no data related to actual salaries at the school level for any of the groups of personnel. The budget is published, therefore non-personnel budgeted expenses are available. It is not clear if the district makes "actual" expenses available.

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

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The district presents adequate evidence that there are successful conditions under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement reforms based on their district's needs to design PLEs.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	5

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(a)The district describes an extensive process of gathering stakeholders together in over 25 meetings to shape the formation of the proposal. No evidence was provided related to whether the district has a collective bargaining contract. If they do not letter of support from the teachers association was provided. Neither was there mention of 70% of the teachers supporting the proposal if there is no collective bargaining unit. (b) Letters of support were provided from key community stakeholders.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	2

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal annotates that there are gaps in four subgroups: Economical disadvantaged students; ELLS; African- American students, and Students with Disabilities. However, scant information is provided as to how the gaps were found and the analysis used. No data is provided with precise numbers to first judge the gaps and then later monitor progress. The plan seems to focus on technology and Professional Development. Inadequate evidence is provided explicating how these individual initiatives will come together to form a coherent initial plan and ongoing monitoring of implementation and student progress and the closing of gaps.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	12

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district presents a plan for students to understand that what they are learning is key to their attaining their goals. The district plan involves the students setting individualized learning goals that will be reviewed multiple times throughout the year. The district plans on accomplishing this through a modification of curriculum at the middle school level to focus students' goals early. The district plans to use a system of online courses, and dual enrollment to challenge the gifted and talented students. The proposal also suggests that it has structures in place so all students have access to a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development. The district

annotates a very ambitious learning platform that it envisions facilitating all students' progress toward their goals. The district provides convincing evidence those students who have career goals will be exposed to high quality instructional approaches and environments primarily through the use of electronic platforms. The proposal mentions that the district is a diverse district. However, scant information is available on how this exposure will be accomplished. The districts' proposes that hiring more counselors will facilitate students' growth in the area of goal setting and planning their goals. The district emphasizes its technological platform as one way to have a personalized instructional content. However, little information is provided about other ways to personalize student learning. In particular, the role of the educator is not addressed. The district proposes to use its technology platform to devise modules that address individual needs. The district notes that high quality content is necessary, but no information is provided regarding how there will be quality checks on the content. The district presents information to suggest that its Learning Management System will facilitate educators' ability to give on-going and regular feedback to students. The district projects a contradictory and ambiguous picture. A major portion of support appears to be the use of team teaching, but the district notes that in the past this has not been a consistently effective method. The district provides a general statement that technology will help to facilitate accommodations, though implementation details are sparse.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	12

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a)The district presents evidence of an adequate PD plan that is designed to improve educator effectiveness. The districts PD plan revolves around four models of effective teaching: Direct Instruction, Cooperative Learning, Inquiry and Concept Attainment. The district describes how these methods can be used by teachers to provide personalized learning environments. While detail is provided describing the four methods, less detail is provided relating to their plan for implementation of the PD cycle. The district does plan on using Professional Learning Communities to plan and adjust lessons based on data presented. A similar achievable learning community is provided for administrators through "Student Learning Forums". These two systems provide evidence that the district the capacity to frequently measure students' progress and to use it to inform instruction. Sparse information is provided about the principal and teacher evaluation systems. The district does describe a teacher observation protocol that appears to be the primary data point for teacher evaluation. Little information is provided about principals' evaluation system in relation to student achievement. The district does note that principals will be evaluated on their use of student data, but no direct link to student achievement and principal or teacher evaluations is made. (b) The district provides a general statement that its LMS will provide educators easy access to data for analysis. The district provides a general statement that they are working on developing standards based modules but few details are provided about these modules. While the district provides information about progress monitoring, only general information is provided about how learning will be individualized. The district mentions that students demonstrating mastery will be given "more challenging" task. More detail is provided about students not making mastery with suggestions such as: "they will be provided with 'video review, tutorial, or interactive peer portal". Sparse information is provided on how the educators will match these to students' individual needs. (c) The district does not address how information from teacher evaluation systems help school leaders to assess and take steps to improve individual and collective educator effectiveness. It is noted that the Student Learning Forum (SLF) will use data to address individual and group educators' needs. However, it is not clear what data is being used. No specific information is provided about how the district plans the close "the achievement gaps" in their district. Only a statement related to intensive PD will "continue to raise achievement and close the gaps for students". No specifics are given that specifically address individual populations. (d) The district does not present an ambitious plan for increasing student access to highly effective teachers. The district does note that they wil use something called "glass classrooms" to provide PD for educators. They also have implemented partnerships with local universities for student teachers. There is scant information as to how this all ties together into a cohesive whole.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a)The district provides adequate evidence that the LEA central office is organized to provide supportive services to facilitate personalized learning. (b)The district points to a combination of its Central Unified Technology Master Pan, District Instructional Action Plan, and collaborative structures as a cohesive collaboration that allows LEA school staff to adjust school schedules and make staffing decisions based on need. (c, d) The district notes that students have three opportunities to show mastery of benchmarks. Little information is provided as to whether students have the opportunity to earn credit based on demonstrated mastery. (e)Sparse information is provided annotating how learning resources and instructional practices are adaptable and fully accessible to all students. Appendix G presents the results of a satisfaction survey of students in a co-taught class. No

data are provided showing outcomes of students in these classes for either the special education population or non-special education population. Some data is provided graphically related to achievement of ELL learners. The three years of graphs seems to indicate that ELL students are making progress at about the same levels for the last three years, with a dip in the 2010-11 school year. No data is provided addressing the closing of the achievement gap.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	7

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The proposal states generally that all stakeholders will have access to necessary content, tools and other learning resources. The TMS appears to make access for teachers, administrators and students through the LMS system to student data and student progress. No detail is provided as to how this access is to be provided to stakeholders who do not have access to the hardware or software. (b) There appears to be an adequate plan in place for ensuring that students and educators have appropriate access to technical support. Sparse information is provided about how technical support will be provided to parents and other stakeholders.(c) The plan provides evidence that parents and students will have the ability to export their information in other formats. (e)The district annotates that the implementation of the District TMP and LMS will facilitate a single point of entry to access all information.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	4

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district provides an inadequate description of their plan for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process. While the district provides a general description of reports that will be issues and shared, no specifics as to metrics and timelines to be used.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	1

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Only a general narrative addressing how they will communicate with stakeholders is provided by the proposal. The district iterates its commitment to providing clear communication, but no specifics are available.

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

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal presents a rational for assessments and benchmarks to be used in monitoring progress. However, no projections for growth are provided in the proposal.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

No evaluation plan was provided.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	2

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal did not provide a budget narrative. There was a column devoted to ongoing expenses after the 4th year. No information was provided related to funds for other sources.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	0

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

No plan for sustainability was provided in this section. There were some ambiguous statements in the proposal about sustainability, but no specifics were given. There is a mention in the Budget column of ongoing expenses, but no narrative is provided to suggest how these funds would be acquired to sustain the project.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The district has put together adequate plan. There is a general lack of goals and details provided.

Total	210	96

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0852CA-2 for Central Unified School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has very articulately presented a clear and coherent reform vision that builds on its current work in the four core educational assurance areas. As well, the applicant has described a credible approach and past success data to demonstrate how it will meet the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support.

This was evidenced by the existing foundations established as a result of reform efforts the district has undertaken in the last five years. The Instructional Action Plan, District Guiding Principles and Technology Master Plan are a few of the foundations that are already in place and currently being implemented by the district.

Of positive note is the applicant's understanding and efforts in "building the capacity of the adults in the organization". The concept that building capacity is "a preschool through adult education effort" that will lead to improved student learning is supported by the Leadership System Cycle as the district's "mental model" for change. As a strength of the reform vision, this

mental model and the various reform foundations are already in place and "engrained" in the district culture. The RTTT funds would serve to enhance and accelerate these reform efforts.

Another strength of the proposal is that the district has already designed and begun implementation of CCSS and Smarter Balance Assessment professional development program for all staff at all levels in the district. This would include PLCs and grade level/content area collaboratives to analyze student work samples, standards mastery, and lesson effectiveness to prescribe and plan lessons.

The applicant's reform vision also includes strong administrator professional development, a comprehensive Technology Master Plan and extensive teacher evaluation efforts that include onsite, ongoing feedback for teachers.

The applicant's RTTT plan centers around the following five primary elements in which the applicant has already demonstrated ongoing efforts.

1. Individualized learning environment
2. Close the achievement gap for all subgroups.
3. Recruit, retain, develop, and support highly effective teachers and leaders to staff all schools,
4. Access to a robust data system
5. Superintendent, Principal, Administrator, and Teacher evaluation system

Overall, based on its past and ongoing reform efforts, the district is poised to implement the proposed reform vision and has scored high for this section.

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

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes that all 15,343 students and schools (21) in the district will participate in the grant project because they have all been involved in the latest reform efforts and the applicant wants "the entire system engaged in reform, providing a cohesive team effort". This supports the applicant's description of past efforts to reshape the district culture. The district and schools individually and collectively meet the competition's eligibility requirements.

The applicant has provided a list of the 21 participating schools, the total number of participating students, participating students from low-income families, participating students who are high-need students, and participating educators.

The applicant has completely responded to all criteria and scored in the high range.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	7

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has very thoroughly and credibly described the five primary elements of its reform plan, which is evidenced with solid data from ongoing reform efforts.

1. Individualized learning environment
2. Close the achievement gap for all subgroups.
3. Recruit, retain, develop, and support highly effective teachers and leaders to staff all schools,
4. Access to a robust data system
5. Superintendent, Principal, Administrator, and Teacher evaluation systems

While the applicant has comprehensively described the goals, activities, rational and person's responsible, the application did not provide targets for the goals. This makes it difficult to determine projected growth. As an example, the goal to provide an individualized learning environment to accelerate student achievement has a number of activities (i.e. AVID, Career Cruising, Advisory, Career Pathways, CTE courses, AP and honors programs, in addition to the Illuminate Data System data with curriculum embedded assessments) so that teachers can tailor instruction to student needs, though no goal targets.

As another example, the applicant has comprehensively proposed that the Student Learning Forums are focused district wide efforts that include all district leaders, school site leaders and teachers in regularly scheduled opportunities to review and assess school programs, services and student learning. Additionally, Instructional Coaches, PLCs, teacher leaders, demonstration sites, the teacher and principal evaluation system, and intensive professional development are all aspects of the concept to build capacity in the adults in the system to use student data to personalize learning and subsequently improve student achievement.

Additionally, the plan to utilize the following nine turnaround strategies from its high performing high poverty schools (Teague, which grew 63 points in API and exceeded the state growth target), as a model for other schools is not only reasonable, the Teague and Polk results demonstrate it is feasible.

1. Development of teacher capacity through professional development in Direct Instruction model, Structured Academic Vocabulary instruction, English Language Development (ELD), Balanced Math, English Language Arts
2. Professional Learning Communities focus on English Language Arts, with evidence of analysis of common assessments, teaching practices, re-teaching and enrichment in response to four critical inquiry questions.
3. On-site instructional coach support for teachers in implementation of training-to-practice.
4. Extensive monitoring of training-to-practice by site administration who provided additional support and guidance.
5. Increased professional development for teachers and administrators in data analysis.
6. Student Learning Forums in which Principals present to district administration their analysis of student data and next steps.
7. Implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to establish a positive learning environment.
8. High expectations and accountability for everyone, reinforced by site administration frequently meeting with grade level teams.
9. Increased parent involvement through nutrition classes, English Learner parent nights, parent education, development of effective School Site Council (SSC) and English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC), student drama/music performances.

With no goal targets, it is unclear how the applicant will know when it has achieved these laudable and achievable goals.

The applicant proposes to continue to implement the Leadership System Cycle as a mental model for its theory of change to improve student learning outcomes for all students. The demonstrated student success in some schools is indicative of the positive impact of this continuous improvement feedback cycle.

While there were no specific targets for the goals and activities presented, the applicant has presented achievable goals and activities as demonstrated with the Teague and Polk student achievement growth, the co-teaching model, Leadership System Cycle and other successes that it has the capacity to implement its reform plan.

Overall, the applicant has scored high for these criteria.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	0

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

While the applicant has demonstrated past success in exceeding State ESEA targets, the applicant did not provide annual goals overall and by student subgroup the following areas.

(a) Performance on summative assessments (proficiency status and growth).

(b) Decreasing achievement gaps (as defined in this notice).

(c) Graduation rates (as defined in this notice).

(d) College enrollment (as defined in this notice) rates.

With no goals to review, the applicant has scored in a low range.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has demonstrated evidence of a clear record of success for the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching, in its persistently lowest-achieving schools and other schools in the district. This is evidenced by the individual school level data provided in chart and graph form in Appendix J.

Teague and Polk Elementary schools are convincing examples of how the applicant has achieved ambitious and significant reforms in schools with high poverty rates and achievement gaps. This is well evidenced as follows.

As a district, the applicant has demonstrated steady growth on the California State Accountability System, making a 40-point gain from 2009 to 2012. They have a California Academic Performance Indicator (API) of 772, which is 28 points shy of the target of 800 (out of a possible 1000). Individual schools have also demonstrated significant API growth data as demonstrated below.

- 13/18 of the district's schools achieved their State API growth targets in 2012

- 7/18 of all schools achieved an Academic Performance Index of 800 or above in 2012
- Eleven out of thirteen elementary schools showed double digit API growth, with two schools making 41 point gains in 2011

As evidence of the applicant's ability to improve student learning outcomes and close achievement gaps, Polk Elementary School with 77% FRL and 18% ELL students has had all subgroups (except students with disabilities) meet or exceed the state API performance target of 800. All subgroups have increased from 4-10 points in ELA and from 2-12 points in Math.

The co-teaching Model at the Middle Schools demonstrated student learning increases in both students with disabilities and general education in the areas of focused collaboration and data analysis, though, the applicant did not provide any specific student data to support the claim. Overall, middle school student achievement data was provided in Appendix J.

At the secondary level, the applicant has demonstrated its record of improving learning by citing AP passing rates that have more than doubled in the last six years (and exceed the county and state rates) the graduation rate increased from 77% in 2008-09 to 84% in 2009-2010, and the percent of 12th grade graduates completing all courses required for entrance to the University of California campuses increased from 16% in 2008-09 to 35% in 2010-11. Though the graduation rate and course completion data this did not cover a 4 year period.

In addition to providing success data, the applicant presented evidence of strategies that supported this student growth. As an example, the strong AP passing rates are the result of:

- Examination of trends in data
- Teacher professional development
- Parent education and outreach
- At least six intensive study sessions, outside each
- school day, for each AP class
- Use of College Board released test items
- Regular use of practice AP tests, with student feedback
- Quarterly joint administration review of data

The applicant did not provide any data on college enrollment rates.

The applicant proposes to make student performance data available to students, educators, and parents via the Aeries Student Information System and the Illuminate Data System that will provide access to this data via one portal. Data results will be provided individually, in clusters, in class and school reports so that students, parents and teachers can monitor individual progress.

Parents will have access to school computers, or a hard copy of reports, and in some cases, receive Saturday training on the system. Parents also have access to regular progress reports, report cards and teacher conferences. Teachers will have access to a teacher portal in the illuminate System to use the data to review evidence of growth and modify and improve teaching strategies in order to personalize the learning. Though , the applicant did not speak to how it would make these opportunities available to parents who speak a language other than English.

Other than Teague and Polk, the applicant did not address improvement for ELL and students with disabilities in other schools or the district as a whole.

Overall, the applicant has convincingly met these criteria and scores in the high range.

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

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has demonstrated evidence of a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments by making public, by school, actual school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration. This is evidenced by the public budget process which includes Board adoption (public meeting), the Adopted Budget, the First Interim Budget, the Second Interim Budget and the Unaudited Actual Budget, which are opportunities for community input.

Budgets are available online and posted for public review. Following the adoption of each report, the District breaks each school site budget out individually and provides a detailed budget to each school. The school site then provides a copy for the public and posts the budget on their web site. Appendix K provided a very user friendly sample report.

The applicant has demonstrated that it goes beyond just making budget information public by gathering proposed budget input from senior leadership and the public. The public has the opportunity to provide budget input during two public Board meetings before the budget is adopted. Parents and the public also have access to budget and accountability information through the School Accountability Report Cards (SARC- Appendix L) and District Accountability Report Cards (DARC). The SARC serves as a transparent tool to evaluate and

compare schools on a variety of indicators including budget.

While the applicant does provide teacher salaries as a percent of the district budget it does not make available *actual* data for the following four categories of school-level expenditures from State and local funds:

(a) Actual personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff,

(b) Actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff only

(c) Actual personnel salaries at the school level for teachers only

(d) Actual non-personnel expenditures at the school level

Overall, the applicant has comprehensively responded to these criteria and scored in the high range.

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

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has demonstrated evidence of the necessary conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in this proposal.

This is evidenced with the legislative funding flexibility for allocating state funds to targeted areas for increased student learning and increased accessibility to state waiver requests.

Additionally, a strength of the proposal is the applicant's knowledge of and understanding of state level initiatives (i.e. CCSS adoption and Smarter Balance Assessments, etc.) and how its own strategies (Instructional Action Plan, Master technology Plan and Guiding principals and budget) align with those initiatives.

Overall, the applicant has scored high for this criterion.

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

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Meaningful stakeholder engagement and support in the development of the proposal was demonstrated in the over 25 meetings throughout the district to brainstorm and provide input in the development of the proposal. Students, parents, teachers, classified staff, administrators, and community stakeholders were afforded opportunities to attend stakeholder meetings. The applicant notes that, "it was not an issue of revising the proposal based on feedback; it was a matter of documenting and adjusting the vision and plan together as a community."

The applicant provided evidence of the extensive student, teacher, and principal engagement in the development of the proposal and how the proposal was revised based on their engagement and feedback by providing actual stakeholder comments and the inclusion of several recommendations into the plan. As one example, out of many, high school students when meeting with the superintendent proposed a ninth grade class that focuses on career options. The class has been included in the proposal along with counselor professional development to offer the class.

As evidence of direct engagement and support for the proposals from teachers in participating schools, teachers had two formal meetings to provide input into the proposal- in addition to the Superintendent Teacher Advisory Team (STAT), Central Unified Teacher's Association (CUTA) President meeting, and the Teacher Leader meeting. There was no letter of support from the CUTA.

Principals and community partners also provided input. Community partner input is in part demonstrated with the numerous letters of support in Appendices M and N. The applicant has letters of support from local and state government officials, the Fresno County Office of Education leaders, Institution of Higher Education, members of Faith-based organizations, Chief Executive Officers of partner non-profit organizations, and the local business community.

Overall, the applicant has fully responded to these criteria and scored in the high range.

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

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has noted the following five gaps as a result of its work with a District Assistance and Intervention Team (DAIT) consultant.

- Achievement Gaps
- Professional Development to Provide an Individualized Learning Environment

- Technology Skills to Provide an Individualized Learning Environment
- Technology Infrastructure to Provide an Individualized Learning Environment
- Professional Development for Principals, Teachers and District Leaders

Evidence of how the applicant proposes to address each gap follows.

The applicant proposes to further decrease the achievement gap district wide for the low SES, English Language Learners, African American students, and Students with Disabilities sub groups by implementing some of the same successful turn around strategies modeled by Teague Elementary.

The applicant has proposed to continue the ongoing approach to meeting the individual needs of students based on an analysis of achievement data and classroom observations. The District has identified the need to support differentiated instruction, based on authentic evidence, for the learner to continue to make progress towards mastery of college and career aligned standards. Through ongoing professional development and support, teacher and leader capacity has continued to strengthen in the areas of Common Core State Standards, Smarter Balanced Assessment, English Learner support, differentiated learning.

The applicant proposes that every teacher and student will use a tech device as an integrated part of the learning each day in every classroom. Given the newness of the tool for many teachers, extensive support and professional development will be provided to help teachers become expert in the use of the technology as a learning tool. The applicant reasonably proposes the first year for just teacher technology learning. The professional development systems will be explicitly designed to ensure adult and student users are well informed and proficient in the uses of the technological tools and instructional learning management systems (i.e. LMS, Aereis and Illuminate Data Systems) available to them.

The Technology Master Plan addresses an infrastructure support system that will provide the kind of personalized learning environment that the applicant envisions for each student. The Master Plan assesses current technology status compared to the optimum delivery system and has identified the gap in explicit detail. The District has a plan and a timeline to provide wireless internet access in every classroom in every school, as well as a partnership to provide external access in every student's home within district boundaries. The Master Plan also defines standards of practice to move technology from the current status to an integrated model for meeting the needs of all students and staff. This model will ensure appropriate software and hardware tools and professional development are available to every teacher and student to provide a personalized learning environment.

The Technology Master Plan addresses professional development for teachers and leaders to familiarized and become proficient with an integrated learning management system and personal learning environments. The professional development will be explicitly designed to ensure adult and student users are well informed and proficient in the uses of the technological tools they will have access to.

The applicant's Master Technology Plan is an example of a high-quality plan for an analysis of the applicant's current status regarding the technology gaps and how the applicant will address those gaps to implement personalized learning environments.

Overall, the applicant has scored high for these criteria.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes the following strategies as evidence of how it ensures that students understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals and that students understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals.

- All students - participate in setting individualized learning goals and review at multiple times throughout the year
- Career Cruising and My Road to the High School will be utilized district wide for career planning at the secondary level
- portfolio review and presentations by students.
- Middle school - daily advisory period identifying and tracking progress toward learning and goals linked to college, career and graduation requirements
- Modify curriculum to focus on students' understanding how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, measure progress toward those goals, and developing specific plans and strategies related to post-secondary options
- High school - freshman requirement course to center on goal setting and college and career preparation
- Parent and student workshops

The applicant described the following technology-enhanced personalized learning strategies as a means of providing rigorous, relevant, standards-based deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest.

- instruction through acceleration
- experiential courses of study and powerful learning experiences
- computer-based high school courses
- small group projects
- independent study
- cooperative learning experiences
- academic competition that foster both critical and creative thinking.
- integrated curriculum

The applicant proposes that the diversity of the district student body and the interactive LMS will provide access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning. Additionally, technology access opens student opportunities for learning other world views.

Increasing middle school counselors and daily advisory were presented as examples of developing skills for goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving.

The applicant proposes the LMS and CCSS State Standards-Based Instructional Learning Modules as key to providing a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development for all students. While the standards-based modules are not yet developed, they are a core component of the Technology Master Plan and have a strong likelihood of personalizing learning along with the interactive LMS. The modules and real-time feedback from the LMS and Illuminate data System will provide student specific information and options for a variety of instructional approaches. As an example, students may be re-taught certain lesson segments, receive extended or enhanced practice, challenge tasks, or a video of a lesson.

Of positive note is the applicant's description of the four main models of teaching (Appendix Q).

- Direct Instruction
- Cooperative Learning
- Inquiry
- Concept Attainment

These four models will provide a strong set of instructional options for teachers when instructing and personalizing student mastery of a skill or concept. Past professional development has focused on Direct Instruction, though the applicant proposes more professional development to support the multiple models of instruction. Additionally, the applicant proposes to offer the following personalized instructional options, on-line learning, project-based, Learning Center Model, Secondary Co-teaching Model, vocational-functional life skills, E2020 aligned to core curriculum, Spatial Temporal Math, Accelerated Reader, 3D Graphic Design, and Imagination Learning for ELL students.

While the applicant stated that high-quality content, including digital learning content as appropriate and aligned with college and career-ready graduation requirements would be available, there were no specifics on the actual content.

The applicant's strong approach to ongoing and regular feedback via the data systems and teacher and principal use of data has been noted earlier in this review. These data systems and educator analysis opportunities provide personalized learning recommendations based on the student's current knowledge and skills, college- and career-ready graduation requirements, available content, instructional approaches, and supports.

In its response to the criterion for accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students, the applicant comprehensively described the co-teaching model art the middle and high schools. The applicant has co-teaching classrooms at all three middle schools and the two high school locations, and plans to provide the necessary professional development to sustain the model. As a service delivery option that provides special education services to students with disabilities in general education settings, the co-teaching model is a very specific example of personalized learning and instruction within the general education setting.

The applicant did not provide a plan with targets for its goals and timelines, so it is unclear when or how the applicant will know that it has met the proposed activities.

Overall, having provided a number of specific examples in response to this criteria, the applicant has scored in the low-moderate range.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	10

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

As noted earlier, the applicant looks at reform as "a preschool to adult education effort". Building capacity in its adults is a focal point of its work. As such, the district already provides and proposes to continue to provide a number of ongoing, job embedded teacher *and* principal learning opportunities in addition to the traditional "sit and get" professional development opportunities. Key among the ongoing, job embedded options are: PLCs, instructional coaches, the co-teaching model, teacher and principal collaboratives examining student work, and demonstration sites. The district's Technology Master Plan is another means of ensuring that all participating educators have access to the necessary technology and engage in training and professional teams, that supports their individual and collective capacity to provide a personalized education for all students. Lastly, as noted earlier, the applicant provides specific professional development on a variety of instructional models and strategies. All of the above, plus the LMS and Illuminate data Systems are evidence of the applicant's plan to implement personalized learning environments and strategies that adapt content and instruction, in response to students' academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches.

Collaborative work in class or on the LMS, project-based learning, video lessons, on line courses, independent study, small group work, real life learning, are a few examples of how the applicant proposes to meet the individual academic needs and interests of all students.

The University of California and California State University systems have an approved list of a-g requirements necessary for high school graduation and readiness for college entrance. The applicant's proposed plan for frequently measuring student progress toward meeting college- and career to ready graduation requirements is to increase the number of the Counselors to meet with students in middle and high school. Middle school students would enroll in AVID courses and review these plans on a regular basis. The 9th graders would enroll in the require 9th grade class to review these requirements and to outline a schedule of courses for the next four years. Additionally, the applicant monitors student progress, provides CAHSEE coursework and online practice sessions, and retake opportunities for students to meet the CAHSEE (state) graduation requirement.

In an effort to improve teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness the applicant revised the principal evaluation and the teacher evaluation is aligned with the CA Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP). The principal evaluation is a five-level evaluation metric that provides feedback based on emerging (1) to exemplary (5) on a number of leadership and instruction categories (Appendix T).

While the teacher evaluation does not include student growth as measured on the state assessment, all educator evaluations focus on improving educational practices and mitigating the achievement gap. This continuous improvement process is evidenced by the ongoing formative student assessment data used to inform the PLCs, Student Learning Forums, Teacher/Principal Collaboratives, direct observation of instructional practice and feedback, demonstration sites, co-teaching model, and instructional coach support. Though, the applicant has not demonstrated how these strategies and activities would connect to teacher and principal evaluations.

The district Technology master Plan ensures that all participating educators will have access to, and know how to use, tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress. The plan includes provisions for:

- Instructional Support Systems (learning resources e.g. instructional content and assessments, digital resources)
- Infrastructure Support Systems
- Information Support Systems
- Professional Development Support Systems

All participating school leaders and school leadership teams have the necessary training, policies, tools, data, and resources that will enable them to structure an effective learning environment that meets individual student academic needs and accelerates student progress through common and individual learning environments.

The applicant has provided evidence of training, policies, tools, data, and resources that support school leaders and school leadership teams to assess and take steps to improve, individual and collective educator effectiveness and school culture and climate, for the purpose of continuous school improvement. As noted earlier, this is evidenced in the the principal and teacher evaluations, Student Learning Forums, Teacher/Principal Collaboratives, ongoing professional development opportunities, the District Guiding Principals and the District Technology Master Plan, as a few examples.

The applicant did not specifically address hard-to-staff schools. Nor, did the applicant provide specific targets, timelines and deliverable for its plan to improve teaching and leading.

Overall, the applicant has described an approach to teaching and leading that helps educators improve instruction and increase their capacity to support student progress though, did not provide a plan for how that would be accomplished and has scored in the moderate range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	9

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

As an example of organizing the district central office, the applicant has restructured its Research, Assessment and Evaluation office to provide support and services to all participating schools via data analysis and reporting. Additionally, the District Technology Master Plan is specifically intended to address:

- Instructional Support Systems
- Infrastructure Support Systems
- Information Support Systems
- Professional Development Support Systems

The District Instructional Action Plan and Guiding Principles are also examples of strong and existing district practices and polices that support PLE and improved student learning.

While the district has several well established practices, procedures and protocols, there are also avenues and opportunities for school leadership teams to have the necessary flexibility and autonomy over school based factors such as school schedules, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and noneducators, and school-level budgets. The opportunities for input are evidenced by the Curriculum and Instruction Advisory Council, the Administrative Council, Mid-management Professional Learning Community, Principal In-Depth Meetings, Student Learning Forums, Teacher and Principal Collaboratives, and Superintendent/Teacher Advisory Team.

The comprehensive K-12 Benchmark Assessment System for English Language Arts and Mathematics is one example of giving students repeated opportunities to demonstrate mastery of grade level content and earn credit based on mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic. These benchmark assessments are given three times a year and provide formative data to teachers to guide content and personalize instructional practices, again, giving students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways.

The applicant has throughout the proposal addressed providing specific learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners. As an example the co-teaching model at the middle schools will be expanded. As well, project funds will provide enhancements and extensions to existing programs and practices such as focused professional development for meeting the unique needs of English Learners.

The applicant did not provide a plan with goals, timelines, metrics and person's responsible for the support of project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure. With out targeted goals is is unclear how all of the above high quality practices fit into an overall plan.

Overall, the applicant has scored in the moderate range for these criteria.

	Available	Score
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	4

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes that the District Technology Master Plan ensures that all participating students, their parents, educators and other stakeholders will have access to the necessary content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of this proposal. The plan is comprehensive and provides the infrastructure that supports personalized learning by ensuring that students, parents, and educators,will have access to the necessary technology, professional development and training, and technical support systems. As an example, a few access strategies for parents include: using computers at school, requesting hard copies of information, or attending Saturday training opportunities.

The Learning Management System (LMS) is the information and technology system that allows for interactive, collaborative dialogue and real time personalized feedback to students, and the posting work for peer review and editing. At the same time, parents will have access to actual student work samples. The LMS will allow teachers to individualize student access to the standards-based modules. Students in need of additional instruction may be assisted by the classroom teacher, may be directed to an on-line video, tutorial, or peer work product. A student who has a gap in mastery of a skill or concept can be redirected to that skill for re-teaching and support. Students in need of a challenge or enrichment will be provided with access to project-based extensions or research options. Parents and students will be able to access and export student information in an open data format.

The applicant notes that its systems are inter operable data systems that include human resources data, student information

data, budget data, and instructional improvement system data.

While the applicant has addressed current infrastructures and rationale to continue, there is no overall plan with goals, timelines and metrics, etc. As such, the applicant has scored in the moderate range for these criteria.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has proposed a tested and successful, high-quality approach to continuously improve its plan. The applicant proposes to continue its implementation of the Leadership System Cycle as the project framework for continuous improvement. The Leadership Cycle is a research based mental model for leading change and continuous improvement. The applicant states that having implemented the cycle over the course of 3 years in collaboration with a state partner (Pivot Learning Partners), it "is firmly engrained" in district culture and is a well-established vehicle for the district's continuous improvement process. As such, the district currently has in place activities which provide on-going data and feedback loops to gauge program effectiveness.

As demonstrated in Appendix S, the six steps in The Leadership Cycle are:

- Understanding and Leveraging the Context
- Defining Vision and Goals
- Articulating Strategy
- Crafting Key Messages and Managing Meaning
- Implementing Tactics
- Examining Results and Adjusting for Continuous Improvement

Additionally, the applicant proposes student achievement and programmatic feedback and improvement strategies that include:

- Student Learning Forums (3 times a year)
- Data Team meetings
- Teacher and Principal Collaboratives,
- Stakeholder meetings (teachers, parents, principals)
- Bi-annual public meeting to report on grant implementation and outcomes.

Teacher and principal effectiveness feedback and ongoing improvement opportunities include:

- professional development evaluations and SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats)
- Site leaders and Instructional coaches support training-to-practice
- co-planned, and co-taught lessons
- review of student data
- PLCs
- Teacher collaboratives use student learning data to monitor and adjust instructional programs
- Principal Collaboratives (evidence of training-to-practice opportunities, sharing with colleagues)

Lastly, as part of this feedback system the district Research, Evaluation and Assessment office was recently restructured and will provide the following.

- regular reports
- analysis of data collected from the information systems
- student/parent surveys, and staff assessment
- evaluation of program implementation

While the applicant has described the rational for a reasonable and demonstrably successful continuous improvement process that it has used in the past, it is unclear what constitutes timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals. The applicant did not provide a plan with targeted goals, timelines, person's responsible etc.

Overall, the applicant has scored in the moderate-high range.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Proposed strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders include:

- district publications to district and community groups
- site level parent and community reports
- bi-annual community meetings
- scheduled reports to the Board
- Regularly posting of RTTT information on the District website

As demonstrated in (B)(4) the applicant has comprehensively demonstrated active staff and stakeholder engagement for developing the proposal, and for continued input into the progress of the project.

The applicant has developed and proposed the following standards of practice as a demonstration of their transparency and messaging throughout the implementation of this project to students, staff, parents and community partners.

- Provide public access for technology use and appropriate use by stakeholders
- Provide standardized support training for stakeholder use of technology as a communication tool
- Create brochures, newsletters, etc. of technology use to standardize system wide messaging
- Monitor use of home communication components available through technology
- Review the effectiveness of District outreach practices

Overall, the applicant has responded to these criteria in the high range.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	0

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presented narrative describing the measures, its rationale for selecting that measure, and baseline data for each measure, though, did not provide the measures for overall or by the designated subgroups. Nor, did the applicant provide targets for the measures. As such, it is unclear if the performance measures are ambitious and achievable.

There were measures for both academic and social emotional needs at all levels. Academic measures include the state CAHESS for high schools and the CUSD benchmarks for grades 4-8. LEAPS, which identifies students' social and emotional skill needs, and provides teachers with targeted lesson plans to address the need and measure progress is the social-emotional measure for all levels.

In addition, the KSEP will measure students' Kindergarten readiness while, the FAFSA application will also be tracked for high schoolers.

The applicant proposed that every school site would have two measures that will demonstrate the number of students by subgroup whose teacher and principal are highly effective, and the number of students by subgroup whose teacher and principal are highly effective, that is on average students made one year growth for one year of instruction. Though no targets were provided.

Without the required overall or subgroup targets the applicant has not responded to these criteria and scored a zero.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not respond to the criterion to present a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of RTTT – District funded activities.

As such, the applicant has scored a zero for this section.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	2

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's budget did include a table of the overall budget for the entire grant period, though there was no specific budget narrative. The Table provided overall yearly budget data to support the development and implementation of the proposed project.

The applicant did not indicate that funds other than the grant funds will be used to support the project.

The applicant did not specifically describe funds that will be used for one-time investments versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs. Nor, did the applicant address strategies that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments.

Technology equipment costs were line itemed and more fully described and justified in the Technology Master Plan.

Overall, with no budget narrative that provides a line item description of the budget expenditures, or project budgets, the applicant has insufficiently responded to these criteria, and scores in the low range.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	0

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Other than the Master Technology Plan, the applicant has not provided a plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant.

The applicant has not addressed this criterion and scores a zero.

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 respond to this section.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has provided a very clear, coherent and high quality plan to personalize learning for all students. The specific strategies and teacher principal supports were comprehensive and the proposal has completely addressed all four educational assurance areas throughout the application. As an example the applicant intends to build upon successful school turn around strategies that have demonstrated success in significantly improving learning and teaching, and decreasing the achievement gap in two of the district schools.

Throughout the proposal the applicant provided numerous specific instructional and technological strategies and options for educators to personalize student learning. As well, the applicant has proposed to provide the necessary professional development and supports that will enable teachers and principals to improve student learning as presented in this proposal.

The fact that many of the proposal strategies are already in place in the district, with demonstrated success bodes well for the likelihood of further success in improving personalized learning. It is unclear why the applicant did not provide the performance measure targets and budget narrative. These two criteria were the missing pieces to a very strong proposal.

Total	210	109

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0852CA-3 for Central Unified School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

NOTE: Signature blocks on pages 9, 14, and 15 are not signed.

The applicant creates a comprehensive and coherent reform vision surrounding the four core educational assurance areas. Without elaborating the details of the plan in describing the vision, the applicant has set out a broad vision of:

- Individualized learning environments
- Closing achievement gaps
- Recruiting, retaining, and developing highly effective teachers and leaders
- Building robust data systems (and providing access to students, parents, and educators)
- Growth based evaluation systems for educators at all levels

This response is in the high score range. The substantial text surrounding the vision notwithstanding, the details of the reform elements remain obscure.

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

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(2)(a)(b)(c) The applicant states that all of the LEA's schools and students as participating. The process of developing the application was well vetted. It is a bit unclear if preschool students are participating because the student grade levels listed in the tables provided do not include preschool . Schools listed earlier as beginning at preschool show "K" as the lowest grade levels.

The lack of clarity regarding preschool participation may be attributed to clerical error or it may be that state regulations do not include those students in enrollment figures even if they attend. This did not detract from points but is simply noted. All points are awarded.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a number of reforms already in place. Some extend to all schools and others have been more limited in scope. These reforms include:

To provide individualized learning environments –

- Advanced Placement and Honors courses,
- AVID,
- Multiple Regional Occupational Programs (ROP), and
- Career Technical Education courses,

To close achievement gaps –

- Increased leadership monitoring in low performing schools,

Positive Behavior Intervention and Support;
- Extended Day and Year Learning Opportunities; and
- On-line credit recovery

To improve recruiting, retaining, and developing highly effective teachers and leaders –

- Partnerships with local universities
- Teacher PLCs for planning and data analysis
- Assigning effective teachers to low performing and high poverty schools on a priority basis

To build robust data systems (and providing access to students, parents, and educators) –

- Revised benchmark assessments
- Illuminate Data System for improved data access and tracking student progress

Growth based evaluation systems for educators at all levels –

- Improved systems linked to student growth

The applicant specifically states that teacher evaluations will NOT be directly linked to student mastery on standardized tests but will be based on direct observation of instructional practices.

The applicant shows a strong commitment to educational reform related to the elements of the proposal. The commitment to evaluation reform at the teacher level is unclear as the applicant specifically rules out a significant source of information. The response is in the lower portion of the high range.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	0

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(4)(a) The applicant does not provide any goals or targets on summative assessments.

(4)(b) The applicant does not provide any goals or targets on decreasing achievement gaps.

(4)(c) The applicant does not provide any goals or targets on graduation rates.

(4)(d) The applicant does not provide any goals or targets on college enrollment.

The applicant does not discuss goals and the project goals are not presented in the tables provided. The response receives zero (0) points.

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	1

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(1)(a) The applicant reports gains in the state accountability system but doesn't document those gains in tables at the district level or by school or by subgroup. Only one table on Advanced Placement is presented. This table shows a substantial improvement in the passing rate from 2008 to 2009 but not much change since then. The table does not present any evidence regarding how many students or what percentage of students were taking the AP exams. No track record of success in improving graduation rates is presented. I could not find any data or track record regarding the closing of achievement gaps.

(1)(b) There is some discussion of reforms at two elementary schools but the data related to their results is vague and unclear. The data pages in Appendix J were difficult to interpret and did not clearly relate to the track record of success and subgroup performance.

(1)(c) The Parent Portal provides access to student grades, attendance, and discipline records. In this section, it is unclear if it provides access to formative or summative assessment data. In a later section there is an implication that this access is being developed. Student access is unclear.

The applicant does not demonstrate a clear track record of success. The applicant describes two bright spots of successful elementary schools, however these are not clearly linked to reforms that have been implemented. The record of success in middle level or at the high school is not discussed and is obscure. The response is in the very low range.

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

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(2)(a)(b)(c)(d) The applicant describes many elements of the budget process and the transparency of the budget. Appendix K shows a school level budget as displayed on their website, but the budget is highly aggregated with all personnel budgets in one figure. The figures shown are budget figures. Budgets and Expenditures are often different. The figures provided are not actual expenditures as requested in the grant instructions.

The level of transparency does not meet the criteria set forth in grant instructions. The response scores in the low range.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	8

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant specifies that the state has granted sufficient autonomy to LEAs to carryout its proposals. Although this autonomy is set to expire before the end of the grant period, they are confident that the necessary autonomy will remain. It does not provide an in-depth analysis of proposed activities and programs relative to the district's basic authority.

The response is in the high range of scores.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	8

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(4)(a) The applicant documents very thoroughly the wide range of parental, student, teacher and other stakeholder input gathered in designing this proposal.

(4)(a)(i)(ii) The local Teacher's Association president's name is on the assurance form, but the signature is missing. Many of the signatures are missing from various assurance forms.

(4)(b) The proposal is accompanied by many letters of support. There is no letter of support from the Teacher's Association.

There is good evidence of stakeholder engagement and support for the proposal. The level of support from the Teacher's Association is not completely clear. The Teacher's Association's support will be critical to the support of the reforms and the lack of clarity is a definite drawback. However, the district went to extended lengths to engage students and parents as well as holding many meetings with teacher representatives and all teachers. Taken together this places the response in the lower portion of the high score range.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	1

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes five areas of need it has identified. It worked with a District Assistance and Intervention Team (DAIT) consultant to identify needs and gaps. The process used and the deliverables are unclear. The applicant does not present a high-quality plan for conducting this analysis. The six elements of a high-quality plan include goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and who will be responsible for implementing the activities. These elements are not present related to the need and gap analysis. There is discussion of some of the goals and activities they have identified, but how they were derived is not elucidated.

This response is in the low score range.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	5

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a)(i) The applicant has already begun implementing plans to help students connect what they are learning to college and career readiness goals. Some of the elements discussed include setting individual learning goals and reviewing them multiple times throughout the year. Career Cruising and My Road to the High School will be used for career planning at the secondary level. Middle school students will spend time each day in an advisory period tracking their progress toward goals. The application does not elaborate on how elementary students might set goals and link what they are learning to the goals they set.

(a)(ii) The ability to identify goals and monitor progress has been well thought out for students in grades 7-12. The applicant is developing a system in partnership with technology vendors for providing online access to an increasing range of student performance data. It is unclear if the applicant has considered ways for students in grades K-6 to begin setting learning goals and connecting their learning or success in life to what they are learning in the present.

(a)(iii) The identification of career interests and individual needs Is stressed for high school students. A brief statement is included regarding K-6 content and learning experiences related to goals. The in-depth nature of learning will be addressed by hands-on experiences and partnerships with the working world. On-line courses will expand the range of subjects students can explore related to their personal interests.

(a)(iv) The applicant views the opportunity to explore diversity within the student body as adequate for developing the student's perspectives on diverse cultures and context. There is some discussion of active respectful listening and sharing of point of view. This is a weak response to this section.

(a)(v) The applicant focuses in this section on how students will learn core content. Skills such as goal setting, collaboration, critical thinking, communication and perseverance are not explicitly addressed.

(b)(i) The proposal emphasizes re-teaching modalities of remedial instruction in creating a personalized sequence of instruction. This is a reactive, non-student driven mode of instruction that does not reach the level of a personalized learning environment.

(b)(ii) The student's access to a variety of instructional methods will be limited to the variety their teachers prefer. The proposal indicates additional teacher PD in three additional district approved instructional methods will provide the variety the students need. Other instructional methods are briefly mentioned elsewhere in the proposal, but it is unclear if these or other, alternative, non-district approved practices will be supported with professional development.

(b)(iii) The applicant acknowledges the importance of high quality and particularly digital content, but does not elaborate on the types or sources of content it would anticipate making available to students nor the process/mechanisms they would use in making them available.

(b)(iv)(A)(B) The Learning Management System will track student progress and provide students with feedback on their progress toward mastery of standards. Teachers will be able to monitor student progress and make recommendations based on system feedback.

(b)(v) In the proposal, the applicant focuses exclusively on adapting instruction to address the needs of special education students because they have the largest achievement gap. It is unclear how large the other subgroups are relative to special education. If the other subgroups are very large, it will be difficult to address the overall achievement gaps without also finding ways to accommodate the learning modalities and needs of those groups.

(c) The proposal indicates teachers will be trained and after the first year, students will work with the devices and become familiar with them. It is ambiguous whether there are any plans to assess the students' ability to use devices or methods or how the district will be certain the students are able to use the tools to mange their learning.

The response to this section is largely inadequate. The minimal of attention to learning goals for students in grades K-6, the limited way in which cultural diversity is addressed, the lack of clarity regarding the types and sources of high quality content, the narrow focus on the accommodations of one subgroup while not discussing potentially larger low achieving subgroups all put this response into the lower portion of the middle range of scores.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	4

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a)(i) The discussion of professional development emphasizes improved instructional practice using one of four models approved by the district. How these models reinforce personalized learning environments is unclear. It is also unclear how the PD would be different than what is currently being done other than shifting from emphasizing only one of the approved models to the other three models.

(a)(ii) It is unclear if the proposal includes any PD for adapting content and instruction. There is some discussion of how

teacher experience leads to on-the-spot adjustments because they have acquired the art of teaching.

(a)(iii) The applicant discussion of monitoring student progress towards college and career ready standards is limited to monitoring graduation requirements. This is a very limited and incomplete view of college and career ready standards.

(a)(iv) The applicant discusses the teacher and principal evaluation systems, their content elements, their negotiated aspects, and the new connection between principal evaluations and student achievement. The proposal does not discuss any training on how either the teacher or principal evaluation system might be used to support growth in student achievement. Without incorporating student achievement into individual teacher evaluations, it is possible to look at evaluation elements and analyze how they affect the educational outcomes. This section does not fully address the information requested.

(b)(i) The proposal does not clarify how educators will identify individual student learning modalities and interests. Identifying areas of academic weakness is not the same thing as identifying what excites the student to learn. Offering a wider range of courses may help, but different modes of instruction may also be needed.

(b)(ii) It is unclear how the district will know if teachers are familiar with the high-quality resources. If teachers cannot use the tools, it won't matter how good the tools are.

(b)(iii) It is unclear how teachers will learn to match tools to student needs.

(c)(i) Principals and other school leaders will have access to student achievement data. It is uncertain whether they will have the training, tools, resources, and policies needed to translate this data into steps to improve educator effectiveness. The proposal does not discuss the use of information from the teacher evaluation system in improving collective and individual effectiveness.

(c)(ii) The proposal describes the training, practices and systems in place to maintain a system of continuous improvement.

(d) The applicant proposes three basic approaches to increasing the number of students receiving instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals.

- Create demonstration classrooms with a glass wall to minimize the invasiveness of observing master lessons.
- Enhance student teacher recruitment through mentoring by master teachers, coordination with the chief Academic Officer, and careful hiring of vetted student teachers.
- Developing and hiring better administrators through an Aspiring Administrator program created with a university partner.

The applicant does not present a high-quality plan for teaching and leading. The six elements of a high-quality plan include goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and who will be responsible for implementing the activities. General goals and a few activities are described, but the rationale for them, the timelines, the deliverables, and the persons responsible for implementation are largely not discussed. It is unclear how teachers will know what excites a student's learning – offering an additional range of courses may not be enough. The lack of connection between student performance and teacher evaluation is also problematic.

This response is in the low score range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	7

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The application is vague regarding specific aspects of the central office that will support and provide services to the participating schools. The discussion regarding the collaborative nature of plan development suggests openness, but does not clarify the decision making structure related to the proposed grant.

(b) School autonomy and flexibility over schedules, personnel decisions and staffing models are mentioned without elaborating on the processes involved. School categorical budgets are described as designed and implemented at the school level with oversight by the district to ensure compliance with guidelines and procedures.

(c) Online learning programs and alternative education services provide secondary students opportunities for earning credit via mastery. It is less clear how elementary students will accelerate their learning through mastery. The assessment system in place for Language Arts and Mathematics allows students to demonstrate mastery, but how students move forward to new content or deeper learning is unclear.

(d) Although mastery can be demonstrated three times a year, the assessment system is the only modality described. It is unclear if there are multiple methods of demonstrating mastery at all grade levels.

(e) The applicant cites a commitment and practice of PD focused on adapting instruction to the needs of special education and English Language Learners. The evidence of success in this area is difficult to consolidate and understand from the many pages of school performance reports presented.

The applicant does not present a high-quality plan for assessing or monitoring how the district's policies, practices, and rules will support implementation of the proposal. The six elements of a high-quality plan include goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and who will be responsible for implementing the activities. Current activities and practices are described and sound supportive of the project yet mastery at the elementary level remains unclear. A high-quality plan for these factors during the project is not discussed.

Although the applicant does not have a high-quality plan, this response is scored in the middle score range because current practices appear to support the elements of this section.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	4

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The applicant addresses the digital divide for families with low income in two ways. The proposal calls for a 1 to 1 tablet initiative and making educational content available. It is unclear how students whose families cannot afford broadband/WiFi access would access the internet at home.

(b) The descriptions of technical support to be provided with the 1 to 1 initiative and the tools students, parents, and educators need to access student performance data are obscure. This section mentions the value of these initiatives but the technical support for using them is obfuscated.

(c) The applicant does not discuss exporting data from its LMS. The grant invitation asked that student performance data be exportable by the family to personal learning systems or for secure personal storage of the information.

(d) The technology systems in use to support the project are described as providing a single point of access. This seems to mean a single logon for access. The interoperable data flow between these systems is not discussed, but might be presumed from the context of discussions in other sections.

Again, the lack of a high-quality plan is a limiting factor in scoring this response. Providing a 1 to 1 device initiative is a solid step toward addressing the digital divide for low income families, but without any discussion of internet access while out of school, this issue is not resolved. The level of technology support is obscure and there was no discussion of exporting performance data from the LMS for any purpose.

This response is in the middle range of scores.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal describes a continuous improvement process that is highly developed in the areas of collecting and reporting project and program information. It is not completely clear how decisions might be made to adjust the proposed activities to make improvements. The key leadership of the grant and who has the authority to make changes is vague. The many advisory committees are poised to provide their perspective, but it is unclear where the project goes from there.

This response is in the middle range of scores because although the decision structures and processes are not explicitly expressed to the reader, the district has been using the framework for some time.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes to communicate the project's status and progress to internal and external stakeholders through a variety of methods including traditional printed materials, electronic forums, and meetings. Many of these will be communicated in multiple languages. It is unclear if the meetings would provide a forum for stakeholder feedback to the project or if their feedback would come through other channels. The communication described appears to unidirectional. The processes for ongoing engagement of stakeholders in continuous improvement are not elaborated. Educators will have direct channels of input. The channels for external stakeholders are not clear.

The score of this response is largely based on the strength of discussing multilingual communication and other outgoing communication. The lack of clear continuing engagement of external stake holders does limit the points awarded. The response is in the middle range of scores.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	0

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The application provides some basic rationale for selecting the applicant-proposed performance measures. Examples are: feedback on preschooler readiness for Kindergarten and identifying social emotional needs of students, and progress in preparing college applications.

(b) The proposed performance measures do not include measures of subgroup performance. This will make it difficult for the applicant to gauge whether the project goal to close the achievement gap is being met.

(c) There was no discussion of how the measures would be reviewed and improved over time.

The application is not responsive in its performance measures. The measures are limited in that they are at the grade level of aggregation and they do not include subgroup measures. Furthermore, and most importantly, none of the measures provide any growth targets. As such, the performance measures are not simply "not ambitious", they are not responsive to the question.

The response receives zero (0) points.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not discuss the effectiveness of investments and thus receives zero (0) points.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Overall

There is no section (F) in the application. The project budget is not explicitly described in the application. In section (B)(2) there is some discussion of district budget processes and transparency of the general budget. In section (D)(1)(a) there is mention of school control over categorical budgets.

(a) Working from the budget table it appears that all funds for the project come from RTTD. No Indirect Costs are included in the budget.

(b) Most of the activities in the project are discussed in general terms. The sufficiency of the budget is difficult to gauge without a budget discussion and a specific high-quality plan with clear activities. The budget for retrofitting the glass wall teaching demonstration rooms is about $20,000 per room. This may be sufficient although the description of the rooms was inadequate to know the full extent of what is being done to them. The annual cost of the 8 counselors decreases from $560,000 per year to $280,000 per year in year four. This is not explained.

(c)(i) All funds come from RTTD.

(c)(ii) The one time funds are clearly identified. How $2,340,000 in annual personnel costs translates into $420,000 in

ongoing expense is unclear.

The budget section overall is unresponsive. A budget is presented but without a discussion or explanation the response is in the low score range.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	0

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The sustainability of the grant is not discussed or described. This section receives zero (0) points.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

There is no section on the competitive preference priority. This section receives zero (0) points

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's reform proposal is very general and vague. The performance measures do not have goals and thus cannot be evaluated in terms of being ambitious, yet achievable. Some of the ideas have merit, yet specifics are missing. Most sections requesting a high-quality plan do not have one. There is no budget discussion so it is difficult to evaluate the sufficiency or appropriateness of the budget.

Absolute Priority 1 is not met.

Total	210	80