



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0935TN-1 for Claiborne County School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Applicant has set forth comprehensive and coherent reform vision built on post-secondary awareness, academic rigor, college/career readiness &amp; transitional engagement</i></li> <li><i>Applicant articulated a clear approach to accelerate student achievement through viable post secondary educational options for students and the community</i></li> </ol> <p><i>Overall, the applicant's reform vision is innovative, particularly for the targeted populations, and funding for the proposal would deepen student learning, and increase equity through the district and community; however, more explanation is needed for individual tasks that would be based on student academic interest. But overall, the vision was a commendable vision.</i></p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicant's approach to implementing its reform proposal had some discrepancies in addressing the implementation process: Applicant provided minimal/sparse reason for selection process (i.e. selection based on current assessment grouping-grades 3-12).</li> </ol> <p>-selecting only students with lunch subsidies to participate; population was not denoted on table; lack clarity on the type of support for students not participating in the reform.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall, the applicant described and listed the schools and process used for selecting participants.</li> </ol>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Applicant articulated clear plans describing how transforming family culture and current educational attainment expectations to "college going students" and how "college going students" would help the applicant reach its outcome goals.</i></li> </ol> <p><i>Applicant lack sufficient evidence of how the reform proposal would scale up into meaningful reform but the applicant was able to articulate well their theory of change of its plan would improve student and community outcomes.</i></p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicant's vision seems likely to result in improved student, parent, and community awareness, engagement and pursuit of post-secondary education because the applicant's plans were thorough and articulated well.</li> </ol> <p>Applicant's tables that demonstrated annual goals achievement gaps listed performance goals that were not ambitious enough</p>		

although attainable, and college enrollment data was not available, in which weakened the applicant's response to this section considering the intent of the funding would be to gather data.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	8
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Applicant did not demonstrate evidence of a clear record of success over the past 4 yrs. but was able to demonstrate a clear record of success over 1 yr (2011-2012) for going beyond TN RttT governance targets; chart of raw data was provided</i></li> <li><i>Applicant did not demonstrate evidence of graduation data available or achieve ambitious reforms in low performing schools.</i></li> </ol> <p><i>Applicant articulated how student performance data was accessible (Stakeholder access to student performance through state report card, parent-teacher meeting every 9 weeks, and progress reports sent out every mid nine week) but the applicant's efforts were not very innovative strategies-same as the last 20 yrs.</i></p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Applicant response was not a high level of transparency in district processes, practices, or investments because no descriptions, just a table that stated that it was created solely for the purpose of the grant and not within the district.</i></li> </ol> <p><i>Overall, the applicant provided a table with minimal information of personnel salaries.</i></p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	5
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Applicant did not demonstrate evidence of overall autonomy. As noted by the letter of reference from Trustee of Claiborne County, the applicant only has financial autonomy.</i></li> </ol> <p><i>Applicant's response was weakened because the applicant did not provide clear evidence of overall sufficient autonomy.</i></p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	8
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Applicant demonstrated evidence of a very innovative and ambitious way to get stakeholders support by posted a legal classified ad in local news paper and later an article in the news describing the type of support to engage stakeholders in the process; very innovative approach.</i></li> <li><i>Applicant has collective bargaining representation and the applicant included over 12 letters of support from key stakeholders.</i></li> <li><i>Applicant did not have letters of support from parents or a parent/student organization, which weakened the response.</i></li> </ol>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Applicant articulated and demonstrated plan implementing personalized learning environments and the logic behind the</i></li> </ol>		

reform efforts. Applicant's analysis demonstrated evidence of addressing students being under prepared for post-secondary and STEM courses, and limitations of post-secondary options by means of college visits, summer academies, tutorial programs, teacher pd, and college readiness coaching.

Applicant's plan lacked sufficient evidence of current status of implementing personalized learning environments. Applicant solely discussed what they would do if funded.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	11
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Applicant articulated what students will learn to accomplish goals, however, applicant did not provide a high-quality plan, instead they listed graduation requirements as a guide; did not list measure of progress towards goals</i></li> <li><i>Establish Early Warning Indicator (EWI) system to keep student on graduation track; but does not involve deep learning experiences for students</i></li> <li><i>Applicant detailed cultural diversity/perspective through a "Transition Work Plan" was developed for 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> graders; activities include collegiate night and shadowing campus activities. Grade levels were appropriate for purpose of transition</i></li> <li><i>Appropriate use of summer and Saturday academies that offer critical content to develop skills and traits discussed in (C1av)</i></li> <li><i>Personalized sequence activities include 4 yr personal work/educational plan that begins in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade does not provide students with a variety of interactive opportunities with colleges (all that applicant listed were thoughts or disseminated information about college readiness)</i></li> <li><i>Targeted timeline for freshman students did not include enough exposure/experiences to careers if applicant is asking for students to pick careers/areas of student during sophomore year.</i></li> <li><i>Request for funding of digital learning was addressed to include High-quality content assessable for calculators in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades, credit recovery courses, on-line access to advance courses, and mobile lab for acceptance documents for post-secondary entrance; all aligned with college/career standards, readiness, and requirements</i></li> <li><i>Applicant used basic progress reports to determine progress towards mastery, which were not ambitious.</i></li> <li><i>Applicant did not response to (C)(1)(iv)(B) or ( v)</i></li> </ol> <p><i>Applicant identified that a "sponsor" program would be established as a mechanism to provide students guidance, mentorships, scholarships, networking to engage students, which did not demonstrate a mechanisms already in place.</i></p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	7
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Applicant's plan to help teacher improve instruction by having immediate access to training tools and materials, and utilizing TVAAS website to assist teachers in identifying struggling student was insufficient because the applicant only listed the above as their approach to improve instruction and capacity to support overall students progress and specific to college/career readiness.</i></li> <li><i>Applicant's approach to adapt instruction by employing on-line teacher service provider, 1000+ hrs of online learning, webinars, technology training, and collaborations was insufficient because it did not include or specify college/career readiness.</i></li> <li><i>Applicant provided Mapped Competencies for dropouts, remedial course enrollment for college, and college culture and TEAM evaluation review to measure student progress, which strengthened the applicant's response.</i></li> <li><i>Applicant provided actionable information that included providing hands-on training to prepare students for post-secondary life, and rely heavily on the GEAR UP TN program (program aligned with funding goals for 7<sup>th</sup> graders) where pd and resources from cohort will serve as a pilot.</i></li> <li><i>Applicant identified the use of a free Learning Center provided by TN DOE, and on a temporary basis the use of para-professionals as substitutes or regular substitute teachers to train permanent teachers as their learning resources which were not aligned with college/career readiness.</i></li> <li><i>Applicant's process and tolls to match students needs was inadequate because the applicant mention matching teacher qualities to student needs to personalize support but did not specify how that would be done.</i></li> </ol>		

7. *Applicant did warrant points by specifying the use of Teacher Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) as value-added reporting to help leaders take steps to improvement.*
8. *Applicant did not adequately address their plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from highly effective teachers/principals. Applicant's comments were vague and did not address college/career/graduation readiness.*
9. *Overall, the applicant did not have a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment for students pursuing rigorous course of study aligned with college/career readiness or graduation requirements.*

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

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	7
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Applicant provided an organization chart of central office but clarity was not given to who/how the central office would provide support to all participating schools.</li> <li>2. Applicant's identified data teams as leadership teams that make decisions; however data teams do not have autonomy or authority to make personnel decisions, changes in school schedules or calendars.</li> <li>3. Applicant only clarified one way for credit recovery (i.e. utilize PLATO Learning for credit recovery programs). No option was left for students who were not successful at PLATO, which weakened the response.</li> <li>4. Applicant did not specify "How?" students are giving multiple time/comparable ways to demonstrate mastery of standards</li> <li>5. Applicant mentioned data teams would focus on subgroup analysis to target interventions and develop individual learning plans but the applicant did not list any learning resources or instructional practices.</li> <li>6. Overall, the applicant did not address this section thoroughly enough to warrant maximum points.</li> </ol>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	6
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Applicant ensures parental involvement by means of the Parent Involvement Supervisor and school improvement team meeting regularly but the applicant did not discuss how parents, educators, and other stakeholders would have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school.</i></li> <li>2. <i>Applicant provided evidence of support to provide access for parents/stakeholders to GED educational services (applicant provided list of services through the program that included before and after school programs, computer classes for students and the community).</i></li> <li>3. <i>Applicant uses a Star Student data system to allow teachers to export their information to provide students with individual and class reports; however, the data system's reports are only accessible upon request, and the applicant did not specify how parents and students were allowed to export their information.</i></li> <li>4. <i>Applicant identified several data systems that ensured use of interoperable data systems that included student information data and instructional improvement systems.</i></li> </ol>		

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

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	8
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Applicant did provide strategies for implementing a continuous improvement plan; however the plan was not rigorous enough. Instead, the applicant discussed how it would utilize the same data program in GEAR UP TN as continuous improvement.</li> <li>2. Applicant provided inadequate monitoring approach by using one person evaluations and that was done only by the Director (Director Holdway).</li> </ol>		

Overall, the applicant's strategy did address how the applicant would monitor, measure, and publicly share information of its investments in pd, technology and staff development.

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

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:  
*Applicant only identified meetings as ongoing engagement. Applicant lacked evidence of expanding options for more creative ways for ongoing communication and engagement, which weakened the applicant's response.*

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
--	---	---

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

1. The rational for selecting measures listed in chart were ambitious yet achievable because the applicant's measures were relatively high (i.e. 80% of cohort teachers would regularly implement at least 3 strategies from pd workshops, 100% of district teachers will attend pd training, etc.)
2. Applicant did not clarify how the measure would provide rigorous, timely, or formative information regarding the applicant's area of concern or specify how they would review and improve overtime.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
---	---	---

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:  
 Applicant did identify key data elements to evaluate effectiveness of grant; including quasi-experimental, mixed-methods approach, interviewing all stakeholders, and quantitative data analysis but applicant did not specify how data or evaluation method was aligned with their plan to evaluate the effectiveness of funded activities like pd, and more productive ways to use time, staff and other resources to improve results, which weakened the applicant's response.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	4

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

1. *There were some discrepancies in the budget request:*
  - *Evaluations led by the University of TN (3 professors) were not discussed in the reform program of the grant therefore lacks sufficient rational for their purpose and/or impact on the grant for funding.*
  - *Likewise, the budget request for 4 (61 passenger school buses) was not mentioned at all until the budget section and therefore warrants justification for its use/impact for funding.*
2. *Overall, the applicant identified funding that supported the project, but the applicant failed to provide reasonable and sufficient persons to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal because the persons identified were current employees with job duties that require 100% of their time in other areas, and for the purpose/vision of the reform proposal, persons supporting this reform efforts is a 100% job task. Therefore, the applicant's response was weakened.*
3. *Applicant did provide a rationale for investments and priorities that included total revenues from the grant, but failed to identify funds that would incur after the grant period that would ensure long-term sustainability.*

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

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

1. Applicant did not have a quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. Applicant's plan included support from Dr. Banks' role in using GEAR UP TN as an attempt to "capitalize upon networks of regional

professionals and universities”, and no mention of state or local government leadership or financial support.

Overall, the applicant did have a plan but it did not address the sustainability of the project’s goals sufficiently and the applicant did not discuss budget cost of 3year after the term of the grant.

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

1. *Applicant has established partnership with after- school program, however, the partnership does not address the social, emotional or behavioral needs of participating students.*
2. *The description of the program are not aligned with expectations of this section because both programs were not innovative or ambitious enough and both programs did not add significant support to the applicant’s broader grant proposal.*
3. *Applicant did not identify population-level desired results effectively.*

*Consultants of the program and both of the competitive preference priorities were listed as evaluator for the current grant. This seems problematic because their tasks/purpose of their programs was 1. Tasks: Tasks overlaps with both competitive preferences and there was not a real distinct between the two. 2. Purpose of programs: was not of quality because it was on a voluntary bases and the incorporation of culturally relevant teaching- the applicant did not provide a clear merit for how culturally relevant teaching was different from differentiating STEM to fit the current cultural state of the district.*

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

- *The applicant coherently and comprehensively addressed how it would build on the core educational assurance area to create learning environments that were designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through personalized learning environments that were aligned with preparing students and parents with preparation for increasing graduation rates, college entrance and sustainability.*
- *The applicant’s vision was very ambitious, achievable, but most importantly, commendable because their reform vision encompassed support for preparing students, teachers, and the community with 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills for every ones success.*
- *The applicant does not have “safety nets” to sustain grant effectiveness or monitoring ability, strong budget and sustainability, or LEA policy and infrastructure, which weakened the proposal.*

Total	210	112
-------	-----	-----

### Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	3

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

*First Optional Budget Supplement: The applicant had a clear approach to support teachers with the ability to create and use STEM assessment strategies to provide meaningful evidence of student learning in inquiry-based classrooms. However, the*

*plan did not address how the applicant would carry out activities across 2 or more LEAs. Moreover, the plan was weakened because of the huge investment of this project and functionality is based on voluntary attendance. This program did not provide enough evidence to be an innovative solution for STEM assessment strategies.*

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

15

2

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

*The applicant had a clear plan to provide equity in the classroom with culturally responsive STEM teaching practices for grades 5-9 teachers. However, the targeted audience was not identified and the applicant did not specify how it would carry out activities across 2 or more LEAs. The program was very similar to the first optional budget supplement request (which was not innovative) with the acceptance of adding cultural responsive teaching as a means for equity. The applicant did not provide evidence of an innovative reform solutions that was ambitious enough to be replicated in schools across the Nation.*



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0935TN-2 for Claiborne County School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant has a clear vision for reform that is obviously aimed at increasing career- and college-readiness and awareness. The applicant demonstrates a clear understanding of the needs of the participating students and the challenges that will have to be faced on the journey. The vision sets forth an ambitious plan that provides unique opportunities that are tailored to the needs of students and allows them to set a career/college path and assists them in following (and staying on) the path. The vision provides goals that are clear and credible for accelerating student achievement and deepening learning while increasing equity. The vision provides for personalized student support based on career and college goals. The vision does seem to focus more on college and career readiness for all and less on decreasing the achievement gaps. This seems to be due to the fact that the majority of the students fall into one of the sub-groups and thus the gaps are not as pronounced as in other environments. The one area that seems to be lacking in the vision of reform presented by the applicant is one for younger students. While the applicant has chosen to only include students in grades 3 and higher, the proposed reforms seem best suited for students in middle and secondary schools and not lower grades. There a few proposed reforms that would impact younger students but these are minor and do not fit the age group as well.		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: a) There is a clear explanation of the process used to select schools to participate based on the ability to "gather robust quantifiable statistical data generated from in place summative assessments" and by selecting those eligible under RTT-D requirements.  b and c) The applicant provides a comprehensive list of schools that will participate in the grant. The chart provided indicates the numbers of participants in the required category for each school as well as overall. Overall, the numbers of participating students (2488) as well as the numbers of high-need students (2050), numbers from low income families (2488) and participating educators (337) are provided. It is evident that the applicant's approach to implement its reform proposal will support high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation.		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	3

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a vision of the grant activities serving as a model for replication in the region, state and nation but does not provide a high-quality plan for how this will be accomplished. While table 6 provides a clear logic model of how the plans will affect student learning outcomes for students in the short term, intermediate term and long term it does not address how this will be scaled up or translated. There is the implication that the reforms will have an affect on reform efforts, but there is no indication of specifically how the reforms will be scaled up nor how this will help the applicant reach its outcome goals.

Score 3/10 based on the presence of a clear and comprehensive logic model of how the plan will improve student learning outcomes for those served by the grant, but the lack of a concrete and specific plan for scaling up and translating the model for reform to support district-wide change.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	5
---	----	---

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The use of formal and informal needs assessment techniques led to a clear understanding of the gaps and thus the goals to be addressed through this proposal. The gaps identified led to the development goals that are ambitious and achievable.

a) The applicant has set goals for performance on summative assessments by subgroup for each grade level band (math 3-8, reading 3-8, Algebra 9-12, English 9-12). However, based on the information provided, there is no clear indication as to how the vision presented will improve student learning and performance and increased equity in these areas.

b) It is unclear why there are no goals indicated for decreasing achievement gaps in any areas. Baseline data is given for each of the student subgroups but no data for decreasing the gaps. There is no explanation provided to indicate the reason for this. Since there are no projected goals, it is not possible to know if the vision is likely to result in increased equity.

c and d) The vision presented by the applicant is very likely to result in improved graduation rates and college enrollment rates for all subgroups identified. The full utilization of the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System methodology can serve to assist students in having a clear vision of progress toward graduation and requirements for career or college. Further, the implementation of the thematic clusters will give students the necessary information for college enrollment and help them identify the necessary course to take to assure enrollment is possible upon graduation.

Score 5/10. The score is based on the lack of clear indication as to how summative assessment will reflect the results of the reforms proposed and lack of explanation for absence of goals for decreasing the achievement gaps. Credit was given for the high likelihood that the vision presented would improve graduation rates and college enrollment rates for all subgroups.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	8

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

a) The recognition in August 2012 by the Tennessee State Department fo Education as an "Exemplary District" with respect to the state's Race to the Top criteria. The fact that the district was "recognized as among Tennessee;s top 15% highly performing districts." This clearly represents a record of success in improving student learning outcomes and closing achievement gaps. There is no of a record of success in imporving high school graduation rates or college enrollment rates.

b) The only evidence of ambitious and significant reforms in the low-performing schools is the attainment of "Reward School" status for Soldiers Memorial. The LEA has no other reported record of success in this area.

c) There is extensive evidence that student performance data is avaialbel to students, educators and parents. The state reprot card that provides public access to a variety of data that is available for all stakeholders. The intervention communications reflect a strong plarent commuication componenet in that they include parent-teacher meetings, mid-term progress reports and open houses.

Score 8/15 based on stron communication nof performance data with students, parents, students and educators and the record of imporving student learning outcomes in response to the state RTT initiative. The narrative lacks information on high school graduaion rates, enrollment rates and significan reforms in the low-performing schools.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	0
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides data that reflects the salaries of school personnel for instructional and non-instructional staff. However, there is no explanation as to how this information is made available to the public. Information provided about the provision of information for protected students does not reflect transparency of students with other designations. While the actual salaries are presented, there is no indication of the extent to which this information is available to the public. Further, there is no mention of non-personnel expenditures at the school level.</p> <p>Score 0/5 based on the lack of any indication of how information is disseminated in order to insure transparency in processes, practices or investments.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	2
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has provided limited evidence that they have sufficient autonomy to implement the proposed programs. The letter of "good standing" from the county trustee does provide evidence of financial autonomy. However, the list of sections of the Tennessee Code Annotated rules and policy sectors is not described. There is no explanation of these nor is there any indication of how these provide evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy.</p> <p>Score 2/10 based on the evidence of financial autonomy but lack of explanation to support the presence of other conditions or autonomy.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	8
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>ai) The applicant used innovative and varied means to inform all stakeholders. Information in the local newspaper provided a means of engaging all stakeholders in the process. The example of the retiree providing input and the revision of the proposal based on this input provides a compelling case for the claim that input from varied sources was considered in developing and revising the proposal. Peer communications through the Center of Regional Excellence and the State Collaborative on /reforming Education generated feedback from individuals as well and led to revisions. There is clear evidence of direct engagement and support for the proposals from the membership of the /Tennessee Education Association and the Claiborne County Education Associations. The letters provided are evidence that these organizations were informed and supported the proposal. Lead teachers, principals, supervisors, school board members and other district personnel were given the opportunity to provide feedback as well. Again, the applicant demonstrates evidence that input from these meetings led to revisions to the proposal., the inclusion of a leadership program for teachers was the result of this communication.</p> <p>b) The list of stakeholders providing letters of support is varied and represents members from the US Senate, State Senate, local government, non-profit organizations and the University of Tennessee. While this list does show a broad range of support, there are no letters from key stakeholders such as parents students or the business community.</p> <p>Score 8/10 based on a strong demonstration of engagement of stakeholders in the development and revision of the proposal and letters of support from varied stakeholder groups. Points were deducted for the lack of support letters form parents, students and local businesses.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	2
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has provided a strong review of the logic behind the reform proposal. The applicant has identified five gaps and has targeted four objectives and given specific details as to how the objectives will be addressed. The descriptions provide a clear picture behind the logic. There is, however, no indication of a plan for an analysis of the applicant's current status in implementing the personalized learning environments. While many proposed activities are described that support the identified gaps and objectives, there is not an indication of how current status will be addressed as the program progresses.</p>		

Score 2/5 based on a strong logic model but the lack of evidence of a plan for analysis of current status.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	8

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

a(i). The plan to help all students understand that what they are learning is key to their success is lacking some critical components. The applicant does not give a clear picture of what the cultureally relevant teaching to be implemented by teachers will "look like" nor how it will help all students understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals. Further, there is no indication of how this addresses the high-need population in any way that is specific to this sub-group. The plan to disseminate information to assure a successful transition to post-secondary education is unique and addresses all students in a vairyety of means and in a way that includes all student populations. The program, as described, would help to inform students as to the reason for learning what they are in the classroom.

a(ii) The applicant has an extremely strong plan to help students identify and pursue learning and developmental goals linked to college- and career-ready standards and graudation requirments. The four clustered foci will serve to provide valuable inforamtion as far as identification of career or college expectations and requirements, academic requirements, financial aid information, and transistion and engagement. The clusters provides a system for measuring progress. For example the academic rigor for college and career will measure progres through standardized testing and other clusters will use meetings as a means of measuring progress and determining the path to success.

a(iii) As a result of the state RTT funding an early warning indicator system is already in place to keep students on track for graduation. While this could serve as a path to graduation, this does not provide opportunities for students to be involved in deep learning experiences. The identification of concerns on the path to graduation does not insure deep learning experiences. Further, there is no mention of areas of academic interest. It does not appear that there is any plan to include students in any input into the academic areas that are available for focus in the schools.

a(iv) The appicant indicates that the transitional activities will provide exposure to diverse cultures, contexts and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning. However, as described, there is no guarantee that the activities will expose students to any of these. The claim that the goal os the transitional activitees is to "help cohort students develop a sense of comfort with their pending transitions and ultimately empower them to make the transition into post-secondary environments a personal success does not give any evidence that the goal of these activities is to increae acess and exposure. There does not appear to be any intentional plan in place to assure exposure to diversie cultures, contexts or perspectives.

a(v) The plan to include summer and Saturday academies does not provide an approach to learning that engages and empowers all learners, in particular high-need students, in an age-appropriate manner such that they master critical content and skills. There is no indication that these academies are open to all students nor that they address the needs of high-need students beyond the curriculum that is designed for all students. Further, there is no clear description of how the academies will address the skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perserverance, critical thinking, communiation, creativity, and problem-solving. While these are aspects of STEM curricula, thre is no indication that they will be included simply because the academies are developed by math and science personnel.

b(i) The plan to implement a 4-year perosonal work and eduational plan for each student will be valuable for providing for a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed. Futher, the different themed clusters provide the required informatio to ensure college- and career-readiness.

b(ii) The applicant has presented a plan for professional development that does address a variety of techniques for engaging a variety of learners. In addition, there is a plan to survey various stakeholders including parents and students to identify needs for tailored approaches to learning. However, there is not a clear indication that these will necessarily lead to the implementation of different approaches and environments. The applicant fails to give sufficient detail to deterine if this is the case. It is unclear how the timeline of activities for RTT-D students reflects vaired instructional approaches or environments. The list of

activities is comprehensive and compelling, but many of them seem to be in the context of a traditional approaches and environments. For example, community members sharing information does not assure that this is anything but a lecture by a different person. Or, listening to intercom announcements and writing and sending articles to local media do not indicate anything that is unique nor tailored to individuals.

b(iii) It is unclear if the applicant has a plan to ensure that all students will have access to digital learning content. While they do mention that the high schools are "long-distance learning labs" there is no indication of available technology to access digital learning content. The applicant mentioned earlier that not all students have access to modern technology at home. However, the plan for digital learning content states that online interactive content and podcasts will "allow students to proceed at their own pace and affords them the opportunity to access from that which is used in the daily classroom." Based on previously presented data and descriptions, this is not feasible for many students in the district. Further, the claim that all students will have access to long-distance learning labs connected to the Saturday mini-camps is unrealistic based on the lack of assurance that all students will participate in these offerings.

b(iv) The plan for providing ongoing and regular feedback does not go beyond a minimal amount of feedback in an apparently standardized format. The plan presented relies on the already existing schedule and does not provide any additional feedback nor a clear vision of how the reports to parents will be altered or presented to help indicate progress toward mastery of standards. The addition of opportunity for a follow up program is unique and could make an impact on the number of parents that are assisted by any feedback that is available.

b(v) While the plan presented does offer the indication that a supplemental education service provider will be procured to assist with those RTT-D students identified as high-need, there is no clear plan as to the description of the services that these individuals will offer. The formation of a scholarship fund and other partnerships plans do not describe accommodations to help keep students on track but rather accommodations to help them once they have met the college-ready graduation requirements. Further, it is unclear how the plan to implement community service projects represents high-quality strategies to ensure the students are on track toward meeting college- and career-ready standards.

c. There is no plan presented to ensure the 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 track and manage their learning.

Score 8/20 based on a plan that engages and empowers some learners (especially those with access to technology outside of the school), but that does not include all students (for example those that participate in all academies). The plan does provide viable opportunities for students to know the path that must be taken to reach college- or career goals but does not offer a strong enough plan to assure that everyone has access to varied instructional approaches high-quality digital content, or feedback that is unique to the plan as presented.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	8
---	----	---

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

a (i). There is not a clear indication of how the professional learning communities or professional development opportunities will support the implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies to meet the student's academic needs. While several different programs and projects that support these goals, there is no indication as to how these will be targeted to the specific program described here.

a(ii) While the list of highlights of the proposed Teacher Learning Community is extensive, there is no indication of how this will lead to adapted content and instruction. Simply providing teachers with more websites and other resources does not guarantee that teaching will be altered. The plan lacks a vision for assisting teachers to make the adaptations or for ensuring that these resources are used for this purpose.

a(iii and iv) The chart provided (17) does offer a clear and comprehensive plan for measuring student progress toward meeting college- and career- ready standards through the use of standardized testing data, enrollment data, and attitudinal. Since these are summative measures, the only opportunities for collection will be at the end of courses. The applicant does not include any measures which would give more frequent measures. Further, the applicant fails to indicate how this data will improve practice and effectiveness. There is no indication of how the data will be used once it is disseminated.

b(i) As presented, there is no indication that the curriculum mapping or the lesson planning support services will help educators identify optimal learning approaches for INDIVIDUAL student needs. Further, it is unclear how the training for para-professionals and substitute teachers will help to address this. The applicant fails to provide specifics that clarify how these tools and training will lead to enhancement of individualize educational experiences.

b(ii) The applicant has not provided a clear picture of the access that educators will have to high-quality learning resources.

The statements made concerning this are vague and do not provide sufficient detail to address this issue. The information about GEAR UP TN is difficult to follow and does not seem to actually provide the requested information.

b(iii) There is no clear indication of how the educators have access to processes and tools to match student needs. The narrative seems to indicate why this is important without indicating how it is to be accomplished.

c (i). The applicant does not provide information from the sources of evaluation. Rather, the applicant simply tells what these sources are and indicates that professional development will help district leaders implement the system. The statement that "though the core of the TEAM evaluation system, educators continuously improve their practices" does not give any indication of steps that will be taken to improve educator effectiveness and school culture and climate for the purposes of school improvement. Information about substitute and student teacher evaluations does help to indicate that there is a culture of assuring effective teaching, but there is no indication of how this data is used to bring about change.

c(ii) The practices described (Lottery for Education Afterschool Program services, THEC review, and GEAR UP TN) are valuable for providing teachers with training to improve teaching. However, the applicant fails to elaborate on how these programs, along with those proposed through the RTT-D grant funds will improve school progress toward the goals of increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps. Further, it is unclear if all teachers will participate in these programs (or have already).

d. No plan is indicated for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers. The list of personnel for the project is comprehensive and impressive. However, many of these are not teachers and would not directly instruct the students. Some of them would instruct, but would not qualify as teachers based on education and background. The applicant lacks a clear description of the impact of these individuals on the number of students receiving instruction from effective teachers.

Score 8/20 based on the presence of many extensive programs, personnel and ideas but with little clarity as to the impact that the listed components would have on teaching and leading.

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

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	4
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
1(a) The organization of the district office is provided and is complete. However, there is no indication how this structure will provide support and services for the proposed reform.		
1(b) data and school improvement teams are only ones listed, no indication of flexibility		
(c) PLATO is for credit recovery only, no other mention of opportunities to earn credit based on master		
(d) Standardized tests only mentioned, no multiple times or multiple ways, K-2 report cards have no impact on this plan		
(e) There is a system in place for adapting practices. However, individualized educational plans do not equal full accessibility - can not tell from the description what other aspects in place		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	4
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
a) Parent involvement supervisor is a good way to help get parents involved, Parents on school implementation teams is good, no other mention of other groups or accessibility beyond these groups, no other content resources or tools mentioned		
b) Accessibility is good but no mention of support for technology outside of the schools		
c) No open data format, website do not seem to provide data (only information), state electronic library is the only mention of anything that resembles a learning system, reports are accessible but not learning systems		
d) No evidence of interoperability , large variety of systems but no connections obvious		

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

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	5
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Good to use GEAR UP TN and TVAAS data as this provides a thorough source of data for statistical review this proposed program.</p> <p>There is no indication of how the applicant will monitor the information received through the GEAR UP TN and TVAAS data systems.</p> <p>No indication of how the information will be shared - the proposal states that it will be posted but no details as to how or when this will occur.</p> <p>Overall this section lacks specifics that provide a strategy for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback. 5/15 points.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>External - Mideast Regional P-16 council is the only real example for external communication and engagement, the role that Dr. Richards will play in communication and engagement is unclear</p> <p>Internal - varied and multiple strategies including district websites, symposia and the media - much more comprehensive internal than external strategy</p> <p>Score 3/5 based on a strong internal approach to improve the plan but a need for a more comprehensive plan for external communication and engagement.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>a - The rationale for selecting the measures is clear and reasonable. The intent to provide effective professional development is a reasonable justification for the measures.</p> <p>b - The applicant has clearly identified four objectives and set clear targets and objectives. The number of performance measures exceeds the required 12-14 and seems to be a bit too broad for valuable data collection and analysis.</p> <p>c - The applicant provides a good plan for review of performance measures over time but no real plan for using this to review for alterations to the plan nor to improve the measures</p> <p>4/5 points based on strong rationale and objectives but overly ambitious and no plan for using the data to improve the program.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Sufficient training for data collection is provided. The applicant has a plan to train all personnel on data collection for developing an online data management system to facilitate in the data collection and management. Both internal (Dr. Banks) and external (Tennessee Higher Education Commission) sources for training have been identified.</p> <p>The applicant has identified an evaluation team and has a clear and efficient plan for developing data collection instruments, providing support for issues related to data collection and analysis of data.</p> <p>The applicant has developed a plan to develop and utilize a variety of instruments and sources of data including interviews, surveys, and quantitative data sources.</p> <p>Overall a strong plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the investment. 5/5</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>a) The applicant has identified and given sufficient narrative to reflect all funds that will support the project are listed</p> <p>b) Based on the budget narrative, all fund requests are reasonable and sufficient with the exception of the request for funds to purchase new busses. There is no clear evidence that these would be used to support the project except inadvertently</p> <p>c) All descriptions of funds are complete and reasonable. The charts indicate those funds that would be ongoing throughout the course of the grant and those that are one time investments</p> <p>Score 9/10 based on reasonable funding requests (with the exception of the busses) and a narrative that supports and explains thoroughly the requested funds.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>There is a plan for sustainability but it lacks a strong foundation, the possibility of partnerships exists but no definite partnerships that would help to sustain the project financially exist to date, There is only potential annual fund matches and no definite, no mention of non-financial avenues for sustainability.</p> <p>Score 5/10 based on the fact that there is a plan in place but there is no strong foundation nor definite plans to establish partnerships that would aid in the possibility of sustainability.</p>		

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	3
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The partnership with The Learning Place is sustainable and the description and will support the plan. There is no clear description of the partnership beyond the name and details about the owner.</li> <li>2. There indication of the population-level desired results for students is presented in a table that lacks sufficient detail. It is not possible to tell if these results would be attainable. Further, not all results apply specifically to students in the LEA. The results do not include "other educational outcomes" that affect the students.</li> <li>3. There is no description of how the partnership would track the indicators, use data to target resources, develop a strategy to scale the model beyond the participating students or improve the results over time.</li> <li>4. There is no description of how the partnership would integrate education and other services for participating students.</li> <li>5. There is no description of how the tools and supports to assess the needs and assets of participating students, identify and inventory the needs and assets of the school and community, create a decision-making process, engage families of participating students, nor assess the progress in implementing the plan.</li> <li>6. No performance measures are identified in relation to the partnership.</li> </ol>		

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

- 1) The 10 programs provide learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college- and career- ready standards. They would be especially effective in helping students identify the paths to careers and college and to stay on track to attain their goals
- 2) The applicant has addressed how the program proposed would lead to Individualized learning plans will help to deepen student learning by helping them identify goals and paths to the goals.
- 3) The applicant has designed a strong professional development plan to increase educator effectiveness and thus lead to the achievement of the stated goals and objectives.
- 4) The proposed programs will allow for individualized plans and thus decrease achievement gaps among students of various populations. The applicant provides a clear description of the programs that would address these individualized plans through college and career preparation opportunities for individual students.
- 5) A large portion of the plan focuses on increased graduation rates and preparation for college and careers. The proposed programs would address students' individual needs and thus increase the rates of graduation and the numbers of graduates prepared for college and career.

Total	210	104
-------	-----	-----

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	10

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Plan embeds the five core elements of effective PD - this should help to provide for effective academies

This appears to be two different projects but it is difficult to tell

The first portion- The rationale is strong. Tthe applicant shows a need and a viable plan for addressing the need. The population to be served (middle school teachers) is reasonable based on the rationale. Thre is a lack of a clear understanding of what STEM really is and looks like and the qualifications of the faculty who will develop and facilitate the summer academies The applicant provides a clear and strong plan for summer academy components and provides a plan to assure that the program is open to Claiborne County and "neighboring districts"

The budget, as described is reasonable and sufficient to support the projects.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	10
--	----	----

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

The second portion of the application dealing with equity in the classroom is viable and needed. The table with program activities, purposes, elements and timelines provides a clear picture of the proposed PD over time. As in the first portion, the facilitators/developers do not seem to have the expertise to provide the quality of PD needed. In this case, there is no indication of participants (2 or more districts)

The budget, as described is reasonable and sufficient to support the projects as described. However, the description lacks sufficient detail to determine the practicality of the proposed budget.



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0935TN-3 for Claiborne County School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Claiborne County School District (CCSD) articulated a vision for the success of its students that is lofty and aligned with what effective districts are all about. CCSD also effectively communicated its passion for accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support. The four clusters identified provide valid vehicles for improving student growth across the district. The district asserts it will embrace diversity as an educational platform. These aspects strengthen the vision. But the applicant was required to set forth a vision that builds on its core work in four educational assurance areas. None were addressed, significantly affecting the overall rating on this area. It was judged to be of middle level quality.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>CCSD provides three tables that identify participating schools and provide a breakdown of students by school and by their demographics. These tables strengthened the area because they were clear and provided ample information. It is clear that its students collectively meet eligibility requirements. These tables provide the appropriate school and student data needed. Also provided was a logical rationale for why all students in grades three through twelve were chosen. It did not, however, provide information about the process employed to select schools to participate as called for in the requirements so the basis for a decision where students in grades three through twelve will participate in the project while those in grades below that level will not is unknown. This section was scored in the middle level of quality.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This area was rated high middle in quality. It was not necessary for the district to provide a plan in this section because all its schools in grades three through twelve are participating. This section would have been very judged to be very strong if the district clarified how what it learned as a result of reform will be utilized to improve student performance in the grades below three that had not participated in the project. It also would have been strengthened had it provided a theory of change to clarify how it would help the district reach its outcome goals.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>CCSD has a strong approach to goals to achieve its vision. It identified annual goals equal to or exceeding state ESEA targets district wide and by subgroups. These goals are ambitious and achievable and have been prioritized. They were identified using state summative instruments and college enrollment data. Pursuit of post secondary education options was identified as a first priority. Other targets focus on preparation for college. An overarching goal was identified: "To establish Personalized</p>		

Learning Environments for poor students where there are few or none.” There was, however, a loose connection between that goal and the four objectives identified. For example, one objective is “Increase secondary performance to promote post-secondary success.” While a worthy objective how it leads to Personalized Learning Environments is not clear. The applicant provided three other elements that helped clarify how the goals fit in the project: a logic model, an explanation of clustered activities, and a chart with an overview of years one through four. Also provided were sound summer school and mentor plans and other charts and information that clarified how activities and strategies will be employed. Goals for LEA-wide improved student outcomes was scored in 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	9
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>CCSD provided evidence of its prior success. It was recognized as an “Exemplary District” under Tennessee’s Race to the Top governance structure, a level of achievement shared by just 19 of the state’s 136 districts. It also has a middle school that earned “Reward School” status, because it is in the top 5 percent of schools for year-over-year progress. This middle school improved significantly after informal restructuring that included principal change and a number of interventions. The district also experienced success when another school was removed from “High Priority” status. But there are areas where it has not achieved success. Of their 11 schools 5 are designated as “Focus Schools” for 2012-2013 because of significant achievement gaps between racial and ethnic groups. These schools are in the bottom ten percent statewide. There is no evidence of significant reform efforts in these schools. CCSD noted that its persistently lowest-achieving schools and low-performing schools make student performance data available to students, educators and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and services. It also has a number of methods for communicating student results and progress to parents. These include the state report card that includes important NCLB provisions, newspaper, an electronic network, and phone trees. Student progress reports that must be signed by the parents are part of the teacher evaluation system. Both of these practices add to its strength in this area. Overall, CCSD does show strength in this area through its designation as an exemplary district, successful reform effort in a low-performing school, and transparency of data. Its lack of success and efforts in almost half its schools and the absence of data and narrative addressing progress in graduation rates and college enrollment contributed to this section being judged of middle quality.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	0
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>CCSD provided little information to demonstrate transparency in processes, practices and investments. Thus, this section was very weak. The narrative focused on equity and equal access. The district provided a useful chart that identified aggregate salaries for each of the schools included in the proposal but this information came from the district office and there was no evidence it is made transparent district wide. No information was provided that the district makes public school salaries, actual school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, school administration or personnel salaries at the district or school-level or non-personnel expenditures at the school level. This area was judged to be very weak.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	2
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>CCSD’s evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy to implement personalized learning environments was weak. For example, it provided a letter of “good standing” from a county trustee that attests to their “good standing” and financial authority. But the letter simply notified them that they receive monies monthly. CCSD referenced a number of state statutes reflecting regulatory governances allowable under state code that attest to the district’s financial authority, But the conditions that impact reform and the extent to which the district has sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement reform that requires personalized learning environments were not addressed. Because of the lack of information, a low level rating was awarded this area.</p>		

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

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

CCSD has implemented a number of strategies designed to promote meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal. Some were innovative and strong. For example, the newspaper's classified ad space was utilized to give notice of a public meeting for the purpose of discussing the RTTD application. An Op Ed letter in the editorial section resulted in the participation of retirees, speakers, and mentors. Open meetings were held and the proposal was discussed with teachers, administrators, members of the public, and other stakeholders. The district initiated peer communications to increase discussion at the state level that resulted in a district presentation to a panel of reviewers who provided meaningful feedback and support from a university professor who agreed to serve as an outside reviewer. The project was discussed at two board meetings and feedback was provided by citizens and others. There was evidence of good communication to schools. Letters of support from legislators, the city and county mayors, non-profits, and the University of Tennessee are provided. These activities and evidence are sound and contribute to stakeholder engagement and support. There was, however, no mention of attempts to engage key stakeholders such as parents and parent organizations and students. And there were no letters of support from them. More importantly there was no evidence of deep involvement of the staff or community in developing the proposal. While there was a letter of support from the teacher association president there was no evidence that CCSD a non union district has at least 70 percent of teachers from participating schools supporting the proposal. These are important omissions and weaken the quality of this section. It was awarded points in the middle level of quality.

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

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

There was no evidence of a plan for an analysis of the applicant's current status in implementing personalized learning environments. CCSD states that it examined historical data to identify five areas of concern or gaps. But information about who did it and how it was done are not provided. Five gaps were identified. These gaps reflect important areas and are statements of need reflecting a state of attainment that is unsatisfactory. While they are in important areas some are not stated as gaps and some are not clear. For example, Gap 2 states "students require remedial or developmental post-secondary courses." While this reflects a strong need, the gap that created that need is not identified. Gap 3 addresses the school district's "existing culture of low educational attainment expectations." It is not clear whether those low expectations of attainment are on the part of students, parents, teachers and/or others. Clarity about the gaps is critical because it drives or leads strategy. While the activities and strategies and the logic model included in this section had merit for aspects of the work to be done, it added little to better understand its gap analysis plan and did not promote clarity about the gaps. This area was scored in the low middle 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 district's plan for improving student learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment is of high middle level quality. It has many strengths. For example, it employs multiple approaches and has many sound activities for improving teaching and learning. Overlapping clusters derived from triangulation of examined gaps, objectives, and tasks aimed at closing those gaps to reach the goal: personalizing the district's students' educational environment has merit conceptually. The focus on STEM and on standards are important keys to success. A large number of activities promote students' understanding that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals. Tailoring work plans to meet student needs is a positive strategy for students and has promise for promoting the success of high needs students. The district's focus on high need schools and partnerships with The University of Tennessee and Walters State College also provides support for high need students. Other programs also have merit for promoting learning. These include career programs, summer school, assessments, career information/decision making, college fairs and visits, and advisement. It is important and positive that these and other activities will be carried out throughout the students' careers. But the plan has some structural weaknesses that hamper its effectiveness. The goals are not clear. Nor are the deliverables and parties responsible for activities. Although

timelines were provided for student activities none was provided for reform project activities. A number of the project activities for enhancing learning lack sufficient specificity to clarify how they will achieve their desired impact. For example the chart with student activities provides a lengthy list of what students will do, but there is a lack of information that describes how these activities will go beyond information sharing and impact students who have been described as having low maturity levels, vision, and expectations. Many of the proposed learning experiences have merit but lack scope and depth. The activities proposed are sound and well chosen but do not appear to be sufficient to produce a deep learning experience in areas of academic interest or allow students to master critical academic content, skills and traits. For example, the district's key strategy proposes 9-week progress reports to provide feedback and Facebook to keep students up to date on important events. These are sound strategies but may not be sufficient to overcome the effects of the deep culture identified in the proposal. In sum, while there are many sound strategies to promote student access to important elements such as a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development and digital learning, the district has not presented them as a plan with goals, deliverables, activities, timelines and responsible parties. It is also not clear how the key or critical elements are interrelated and tie together to produce the result the district seeks. Quality for this area was judged to be in the high middle range.

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

20

10

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

CCSD's plan for teaching and leading is of middle level quality. It has a number of strengths but also has significant weaknesses. Both are addressed below. The district proposes utilization of a Professional Learning Community for teachers that will exceed their goal of personalizing student learning by extending that environment into the world of teaching is a strength. It is an ambitious goal and marrying the two communities is a worthy big idea. But the district does not provide sufficient information to understand when or how the learning communities will be developed or how they will function. This has a significant impact on the quality of the plan. It provides a map for competencies needed for success that matches education needs with RTTD provided services. These competencies are sound and include provisions for developing tools, data, and resources. But the explanation lacks sufficient specificity. This lack of specificity prevails in other aspects. For example, CCSD proposes GEAR UP TN be used as a pilot for providing access to meet the need to provide a powerful data system. It will "offer" hands-on training via GEAR UP TN and then evaluate the results. It is not clear what the district will do to ensure that teachers accept that summertime offer or what they will do if the pilot data are not positive. It also provides sound performance measures but does not adequately describe how they will be achieved. For example, for internet training the district lists the topics to be covered as one of the highlights of the learning community but does not provide any additional information as to when and how and for whom it will be accomplished. It also does not appear that the services provided are sufficient to produce the challenging performance measures identified in Table 17 (RTTD Mapped Competencies) For example, educator development on common core standards and in-campus and in-community student tutoring advising are prescribed for increasing student performance on the ACT and other college entrance exams. While those activities prescribed may have some impact, surely a more comprehensive approach is needed. CCSD proposes use of TEAM, a Tennessee model for strengthening understanding, use, and application of value-added measures in teacher evaluation. This is a valid and timely way to strengthen the awareness of teachers and support their desire to improve student learning. The Tennessee teacher evaluation program (TVAAS) has been recognized as a powerful vehicle for improving teacher effectiveness and promoting student achievement. The district also will take advantage of LEAPS, a statewide professional development program for teachers, that is aimed at closing race, gender, and achievement gaps. The district presented a promising theory of change with core features that conceptualizes how teacher professional development will succeed. It also has a set of structures and elements that hold great promise. Although there was some mention of the need to improve instruction in low performing schools, there was no plan to ramp up instructional effectiveness at hard-to-staff schools. In sum, the district has identified many sound approaches to improving the effectiveness of educators and their ability to accelerate student progress. They are the strengths in this section. The significant weakness is the failure to link activities to a clear set of goals and specify deliverables, responsible parties, and timelines. This section was rated in the middle range for that reason.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

CCSD provided an up-to-date organizational chart that showed the superintendent as Director of Schools with line responsibility to the supervisors, coordinators and others as well as to the principals. There was no evidence that the district

would make any organizational, structural, or policy adjustments to promote RTTD and its mission and objectives. This is not a strength. The district presently has leadership teams in every school. It also has data teams. While it was noted that these teams have input in decision making there is no evidence they have sufficient flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and non educators, and school-level budgets as requested in the application. CCSD provides students the opportunity to earn credit on demonstrated mastery in both high schools. The Credit Recovery Program utilizes a PLATO learning and offers more than 200 courses. Credit Recovery Program is a sound idea and Plato is a proven effective credit program. It also uses TCAP data and Discovery Education Assessments to provide students opportunities to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways. This appears to be a viable method for demonstrating mastery. While CCSD has viable methods for analyzing data at the sub group level, no strategies to provide learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students are provided. CCSD scored was scored in the middle level range in this area.

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

10

7

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

CCSD's intent to provide access to content, tools, and other learning resources was made clear throughout the proposal. More systematic approaches to that task would strengthen the effort. The district demonstrates its commitment to parent support. For example, a Parent Involvement Supervisor assists all schools in increasing parent involvement through the use of school teams that provide all stakeholders access to tools and materials that foster learning. The district provides technology systems and has strategies that promote their use. They also have sound strategies for providing technical support. These include mobile labs, home visits, computer classes, and others. The district has a number of sound strategies for using information technology systems to export information to parents in an open data format. It also uses other electronic learning systems such as Electronic Library, in collaboration with the state department. There was no evidence that there were things in place in the district that allows parents to use the data in other electronic learning systems or of software that stores records. CCSD uses STAR Student data base system to enter and track student information data, budget data, and instructional improvement system data. These and other data system provide them a viable interoperable data system. A high middle rating was earned in this area.

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

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	3

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district's strategy for continuous improvement was judged to be very weak. The district pointed out that the state has structures and processes to provide student achievement data to support continuous improvement in districts and schools. The state teacher evaluation instrument, in particular, is a strong source of student and teacher performance. REPORT CARD, RANDA, ALERT NOW, and others appear to also have merit. But the district provided no additional information to clarify how it would systematically monitor and measure progress, as well as specific structures, such as TEAMS or processes, such as staff development to determine their effectiveness and make adjustments as needed during the term of the grant. A score in the low range was awarded in this area. The district has processes and structures in place such as TEAM to provide data and personnel to focus on and support continuous improvement. The district proposes that continuous improvement will also be enhanced through evaluation of the director of schools. But no specific processes or structures were provided to assess RTTD progress and its processes and investments nor were any other strategies offered to ensure continuous improvement.

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

5

3

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The district identified a program director as responsible for review and dissemination of data and communication. It provided a schedule of program milestones, evaluation timelines, and some information about dissemination of results and sustainability. These strengthened the area report because they provide a basis for adjusting among internal stakeholders. It is proposed that an evaluation report be provided and that the web, a symposium, conferences and other means be used as communication vehicles. These are positive communication vehicles. But it is not clear how the district will communicate with parents in a frequent, sustained manner. This impacts the district's ability to make changes that will impact parents, a key

stakeholder in this effort. A rating in the middle quality range was earned in this area.

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

5

3

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

This was judged to be an area of middle level strength. The district provided a number of measures to target performance and identified data to be collected. The measures are tied to RDDT objectives and are specific, measurable, and formative. No rationale for selecting measures was provided nor was it clear how they are tied to the proposed plan or theory of action. This weakened the area. In addition, many of the measures did not meet accepted criteria to be judged as *performance* measures. For example, attendance at a training and many other sessions or activities will be measured but no measures of the outcomes of the sessions were proposed. A plan was provided for review and improvement of the project over time. It was accompanied by specific valid program evaluation questions and a method of evaluation guided by an evaluation team was described. But no timeline, process or other data were provided. Performance measure improvement was addressed by the district. An explanation as to how data related to the measure was provided. But there was no discussion about how the data will be used to improve performance measures. Because of these shortcomings the area was rated in the middle level range.

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

5

2

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

CSSD proposes rigorous training on the use of data to evaluate the effectiveness of Race to the Top. It proposes comping the performance of the district schools to matched schools. It also proposes a focus on key student and parent data, school data, teacher data and analysis, and a focus on other stakeholders. While it is laudatory to examine results and to determine the return on investment, key important and costly processes such as staff development must also be continuously evaluated to determine their effectiveness and value added to the project. The omission of plans to evaluate the use of technology; the use of time, staff, money, and other resources, the value of specific structures (such as school leadership teams) and processes (such as communication) led to a low middle rating in this area.

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

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	7

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

CSSD provided a detailed budget and narrative. Included were project level budgets and narratives. It also described opportunities for matching funds and provided dollar amounts for those funds. The budget appeared to be reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal. It also provides a rationale for many investments and priorities that strengthened the proposal. There were areas where it had omissions or could have been stronger. For example, the applicant did not identify all funds that will be used to support the project including state, LEA, and other federal funds. Nor did it differentiate funds that will be used for one-time investments from those that will be used for ongoing operational costs that will be incurred during and after the grant period or focus on strategies that will ensure long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments. It earned a rating of high middle quality in this area.

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

10

0

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

CSSD provided an overall budget summary that summarized the budget by categories. But it did not provide a plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant, a budget for the three years after the term of the grant, or funding from the state or local government. No points were awarded because no information was provided to clarify how the project will be sustained.

## Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
--	-----------	-------

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	2
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Competitive Preference Priority earned a low score because the description and rationale for the partnership were not complete or compelling. CCSSD proposed a partnership with The Learning Place, a non-profit. The Learning Place would help with individual tutoring, use of highly qualified retired teachers, home visits, and inquiry-based learning, which is a viable method for enhancing student learning especially in STEM coursework. Little information was provided to promote understanding of how the partnership would promote sustainability, how it would impact students, integrate efforts within schools, build capacity, serve a specific population, or address specific objectives, such as the extent to which the partnership would enhance achievement of not more than 10 population-level desired results for students in the district that align with and support the RTTD proposal. It does not indicate if the partnership would track selected indicators that measure each result at the aggregate level, use the data to target its resources, be used to develop a strategy to scale the model beyond the participating students, improve results over time, integrate education and other services, or build the capacity of staff in participating schools by providing them with tools and supports. It was scored in the low level of quality.</p>		

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>CCSD met the absolute priority. First it provided evidence they have the capacity to build on the four assurance areas to significantly improve learning and teaching by personalizing learning environments. CCSD's vision will be useful and their approach to implementation was satisfactory. They were strong in reform and change. Their plan in the critical area of improving teaching and learning was at the high middle level of quality. And their plan for another critical area, teaching and leading was of sufficient strength. They also showed breadth; they scored at or above the middle level of quality in 17 of 19 application criteria. The plan was also at an acceptable level of coherence and comprehensiveness. When the criteria are viewed collectively CCSD met the absolute priority.</p>		

Total	210	103
-------	-----	-----

### Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	12
<p>Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>CCSSD proposed Project 1 to serve middle and high school mathematics and science teachers of Biology 1 and Algebra 1 focusing on bridging the gap between best practices, inquiry base instruction, and standardized achievement driven assessment practices. It provided a sound rationale for the project and its plan is of high quality with goals, rationale, deliverables, and a timeline with responsible parties. The project will be voluntary and open to middle and high school STEM teachers in Clairborne County and neighboring school districts for a minimum of 25 to 40 teachers. The project contained three objectives and will employ professional learning communities and a summer academy. It has two project facilitators. Its clarified materials and supplies needed and provided a budget that was both modest and matched activities and investment dollars. It also clearly described how the project would be carried out. It can be replicated across the nation. These aspects are the strength of the project. It lacks strength, however, in the extent to which it is truly an innovative solution and has significance for other districts. Given the modest budget (\$167,299) it is rated at the high middle level for quality.</p>		
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	12
<p>Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>CCSSD proposed Project 2 to empower teachers to close achievement gaps attributed to race, gender, and socioeconomic</p>		

status by addressing issues of equity in classroom instruction and through the development of culturally relevant (CRT) practices in STEM middle school classroom. It provided a sound rationale for the project including the five core elements of effective teaching. It provided a sound rationale for the project and its plan is of high quality with goals, rationale, deliverables, and a timeline with responsible parties. It employs an intense PD model and two summer school academies and requires 94 contact hours across 18 months. CCSD asserts that modeling, co-teaching, and inquiry based pedagogy building on the LEAPS program during the 2009-2010 school year and other components associated with strong professional development for teachers resulted in a well designed project. The project contained three strong objectives. It is supported by a project facilitator with strong qualifications. Materials and supplies needed were identified and the budget provided was modest and matched activities and investment dollars. It also clearly described how the project would be carried out. It can be replicated across the nation. These aspects are the strength of the project. The project has unique aspects and has potential for use in other districts. Given the modest budget (\$186,717) it is rated at the high middle level for quality.