



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0243GA-1 for Clayton County Board of Education

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The vision statement is coherent and comprehensive and based on the districts set of strategic goals. In a grant this specific mention of the four core educational assurance areas and how they fit into the districts plan would help focus the vision.</p> <p>There is no mention of college and career readiness, closing gaps or improving graduation rates. Only one sentence addressed personalized learning. Data later in the proposal shows that gaps and graduation rates need attention.</p> <p>Tie into the assurance areas can only be done by inference. As a result it is difficult to make conclusions about how the district will address those core areas.</p> <p>Based on the overall proposal, focus of the grant (personalized learning) and the progress of the district the vision rating is low.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration and reviewing goals done on a regular basis</li> <li>• Community supports are listed such as pre-school diagnostic center, a Prevention Intervention Education Center (to reduce truancy), an after school program and Campus Kids program</li> <li>• Data shows school demographic information</li> <li>• District chose all schools for grant based on closing achievement gap</li> </ul> <p>The process to select schools for this grant was not evident. One sentence covered this section of the approach to implementation and no other information was provided as a basis for the selection process. All schools were chosen based on closing gaps. The district did not target schools with larger gaps. This district did not look at root causes for academic problems which could be helpful in closing gaps and improving the graduation rate. It is commendable that the district reviews goals on a regular basis but this grant, specifically the personalized learning section could be a great value to target improvement. The lack of a selection process for schools or students makes the scope of this proposal huge.</p> <p>The list of schools participation is available and the data charts denote the required information.</p> <p>The data describing the participating low income population and teachers is clearly shown.</p>		
<b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<p><b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Because the district is in a previous RTTT grant many programs are in place that are designed to improve student achievement. in this section the district describes how all four core assurance areas are incorporated into school district operations. This infrastructure is an important foundation for the establishment of a personalized learning system. Because the plan will encompass all schools in the district a targeted pilot program with a scaled up to the district plan is not</p>		

proposed. The scope of the proposal may lead to implementation problems that could have been worked out in a smaller pilot.

The plan addresses how the district hopes to close gaps, accelerate achievement, reward teachers and integrate assessments using a personalized learning system.

Teachers using a coaching model will be under a personalized learning system for professional development.

The proposed action plan is described in detail. Key Goals, Timelines, Deliverables, Responsibilities, and goals are all appropriate.

<b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
--	-----------	----------

**(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

District data is presented with goals over the next 4 years

- Goals set to meet or exceed state performance targets
- Goals set to close gaps, increase graduation rates and improve college application rates
- Annual goals we presented and calculated using formulas

They are going to blend, braid or leverage these new RTTT-D funds with the previous RTTT3 funds to maximize services to students. Goals were set using baseline data from the 2011-2012 school year summative, assessments, closing gaps, graduation rates and college enrollment. Since the state longitudinal Data System is not in place, they have no information on post secondary degree attainment at this time.

The Reform agenda for the district lays out a comprehensive plan, based on the 4 assurance areas and increasing parent/community involvement. These are ambitious goals are certainly achievable especially in light of the district overcoming previous problems.

There was no information presented here that describes how a personalized learning system would help the district reach their goals.

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

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

**(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

- Increase in 3-8 Reading, LA, Science and Social Studies
- Graduation Rate with the new formula is 51.5%
- Math scores are "erratic"
- End of course exams in 9th grade Literature, composition, biology, physical science, economics, math and US history have improved
- Focus on improving attendance to improve graduation rate
- College enrollment data is "dismal"
- Data systems have not yet been developed enough or utilized to improve instruction
- The district's Professional Learning Center has had successes with alternative certification programs, training and certification for hard to fill positions and training all the staff in the new Common Core
- The Center also works with RTTT initiatives, building leadership capacity and principal induction programs
- Professional Learning Center is open for extended hours 7 am - 10 pm

- A staff position of community specialist works to expand opportunities for parents to become engaged in their child's education
- Title I programs involve parents
- The district has no "turnaround" schools but does have 17 focus or alert schools

In a district this large and with the problems of loosing accreditation, having school board problems and turnover in leadership, there are many initiatives that have been put in place to improve academic achievement. The Professional Learning Center is a resource that can be used to target professional development to address gaps in instructional areas. A community specialist is another resource that the district may call upon to bring the school and community together. There are data systems in place. The question of "How do we use data to improve instruction" is a key statement. There has been some improvement in achievement and end of course exam scores but the overall scores are below national averages. Gaps to English Learners and Students with Disabilities are evident. Graduation rates are in the 50% range.

Based on all of the information there are a number of initiatives in place but as of yet there is not a clear record of success. Achievement, Gaps, graduation rates and college enrollment are all low. Although there are no turnaround schools, 17 schools are focus or alert schools. They get additional support with a number of programs. Performance data is available to school staff but there is no mention of how parents can access the information.

The district talks about using a data system to personalize student, teacher and leader learning through customization, but it is only a one sentence comment.

<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
---	----------	----------

**(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The narrative describes a high level of transparency in the reporting of district salaries, financial reports and information sent to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Salary information is available on their school web site and a state of Georgia web site. The district has received awards in the area of financial reporting and accounting. The data for financial activity in various funds is available on their school web site. Of special note is that school board meetings are televised. The appendix provided detailed information on school level instructional and support staff salaries. Other operational expenses were listed by school level. There is much evidence to support the current transparency and availability of this information with the school district.

<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
--	-----------	----------

**(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

- Use of a blended learning approach for personalized learning
- Head Start and Early Head Start programs have been implemented-teacher notes guide development
- An early Intervention Program uses a software system to track progress and keep students on track for graduation
- English for Speakers of Other Languages provides assistance to K-12 students with limited English skills
- Software-based Remedial Education Program - required under state law - in place
- Alternative students in high school and middle school participate in blended learning programs--virtual instruction and face to face, more training is required to better use this resource
- Dual enrollment program offered
- Career, Technical and Agricultural Education is offered at all district high schools, however student performance on end-of-pathway assessments is underdeveloped
- New grant will provide STEM offerings in middle school
- Web-Based Senior Exit Portfolio is based on college and career readiness with new grant used to expand program down to 4th grade
- District seen as technology rich but integration and implementation of the tools is a challenge
- 8th Technology Literacy Exam shows only 1% of student score at the Advanced Proficiency Level]
- With grant district will employ staff to create online learning modules based on district needs

District has many initiatives in place from Pre K services to dual enrollment options. It is evident by the number of different resources available in the district that there is a willingness to try different approaches to improve achievement. Data from

the district virtual schools shows that online coursework has helped students "pass." A senior portfolio which is based in college are career readiness is an initiative that they want to incorporate starting in grade 4. The assumption is that this will be part of every grade from 4 through 12.

It is clear that the district is willing to try programs that will improve student achievement. They are working with state level officials on the RTTT 3 state of Georgia grant. There was no discussion on waivers for the issue of seat time versus mastery of a subject.

There was no evidence presented how this concept would improve student achievement or college enrollment. Based on what the district has done over the past few years, another initiative. The change in school culture, instructional methods and school procedures needs to be addressed to create a personalized learning system.

<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
--	-----------	----------

**(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

- Input for this grant "has been gathered over time"
- During a district's strategic plan meeting, the writing team gathered input
- Draft of grant posted on web site allowing 10 days of public comment--2 comments received
- Staff was surveyed showing a 90% strongly support or support the grant
- Comments of staff taken into consideration
- On staff is a Community/Communication Specialist
- Letters of support included in appendix

With a grant of this scope there was no evidence of a specific meeting to gather stakeholder input. The district did use district strategic planning sessions to gather community input. A Staff survey garnered a 76% response in support of the grant. The Georgia Department of Education reviewed the proposal and had many suggestions. A cross-functional team drafted the initial response to the grant. The draft was posted on their web site. The grant was edited several times to incorporate comments and suggestions from stakeholders. Letters of support from many sources were included. Comments or letters from the mayors was not in evidence. Correspondence shows that they had four days or less to comment on the grant. Overall the grant writing team received input from many sources using a variety of methods. Collaboration, time to comment and lack of information from the mayors offices would be a concern, especially considering the amount of grant money involved.

<b>(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
---	----------	----------

**(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:**

The district presents a plan that covers the goal areas of standards and assessments, preparing students for college, effective teachers and leaders, use of data systems and community engagement. Gaps were identified for each priority area. Gaps were shown in college and career ready statistics and the gap that exists between "highly qualified teachers" and the statement that "our teachers are not effective for many students." There was unclear logic presented about how implementation of personalized learning environments would improve student performance. The activities listed in the plan were extensive and all geared at academic achievement. The details of a personalized learning environment was lacking both in the narrative and in the action plan.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>11</b>

**(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

Because the district is implementing a personalize learning system across all grade levels, it is difficult to cover all areas required in this section. A multitude of programs, initiatives, and models are packaged together in this part of the grant that are proposed to engage and empower the learner. Although there is national data to support improved achievement for some of the programs (AVID, STEM) there is not a connection made between using a learning portfolio and student achievement. The scope of the grant makes it very difficult to focus on a system that engages and empowers all learners. The implementation strategies list a number of uses for technology. Assessments, field trips - both virtual and real, use of an academic inventory to create individualized lesson plans, and the use of a working portfolio for grades 4-12 are part of the plan.

There is evidence of strategies that include college and career ready programs through all the grade bands. The concepts such as career and college counseling support at the elementary level are appropriate.

A key concept of having students engaged in their own learning by exploring an area of interest is not discussed. A system where students can measure their progress toward goals is not described in detail. The use of a portfolio is the proposed mechanism but the description and link to a personalized learning system is insufficient.

The strategy for exposure to different cultures will be addressed through a world language program at all grade levels is appropriate.

The innovation to create a personalized learning system is lost in whole sequence of other programs listed in the grant. True personalization including the learning environment, high quality instructional approaches and training to students to use the tools and resources are not evident. All of the programs listed are appropriate to move a district forward but there is a disconnect between this list and a personalized sequence of instructional content. High quality digital content is not described and its use is limited in the strategies listed.

Feedback is given via a number of assessments that are part of the overall strategy.

The concept of personalized learning recommendations is only lightly considered at the Pre-K level. The district proposed to create individualized learning plans based on an academic inventory. This specific concept is not carried forth in later grade levels.

Accommodations and strategies for high need students are addressed and there is data to show that the district has been successful in improving scores.

This section is a multi-faceted approach to the concept of a personalized learning system. Details and specific plans are unclear. Innovative use of the technology infrastructure was minimal.

<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>8</b>
--	-----------	----------

**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The district has a number of programs to help build the capacity of its teaching staff. Content skill development, common core training, programs for teachers of English learners, coaches, evaluation system, a teacher effectiveness system, recruiting systems, stipends for math endorsement, and a Professional Learning Department are all tools the district can use to improve learning and teaching. The section did not sufficiently address the improvement of learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment. There was talk about the staff needing to undergo a significant paradigm shift, but the answer to that was to expand the frequency of measuring student progress. With the overall scores, graduation rate and gaps, the teachers do need to have a significant paradigm shift and change the focus on measurement to their own instruction. There was little evidence to show the design of a personalized learning and teaching system for all students.

There are resources available in the district to help that process. The new evaluation system will help improve teachers and provide more feedback to improve instruction. There is also a new system to evaluate leaders.

Although coaching models were discussed, there was no evidence to show teachers were part of a professional learning community or team. The Professional Learning department is a great resource and open beyond the school day. The existence of teacher teams was not indicated.

There is evidence that students are monitored/tested on a regular basis. They are moving toward a system that will combine all the data to make decision making easier.

Professional Development is evident but it has not yet shown an impact on student scores or closing of gaps. This department also helps in the training of staff for hard to fill areas and additional staff certification. They did show that 100% of their staff were highly qualified teachers.

The district has many projects and resources in place. Their scores, gaps and graduation rate is an issue to be addressed. There is an overall weakness between development of a personalized learning system and what they propose to do with the grant money.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>
<p><b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The district has comprehensive policies and and infrastructure to support all schools and students in the district. The administrative infrastructure is in place to support the grant.</p> <p>School leadership teams are mentioned in this part of the grant. Their roles and responsibilities were minimally covered in the narrative. The role of the district and building leadership team was not clear. There was no data on who is on the team, how often they meet or how much influence they have on decision-making process. The use of school leadership teams need to expand in light of the requirements of this grant. The district "makes attempts" to make sure appropriate people are part of the decision making process but this comment demonstrates that a formalized input system for stakeholders is limited.</p> <p>The district is willing to address the issue of mastery over seat time through a change in Board Policy. Students are certainly assessed throughout their school careers but standards-based report cards are not yet in place. Their special education department has tools to provide students with appropriate instructional practices.</p> <p>The support to special needs students and those with limited English skills is documented. Use of the Universal Design for Learning and an International Center for multilingual parents demonstrate the districts committment to providing targeted services for the school community.</p>		
<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
<p><b>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The district does have technology services and equipment available to staff, students and parents. The computer labs have extended hours which allows parents and students access beyond regular school hours. The district provides computer equipment to staff, but there is no mention on equipment on loan for students. There is a plan to provide support to those using the computer labs with a district dsignee in the school and staff online to help students with their computerized assignments. The district has also worked a deal to provide parents with a reasonable home internet access option. Plans call for technology staff to build online lessons aligned to student and parent needs. Their use of Infinite Campus will allow for an interoperable data management system. The components are in place for an off the shelf curriculum package run through the computer labs. Innovation and the change in educational culture are not addressed.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>

**(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

A continuous improvement system that is used throughout the district and for overall improvement efforts is not described. The use of strategic planning with input from stakeholders sets the framework for an improvement system but the plan lacks details of progress monitoring and benchmarks.

The district has a set of tools to measure and monitor this grant over the 4 year term. Benchmarks are set and performance measures are determined. Because of the huge scope of this grant it will be hard to determine how the actual personal learning system affects student achievement.

They are also vague on "specific programs" that will undergo intensive evaluation during the last 2 years of the grant. Overall all the data collected can be used to monitor improvement in the district. The weakness is in measuring the effectiveness of a personalized learning system because of the shotgun nature of the plan.

A community outreach team and outside evaluator will be used to help determine the effectiveness of the initiative.

They will use information from a state developed teacher, principal and superintendent evaluation systems to link student achievement to employee performance.

<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
---	----------	----------

**(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

There is evidence that the district does have resources it can call upon to engage and inform internal and external stakeholders. A Community/communication specialist and Parent Liaison Specialist can be key parts to the ongoing engagement piece. The district will also create a community outreach team to help in the engagement and communication aspect of the initiative.

The narrative describes its strategic plan to address improvements. Community meetings, communication, and the creation of the staff positions to increase capacity in this area is commendable.

<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
---	----------	----------

**(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The narrative describes a number of performance measures that will be used during the course of the grant. Teacher and principal effectiveness will be part of the data once available. Data for teacher effectiveness or principal effectiveness will not start until the state RTTT-based system is in place.

Student attendance will be measured in all grade levels.

In the pre-K area, the district will use Student Learning Objectives that are being developed by the State of Georgia. These can be tied back to the teacher evaluation program to determine teacher effectiveness based on student outcomes. Reading and math is also a data tool in this grade band.

In the grades 4-8 band there is evidence that performance measures will be in place to monitor college and career readiness. The district will also look for increases in students who pass all five portions of the state tests.

In grades 9-12 FAFSA form tracking, lexile measurements, college and career assessments and math data will be used as performance measures.

Fitnessgram is being used as a performance measure in all grade levels. How this assessment is tied to a personalized learning system was not identified.

A short description of a Social-Emotional performance measure was described. It was unclear if this was a curriculum level test or some other sort of assessment.

Rationale is supplied for the performance measures. Some areas have baseline data, others will be collected over the term of the grant. The measurements presented will provide good data to help guide improvement efforts and it is

comprehensive by including subgroups. The goals for student attendance are very lofty, perhaps too lofty--reaching a zero point at the end of the grant period. There was no information on how the data will be reviewed and improved as a measuring tool over time. Again, the data is important to collect and analyze but it is missing how the use of a personalized learning system can be tracked. This was not mentioned in this section of the grant.

<b>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
--	----------	----------

**(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The scope of this grant making specific evaluations of program elements difficult. The narrative is limited discussion with regards to the details of a personalized learning system. This makes evaluation difficult. The performance measures are described and most are appropriate in terms of advancing student achievement and getting students on the path to college and career readiness. The specific linkage to a personalized learning system is obscure.

The approach to continuous improvement of the plan is very limited and the link to a personalized learning system is weak. If students do not score well on the FITNESSGRAM, there is not a clear plan to address the problem. The same can be said for the other performance measures.

The independent variables of this proposal, such as professional development, technology investments, teacher evaluations and others are hard to track based on the project design. That makes it difficult to say that one initiative provided better results than another.

The districts has laid out a process to monitor, review and communicate about the grant progress. Two way communication between the grant manager and buildings was described. Missing was how the district will look at changing how they do business to meet the needs of students and this grant.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>

**(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

The budget is will defined, organized and easy to follow. Additional funds are identified throughout the budget. Monies are divided into the main application areas. There is a concentration on additional testing and hiring assessment staff. Additional coaches will be hired under the grant. Resources will be allocated toward building parent and community communication. Stipends for professional development was throughout the budget. Principals are given some funds for "encouraging on-going incentives." It is unclear if this relates to the link between student achievement and teacher performance.

The grant states that the "heart of the plan is to guarantee that every child has an effective teacher." Personalized learning environments are a secondary part to that premise. Most budget areas do not address this component of the grant. Overall the budget is put together to further collect data, provide more outreach, buy a data system, put in some targeted school reform programs and buy coaches. Other fund sources are part of the budget narrative but specific fund sources are not identified in the budget line item.

The narrative states that the use of funds were planned to ensure sustainability but details on how that occurs was not presented.

One time costs are identified by line item.

<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The district talks about the ability to sustain the project after the grant period by moving fund sources, seeking additional grants and there will be less need because the staff will be trained to use data.</p> <p>The costs of the additional assessments to be purchased with grant funds was not specifically discussed.</p> <p>A budget for 3 years after the grant was not described. Potential savings opportunities were mentioned. The efficiencies in instruction created by a personalized learning system were not in evidence.</p> <p>The section lacked specific information about a personal learning environment and how that would be supported in years following the grant. Instead the narrative describes a formative assessment system, a student tracking system and performance management system. Here there is a disconnect between a personalized learning system and what the district will be doing over the course of the grant.</p> <p>The responsibility for sustainability is listed as the grant development writer and the RTTT-D supervisor. Funds for technology are available through a special tax source. A high quality plan is not in evidence. Timelines and deliverables are not described.</p>		

**Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)**

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>
<p><b>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>This section was not part of this narrative.</p>		

**Absolute Priority 1**

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>	<b>Met/Not Met</b>	<b>Met</b>
<p><b>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>This application was very broad in scope and did not comprehensively address the significantly improving learning and teaching through personalization strategies. All assurance areas were addressed throughout the proposal.</p> <p>Additional assessments, evaluating educators, buying software or data management packages, implementing AVID and adding teacher coaches did not address the development of personalization strategies for students.</p> <p>Because the grant was a shotgun approach it did not address how the district can change the culture and test the direct impact of a personalized learning program.</p> <p>The district has great needs as evidenced in the graduation rate, gaps, achievement scores, college enrollment, accreditation problems and superintendent turnover.</p> <p>Information on a personalized learning system was sparse.</p>		

--	--	--

Total	210	119
-------	-----	-----



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0243GA-2 for Clayton County Board of Education

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant's reform vision builds on its work in four educational assurance areas. With goals aligned to Race to the Top and Race to the Top-District, the applicant has demonstrated evidence of focus on the four core educational reform areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant has adopted standards and assessments and articulated ongoing plans to ensure fidelity of implementation and augmentation.</li> <li>• The applicant has demonstrated the capacity or plans to build capacity for robust data systems that measure student growth and success and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction.</li> <li>• The applicant has a viable plan for recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals.</li> <li>• The applicant has demonstrated success in school turnaround efforts and regaining district accreditation.</li> </ul> <p>A major strength of the applicant's reform vision is its ongoing and focused professional development efforts and plans to augment learning opportunities for educators that are multifaceted, differentiated, and available in multiple formats. Sustained over time, these reform efforts have the capacity to improve student outcomes in all domains. The applicant has multiple supports in place for educators at all levels of development, and recognizes teachers and leaders as critical change agents.</p> <p>Another strength of the applicant's reform initiative is its desire to continue to build capacity for data system and technology acquisition and application in a comprehensive and sustainable manner. The applicant recognizes that it is in the infancy stages of data usage, and appears to be poised to embark upon a journey that will provide rich data sources that, if utilized appropriately, will support its goal of high achievement and equitable access to educational resources for all students.</p> <p>The applicant's vision for reform is grounded in academic standards and includes myriad assessments and programs across the PK-12 continuum. This is both an area of strength and an area of challenge. In terms of strength, it demonstrates that the applicant seeks to provide multiple programs and initiatives, and accompanying assessments, for a diverse student population. In terms of challenge, having so many programs and initiatives may prove unmanageable for educators and students and, rather than strengthen the academic program and deepen student learning, lead to unfocused fragmentation.</p> <p>Many components of the applicant's reform vision are comprehensive and coherent and provide a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support, but such is not evident throughout.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>

**(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

(A)(2) The applicant has indicated a district-wide, PK-12 (all content areas) approach to implementing its reform proposal that includes all traditional school sites (61) and three (3) non-traditional sites.

(a) The applicant cites that all school sites were selected based the percent of students qualifying for free/reduced meals, the district's participation in Race to the Top (RT3), and on the need to close the achievement gaps between groups as evidenced by Table 3: Student Achievement Gaps on the EOCT.

- Gap identification appears to be incomplete: Table 3 data for High School is disaggregated by school site and only includes information for All students. However, the applicant has provided complete subgroup baseline data for Summative Assessments on Table 7 and Achievement Gap for Lowest Performing Subgroup on Table 8.

(b) The applicant has listed the schools that will participate in grant activities.

(c) The applicant has indicated the number of participating sites/schools (64), the number of participating students (51,891), the number of participating students from low-income families (6,564), the number of participating students who are high-need students (45,327), and the number of participating participating educators (3,864).

- There is a discrepancy in the number of participating students from low-income families as listed in Table 1 (6,564) and Table 6, column E (45,327).

<b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
--	-----------	----------

**(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant states that scale-up efforts will not require additional LEA action as all schools/sites are grant participants. However, the applicant states that many of the proposed reform initiatives are conducive to scale-up. The applicant indicates that the reform measures are research based, however, no supporting evidence of this claim was provided. The applicant identified several higher education institutions and one local law enforcement agency as ongoing, sustainable collaborative partnerships with plans to continue to develop similar partnerships.

**Reform Agenda One**

The applicant's Reform Agenda One demonstrates an actionable, and policy-supported, commitment to fully implementing Common Core Standards, College and Career Readiness, on-going student assessment in multiple formats, and robust utilization of data.

**Reform Agenda Two**

The applicant's Reform Agenda Two indicates a College and Career Ready Plan and demonstrates current implementation of College and Career Readiness assessments including AP , ACT, IB, PLAN, PSAT, SAT, COMPASS/ACCESS, and industry certification/work readiness.

- There insufficient evidence re how the applicant analyzes College and Career Readiness assessment data and uses the results to inform teaching and learning and shares assessment data with students, families, and school personnel.
- It is unclear how the applicant provides/or will provide academic support that reduces the number of graduates who require postsecondary learning support services.
- Opportunities to learn, or plans for opportunities to learn, in environments outside of the classroom are evident.
- A College and Career Readiness plan has been implemented, and there is some evidence of and plans for ongoing monitoring and data collection, analysis, and dissemination.

**Reform Agenda Three**

The applicant's Reform Agenda Three indicates current utilization and plans underway for the implementation of data systems to inform teaching and learning and dissemination of achievement results to students, school personnel, and families. These include an interoperable SIS, SLDS linkage, use of other system data, and the pending purchase of a new assessment system that supports the CCSS and enables robust data reporting for multiple purposes.

- The applicant demonstrates ambitious and achievable processes to ensure a robust data system and presents a viable plan to inform all constituents as appropriate.
- The applicant ascertains the need for additional support regarding how best to utilize data and articulates a logical data use progression that includes ongoing professional development, monitoring, and evaluation.
- (Optional) The applicant currently does not have a longitudinal data system that matches PK-12 and higher education data. The applicant has not identified a mechanism to collect and report this data and such is not indicated in the applicant's Action Plan.

#### **Reform Agenda Four**

The applicant's Reform Agenda Four indicates evaluation systems are in place for teachers and leaders.

- The applicant states that a Superintendent evaluation system should be developed, however, the timeline for the development and implementation of this system was unclear and is not included in the Action Plan.

The applicant's Reform Agenda Four indicates operational and achievement level support personnel are evident at multiple levels of the system including Area Support Teams and site-based support.

The applicant's Reform Agenda Four indicates job-embedded reform efforts through a multifaceted approach to professional development.

- The applicant identifies eight reform strategies for which professional development has been provided to 4,000 educators over a two-plus year timeframe. However, "educator" is not defined and it is unclear if this professional development was provided to teachers, paraprofessionals, other instructional staff, administrators, or all. The applicant does not indicate the nature of the professional development, i.e.... sustained over time or provided via "one-shot" workshops. Additionally, the applicant does not identify the number, timeframe, or grade bands, if applicable, of teachers receiving the technology integration, critical thinking, and literacy across the curriculum training.

The applicant's Reform Agenda Four does not fully address how the district retains/plans to retain effective teachers and leaders where they are needed most.

- Although the applicant's Action Plan identifies a disparity between current teacher evaluation results with student outcomes, the Action Plan does not explicitly address how the district identifies areas of high need and how teachers to fill those needs are/will be identified.
- It is not evident how the applicant identifies and assigns effective leaders where they are needed most.
- The applicant implements a Mathematics Endorsement program for up to 1,000 teachers to address a high-needs area, however, it does not identify the selection process for participants or explain how individuals attaining the endorsement will serve where they are needed most.

#### **Reform Agenda Five**

The applicant's Reform Agenda Five demonstrates a focused effort to improve communication, community involvement, and stakeholder engagement.

- The applicant proposes new initiatives, beginning with development of a district-wide communication protocol, to increase parent engagement such as Parent Centers, newsletters, and Parent Academies.
- The enhancement of ongoing initiatives provide a foundation for improved communication, involvement, and engagement.
- The applicant currently provides data training for parents regarding student growth and success.

- The applicant proposes to provide educational instructional resources to parents "when they have demonstrated high levels of commitment, engagement, and involvement" with their school. However, it is unclear as to what constitutes high levels or how parents who do not meet this criteria will be alternatively served.

**Theory of Action**

The applicant's Theory of Action is supported by its Reform Agenda, maintains student achievement as the central focus, and recognizes the critical role of highly effective teachers and administrators, involved parents, and engaged community.

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

**10**

**5**

**(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

(A)(4) (a)

The applicant has determined annual performance targets for improvement to meet or exceed the State's performance targets as set forth by the ESEA waiver over time and by 2016. However, the State's ESEA targets are not stated, thus the applicant's proposed targets cannot be verified.

- Based on data provided on Table 7: Performance on Summative Assessments, the applicant has set realistic and attainable incremental achievement goals for most subgroups.
- Based on the aforementioned data, achievement goals for Students With Disabilities appear to be overly ambitious and are minimally supported by explicit student interventions. The applicant provides reasonable measures of identifying SWD throughout the application, however, the applicant's Action Plan provides limited evidence of the involvement of the Director of Special Education Services or explicit measures to address disproportionality.
- There are several inconsistencies in data projections from SY 2011-2012 to Goals. For example, using the applicant's formula for Target Growth *CRCT Language Grade 05* indicates a Baseline of 89% and SY 2012-2013 target of 94.8%. The target, based on the applicant's formula, should be 91%. Calculation errors from Baseline to the first target year create YOY target data errors.

(A) (4) (b)

The applicant has determined annual targets to decrease the gap between the lowest performing subgroup/s and All students. However, the State's ESEA targets are not stated, thus the applicant's proposed targets cannot be verified.

- Data for subgroups and comparison groups render an attainable and realistic decrease in achievement gaps from Baseline SY 2011-2012 to SY 2012-2013. However, the annual decrease in the achievement gap is reported as static through SY 2016-2017. For example, *CRTC Language Grade 03- Subgroup SWD* predicts SY 2012-2013 proficiency rates of 84.5% for All and 54.5% for SWD, a 4.6% decrease in the achievement gap from baseline to SY 2012-2013. Projections provided for SY 2013 indicate proficiency rates of 88% for All and 65% for SWD, resulting in a decrease in achievement gap between the subgroups of 2.875%.

(A) (4) (c)

The applicant has determined realistic and attainable annual graduation targets for most subgroups. However, the State's ESEA targets are not stated, thus the applicant's proposed targets cannot be verified.

- The applicant demonstrated incremental increases in graduation rates from 2007-2011 under the proxy rate, but experienced a decreased graduation rate under the adjusted cohort rate. However, the baseline data are inconsistently reported. For example, in (B) (1) the applicant reports a SY 2010-2011 Baseline graduation rate of 51.5%, but Table 9: Graduation Rates indicates a graduation rate of 58.3%. Additionally, graduation rates for SY 2011-2012 are not included.
- Graduation rates for SWD may be unrealistic. The applicant provides reasonable measures of identifying SWD throughout the application and overall measures of holistic support for increased graduation rates, however, the applicant's Action Plan provides limited evidence of the involvement of the Director of Special Education Services or explicit measures to address disproportionality.

(A) (4) (d)

The applicant has determined realistic and attainable College Enrollment Goals. However, the State's ESEA targets are not stated, thus the applicant's proposed targets cannot be verified.

The applicant has indicated a number of programs and initiatives will be, or are currently, implemented to support students and prepare them for postsecondary education. These strategies/programs/projects are in addition to and integrated with increasing the effectiveness of instructional workforce and parent and community support/engagement, such as:

- Guidance counselors utilize Own the Turf to create a school culture of college readiness and GACollege411, a program that provides online assistance for students and families plan for higher education, select a college, and apply for admission.
- College and Career Ready Counselors
- AVID
- STEM and World Languages
- Career Interest Inventories
- AP, IB, Dual Credit, Blended Learning, Virtual Learning and Experiential learning
- Assessment prep and monitoring such as PSAT, EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT, SAT, COMPASS/ACCESS
- Transition programming and support for students with disabilities and English language learners
- A College and Career Readiness plan has been implemented, and there is some evidence of and plans for ongoing monitoring and data collection, analysis, and dissemination.

The applicant's course of proposed action, coupled with the overall PK-12 improvement strategy, has the potential to increase the number of students ready for and enrolling in postsecondary coursework if implemented with fidelity. The proposed site-based and external supports and resources include students and families. Assessment, assessment preparation, assessment monitoring and evaluation, along with counselor and educator support, provide a credible foundation for preparing students for graduation and postsecondary education.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>
<p><b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(B) (1) (a)</p> <p>The applicant has myriad programs and supports to improve student learning outcomes and close achievement gaps, but a clear record of success in the past four years is not supported by the data provided.</p> <p>The applicant states that there have been statistically significant increases in student achievement levels for students in grades 3-8 in the areas of Reading, Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three years of data were included for CRTC Reading and Language Arts for subgroups All, SWD, and ELL via Table 15; three years of data were included for CRTC Reading and Language Arts in the aggregate via Figures 3 and 4.</li> <li>• Data reporting for these content areas contain inconsistencies. For example, data for Grade 5 Reading via Table 15 indicate the following scores: 2010- 84%; 2011-82%; 2012-92%,while Figure 3 indicates 2010-84%; 2011-83%; 2012-86%. Such consistencies are prevalent throughout the two documents provided.</li> <li>• No data were provided for Science and Social Studies, thus increases in student achievement levels cannot be verified.</li> <li>• Data provided via the CRTC charts (Figures 3 and 4) indicate achievement gains from 2010 to 2012 for the following content areas/grade levels: Language Arts Grade 4, Grade 5, Grade 7, Grade 8; Reading Grades 4-8.</li> <li>• Disaggregate data (Table 15) indicates achievement gains from 2010 to 2012 for the following content areas/grade levels for subgroup SWD: Language Arts Grades 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8; Reading Grades 3-8; and for subgroup ELL: Language Arts Grades 3 and 7; Reading Grades 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8.</li> <li>• Statistical significance cannot be verified by the given data sets.</li> </ul>		

The applicant indicates erratic student achievement for Grades 3-8 for the three-year period of 2010-2012, and the data substantiate this claim.

For all available content area data, achievement levels for subgroups SWD and ELL are below or far below the achievement levels for subgroup All students.

End of Course Assessments for high school students for SY 2010 to 2012 indicate gains in student achievement levels for all reported content areas for subgroup All students.

- Mathematics I, Mathematics II, Biology and U.S. History for subgroup All students indicate SY 2012 scores with pass rates ranging from 34% to 53%. Subgroups
- Subgroup SWD showed improvement in American Literature, Physical Science, Economics, Mathematics I, and U.S. History; Subgroup ELL showed improvement in every content area except Biology and Mathematics I.
- For all available content area data, achievement levels for subgroups SWD and ELL are below or far below the achievement levels for subgroup All students.

SAT scores indicate an overall district change of 1% from SY 2011 to 2012. Significant disparities exist between district schools, with overall change ranging from an increase of 59% to a loss of 66% at one of the districts "Alert" high schools.

A single data set were provided for the SY 2011-2012 Career Pathways assessment, indicating a 34% pass rate. Data for this assessment were disaggregated by subject area only.

SY 2011-2012 Online learning, including Credit Recovery, Georgia Virtual School, and District Virtual indicate improved or acceptable student pass rates. Data for these assessments were not disaggregated.

High School Graduation Rates indicated incremental improvement from SY 2007-2011 using the proxy or leaver's rate. However, using the cohort method required an adjustment of the applicant's graduation rate from 80.2% to 51.5%, the new baseline. Disparities for subgroups SWD and ELL exist for High School Graduation rates for SY 2010-2011. Data were not disaggregated by subgroup for prior years.

College Enrollment SY 2011-2012, disaggregated by subgroup, indicates a rate of 41% overall, with subgroup rates ranging from 56% (Asian/Pacific Islander) to 21% (ELL). Disparities for subgroups SWD and ELL exist for College Enrollment rates.

(B) (1) (b)

The applicant has demonstrated an understanding of and ability to implement school reform methods as evidenced by its recent reaccreditation. Additionally, the applicant has demonstrated an understanding and ability to implement school reform methods as evidenced by the reclassification of Lovejoy Middle School's LAS designation.

(B) (1) (c)

The applicant currently makes student performance data available to student, educators, and parents. The applicant Action Plan addresses measures to communicate student performance data to students, educators, and parents. The applicant plans to develop a Data Governance Committee to oversee policy and implications of granting more data access to students. Additionally, the applicant has adopted an interoperable student data system, Infinite Campus, and is considering a new integrated assessment system. Training for staff, students, and parents on data use, analysis, and application is currently provided and will be augmented. A qualitative evaluation of Goal 3 criteria is planned.

<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
---	----------	----------

**(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant demonstrates a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments, including public disclosure of the same, and has been recognized for its financial reporting practices.

The applicant makes school level expenditures from State and local funds are made available to the public via Open Georgia, the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Georgia Department of Education, and the LEA website. The applicant has demonstrated disclosure compliance and has been recognized for its financial reporting practices.

- Financial data and personnel salary are provided to multiple regulatory organizations annually and posted on Open Georgia.
- The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report is completed annually through the district's business department. This report is posted on the district's website. According to the applicant, excellence in financial reporting have resulted in several Certification of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Accounting awards.
- The applicant submits financial information re annual salaries and benefits for teachers and support personnel to the Bureau of Labor statistics National Labor Survey for the U.S. Department of Labor.
- Financial information re salary and travel is provided to the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts, and published in accordance with the Georgia Transparency Act.

The applicant has provided the information required to meet criterion (B) (2).

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

**10**

**6**

**(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

- The applicant solicited review from the Georgia Department of Education and received specific feedback on each proposal component. However, it does not appear that the applicant revised all portions of the application to reflect the SEA's recommendations.
- The applicant cites evidence of implementing existing PK-12 reform strategies and identifies planned initiatives to augment current implementation, and specifies new initiatives.
- The applicant does not reference State legal, statutory, or regulatory requirements to implement personalized learning environments described in the proposal and information provided does not fully address this criterion.

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

**10**

**6**

**(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

(B) (4) (a)

- The applicant developed a cross-functional team to draft the initial response to the grant. The composition of and selection criteria for this team is not stated.
- The applicant solicited stakeholder engagement through school improvement and parent engagement surveys, public planning meetings, a public comment period on the draft application posted on the district's website, following public presentations, and via web-based communications. However, the frequency of each type of engagement is vague, and no scheduling documentation is provided.
- Area Superintendents, principal supervisors, and building administrators were responsible for soliciting feedback from parents, teachers, and students. The method and/or data collection instruments for feedback for parents and teachers was stated, however it is not evident how student feedback was solicited or how those data were collected, analyzed, or used.
- The applicant states that revisions were made based on solicited feedback, however, examples of specific revisions are not identified.

(B) (4) (ii)

It is not evident that at least 70% of teachers from participating schools support the proposal. The applicant states that a survey was sent to school and district staff soliciting feedback and level of support and received a 76% response rate (3,130 out of 4, 069 employees). According to the data provided, 2,328 teachers participated in the survey. The survey responses are not disaggregated by district position or respondent type; it is not clear what constituents are responsible for the 90% approval rating. The support rate of participating teachers was cited in the Georgia Department of Education's response to the applicant's initial proposal.

It is not clear how the applicant used stakeholder input and recommendations to revise the proposal. This was cited in the Georgia Department of Education's response to the applicant's initial proposal.

(B) (4) (b)

The applicant included seven letters of support from the following community members/organizations: Solicitor General of Clayton County, Board of Commissioners of Clayton County, Chick-fil-A, Clayton County Fire and Emergency Services, Moorehouse College, Community Impact Center, and Herff Jones Scholastic. However, letters of support are not specific in detail regarding the scope of support would offered during and post the implementation period.

Mayoral input was solicited via email on September 28, 2012, but the applicant did not receive a response.

<b>(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
---	----------	----------

**(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant's does not effectively communicate its plan for analysis of current status in implementing PLEs and minimally addresses the logic behind the reform proposal. The applicant does not coherently or convincingly identify the needs and gaps that the plan will address. The applicant provides an action plan that includes timelines, goals, myriad activities, resources, deliverables, and responsible parties, but the action plan lacks specific focus and does not adequately address or provide convincing evidence that the action plan will systemically and systematically create and maintain effective PLEs for all students.

No formal implementation gap analyses or process for conducting the same are included in the proposal, however, gap identification is included in various components of the applicant's narrative. The applicant's current status in implementing personalized learning environments is not explicitly stated, but the applicant acknowledges a critical need for resources that systematically and systemically create and maintain PLEs for all students. The applicant states that there is some evidence of instances of PLE at every grade band. However, this statement is not substantiated with evidence and was identified in the comment section of the Georgia Department of Education's review of the RTT-D proposal as a statement that was not evidence-based.

The applicant indicates that personalized learning is minimally evidenced in grade bands and is not fully implemented district-wide for all students, representing a significant implementation gap, however, evidence to substantiate where it is evidenced in grade bands is not provided. The applicant cites nominal percentages of students who are on trajectory to be college ready or who are college ready based on current assessment scores and cohort graduation rates. In addition, the applicant indicates a high percentage of social promotion. Although all district teachers are "highly qualified," such is not evidenced through classroom observation data or student proficiency rates. The applicant identifies utilization of numerous data systems as both a need that, once implemented, how to best utilize the generated data will create gaps.

The applicant proposes myriad broad reform efforts as outlined in its Action Plan and attendant timelines and includes

- 1) adoption and implementation of standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college, the workplace, and a global economy;
- 2) adoption and implementation of strategies and actions that engage students in rhetorical reading, analytical writing, critical thinking, content knowledge, and the habits, skills, and behaviors to prepare for college and careers;
- 3) Build and use data systems;
- 4) Recruit, reward and retain effective teachers and leaders; and
- 5) increase parent and community engagement.

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

	Available	Score

<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>
------------------------------------	-----------	-----------

**(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

(C)(1)(a)

(i) It is unclear how many of the proposed reform efforts will ensure that students understand that what they are learning is key to their success and accomplishing their goals. Although the applicant mentions development of Personalized Learning Objectives for individual students and groups of students in this section, it is not included elsewhere in the narrative or in the Action Plan, although the development of the attendant Working Portfolios are.

(ii) College and Career Ready standards and graduation goals have been identified and implemented or are planned to be implemented. The applicant cites myriad support initiatives and programs designed to enable students to structure their learning to achieve their goals, however, measuring progress toward their goals is not robustly developed.

(iii) Learning and career inventories are planned that will enable students to identify areas of academic interests. The applicant plans to implement working portfolios for students in grades 3-12 that will serve as a living document of their progress and dynamic interests. Experiential learning in the form of virtual and live field experiences are planned to enable students to make real-world connections to classroom content. The applicant proposes various modalities for coursework completion including blended learning, virtual learning, independent study, mastery via exam, and second chance.

(iv) The applicant cites monthly, or near monthly, highlights of different ethnicities to celebrate their contributions to society. It is not clear if this practice is a district-wide initiative or is school/site-based. Additionally, the applicant will implement experiential learning via field trips to enable students to make real-world connections to their community and classroom content. However, it is not evident how these learning experiences will be integrated into the curriculum or monitored and evaluated for efficacy.

(v) Mastery of critical academic content will be accomplished through intensive reading and math programs, world languages beginning in grade four, working portfolios, expanding experiential learning through increased field trips, at risk summer programming, fee-based after care, additional support for at risk students and students receiving special education and ESOL services, and other initiatives-- more than 30. A significant focus appears to be placed on assessment, but it is unclear how the applicant will utilize assessment data to inform instruction and improve programs and initiatives. Mastery of dispositions and traits necessary for 21st Century success are supported by Own the Turf, Second Steps, Safe and Drug Free/Red Ribbon initiatives, Career and College counseling services, expanding socio-emotional and RTI supports, and programs such as AVID.

(C)(1)(b)

(i) Although the applicant cites numerous reform initiatives and augmentation of current practices and programs, the personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development is ambiguous.

(ii) The applicant indicates plans to implement and continue to implement a large number of instructional activities and initiatives, however, how such will transfer to instructional approaches that elicit high levels of student learning is vague. Major staff endeavors, such as EdJob and Hands-On, Minds-On, address differentiated instruction, development of key literacy and numeracy skills, for example, support these initiatives. The applicant currently employs or plans to employ multiple learning environments, including Virtual learning, experiential learning, dual enrollment, etc.

(iii) The applicant currently implements or plans to implement STEM courses and Modules, AP courses, CTAE courses, World Languages, digital/virtual learning, and is revising student learning objectives and curricula and assessments to better support the implementation of the Georgia Performance Standards and the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards.

(iv) (A) The applicant currently utilizes or plans to utilize multiple measures of formative and summative assessment, such as working portfolios, SRI, learning inventories, career and college readiness inventories, content specific assessments, Acuity, NWEA, RTI, learning style interest inventories, and state and national assessments. The applicant is in the process of implementing a new SIS and formative assessment system and is linked to the state longitudinal data system. The administration frequency and timeline of data sharing and monitoring is vague for some assessments and evident for others.

(iv) (B) Personalized learning recommendations based on the student's current knowledge and skills , college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements are evident, but not substantive for subgroups SWD and ELL.

(v) The applicant utilizes multiple assessments, beginning in PK, to identify at-risk learners, and implements academic support and intervention strategies to improve achievement and social-emotional growth. Student Support Teams, RTI, reading and mathematics intervention, summer programs, and credit recovery are but a few. Accommodations for subgroups SWD and ELL are evident but appear to minimally transcend compliance. Support for English Learners includes an International Center, implementation of WIDA and plans to further align it to the Common Core, implementation of SIOP, bilingual staff and contracted interpreters, vocabulary and language development, explicit instruction, and assessments are current practice. The applicant recognizes the need to better serve this subgroup, and is prepared to develop a system of professional development, sequential curricular materials, proven instructional methodologies, expanding parent-school relationships, and an evidence-based staff and program evaluation system. However, specific details regarding these programmatic improvements are not provided.

The applicant implements a system that enables early identification of and support for students with physical, mental, emotional, and/or academic challenges. The applicant recognizes disproportionality, and is currently examining ways to address this issue. However, specific strategies for improving educational opportunities for students with disabilities is vague.

(c) The applicant currently provides students training on how to gather, analyze, and use data to measure student growth. Although this criterion is cited in the applicant's Action Plan, the timeline for, frequency of, and monitoring and evaluation processes are not stated.

<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>
--	-----------	-----------

**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

(C)(2)(a)

(i) The applicant cites myriad professional development initiatives (planned and underway) for its educators and indicates a tiered and differentiated system of professional development in face-to-face and digital/online formats. Examples of PD include Hands-On, Minds-On, PLC, Common Core training, 21st Century Classroom, Standards-Based Instruction, and Educator Engagement Framework.

(ii) The applicant cites professional development opportunities support the adaptation of content and instruction, provide opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks, in response to their academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches.

(iii) The applicant implements and plans to augment professional development that includes ongoing data collection and analysis and how to use data to inform instruction and support college and career ready standards and graduation.

(iv) The applicant currently implements multiple strategies to improve teacher and leader effectiveness, including the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System and Leader Keys Effectiveness System, Teacher and Leader Academies, Teacher and Leader Effective Measures, Georgia Assessment of Performance on School Standards, ongoing formative evaluations, and a teacher effectiveness system that integrates observation data collection, professional development, Common Core, and personalized progress monitoring.

(C)(2)(b)

(i) The applicant's current practice and Action Plan provides actionable information that helps educators identify optimal learning approaches that respond to individual student academic needs and interests. The electronic educator evaluation system integrates teacher performance, professional development, and student performance. The applicant states that professional learning and training are components of the current school culture. The applicant identifies grant funding as essential to building the capacity and culture to enable teachers, teacher teams, and school leaders to focus on continuous improvement. However, measures indicating the current and desired status of school climate and culture are not evident.

(ii) The applicant's current practice and Action Plan includes high-quality learning resources that are aligned with college and career ready standards and graduation requirements.

(iii) The applicant's current practice and Action Plan includes processes and tools to match student needs with specific resources and approaches to provide continuously improving feedback about the effectiveness of the resources in meeting student needs.

(C)(2)(c)

(i) The applicant demonstrates a robust teacher evaluation system that uses multiple measures of assessment, include frequent observations and feedback, and collection of evidence of effectiveness. The applicant additionally implement cognitive coaching, weekly focus walks, and other strategies as a component of the observe-feedback-train-observe continuous improvement model.

(ii) The applicant's Professional Learning Department conducts and provides training on all evaluation instruments and provides Professional Learning Specialists who prepare staff for job effectiveness. Additionally, the Professional Learning Department provides a teacher resource center and professional library that is available beyond the regular school day. The applicant's Action Plan includes goals, timelines, responsible parties, and deliverables for differentiated training, system development, and practices for continuous improvement.

(C)(2)(d)

The applicant's plan provides multiple opportunities and formats for professional learning and provides a robust, differentiated system of support mechanisms for its educators. The applicant partners with higher education and regional education labs, has implemented educator endorsement programs for high need content areas (mathematics and science), and utilizes resources such as TFA and others to fill hard-to-staff schools, although it is unclear as to how applicants or schools are selected. While the applicant appears to be on a positive trajectory to build capacity in the areas of teaching and learning, such is currently not reflected in terms of consistent achievement outcomes for all students.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>

**(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

(D)(1)

(a) The applicant's organizational structure is traditional and includes the Board of Education, monitored by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, CFO, CAO, CHRO, and COO. Additionally, the district employs two Area Superintendents who each oversee an Instructional Support Team that is responsible for clusters of district schools. The applicant has employed a Communications/Community Specialist who will oversee communications for the district. Various other support personnel will be employed to support implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the grant, including external evaluators.

(b) Area Superintendents and Instructional Support Teams comprised of Instructional Implementation Specialists and Instructional Facilitators, provide support to site-based leadership teams. Site-based leadership teams support the principal, who has flexibility in school operations and instruction and are allowed to lead with some autonomy in areas (such as school-level budgets), and full autonomy (such as personnel selection) in others. Site-based leadership teams participate on various district-led foci.

(c) The applicant currently has plans to implement a Mastery via Exam program and to submit the plan to the Georgia State Board of Education for approval.

(d) The applicant, in addition to plans for Mastery via Exam, currently implements or plans to implement Online/Virtual courses, Independent Study courses, Blended courses, and Second Chance (students are provided extra time to complete a failed course).

(e) The applicant's Divisions of Exceptional Students and English Learners provides direction and support services for students with disabilities and English Language learners under state, local and federal regulatory guidelines. The applicant states that all learners have access to the appropriate content and tools under the current implementation methods and structures. However, it is not clear how the district plans to address issues of disproportionality.

<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
---	-----------	----------

**(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

(D)(2)

(a) The applicant states that all participating students, parents, educators, and stakeholders have access to the necessary content and tools. For students, the applicant cites access to texts on day one and access to appropriate technologies to support learning goals, and through implementation of current structures. Teachers are assigned a personal laptop with Internet access at all district sites. Extended computer lab hours at most of the district's middle and high school are available on a first come first served basis. Plans to implement this practice in the elementary schools and adult education centers are proposed.

(b) The applicant's Action Plan provides multiple and differentiated levels of technical support in a variety of formats.

(c) In addition to access to computer labs, the district provides a discounted Internet access rate to families. The applicant has adopted Infinite Campus, an interoperable student information system. Although the applicant states that Infinite Campus increases parent and student communications, specific value to parents and students in terms of increased communication is not clear. The applicant plans to provide a cohort of online instructors to provide support for families and for students with computer-based assignments. Additionally, the applicant plans to employ development and technology specialists to design online lessons/modules aligned with student and parent needs.

(d) The applicant has adopted Infinite Campus, an interoperable student information system, with functionality in the area of student records, assessment, curriculum, ad hoc reporting, etc. Additionally, the applicant has stated plans to adopt and implement a new student assessment system.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>

**(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

(E)(1)

The applicant's plan for continuous improvement appears to be achievable and progress monitoring and evaluation are addressed throughout the narrative, in attendant tables and charts such as for achievement performance measures, in the Action Plan under specific Goals, and in the Communication plan.

Teacher and Leader effectiveness will be monitored and evaluated via various methods, including but not limited to walk-throughs, document reviews, and an electronic system that integrates teacher information with professional development and student performance outcomes. Summative evaluations will be used to inform Human Resource decisions such as teacher and leader improvement efforts and retention.

The applicant's Action Plan for Goals 1-4 include either qualitative data, quantitative data, or both to monitor and evaluate progress and timelines, responsible parties, and deliverables. The applicant's Action Plan for Goal 5 includes timelines, responsible parties, and deliverables, but does not appear to include a mechanism for measuring effectiveness. The applicant's Action Plan for Goal 5-Deliverables- plans to monitor the number of parents enrolled in programs, receiving training, instructional resources, and support services, but it is not clear how the quality of the programs, training, instructional resources, or support services will be monitored, measured, or evaluated. Additionally, the applicant states under this Goal that it will "Provide educational resources to parents when they have demonstrated high levels of

commitment, engagement and involvement in their schools," however, what constitutes high levels or defines commitment, engagement, and involvement is not specified.

How the selected performance measures will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant's implementation success is adequate, however, how the applicant will address areas of concern is vague. The applicant addresses how it will review the measures over time, but is not specific in how it will improve the measure over time if the measure is insufficient to gauge implementation progress.

The applicant has demonstrated high-quality plans for ongoing communication and stakeholder engagement (E)(2) and evaluating the effectiveness of investments and resources (E)(4) to support the continuous improvement process during the grant implementation period, however, plans for sustainability post grant are not convincing.

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

**5**

**5**

**(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant's proposed communication and engagement plan includes appropriate, sequential, and attainable strategies including

- Employing a communications/community specialist who will be responsible for developing community input teams comprised of internal and external stakeholders and led by the College and Career Ready Coordinator (CCRC) and work jointly with the CCRC, Parent Liaison Specialist, advisory councils, school leadership teams, and community members to disseminate and gather information;
- A plan to develop and adopt appropriate policy to guide communications to internal and external public; and
- Plans to engage stakeholders through monthly meetings for community input teams, quarterly informational forums, information provided via the district website, and bi-annual reporting of State-of-the-District reports.

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

**5**

**2**

**(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

(E)(3)

(a) The applicant describes its rationale for Performance Measures 1-7 and 13, and minimally describes its rationale for Performance Measures 8-12. However, at least one performance measure appears to be inappropriate and not focused on student achievement, but rather on compliance. For example, the applicant states that the rationale for Performance Measure 4 is "to provide a student growth score for the TKES evaluation system" as a component of determining TEM. Additionally, not all performance measures identified in section (E) (1) Continuous Improvement match performance measures in (E)(3) Performance Measurement Tables.

(b) How the measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant's implementation success is adequate, however, how the applicant will address areas of concern is vague.

(c) The applicant addresses how it will review the measures over time, but is not specific in how it will improve the measure over time if the measure is insufficient to gauge implementation progress.

**Performance Measures**

**All Students**

- a) Highly Effective Teacher and Principal: Baseline data for this performance measure will be available in 2013.
- b) Effective Teacher and Principal: Baseline data for this performance measure will be available in 2013.

Student Attendance: Decrease the percentage of students with ten or more absences in a school year. PK is not included.

### PK-3

a) Increase the percent of students who have on-grade Lexile Levels. (Note that the performance target is set with the goal of decreasing the percent of students who do not have an on-grade level Lexile score, while the data column states increase the percent of students who have on-grade Lexile levels.) No baseline data are available for grades one and two, and no data row is provided for PK or KG, although the performance measure indicates that this is a PK-3 initiative.

Increase student growth as measured by the Student Learning Objective in mathematics- Grades K-3. No baseline data are provided.

b) Increase the level of student in the healthy fitness zone as measured by the Fitnessgram assessment- Grades K-3. No baseline data are provided.

Increase the percent of students who are meeting/exceeding grade-level expectations for socio-emotional development as measured by Second Steps- Grades PK-3. No baseline data are provided.

### Grades 4-8

a) College and Career Readiness: CRCT for ELA, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies- Grades 4-8.

Increase the percent of students on track for college- and career readiness as measured by the EXPLORE assessment- Grade 8.

b) Increase the percent of students with an on-grade level Lexile indicator as indicated by the reading component of the CRCT- Grades 4-8.

Increase the percent of students who pass all five portions of the CRCT- Grades 4-8. No baseline data are provided.

c) Increase the percent of students who are meeting/exceeding grade-level expectations for socio-emotional development as measured by Second Steps- Grades 4-8. No baseline data are provided.

### Grades 9-12

a) Increase the number and percentage of students who complete and submit the FAFSA form. No baseline data are provided.

b) College and Career Readiness: Baseline data by subgroup are provided, but it is not clear what performance measure this table represents as it is not labeled. Portions of the proposal indicate the applicant will be using EOCT, however, the corresponding description for College and Career Ready for grades 9-12 do not mention EOCT.

Increase the percentage of students who score at the benchmark level or above on the PLAN assessment- Grade 10. No baseline data are provided.

c) Career Readiness: Increase the number and percent of graduates who are CTAE Pathway Completers earning national industry recognized credentials or a passing score on a Georgia Department of Education recognized end of pathway assessment- Grade 12. No baseline data are provided.

d) It is unclear what grade-appropriate leading academic indicator of successful implementation the applicant plans to use for this criterion.

e) Increase the number of students in the healthy fitness zone as measured by the FITNESSGRAM assessment- Grades 9-12 enrolled in Health. No baseline data are provided.

The narrative indicates that other performance measures will be used such as the PSAT for 11th grade students and GPA, however these are not included as Performance Measures in the charts. Thus, it is unclear how or if the applicant will use the data to support this criterion.

<b>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
--	----------	----------

<b>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant proposes to utilize the U.S. Department of Education publication <i>Implementing Common Core State Standards and Assessments: A Workbook for State and District Leaders</i> to create a holistic evaluation plan. Key milestones and checkpoints will be monitored regularly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly meetings will be held by the Project Managers and Joint Application Development Team to evaluate current status, key milestones, and checkpoints.</li> <li>• Monthly webinars will be held for school and district leaders to evaluate current status, key milestones, and checkpoints.</li> <li>• Building leaders will provide quarterly reports.</li> <li>• Corrective measures, as applicable, will be developed by the Project Manager, Superintendent, and other district and school leaders and will be monitored at least weekly.</li> <li>• Public budget reports will be compiled quarterly.</li> <li>• Project evaluations will be conducted as program actions end and grant ends.</li> </ul>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>

<b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>(F)(1)</p> <p>(a) Funds that will support the project are identified.</p> <p>(b) The budget appears to reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the proposal, however approximately 51% of grant funding is allocated for salaries and fringe benefits, and it is not clear how/if the applicant plans to sustain those positions post grant funding. Travel allocations appear to be excessive.</p> <p>(c) (i) The budget provides a description of the funds the applicant will use to support the implementation of the proposal, including total revenue from these sources.</p> <p>(c)(ii) Funds appear to be appropriately identified as one-time investments verses those that will be used for ongoing operational costs. The focus on strategies that will ensure long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments is addressed with some substance, but is not specific.</p>		

<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
---	-----------	----------

<b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicants plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant is based on budget assumptions such as stable enrollment, GOB, Title funding, and RT3 funding. The applicant indicates that SPLOST funds will be used for capital projects and technology upgrades. Other considerations include redirecting funds and focus from ineffective programs and initiatives, however, those funds, programs, and initiatives are not specified.</p>		

Salaries and fringe benefits comprise 51% of the grant request, and it is not clear how/if those positions will be maintained post grant, or if reduction in student services will occur post grant funding. The applicant's plan lacks specific and convincing evidence for sustainability.

**Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)**

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</b> Competitive Preference Priority not included.		

**Absolute Priority 1**

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>	<b>Met/Not Met</b>	<b>Met</b>
<b>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</b> The applicant's vision for reform meets the criteria for Absolute Priority 1.		

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>129</b>
--------------	------------	------------



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0243GA-3 for Clayton County Board of Education

**A. Vision (40 total points)**

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b> The goals listed are too general and broad. For example, it is not clear what "improve academic achievement" means in the context of various grades and student populations across the targeted schools. It is also not clear what the target end goals are for academic improvement across the various subject areas over the duration of the project. Similarly, it is not clear how each of the components listed in the goals section within the narrative relates to and builds on theory of action listed within the related appendix.		

The goal statements in the narrative need to reflect on the outcomes that are described in the theory of action. The theory of action on its own is clearly written and builds on a coherent vision of how the proposed activities of the various stakeholders impact one another in producing strong academic and social outcomes for students, families and communities.

It is not clear how the applicant intends to provide personalized student support grounded in common and individual tasks based on student interests. The applicant does not differentiate the strategies across the schools, within grades, content areas, and among students to demonstrate how it intends to deepen student learning and increase equity through personalized student support. For example, the applicant states that the team intends to increase academic achievement for all students through progress monitoring, but it is not clear what type of corrective actions will be taken as the needs of the teacher and student communities will vary across the system.

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

**10**

**4**

**(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant describes the rationale behind the selection of 64 schools that will take part in the implementation efforts within the narrative. However, the tables that are included in appendix A (tables 2 and 4) does not provide clear evidence in terms of how the 64 schools are differentiated in the test scores from the three content areas. While the 10 high schools' test scores are shown in table 3, it is not as clear how the remaining 54 schools' data were presented so that it demonstrated how the applicant examined the data for students at the individual school level. Table 4 only provides demographic information related to students at the school level and the applicant does not make a compelling argument with strong student achievement data as to why all 64 schools need the proposed reform efforts.

For example in table 1, 91% of non-students with disability are meeting and exceeding the state reading test scores. It is unclear how the the 64 schools are fully differentiated in the services they would receive.

The applicant has provided a comprehensive list of schools as well as the estimated number of students that will participate in the grant activities as seen on table 6 of narrative. List the participating schools is part of criteria A2b and the applicant has completed this step.

Overall this section was scored a 4 out of 10 because the applicant presented the basic evidence regarding the participating school populations but does not provide enough evidence and justifications on how it intends to support high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation.

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

**10**

**5**

**(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The text in the narrative regarding LEA-wide reform and change describe the current and prior reform work that is occurring in the Clayton County Public Schools. The portion of the narrative provides the context by which the team intends to scale up the proposed activities. Some parts of this narrative are not clear. For example, it is not clear what the applicant means when it has "developed a system that fosters and supports student learning through a personalized learning environment". Similarly, the applicant discusses that it intends to employ steps and activities to support system wide learning, but the details are not clear as to what those steps are activities would be.

The model of the teacher recruitment partnership as a way of retaining high quality teachers with Teacher for America (TFA) is weak. The applicant does not provide a strong argument that the financial resources invested in these TFA teachers remain within the system after the duration of the TFA corps member two-year commitment.

It is unclear how the team will use the Infinite Campus student information system. While access to data is an important step in the data analysis and decision making process, there needs to be clear systems and processes set up for individuals and teams with the capacity to process the data so that it can inform decision making.

The applicant discusses the use of assessment data and the use of electronic portfolios, but does not discuss the processes and systems that are needed for participants to engage successfully in these types of activities.

The scale-up efforts are described in generalities. The applicant does not clearly identify the "internal and external supports" that are necessary to "leverage resources" nor does it clarify the type of "infrastructure that best supports

teachers, leaders, and students". The applicant gives examples of prior history of working in partnerships with other organizations, but it does not identify specific supports it intends to leverage in this proposal.

In Appendix C, the applicant describes a more detailed plan of the proposed work in the area of five goals. The big goals listed are clear and ambitious and they include strong rationale based on quantitative and qualitative evidence from the district. The listed activities found within each goal do not necessary relate to one another or build on current work at the school site. The activities read more like a discrete list of activities independent from one another rather than a coherent and cohesive strategy that supporting the main goal. For example, under goal 2, it is not clear how activity 8 on STEM courses would relate to activity 9, "expanding the use of technology". Greater specificity is needed to understand how these activities have been chosen and if these selected activities have promising evidence of success within this local context. For example, it is not clear what types of STEM courses the applicant intends to bring into the schools, and how it relates to the professional development that teachers may need to support this type of course work.

The applicant does clearly identify the persons responsible for each of the activities and include a general timeline of work. Greater specificity is needed to describe the timeline. It is not clear how each of these activities will be scaled up over the duration of the project. It is not clear what it means when an activity will be "ongoing, will be enhanced."

<b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
--	-----------	----------

**(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant discusses in the narrative that it is preparing for and implementing the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards and Assessments. However, it is not clear how the applicant will make course adjustments as the new summative assessments will used during the grant period. It is unclear how both the district's current and future policies may have implications in how it defines its goals. The new summative assessments have implications on how the districts will recalibrate those goals. For example, if the new Common Core standards and the accompanying assessments are rigorous than the current assessments, then the projected goals will be impacted.

Based on the current projections found in table 7, the applicant has included goals that result in improved student learning and increased equity among the identified subgroups. That is, at the end of the grant period, all of the subgroups have similarly highly ambitious achievement rates across grades and subject areas. Some of the growth rates for special populations such as English Language Learners (ELL) and students with special disabilities (SWD) may not be actualized of the course of the grant period. For example, for EOCT 9<sup>th</sup> grade literature, SWD have a baseline data of 29% passing. The expected five-year outcome for this same population is at 95.5%. While this ambitious goal is plausible, the applicant has not specified targeted SWD resources that would warrant this level of growth within five years.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>

**(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant has acknowledged that it has had mixed results of success in the past four years in advancing student learning. Table 8 in appendix A is missing so there is not empirical data that is present to see how the students with disabilities (SWD) and English Language Learners (ELLs) have performed in the past four years. Similarly, Table 7 in appendix B is also missing so there is not enough evidence present to assess whether the district has had a clear record of success across the academic subject areas that are tested. The applicant does present the Math II End of Course Test (EOCT) and shares that it has "increased to 23%, 30%, and 35%, respectively". The application could be strengthened if this type of data was presented in a chart form historically in the past four years across the various student subpopulations.

The district has increased for the most part their high school graduation rates based on their "estimate of the percentage of students who entered night grade and graduated four years later". Based on this estimate, the district has graduation rates

that increase for four out of five years with the last year dipping from 81.6% to 80.2%. However, based on the "adjusted cohort rate" it is not clear whether the district has demonstrated evidence that it has raised high school graduation rates as defined by Race to the Top-District notice.

The district also does not have a mechanism of collecting college enrollment rates so no evidence is present that demonstrates the record for college enrollment rates.

While the applicant shares how it has increased the number of students who are taking college-readiness types of tests (e.g. IB, AP, SAT), it does not specify how this type of reform activity is targeted at the lowest performing schools in the district. The description of this reform activity could be strengthened if the district provided evidence of successes in this activity in its persistently lowest-achieving and/or low-performing schools.

The applicant has not demonstrated evidence of how parents and students have had access to student performance data. The applicant states that it intends to "identify and implement methods to use data to improve instruction, close achievement gaps, raise student achievement, increase graduation rates, and help parents and students use data to make informed life-long decisions".

The applicant has identified a reform strategy (TAPP) that has supported "high quality candidates into hard to fill positions". It is not clear what year TAPP began, but this program has trained over 700 Clayton County teachers in hard to fill positions such as math, special education and science.

The applicant has identified 17 Title I schools that have additional supports for teachers and leaders, but it is not clear if these supplementary activities have contributed to success in student outcomes.

<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
---	----------	----------

**(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant clearly demonstrates evidence of transparency in the various levels of school expenditures across the various levels as defined by the criteria B2 and was awarded 5 out of 5 for this criteria. All four categories a-d are clearly defined at the school level in appendix B, exhibit 6 and 7.

This information can be found at the local level, state level (State of Georgia) and the national level (U.S. Department of Labor). The district has received multiple "Certificates of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting" from various nationally established organizations.

The applicant has stabled processes in place by the Division of Business services to ensure expenditures are made transparently and that its actual financial and budget data are also made available to the public via its website and through its board meetings.

<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
--	-----------	----------

**(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant acknowledges that the End of Career Pathway Performance were "dismal" and more students failed than passed in 2011-2012 as evidenced in Table 14, appendix B.

The applicant discusses the implementation of Georgia Head Start and Early Head Start programs servicing students at the Pre-K level who may enter into the Clayton County school system. The applicant discusses how the Preschool Child Observation Record (COR) is a tool that supports a type of individualized learning environment for students.

It is not clear whether the Early Intervention Program (EIP) is a state level reform measure. Enrollment trends for the program are detailed in table 11, appendix B. The applicant does not provide data on actual student achievement outcomes from EIP. However, enrollment data presented will be used to target interventions for this high need student population.

Similarly, secondary students are participating in a state mandated Remedial Education Program (REP) and the state's Transitional Career Partnerships. While these programs exist in the school district, there is no evidence of the district's success rates for student outcomes via these programs. For these identified programs, there is not enough evidence

present to assess whether the district has successful conditions to implement the proposed personalized learning environments.

The strongest evidence that the applicant presents is the access to and availability of technology in the schools and classrooms in the district. For example, the applicant states, "Every classroom is equipped with digital classroom equipment, ..." The applicant recognizes that the technology resources that are available can be leveraged as part of the personalized learning environment and argues for funding to build teacher capacity in using these technology tools and to future supplement the technology foundation with additional tools and strategies such as "flipped classrooms; e-books; webinars; digital cameras; ..."

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

**10**

**3**

**(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

In the survey report in Appendix B, the applicant has done significant engagement with teachers with 2328 teachers responding. The number of responses from parents and students all low with a sample total of 8 parent respondents and 4 student respondents. The survey measures were clearly defined among the five reform agenda items and provided clear measures for stakeholders to voice their opinions for each of the big goals. The applicant shared the proposal draft via the district's website as part of their stakeholder engagement with the community. Posting the draft proposal on the district website is a small step in building transparency and community engagement for the proposal. The applicant acknowledged that this strategy only produced two comments from the community. The lack of comments from this stakeholder group signals low level of engagement from community members.

The applicant has received 2328 teacher responses on their survey measures out of a total of 4069 employees as stated in the narrative and appendix B. Based on the data presented in appendix B, a majority of the teachers supported the five reform goals proposed by the applicant. Comments and feedback are all detailed in appendix B.

The applicant has evidence that the state board of education received the application and produced feedback for this applicant team.

Similarly, the applicant has evidence that this applicant has been sent to the mayor for comment and review offering at least 10 business days for the mayor's team in the review process. The email on page 322 is the evidence of the outreach efforts to the mayor's office.

The applicant has provided a total of six letters of support as detailed in appendix B, exhibit 9. The collection of these letters is not fully representative of the vast array of stakeholders that are connected to the community. For example, the applicant does not have letters of support from parent and parent organizations, student organizations, and early learning programs. Consequently, it is not clear how much support is present from parent and student communities for this proposed work.

Overall, the applicant received a low score of 3 out of 10 because there was weak evidence of the active engagement of the key stakeholders in supporting the district.

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

**5**

**3**

**(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant presents a set of five goals and presents a mix of quantitative and qualitative evidence and analysis that provides the rationale for the project activities under each goal.

The raw data regarding students' academic achievement data by grades and subject areas are clearly presented in the appendix but it is not clear how the applicant summarized these raw data points into their needs and gaps for goal 1 and 2. For example, the applicant states that "55% of students in grades 3 through 8 are not college-ready based on CRCT scores; 50% of 9th graders are not college-ready based on EOCT scores; 65% of 10th graders are not college-ready based on EOCT scores." Yet, from table 15 and figure 2 - 5, the percentages don't necessarily reflect these percentages. Consequently, it was difficult to determine how the applicant completed the analysis and identified the gaps of supports for student learning.

In goal 3, it would be helpful to understand the current context of how the data system is organized and used by the district and the key stakeholders. The applicant gives a rationale as to why it's important to build and use data to inform instruction. However, the application could be strengthened if it provided data, either quantitative or qualitative, that supported how these activities would address the data gaps present in the system.

The applicant does provide a clear plan that includes a variety of activities that support the goals, general timelines of work, identifies key deliverables, and parties responsible. Points were taken off because the analysis of the needs and gaps of the context across the target schools and school district community was overall weak.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>6</b>

**(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant has provided a plan that includes the big goals and activities by which the goals could be achieved across the various grade spans. Many of the strategies that target student learning were described in generalities and it was difficult to understand how the work would be completed at the classroom, school, district, and/or community level. For example, the applicant acknowledges that the use of student portfolios will support students' learning, develop their personal interests, and build academic traits, but the applicant at this stage of the proposal has not identified what the tool is, nor how the teachers and school leaders working as a system would support the student portfolio effort. The applicant has not detailed out the mechanisms that need to be in place so that students understanding how to use the tools and strategies presented to them in tracking and managing their own learning.

Similarly, at the Pre-K level, the applicant has defined how they intend to use a learning inventory to support data collection and feedback in informing instruction. Again, the use of the tool doesn't necessarily produce outcomes where instruction is improved. The applicant does not address how it intends to organize the communities that will use these tools and the process by which students' personalized learning opportunities are increased and enriched, with the goals linked directly to college- and career- ready standards.

The tenets behind experiential learning have the potential to be powerful depending on how this work is implemented. The applicant explains the benefits of this learning strategy but does not lay out a high quality plan that addresses the needs of all of their learners in the system. This strategy has the potential to build on students' traits that in turn may further support their academic content learning.

The proposed work related to the International Center that was opened in 2010 appears to be promising. This center allows community members to come together and showcase their cultural diversity, and have the potential to deepen student learning. It is unclear how all students and families would take part in activities or events that build on the communities' strengths and cultural diversities.

The strategies listed for the applicant's special populations are described in generalities. It is not clear what the plan is for the English language learner (ELL) populations across the various age groups. While the applicant states that the International Center does provide some specific language development supports for ELLs, it is not clear whether all ELLs have access and exposure to these strategies.

Similarly, the plan for the applicant's students with special disabilities (SWD) is also not clear. The applicant intends to continue the model of RtI and SSTs but it is not clear how the funds of this RTTT-D grant would improve and deepen the personalized learning for SWDs.

The applicant discusses in an earlier section that the district has robust technology systems that are in place to support processes that enable student learning. Yet, the strategies that are presented do not take fully take advantage of this technology base so that students could use digital tools that help them to be college- and career- ready. The strategy of "expanding the district's virtual and blended learning programs to include more students in grades 9-12" is too vague. It is not clear what the prior impact of these blended learning programs has been, and how the district intends to scale up the program in targeting the most needed students.

Overall, the applicant has included some good instructional approaches that support student learning and help students develop the critical content and skills that are necessary for college- and career- readiness. The applicant describes how these type of activities would be beneficial to the district's student body but there is not an clear strategy or plan in terms of how each of these activities would be enacted in across the target schools.

<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>4</b>
--	-----------	----------

**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant does not have a high-quality plan within the narrative that supports teachers and schools leaders so that they can improve instruction and increase their capacity through the use of the grant funds. The applicant describes the current strategies that are in place through the funded state level RTTT funds, but does not explain how it intends to use RTTT-D funds in creating the teaching and leading work that is needed in creating personalized learning environments for all students.

Parts of a plan of work are evident in the proposed action plan found in appendix C. However, these activities are not targeted to specific teacher or student populated based on needs or gaps identified at this finer scale.

For example, activity #13 under goal 4 of the action plan states that the applicant intends to implement a comprehensive teacher effectiveness system. Yet, it is unclear how the district intends to organize itself and align the various strategies that it has proposed into a coherent program of work. The timeline for this program needs to be further unpacked as it is not clear how much of this work is needed to be completed over the duration of the grant period as the timeline that listed does not provide additional details.

It is unclear how the applicant will design a coaching model that best fits the individualized needs of students across the target schools. The applicant discusses the addition of paraprofessionals in classrooms but it is not clear who these paraprofessional will support nor how the specific types of professional development that they will gain will benefit student learning at the individualized level.

One promising strategy presented by the applicant is their stipend incentive for the Math Endorsement program. This strategy supports teacher learning more math and gives financial rewards to those teachers who complete the program successfully. This strategy has implications on increasing the effectiveness of math teachers in the classroom.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>

**(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

The comments in this section address the criteria listed from a-e.

(a) The applicant describes the organizational structure of the executive team, the board, the SACS team that monitors the board the school leadership and site-based leadership team structure. This organizing structure is not necessarily unique in supporting student learning. The application could be strengthened if the applicant discussed how the central office organized itself to support the proposed strategies listed in the action plan.

(b) The applicant states that it will provide school leadership teams with sufficient flexibility and autonomy but does not explicit state the practices, policies, and rules that will be in place so that these school leadership teams can support the students' personalized learning.

(c) It is unclear how the local schools will implement competency assessments based on student mastery. The applicant states that students will have an individualized plan that includes the required high school course competencies, but it is not clear how these plans differ among students. It is not clear how standardized these competency assessments will be across the district and whether the outcomes of these assessments are valid and reliable across classrooms and school sites.

(d) The electronic portfolio is a promising strategy to support student learning and their mastery of standards. However, it is unclear what types of expected outcomes or common rubrics will be in place across the system so that rigorous and ambitious teaching and learning is taking place. It is not clear how teachers will organize themselves and their students in supporting this whole school endeavor.

The applicant has included a variety of modalities by which students can demonstrate their mastery of standards. This list is a good beginning list of ideas, but it is not clear what specific programs or courses students will engage in or if these types of strategies have had elements of success in the local context. It's not clear how these courses will be incorporated into the current instructional program and how these options will be vetted so that the learning that takes place is rigorous, ambitious, and aligned to college- and career-ready standards.

(e) The applicant has described clearly the current work of the Division of Exceptional Students and Division for English learners. The work that is stated in the proposal is the ongoing work and state requirements for both populations. It is not clear how the applicant intends to use the RTTT-D funding to target personalized learning for all populations, including special populations.

Overall, the applicant provided moderate to weak evidence for this selection criteria and was awarded 6 out of 15 points for this section.

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

**10**

**3**

**(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The comments in this section address the criteria listed from a-d.

(a) It is not clear how all of the participating students will have access to the necessary content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of the applicant's proposal. While the applicant states that all students will be issued the required texts or access to text on day one of school entry, it is not clear what additional tools or other learning resources may be necessary for all students aside from the required text or access to electronic texts in and outside of the classroom. The applicant needs to further differentiate the supports that are going to be in place across the district the schools in the system may have various needs.

(b) The proposed strategies of extended the computer lab hour and offering discounted Comcast internet service addresses part of the issue of ensuring technology access for parents and students. However, it is not clear how these hours may accommodate working families who may not be able to access the extended hours or be able to afford the discounted internet service. The proposed strategies may reach a segment of the target stakeholder population but does not provide a comprehensive plan that addresses the varied needs of the stakeholder community.

(c) The applicant does not fully describe a proposed information technology system that allows parents and students to export their information in an open data format. The applicant mentions that the "Infinite Campus", a data system purchased by the district, will "increase parent and student communications", it is not clear how students and parents will engage within this system and what types of communications will take place over the course of the grant period used to improve student learning.

(d) The applicant states that "Infinite Campus" has interoperable functionality that captures the examples of data uses listed within criteria "d." It would be helpful to understand more fully how the district and all of the teachers and staff members will be trained and supported in using this system. The online and development and technology specialists that are hired will be used to "build online lessons or modules aligned to student and parent needs." It is not clear the type of capacity building will be necessary to get district leaders and teachers to fully utilize this new data management system to inform and improve learning opportunities for students.

For this selection criteria, the applicant earned 3 out of 10 because it poorly presented a credible and comprehensive plan in how the LEA and school infrastructure would support its plans for personalized learning.

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

Available

Score

<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant's strategy for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process is not clear. The applicant states that the district will employ a set of progress monitoring tools. While these tools are listed, it is unclear how all these data will be collected and processed across the various grade spans and content area. The applicant does not clarify how the learning processes will take place in the analysis of these data points nor how continuous improvement would occur across the system from the district level to school cluster level and the individual school level. For example, the applicant discusses that part of progress monitoring involves teacher evaluations, walk-throughs and document reviews. However, it is not clear who will be leading this effort, how these effort will be organized, the tools that will be used to examine and collect these data points, and how decision-making would be consistent across the target schools that impact teaching and learning. As a result, the applicant poorly addressed this criteria and was awarded 4 out of 10 points for this criteria.</p>		
<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<p><b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant has a limited set of strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. It is not clear who will be leading the efforts of the "community outreach team" and how this team will be deployed to work across the targeted schools. This strategy has the potential for strengthening the communications between the work at the district and its schools but it is not clear what the process is for this outreach team in its engagement with the community and its stakeholders.</p> <p>The communication and engagement strategy is not fully developed. The application could be strengthened if representatives from key stakeholder groups were detailed explicitly within the narrative and/or in letters of support within the proposal. The stakeholder groups are mentioned as broad categories, and are not described in further detail.</p> <p>The strategy of developing and piloting a communication plan is promising especially if there is not one in place within the school district and the community already.</p> <p>It is not clear how one parent liaison specialist could be used to support the vast communication needs between schools and parents and families. The application could be strengthened if gave a clearer rationale as to how this parent liaison would work with the district and the full set of target schools in an effective manner.</p> <p>The strategy of presenting information to key stakeholders is limited. The applicant needs to develop strategies and processes by which key stakeholder groups will be engaged with the data that is presented to them in regular, timely fashion.</p>		
<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
<p><b>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant presented a number of data points that are new to the district and its schools. Consequently, the applicant did not have many of the baseline data for a majority of the performance measures proposed. Due to this lack of baseline data, the applicant was not able to project out possible expected targets or annual growth rates other than to provide formula that would project out targets based on anticipated baseline data to be collected in year one of work.</p> <p>The applicant does explain the rationale behind each of the proposed performance measures. However, it is not clear how the measures will be used to provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information to support the applications theory of action.</p> <p>The applicant does not address how it intends to review and improve the measure over time if it is insufficient to gauge implementation progress.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant was awarded a mid to low score in this selection criteria because it did not present enough data points nor discuss possible growth trends it would anticipate for the indicators for this proposal.</p>		
<b>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>

**(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant does not provide enough clarity as to what the holistic approach would be in evaluating the effectiveness of the proposed implementation. The action plan does not include key milestones over an expected timeline nor checkpoints in monitoring effectiveness and progress of work.

Much of the work falls in the responsibility of the project manager to organize and communicate the progress of work to parties responsible and key stakeholders. It is not clear how the project manager and the Joint Application Development (JAD) team will work with the community outreach team in developing a clear and transparent process of evaluating the proposed work. The color coding of the progress of work across the various activities and deliverables is promising, but it is not clear how this tool and process will be used across the various performance measures over the course of the grant timeline.

Consequently, the applicant was awarded 1 out of 5 point in this selection criteria because the applicant addressed this criteria in a weak manner. There was not a clear approach that matched up to its plan of implementation.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant provided the full budget that is made up of six projects. Each of the projects listed included the corresponding budget tables and narrative. The narrative for the each of the project budgets provides rationale to the activities proposed in supporting the theory of action of the project. The applicant provides the total budget of each project and provides the cost breakdown of each of the subparts within the project goals.</p> <p>The applicant does not provide a strong description of all of the funds that will be used to support the implementation of the proposal. Even though the applicant has stated that it intends to take advantage of the 5% mandatory funds set aside for parent involvement, it is not clear what the estimated dollar amount of those funds would be and how those funds would be leveraged with the RTTT-D work with parent engagement.</p> <p>The applicant has not identified the funds that will be used for one-time investments nor does it include a plan for supporting the ongoing cost of the work after the grant period. The applicant does not discuss specific strategies that would ensure the long-term sustainability of this work.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant was awarded a 4 out of 10 int the mid range for this criteria. The applicant provided basic budgetary data but did not include enoug details as to how additional funding opportunities would be secured nor how this project would be sustainable in the long term.</p>		
<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>
<p><b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Overall, the applicant addressed this selection criteria poorly and was awarded 2 out of 10 points.</p> <p>The applicant does not have a high quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. The applicant discusses how plans to be strategic in its actions in promoting sustainability but does not clarify the activities that the project will take on over a specified timeline with key deliverables and milestones over the course of the project.</p> <p>The applicant has included budget assumptions over the course of the project so that it can plan out the RTTT-D program of work along with the predicted funding streams. It is not clear how the state and local government assets will be used to support the work from this proposal.</p> <p>Two of the major strategic activities include the capacity building through professional development of the district's teachers and the use of the formative assessment system to improve instruction. The applicant gives rationale as to why</p>		

these activities are important but does not give enough details as to how these strategies fit in a larger, actionable plan that would promote the long-term sustainability of the work across the district as a system and within and across the school sites

**Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)**

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</b> The applicant has not addressed this competitive preference priority.		

**Absolute Priority 1**

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>	<b>Met/Not Met</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
<b>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</b> The applicant has not met absolute priority 1 in addressing a coherent and comprehensive plan in creating personalized learning environments for its targeted students. The applicant has proposed a number of strategies that may promote more effective teaching and accelerate student learning, but the overall plan lacks specificity in details in how the activities would be implementing system wide with gaps in services for the various needs of teachers and students at the school site. Even though the district may have a strong foundation in the technology infrastructure, it is not clear how school leaders, teachers, and students will take advantage of this established infrastructure in building a personalized learning environment. The strategies presented are good strategies that are necessary to produce learning environments, but is not strong enough to make a case that it would promote a personalized learning environment that meets the needs of all of the students in this district.		

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>75</b>
--------------	------------	-----------

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

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	0
<b>Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:</b> The applicant has not included text that addresses this selection criteria.		

