Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #1324DE-1 for Colonial School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant articulates a comprehensive, intelligible and sound high quality plan. The “BRINC” Consortium districts of Brandywine, Indian River, New Castle County Vocational Technical (NCCVT), and Colonial share a deep commitment to accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing student equity through a coordinated approach. The Consortium’s goal is to ensure that every student in every district graduates college- and career-ready. The Consortium will pursue this goal by creating and supporting new personalized learning environments (PLEs) for students which are focused upon rigorous curriculum, sophisticated data systems, effective educators, and intensive support for the lowest-achieving schools. The district's high-quality plan clearly outlines the importance of the pedagogical shift which occurs with the implementation of personal learning. The applicant articulates the transformation which results in a new way for teachers to teach and students to learn. The applicant is awarded the full 10 points for articulating a comprehensive reform vision.

(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

As the Consortium (BRINC) transitions to creating a population of global citizens prepared for college and careers, the Consortium recognizes the importance and urgent need for a pedagogical change when educating secondary students. Secdonary students are the target population for BRINC’s personalized learning reforms as they face postsecondary college and career experiences in the near future.

As educators, we must structure programming to begin to challenge students to take increasing responsibility for their learning. In order to help students to meet this challenge, the district plans to work with educators to to remove scaffords over time in order to produce the outcomes of a student who sis a self-advocate and independent learner.

BRINC's reform which are outlined will strengthen the delivery of instructional, including rigor, relevance, teacher relationships with students. The applicant is awarded a 9 based upon their approach to implementation.

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

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The consortium will delivery a high-quality plan which goes beyond the norm and the "we've always done it that way" attitude. The plan reaches beyond the ordinary in order to provide personalized learning opportunities for each student. The plan is driven by a shared vision for a future where teaching and learning are responsive to student needs and supported by appropriate resources. Beginning in SY 2013–14, BRINC envisions that all students will be able to compare and analyze their own assessments and make data driven decisions for their future. The students will be empowered to make decisions and set goals regarding their progress. Students in the Consortium will be exposed to new blended learning strategies which can be accessed any where, any time , and have more options for non-traditional learning. Implementing a student-centered approach to data driven decisions is an exceptional plan that reinforces one of the consortium's over-arching goals which is to enable the student to be able to establish goals and set directions for college and career.

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

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant outlines an extensive, yet ambitious plan for meeting and achieving annual goals. The Consortium has a comprehensive vision for personalized learning, Delaware has ambitious RTTT reforms underway. The

Consortium individual districts have a proven track record of their ability to implement change. The Consortium fails to provide deliverables which will result after implementation. The applicant details evidence of how this consortium has the potential to serve as a "proof point" for Delaware and the nation. As a Consortium, the districts have already exceeded State targets and Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) targets. Therefore, the Consortium will start with more aggressive baseline data for their students. The same methodology the State applied to ESEA targets was applied to the Consortium's baseline to increase the targets annually.The Consortium has set ambitious but attainable, measurable, and significant targets.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	13

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The state of Delaware has the successful conditions for a consortium of districts to dramatically improve student achievement through the implementation of PLEs, it is Delaware. Delaware has a history of beating the odds: it was one of only two states to win the initial RTTT application and then won the Early Learning Challenge grant. Where Delaware has been a national leader in RTTT, the Consortium districts have been leaders in the State. Over the past four years, these districts have advanced student achievement and increased equity in teaching and learning

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

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Currently, the Consortium collects required data on school-level expenditures for regular K–12 instruction and the public can view these expenditures by visiting the DDOE's website. The district describes convincing details regarding transparency. In addition, the plan includes, a community web portal to provide financial information, known as the Standardized Reporting Project. The first part of the project is complete; districts have developed a monthly reporting format to report revenue and expenses as compared to the budget. The Citizen Finance Oversight Committee (CFOC), consisting of residents of the district, reviews the reports before they are submitted to the Board of Education each month for approval, making information publicly available for this group. The Consortium provides personnel salary schedules for instructional staff, teachers and non-personnel expenditures at the school level. Based upon my professional experience, providing access to the salaries meets the requirement of this element.

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

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant describes successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements.
- The applicant provides an overview of the working relationship local education agencies maintain with the Department of Education of Delaware.
- Details provided by the applicant addresses the flexibility that the department of education affords local school districts in regards to learning environments.
- Flexibility is a positive in regards to personalized learning environments, as it will enable the student greater opportunities to meet their individual academic and college/career goals.
- State statute provides alternative teacher certification options.
- Alternative routes to the teaching discipline will broaden the door for individuals in the business world to bring their expertise, talent and skills. The alternative certified teacher will be able to convey to students the relationship of the academics to the career world.
- Supporting documents submitted by the applicant attest to the positive relationships that already exist with the consortium's school districts.
- The applicant does not include details regarding the local school board within the Consortium and how these may

complement the strong support at the state level. Based upon the strong state regulations provided and the lack of information on the local level, the application receives an 8 on this element.

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

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant has a clear understanding that the stakeholder group most directly affected by the plan would be students based upon the evidence provided.
- Focus groups and conversations conducted at the middle and high schools across the Consortium, gave students an opportunity to provide into regarding personalized learning strategies at their schools and share their thoughts on ways this implementation strategy could be strengthened.
- Each member district reached out to parent and community stakeholders offering forums and focus groups, including Parent Advisory Committee and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) presentations and updates regarding the development of personalized learning environments.
- The majority of the Consortiums outreach efforts focused upon providing insight into the concept of personalized learning environments.
- Parents were given an opportunity to ask questions and give feedback regarding personalized learning environments.
- The Consortium appears to recognize the importance of creating teacher buy in to new initiatives, based upon the multiple strategies provided to ensure teachers support, understand and facilitate the plan into action.
- The applicant provides details documenting strong stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal, along with stakeholder input from the various groups, i.e. parents, students, teachers, business community.
- Based upon the description provided, the applicant is awarded 10 points.

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

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The Consortium plans to conduct a needs assessment in order to determine their progress towards implementing a personalized learning environment. The logic behind the reform includes a complete plan to analyze the data, identify needs and work with partners and stakeholders to identify the gaps. The applicant is awarded a score of 5 based upon the implementation and use of a needs assessment which examines

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	19

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicants plan provides details to transform education and accelerate student learning by leveraging technology and people to create PLEs that encourage, engage, and empower all learners to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to college- and career-ready standards and graduation requirements. The plan is ambitious and includes noteworthy elements such as future Links platform, personalized learning teams, and high-quality instruction and expanded opportunities.

The Consortium's plan will enable greater access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives by embedding project-based and collaborative learning in all courses.

High-need students in the Consortium fall primarily within the following ESEA subgroups: ELs, African Americans, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities. The Consortium has a disproportionate number of students in these subgroups which

evidence demonstrates are struggling to graduate with their cohort. Many of these students are homebound or transfer from school to school or from district to district throughout the school year which adds a new dimension or challenge. When the students transfer from school to school to district to district it becomes increasingly more difficult to serve these students. The applicants needs assessment identifies gaps such as these and outlines a variety of approaches to make sure these students to not fall through the cracks.

The applicant includes strong elements to accommodate high-needs students. Plans for training and support in regards to training students in digital literacy and citizenship including ensuring safety in online communications, managing online personal information and preventing identity theft, meeting ethical responsibilities, avoiding cyber-bullying and other harmful behaviors, respecting rights and responsibilities with creative work, using search options and effective ways to find information.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	16

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The Consortium outlines an ambitious plan for implementing personalized learning environments supported with instructional technology for all educators and students. Within the PLC's educators will plan and learn together which strengths the learning environment and the educators understanding. The Consortiums outlines a respectful approach with the application of eCurriculum coaches. In addition, face-to-face interaction via digital technology, webinars, podcasts, and blended learning classrooms which will allow students across the Consortium to observe, interact, share and grow demonstrates a strong connection with careers and colleges.The application has a sound plan, however, deliverables are not clearly outlined therefore a score of 16 is awarded.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	11

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- Each district in the consortium implemented structural changes to better support schools with instructional technology and personalized learning.
- The organization of the Consortium is condusive to the creation of (Personalized Learning Environments) that prepare all students for success in college, careers, and life.
- To realize this ambitious vision, the working relationship among the districts provide evidence of a plan encompassing mutual accountability, regular reflection cycles, continuous results monitoring, ongoing feedback, and thoughtful sharing and leveraging of resources.
- Based upon the high quality plan for the Consortiums member districts to meet and collaborate to improve outcomes, the applicant is awarded an 11 on a 15 point scale.

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

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant provides a clear outline detailing an ambitious strategy for ensuring all students, regardless of income, have access to the necessary content, tools and other support systems for the successful implementation of personalized learning plans.
- Clear details describing plans to include not only students, but parents, educators and other stakeholder’s access to the necessary content, tools, and other learning resources to support the successful implementation of personalized learning plans are provided.
- A creative and unique plan is presented by the applicant and involves contacting local businesses to gain their support and assistance with providing Wi-Fi.
- The applicant details policy changes which must be developed or modified in order to fully implement their initiative (BYOD) Bring Your Own Device to school will necessitate.
- The applicant clearly demonstrates an overall understanding of digital citizenship and the importance of educating parents,

teachers and other stakeholders in regards to the necessity of lessening firewalls. This will be a challenge; however, it is impressive that the applicant is willing to take on this initiative.
- The Consortium is awarded a score of 7 based upon the essential elements.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	13

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's high-quality plan is representative of an exemplary plan, however, the applicant clearly demonstrates the importance of continuously monitoring the plan in order to adjust/change and keep in touch with what is best for the students in the district. The consortium will use a Steering Committee to mange the process of data-driven decisions and problem solving conversations. The committee will meet 4 times a year to examine the data and evaluate the Consortiums progress towards fulfilling the high-quality plan. A report of the committee will be developed annually and shared with stakeholders. The committee is ambitious in regards to offering discussion meetings open to all stakeholders.

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

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's high-quality plan clearly establishes the vital link to the stakeholders needed for continuous communication and engagement a score of 5 is awarded on a 5 point scale. The Consortium will communicate with internal and stakeholders through a variety of mediums. Stakeholders will be able to submit feedback, questions and concerns through the Consortium's website. The progress being made by the Consortium towards meeting this reform will be made available on the website. All communication will be available in multiple languages. In addition, all stakeholders will be able to give input in community meetings.

BRINC advisory council will also be formed, consisting of teachers, parents, administrators from all four districts and a State representative. This diverse stakeholder group will provide input on the progression of the implementation plan. Additionally, this group will suggest communication plans and the best way to reach their constituents, including the use of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and blogs.

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

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

BRINC proposes 12 performance measures that will be reviewed and assessed at a minimum annually to understand if the Consortium is on track to meet its district-wide targets for improving student outcomes. The Consortium provides a table to summarize and outline the high-quality, ambitious reforms performance measures and how it will be measures and evaluated. The Consortium has a noteworthy plan to develop and integrate its framework for evaluation the effectiveness of its effectiveness into its overall performance monitoring plan. Based upon the strong evidence and reform presented the applicant is awarded a score of 5.

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

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's high-quality plan includes a clear approach which outlines several different methods for gathering data in order to evaluate their efforts and make adjustments where needed. The effectiveness of the Race to the Top funded actvities will be evaluated with input and feedback for all stakeholders to allow modifications. Based upon the evidence to evaluate effectiveness of the the RTT investments, the applicant is awared a score of 5.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The Consortium's budget includes all funds that will support the project.

The items in the budget are reasonable and will provide for the implementation of the reforms outlined in the plan.

The Consortium currently has a strong record and experience in order to attest to their capacity to manage and fully implement the plan.

The budget is detail oriented with specifics regarding one time investments, maintenance plans, personnel expenditures, and operation costs.

The strategies provided are strong and will ensure that this Consortium has the sustainability to truly personalize learning environments; therefore a score of 10 is awarded.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	6

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The Consortium outlines a clear plan to sustain the reform in order to fulfill and meet the goals outlined in the grant proposal.

The description regarding the sustainability of the reform needs additional details in order to fully understand the Consortiums plan.

The plan outlined includes "potential" sources. A more robust plan is needed.

The plan does state that it has the support from state and local government leaders, however, a more convincing plan for sustaining the project is needed, and therefore a score of 6 is awarded.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not explicitly address the competitive preference priority, therefore a score of 0 is awarded.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant conveys a well-defined plan for creating learning environments designed to significantly improve learning and teaching district-wide.

- The applicant explains that the Consortium recognizes the immediate need for a pedagogical change when educating secondary students, therefore, these students are the target population for the schools within the Consortium.
- Classroom teachers at the secondary level use Learning-Focused Strategies; however, this approach involves the teacher being the source for content delivery.
- With teachers implementing blended learning strategies, students will be exposed to a variety of instructional strategies.
- Professional learning opportunities will be implemented in order to allow educators to better guide and work with students in expanding their knowledge and level of skills needed to be successful and prepared for careers and college.
- The application contains all essential elements: number of students, number of participating students from low-income, high-needs, participating educators.
- A strong plan is described to improve student learning by implementing personalization learning strategies.
- Deliverables are specific with timelines and responsible parties noticeably defined.

Total	210	177

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #1324DE-2 for Colonial School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant is a consortium of four Delaware districts – Brandywine, Indian River, New Castle County Vocational Technical, and Colonial – collectively known as the “BRINC” Consortium. The applicant has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform vision for implementing personalized student learning in all middle and high schools in all districts (schools serving grades 6-12) centered around three strategies: developing a centralized data platform, FutureLinks; establishing personalized learning teams for each student; and developing an expanded array of learning opportunities.

In the vision statement, the applicant presents the following specific strategies, which are elaborated throughout the proposal:

- for student support – blended learning, online learning, alternative credit, mastery learning
- for educator support – professional development (PD) on technology, virtual learning, collaborative learning
- for data system improvements – FutureLinks, a cloud-based system to track student academic and social profiles, goals, learning styles and interests, and assessment data
- for continuous school improvements – increased access to technology and training, school staff support

The applicant proposes to accelerate student achievement, deepen student learning and increase equity for every student through a combination of data tracking through FutureLinks, development of individual learning plans through personalized learning teams (including the student, parent, educator, and guidance counselor), and provision of competency-based curriculum and needed supports linked to student needs, learning style, and academic interests.

The applicant further addresses comprehensively how this vision builds upon prior work by the consortium districts, primarily in conjunction with the implementation of Delaware’s state Race to the Top Grant, in the four core educational assurance areas:

- Standards and Assessments – development and implementation of Common Core aligned standards and assessments, with associated targeted professional development
- Educator Effectiveness – shift hiring and retention practices to focus on educator effectiveness; use evaluations to identify need areas and align PD with needs; focus highly-effective educators in high-need schools
- Data Use – upgrade current data system to FutureLinks data system, allowing educators to track student growth and

link identified need areas to appropriate instructional strategies
- Turning Around Low-Performing Schools – provide extra support to lowest-achieving schools through re-allocation of strongest school leadership and educators to those schools, plus family outreach

The applicant fully and comprehensively addresses the specified criteria, thus the application is awarded full points for this section.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The applicant indicates that all 24 schools in the four districts that serve students in middle and high school grades (grades 6-12) will be included in the project. The applicant's rationale for focusing efforts on the middle and high school grades is that the four districts currently show excellent academic outcomes for elementary school students, but less so for middle and high school students. The applicant explains that focusing efforts on middle and high schools will allow the entire school system to serve student academic needs in a more robust and comprehensive manner. In the charts provided by the applicant, there is clear indication that the set of included schools are comprised of 49% low-income students, thereby meeting the RTTT-D requirement for 40% low-income students.

(b) The applicant lists, individually, every school that will participate in the grant activities:

- Brandywine school district's three high schools and three middle schools
- Indian River school district's two high schools, three middle schools, and three specialized secondary schools
- New Castle County Vocational Technical school district's four high schools
- Colonial school district's one high school, three middle schools, and two specialized secondary schools

(c) The applicant provides the total number of participating students (19,761), participating students from low-income families (9,695), and participating educators (1515). The applicant provides these numbers in total, as indicated above, and also broken out by each participating school. However, the applicant does not indicate the number of high-need students, choosing to leave this column completely blank,

The applicant comprehensively and completely addresses most criteria in this section, but fails to include any numbers indicating the number or percent of high-need students served by the set of proposed schools. Thus the application is awarded high-range, but not full, points for this section.

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

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The consortium has collectively planned to include and engage all students in all middle and high schools in the district in the project. All schools (24), educators (1515), and students (19,761), including all 9695 low-income students, in the middle and high schools of the four consortium districts will participate in grant activities. All schools are listed, and the numbers of participating students are provided, including numbers broken out by low-income (though not by high-need).

The applicant makes a strong case for including all middle and high schools in the district, explaining that including all schools allows the applicant to take a comprehensive approach to the improvement of student outcomes. Further, the applicant explains that elementary schools are not included because these schools already show strong student outcomes; the need is clearly indicated in the middle and high schools, thus efforts are focused there.

The applicant also presents a plan for expansion of the activities to all districts in the state, leading to statewide change. The applicant proposes the use of the state Department of Education's monthly, statewide leadership professional learning communities, and an existing cross-district public and charter school network (Vision Network) to showcase the consortium's best practices and help other districts plan their own improvement strategies.

Since all schools in the district are engaged in the consortium, and all students in all schools in the district will be included in the implementation, and the applicant includes a plan for expanding the lessons learned from the consortium implementation to the rest of the state, the application is awarded full points for this section.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	7

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents ambitious yet achievable annual goals, overall and by student subgroup, for each participating district in each of the areas specified in this section. The applicant describes how targets were set, and explains how these targets exceed the State ESEA targets. Goals are set annual for each year of the grant and one year beyond the grant. Specific

comments about each area are provided below.

(a) Academic proficiency and growth – The applicant sets goals based on the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS), and provides a description of that system in the appendix. Performance goals are set as percentages of students scoring proficient and above; growth goals are set as changes in achievement levels over time. The applicant provides goals for grades 3 through 10; however, the project proposes working with students from grades 6-12. While it is not necessarily bad for the applicant to set goals for grades 3, 4, and 5, the plan does not include these grades; therefore, it is difficult to understand how these goals will be reached through grant activities. More concerning is the applicant's lack of any proposed academic performance or growth goals for grades 11 and 12, grades that are included in the applicant's plan.

(b) Decreasing achievement gaps – The applicant does an excellent job of selecting comparison groups for decreasing achievement gaps, measuring gaps between African-American and Hispanic/Latino student achievement to that of White students, the highest achieving subgroup for the consortium districts and for the state. The applicant also measures gaps between low-income and non-low-income students, Special Education and regular education students, and English Language Learners (ELL) and non-ELL students. The gap-closing goals are ambitious yet achievable. Both ELA and Math gaps are tracked for all comparison groups. However, like in (A)(4)(a) above, the applicant specifies goals for grades 3 through 10, not grades 6-12, which will be the focus of grant activities. Thus the same concerns arise for this criterion as for (a) above.

(c) Graduation rates – The applicant specifies graduate rate goals, overall and by subgroup, that together would reduce the number of students not graduating by 50% by the end of the grant period. This is an ambitious but achievable target. The applicant further specifies that high school graduation rate goals are set only for high school students, thus these numbers reflect a subset of the total student numbers provided elsewhere in the application.

(d) College enrollment rates – The applicant specifies college enrollment rate goals, overall and by subgroup, that are ambitious yet achievable. Further, the applicant breaks down goals by ethnic subgroup even though the state targets are only provided overall by the state of Delaware. Finally, the applicant explains the lack of targets for special education and ELL students in this chart, and does set overall goals for these groups in its narrative.

The applicant presents ambitious yet achievable annual goals, overall and by student subgroup, for each participating district in each of the areas specified in this section. The applicant describes how targets were set, and explains how these targets exceed the State ESEA targets. However, in the charts provided for section (A)(4)(a) and (A)(4)(b), the applicant provides goals for grades 3 through 10, even though the applicant's proposal specifies that the consortium will be focused on serving students from grades 6-12 in the current project. The applicant does, however, go above and beyond in specifying comparison groups for gap closing and breaking out graduation and college completion numbers by student subgroup. Therefore the application is awarded the high end of mid-range points for this section.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	3

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The applicant describes a set of changes implemented in all of the districts in the consortium through Delaware's Race to the Top State grant and Early Learning Challenge grant initiatives. These include the implementation of statewide SAT testing and improved data systems, and the achievement of improvements in student outcomes as evidenced by scores on state tests and the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP). However, while the applicant indicates a "history of success" and references the application appendix as evidence, only two years of data are provided in the appendix. This data does show growth between the previous year (2010-11) and the current year (2011-12), but there is no data provided in the appendix for the years prior. In the narrative, the applicant includes a chart that shows four years of reading and math performance data for each district as a whole; however, this data is concerning, since the reading number drop significantly between 2009-10 and 2010-11 before rising again in the final year; the math numbers are flat before rising in the final year. Neither of these trends is ever explained in the narrative, though many references are made to the changes implemented through the RTTT State grant in 2010. No longitudinal data is ever provided by the applicant in reference to achievement gaps, graduation rates, or college enrollment rates.

(b) The applicant presents the results of a needs analysis for each district conducted in the implementation of Delaware's RTTT State grant, and describes the initiatives implemented in each district to address those needs. These seems appropriate and aligned; district data for the past two years presented in the appendix indicates a gain in student achievement across subject areas and student subgroups in all four districts of the consortium. Current graduation rate data also shows higher-than-state-average graduation rates for the consortium districts. However, the applicant never directly addresses which

schools are the lowest-performing, and how reforms were targeted to those schools. The applicant mentions in Section C of the application that the consortium has plans to move the most highly-effective school leaders and teachers to highest-need schools.

(c) The applicant indicates in Section D of the application that the consortium districts currently use a data system called iTracker that provides educators, though not parents and students, access to real-time student data. The applicant explains that while this system provides educators the basic information needed to adapt instruction to student needs, it is not very strong; one of the tenets of the current proposal is for the applicant to implement the FutureLinks data system, which will allow sophisticated data analysis to inform instruction targeted to student needs. This new system will also allow students and parents access to student data along with educators. This plan is excellent, but does not demonstrate a strong record of success in access to and use of student data.

The applicant does not provide enough prior data on student achievement, gap closing, graduation rates or college enrollment rates to make an informed judgment on whether there has been prior success in the consortium districts in these areas; upward trending data in the past year does indicate movement in the right direction. The applicant does not address low-performing schools specifically, and does not present a strong case for effective data use up to now. Thus the application earns low-range points for this section.

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

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant indicates that school-level financial data is currently available publicly through the state department of education's website. The applicant provides samples of financial data for each of the districts; while these provide an initial set of information about school finances, including average salary schedules, the data does not go far enough to provide actual personnel salaries for any school staff. The applicant describes the consortia's plan to develop a community web portal to provide school financial information, the Standardized Reporting Project, that upon completion will allow the public to access the information specified in the criteria. However, the applicant is clear about the fact that this implementation is at least two to three years in the future.

Since actual salaries for various staff, which are requested "at a minimum" by the criteria, are not currently made available publicly by the consortium districts, but some school financial information including actual non-personnel expenditures at the school level by category, is currently publicly available through the state department of education website, the application is awarded the low end of mid-range points for this section.

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

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides significant evidence for successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under state legal, statutory, and regulatory requirement to implement the personalized learning environments described in the proposal. The applicant indicates that Delaware state law allows districts substantial flexibility to structure the learning environment, including but not limited to: supporting district development of personalized learning, digital learning content, and mastery-based advancement; providing flexibility to districts for the adjustment of class sizes; and providing districts flexible state funding and scholarships for educator professional development. In the one area of state statute that restricts student credit to classroom instruction (seat time), the districts are applying for a state waiver and expect to receive it. Support for all of the information described in this section is provided by the applicant in the appendix, in the form of letters of support from state leaders, relevant portions of the Delaware administrative code, and credit agreements from higher education institutions. The application is awarded full points for this section.

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

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The applicant provides strong evidence for meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal, as well as how the proposal was revised based on this input. The applicant describes, and documents in the appendix, an extensive plan executed over the course of a year to gather input from students, parents, educators, administrators, community members, and business interests in the districts. The applicant describes how comments from each group were used to modify and strengthen the current proposal to more effectively address the needs of the constituent stakeholders. The applicant further describes a plan to continue gathering this type of input from all stakeholders over the course of the grant and beyond. The applicant specifically describes the consortium efforts to engage teachers, including focus groups, union meetings, staff meetings, and meetings with the Teachers of the Year. The applicant provides evidence of both direct teacher engagement

through these meetings as well as letters of support from the state teacher's union.

(b) The applicant provides, in the appendix, letters of support from over 30 entities, spanning parent organizations, the business community, advocacy groups, local community organizations, institutions of higher education, state leaders, education support centers, political leaders, and more. These letters are often long and detailed, providing specific support for the districts engaged in this work.

The applicant thoroughly and completely addresses the criteria in this section, thus the application is awarded full points for this section.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a clear strategy, used by each of the four constituent districts, to perform a district-level needs assessment prior to the preparation of the current proposal. The needs assessment required districts to examine their status in six areas: technology and infrastructure, use of time for students and teachers, digital content usage, use of data, high quality instructional strategies, and leadership and culture. The assessment identified technology access, resources to develop content, and resources to oversee effective implementation of personalized learning environments, including educator time and training, as needs across all four districts.

The applicant explains that this needs assessment will be extended to individual schools during the period of the grant. The applicant indicates that the Consortium Steering Committee will develop their needs assessment with the support of each district's technology, curriculum and instructional leaders; however, the applicant does not identify other aspects of a high-quality plan to do this, including specific activities, a timeline, or any deliverables. Thus the applicant's plan for the analysis of its current implementation status is not credible. In addition, the applicant provides no plan to evaluate the logic behind the reform proposal.

Since the applicant provides clear evidence of an already-implemented high-quality plan for needs assessment at the district level, but fails to provide high-quality plans for analysis of its current implementation status at the school level or assessment of the logic behind the reform proposal, the application is awarded mid-range points for this section.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	14

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents a plan for improving learning centered on three goals: developing a cloud-based web data platform called FutureLinks to allow access to, analysis of, and instructional direction based on, student data; the implementation of personalized learning teams for each student, and the development of high quality instructional strategies and learning opportunities to customize each student's academic experience. Taken together, these goals present a coherent way of addressing the creation of personalized learning environments designed to improve student learning outcomes. Each goal is associated with appropriate activities and a timeline; however, deliverables and responsible parties are not clearly specified by the applicant for any of these goals.

The applicant also thoroughly addresses most of the specific criteria listed in this section; comments on the applicant's approaches to addressing the specific criteria are provided below.

(a)

(a)(i) The applicant indicates that each student will work with their own Personalized Learning Team (PLT), made up of the student, a parent, a counselor, a teacher and a community mentor; through these teams, students will learn the value of setting, tracking, adjusting and achieving academic goals, and how these goals relate to their life success.

(a)(ii) The applicant indicates that students will work with their PLTs to identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college and career readiness. This will be accomplished through the FutureLink system, which will bring together multiple sources of student data, make that data available to student, parents, and educators, and allow educators (with the appropriate training) to identify appropriate curricular pathways for students based on their needs and interests.

(a)(iii) The applicant indicates that students will be engaged in multiple types of deep learning experiences, including:

- project-based learning that involves conducting research, analyzing data, making interdisciplinary connections, and being engaged in complex cross-disciplinary tasks;
- team-based collaborative learning opportunities, dual enrollment at local higher education institutions, and mastery-based learning that will build life skills as well as academic content knowledge; and
- blended learning that will allow students to explore content on their own time in an online environment, and allow teachers to support student learning by providing needed support in the classroom based on student assessment data and aligned to student interest areas.

(a)(iv) The applicant identifies collaborative learning in the classroom, combined with off-site experiences (community service, work experience, internships and college courses), as the main ways that students will be exposed to new contexts, cultures and perspectives. However, the applicant does not address how off-site experiences would be integrated into the school curriculum , nor is there clear indication of how collaborative learning alone will allow access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives. Finally, the applicant does not indicate how the school curriculum might reflect these types of diversity and exposure.

(a)(v) The applicant clearly indicates, and illustrates with examples, how students will master critical academic content and develop the skills and traits specified through: directed curriculum assigned by their PLTs; collaborative team work in class and online; self-ownership of learning; project-based learning opportunities; and off-site experiences such as internships, community service, and college courses.

(b)

(b)(i) The applicant indicates that personalized sequences of instructional content will be mapped out for students based on their data profiles and interests through interactions with their PLTs;

(b)(ii) The applicant indicates that standards assessments as well as mastery-based learning, project-based learning, online exploration, blended learning, and collaborative projects will be available to all students;

(b)(iii) The applicant indicates that all curriculum, on- and off-line, will be aligned to college and career ready standards; high quality content will be made available to students 24-7 through online access and 1:1 computing;

(b)(iv) The applicant indicates that the FutureLink data system combined with the individual student's PLT will be used to collect, analyze, present, and act upon student data such that students help structure their own learning goals and are provided with the necessary curricular resources and educator support to reach those goals.

(b)(v) The applicant indicates that accommodations will be provided for high-need students in the form of extra time on task, repeated opportunities for mastery, targeted interventions, constant access to digital content, technology equipment for all students, and language translations of curriculum.

(c)

The applicant indicates that the majority of student training and support will be provided through the student's Personalized Learning Team (PLT). In addition, to address the needs of the new digital curricular tools to be implemented across all four districts, the Consortium will take charge of providing training to all students and educators in digital literacy and citizenship.

As indicated above, the applicant thoroughly addresses all but one of the criteria for this section; the final criteria, cultural diversity, is addressed partially. However, the applicant neglects to identify deliverables or responsible parties for the various goals and activities listed on its timelines, nor is this clearly addressed in the applicant's narrative. Thus the application earns mid-range points for this section.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	14

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents a plan for improving teaching and leading centered on four goals: improving educator technology use through the use of instructional technology and eCurriculum coaches; improving educator capacity to use blended learning approaches through targeted professional development and observation of effective models; using data coaches and other PD to allow educators and school leaders to make the best use of sophisticated real-time student data tracking; and using evaluation to improve the effectiveness of educators and school leaders. Taken together, these goals present a coherent way of addressing the improvement of educator and school leader capacity to use personalized learning strategies to improve student learning outcomes. Each goal is associated with appropriate activities, responsible parties, and a timeline; however, deliverables are not specified by the applicant for any of these goals.

The applicant also thoroughly addresses most of the specific criteria listed in this section; comments on the applicant's approaches to addressing the specific criteria are provided below.

(a)

(a)(i) The applicant indicates that it will support educator capacity for effective implementation of personalized learning environments through the deployment of instructional technology support, professional learning communities, technology and curriculum coaches, training in variety of formats, modeling effective blended learning classrooms, and partnering with other organizations as needed to provide high quality professional development.

(a)(ii) The applicant indicates that educators will be assisted in adapting content and instruction to student needs and interests through: the use of the new data system, FutureLinks; professional development through local university partners to learn how to adapt course content and instructional strategies for a digital environment; and training in integrating projects based and collaborative learning into all curriculum.

(a)(iii) The applicant indicates that the new data system, FutureLinks, will be used to track student data on multiple assessments, including performance assessments, and feed that information to students, parents, and educators through the student's Personalized Learning Team (PLT) in a way that allows the PLT to structure both student acceleration and effective instructional practice.

(a)(iv) The applicant indicates that educator effectiveness will be monitored using the state's enhanced evaluation system, DPAS II, and that the results of those evaluations will be used to determine teacher career ladder progressions, necessary educator supports and assignment of professional development according to identified needs, and determining effective and highly effective educator ratings. Feedback on improving instructional effectiveness will also be provided by the state's coaching system, Vision Network, and school-based instructional coaches.

(b)

(b)(i) The applicant indicates that the new data system, FutureLink, will be used to provide actionable real-time data to educators, parents and student to assist them in identifying optimal, personalized learning approaches for each student.

(b)(ii) The applicant indicates that high-quality learning resources, including teacher-created and district-purchased digital content, will be made available to all educators, parents, and students, along with training for educators on how to link those resources to student needs. Content will not be released to educators until it has been thoroughly evaluated by the Consortium leadership.

(b)(iii) The applicant indicates that educators will be supported in their efforts to match student needs with specific resources through the new data system and through targeted training on this exact topic. In addition, the Consortium plans to purchase or develop digital content with embedded algorithms that generate recommended learning objects for students based upon their past performance. Educators will be able to use these recommendations to create individualized "playlists" of content matched to student needs and interest.

(c)

(c)(i) The applicant indicates that educator effectiveness will be monitored using the state's enhanced evaluation system, DPAS II, and that the results of those evaluations will be used to determine teacher career ladder progressions, necessary educator supports and assignment of professional development according to identified needs, and determining effective and highly effective educator ratings. Feedback on improving instructional effectiveness will also be provided by the state's coaching system, Vision Network, and school-based instructional coaches. This information will allow school leaders to make necessary staffing decisions for continuous school improvement.

(c)(ii) The applicant indicates that multiple training, systems and practices are currently available to school leaders through the work already begun through the state's Race to the Top State grant. These include monthly training on data and other resources, work with data, development, and leadership coaches, and the state's Vision Network for school leaders. In the future, the individual districts plan to develop leadership academies, cross-district professional development opportunities, personalization training, and summer institutes on policies and procedures related to creating personalized learning environments. The applicant indicates that the consortium plans to establish a detailed process for continuous school improvement, including such elements as continued leader training, gap analysis, regular progress updates, and collaborative meetings for all district and school leaders.

(d)

The applicant explains that the Consortium's plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principles will involve four activities: recruiting from highly effective preparation programs; linking the new data system, FutureLinks, to targeted professional development; establishing new feedback loops for educators, and supporting new teachers through the Delaware New Teacher Mentoring Program. The applicant further explains that providing all students access to online course across the district will improve access for all students to the highly effective teachers and leaders already present in the district. The applicant also describes a plan to increase the numbers of

effective teachers and leaders in hard to staff schools, subjects and specialty areas, by monitoring current allocations and reassigning personnel as needed. However, the applicant provides no information on how educators might feel about this plan of reallocation, which makes it less than credible. In addition, no timelines or deliverables are specified for any of these activities; thus the applicant's plan is not a high quality plan.

As indicated above, the applicant thoroughly addresses all of the criteria for this section. However, the applicant neglects to identify deliverables for the various goals and activities listed on its timelines, nor is this clearly addressed in the applicant's narrative. In addition, in the final criterion, the applicant presents neither a high-quality plan nor confirmation that its school leaders and educators support the plan to reallocate staff according the school need, which is a critical concern. Thus the application earns mid-range points for this section.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	11

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The applicant describes, and illustrates in the appendix, a consortium governance structure that will provide support and services to all participating schools. This governance structure consists of:

Steering Committee – consists of at least one representative from each district, meeting monthly to mange the consortium's activities; sub-committees, including appropriate district personnel, will be formed in the following areas: technology, instructional technology, counseling for college and career readiness, and finance/business.

- BRINC Advisory Committee (educators, parents, and community members)
- Consortium-wide Program Manager – oversees consortium day to day operations
- Institute of Higher Education coordinator – oversees expansion of dual enrollment across all districts
- eLearning Coordinator – oversees development and implementation of blended learning classroom
- FutureLinks coordinator –oversees implementation of data system

In addition, the applicant explains that each school will have an instructional technology coach and an ecurriculum coach to provide training and support to students, parents, and educators on using the new data system, and to educators on creating online curriculum and effectively implementing blended learning opportunities.

(b) The applicant thoroughly describes how the district already provides school leadership teams with sufficient flexibility and autonomy over the specified factors, providing details about flexibility in scheduling, staffing, roles and responsibilities, and budgets.

(c) The applicant explains that progression through mastery is not yet available to students due to a credit hour requirement at the state level. The consortium expects to apply for and receive a waiver for this requirement within the first two years of the grant period, after which it will work with all stakeholders to develop a plan for implementing demonstrated-mastery based student promotion.

(d) The applicant describes state assessments, formative assessments, project-based assessments and student portfolios as the ways that students are currently able to show mastery at various times during the school year. The applicant indicates that no consistent policy currently exists to address this criterion, but that the Consortium plans to address this by developing a model policy for state consideration during the first year of the project.

(e) The applicant clearly describes and provides supporting evidence in the appendix tor it learning-focused strategies (LFS) model of providing support to student with special needs. The applicant indicates that beyond LFS, the strong instructional practices of the districts are also made adaptable and accessible to all students through educator use of Response to Intervention (RTI) techniques combined with the current data system, iTracker, to identify student gaps and target interventions to address them.

The applicant provides plans to address all of the criteria in this section; the applicant segregates activities by goal area, and usually specifies the responsible parties. However, the applicant never provides a timeline for this section's activities, nor are specific deliverables indicated. Thus the applicant's plan falls short of the high-quality mark. The application is awarded mid-range points for this section.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	6

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The applicant describes how all participating students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders will have access to implementation tools, content, and resources regardless of income. The applicant proposes a plan of 1:1 computing, where each student has access to a computer, with subsidies provided for low-income students through local businesses, local IHEs, and the districts themselves. The participant districts are also investigating policy changes that will facilitate the "bring your own device" method that will allow the district to focus its resources on students that do not have their own devices to bring, as well as on removing firewalls and providing (through business partnerships) free internet to all stakeholders.

(b) The applicant describes a variety of methods through which the consortium will ensure comprehensive access to technical support. These include the following: Personalized Learning Teams and social networking sites for students; "community tech" nights, embedded data system assistance, and social networking sites for parents; and training, professional development, instructional technology coaches, and professional learning communities for educators.

(c) The applicant indicates that the new data system, FutureLInks, will be specifically designed to allow students and parents to export student data in an open data format that will allow the us of that data in other electronic learning systems.

(d)The applicant mentions that all districts in the consortium currently use the iTracker data system; upon the development of the new FutureLinks data system, all districts will switch to using that system. Since all districts will use the same system, the data will be interoperable across districts. In addition, the applicant mentions several state-level and external data systems that are currently used by the districts and whose data can be used in district systems.

The applicant provides plans to address all of the criteria in this section; the applicant segregates activities by goal area, and usually specifies the responsible parties. However, the applicant never provides a timeline for this section's activities, nor are specific deliverables indicated. Thus the applicant's plan falls short of the high-quality mark. The application is awarded mid-range points for this section.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant identifies a multi-faceted continuous improvement plan for the Consortium. The applicant's strategy involves project monitoring and continuous adjustments through quarterly Steering Committee meetings, with the Steering Committee publicly sharing annual reports and running semi-annual community stakeholder meetings; a consortium performance monitoring plan; monthly collaborative cross-district meetings; monthly online progress updates and data analysis reports from each district, both of which will be discuss at Consortium meetings, where this data is shared in advance; an annual gap analysis and year end planning meeting hosted by the Steering Committee; a data dashboard created by the program manager to provide quarterly gap reports for each major project; and data from student outcomes gathered through the FutureLink data system. All data will be used by the Steering Committee to evaluate progress toward consortium wide goals and determine what, if any, corrective action is required. The applicant presents a strong and comprehensive plan for continuous improvement, thus the application is awarded full points for this section.

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

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents a strategy for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. For external stakeholders, the applicant identifies communications through the Consortium and district web pages, which will serve as a portal for a multitude of information about consortium activities, including support materials such as educator tools, updated guidance documents, and training materials; and reports such as professional development updates and student progress outcomes. The data portal website will be accessible in multiple languages and formats. In addition, external stakeholders will be engaged in the work of the Consortium through community meetings and participation in a BRINC advisory council. For internal stakeholders, the applicant identifies communications and engagement through high-quality professional development for educators led by school leadership; webinars, podcasts, tutorials, and videos to support educators throughout the year; and student focus groups to ensure that student needs are being met. The applicant presents a strong multifaceted plan for ongoing communications and engagement, thus the application is awarded full points for this section.

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

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant defines 14 performance measures, provides appropriate rationale for each applicant-proposed measure, and in the appendix, provides detailed information on how each measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan, and how each measure will be reviewed and improved if necessary.

Specific comments are provided below, by grade-band, with respect to the ambitious yet achievable nature of the specific performance measures indicated by the applicant, as well as the quality of the annual targets specified and the appropriateness of the subgroups identified for each measure.

- All students – Two measures. The applicant specifies the allocation of effective and highly effective teachers and principals for all students and broken out by student subgroup. The applicant sets ambitious yet achievable targets for all indicators, with a clear explanation by the applicant of why the “effective” numbers are adjusted away from the baseline before the targets are set.
- pK-3 grade band – The applicant does not expect to serve this grade band, so no targets are proposed.
- 4-8 grade band – Four measures. The applicant proposes to use Delaware’s state assessment, DCAS, as the on-track indicator; the Academic Index as the academic indicator; the average daily attendance as the social-emotional indicator; and online course completion as a fourth indicator. The applicant provides ambitious yet achievable targets for the on-track indicator, for all students and by student subgroup. However, the applicant provides no chart, data, or targets for the academic indicators for this grade band. While the applicant does provide targets for average daily attendance for this grade band, it is for all participating students, with no breakouts for student subgroups. In the applicant’s chart for online course completion, the applicant again provides only goals for all participating students as a whole, but no subgroup information.
- 9-12 grade band – Eight measures. The applicant provides targets for FAFSA completion; SAT scores as the on-track indicator; Academic index as the Career-Ready indicator; Dual Enrollment Rate, Graduation Rate, College Enrollment Rate, and Online Course Enrollment Rate as additional academic indicators; and Dropout Rate as the social-emotional indicator. None of the measures are broken out by grade, though FAFSA Completion, Graduation Rate, and College Enrollment Rate are likely limited to seniors. Only graduation rate, dropout rate, and college enrollment rate are broken out by student subgroup; the applicant only provides “all participating student” targets for the remaining measures. The targets, where provided, are ambitious yet achievable.

In summary, the applicant provides multiple measures and targets by grade band and student subgroup, provides rationale for its measures and plans to improve measures if they are insufficient. However, the applicant does not provide academic indicator targets for its 6-8 grade band, nor are most of the targets for the 9-12 grade band broken out by student subgroup. Due to these missing elements, the application is awarded mid-range points for this section.

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

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant indicates the Consortium will develop a full plan to evaluate the effectiveness of its RTTT-D investments in four areas: new instructional content, new technology, educator professional development, and greater student and parent engagement. The applicant indicates that the Consortium will track leading indicators, then map the data analysis to each indicator. The applicant identifies leading indicators for success for the first three of these components:

- new instructional content – participant reactions, participant learning, organization support and change, participant’s use of knowledge and skills, student outcomes
- new technology – device deployment in schools, training of educators and other stakeholders, communication to stakeholders, system/tool usage, impact on practice
- educator professional development - educator participation outcomes, student participation outcomes

The applicant indicates that the Project Manager, with the help of the Steering committee and district and school-level stakeholders, will create the final framework for the evaluation, including detailed information about indicators, questions, data collection methods, proposed measures, and recommendations for how the consortium night use these data to make higher-level programmatic or policy decisions. The applicant indicates that this plan will be developed fully in the first quarter of the first year of the grant.

The strong level of detail in the applicant’s existing plan, including a comprehensive set of already-identified leading indicators, combined with a coherent plan to finalize the framework upon grant funding, provides a convincing argument for the applicant’s evaluation plan. The application is awarded full points for this section.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The applicant indicates that the project will have a total cost of $38,025,318, and will be supported over four years through $29,890, 598 in RTTT-D funds, supplemented by $8,134,720 in other supporting funds. The other funds to be used to support the project are Title II funds ($510,000), E-Rate funds ($1,528,000), local tax receipts ($1,394,720), local operating funds ($2,966,000), technology match funds ($1,206,000), and state professional development funds ($530,000). The total amount of RTTT-D funds requested is within the allowable amount for the size of the district.

(b) The applicant includes detailed amounts and rationale for each category of spending, including project level budgets and budget narratives for each of the budgets provided. The dollar amounts are reasonable and sufficient to support the applicant's proposed plans.

(c)(i) The applicant indicates that the project will have a total cost of $38,025,318, and will be supported over four years through $29,890, 598 in RTTT-D funds, supplemented by $8,134,720 in other supporting funds. The other funds to be used to support the project are Title II funds ($510,000), E-Rate funds ($1,528,000), local tax receipts ($1,394,720), local operating funds ($2,966,000), technology match funds ($1,206,000), and state professional development funds ($530,000).

(c)(ii) The applicant specifically identifies three categories of funds as one-time expenditures – bandwidth, wireless access points, and the development of the new data system, FutureLinks – and indicates the remaining funds will be spent over the course of the four years of the grant. The applicant presents a plan for sustainability based on this regimen of spending; comments on that plan are provided below in (F)(2).

In summary, the applicant provides budgets and budget narratives providing specific dollar amounts by category and justification for costs, all of which appear to be reasonable and sufficient to effectively conduct all of the proposed grant activities. The applicant also identifies a significant amount of supplemental funding through State, Federal, and partner sources to support the project. Therefore, the application is awarded full points for this section.

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

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a strategy, though not necessarily a comprehensive one, for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. This strategy does not, however, constitute a high-quality plan, as specific goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties are never identified for this purpose.

The applicant indicates that since the majority of the RTTT-D funds requested will be used as either one-time expenditures to increase district technology capacity, or short-term expenditures (completed by the end of the grant) required to develop new curricular systems and train the personnel involved in effective use of the newly developed systems, the grant activities will be "self-sustaining" after the completion of the grant period, and not require a significant amount of additional funds to be sustained.

The applicant indicates that some local funds that are currently being utilized for other projects will be freed up to support the continuation of the implementation of the personalized learning environments built through the four years of the current proposed project. The applicant estimates a continuing cost of $1,650,000 per year to maintain and improve the implemented systems (mainly in the areas of continued personnel development, equipment replacement, and updating digital content), and expects this amount to be available through re-allocations of current funds. The applicant also indicates that the non-RTTT-D funding used for the project will continue after the end of the RTTT-D grant. Finally, the applicant indicates that the Consortium expects the state of Delaware to see the activities and products of the grant in these four districts as a scalable model, thereby increasing the willingness of the state to take on some of the financial burden of moving the implementation state-wide.

This strategy depends on a lot of good will, and not much fundraising; also, it seems that the applicant is underestimating the costs for updating and maintaining equipment, and continuous professional development. While Personalized Learning Environments may well become the "status quo" for the participating districts, there is certain to be educator turnover, which will require new expenditures in training and professional development; also, since technology quickly becomes outdated, the applicant will likely incur hefty costs in the years following the grant to update or replace the digital hardware and software purchased during the grant period. Due to the underestimates of cost, lack of a fundraising plan, and lack of a high-quality plan, the application earns low-level points for this criterion.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not specifically address the competitive preference priority anywhere in its proposal. Thus the application is awarded no points for this section.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant meets Absolute Priority 1 through its coherent and comprehensive reform vision that employs three elements – developing a centralized data system, FutureLinks, and training and support for educators, school leaders, parents and students to use the system; establishing personalized learning teams for each student; and developing an expanded array of learning opportunities – which together will allow for the development of personalized learning plans for each student. Data-targeted interventions will be used to accelerate student achievement for all; multiple methods of instructional delivery and demonstration of mastery will deepen student learning for all; and supports will be targeted to the highest-need students using the integrated data system, ensuring increased equity. Specifically,

- In Section A, the applicant describes how it will build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through personalized learning strategies and supports for students and educators that are aligned with the Common Core college- and career-ready standards;
- In Section C, the applicant describes how it will use a data-driven system of personalized learning to accelerate student achievement, decrease achievement gaps across student groups, increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers, and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student. Also in this section, the applicant describes a comprehensive plan of evaluation and professional development to increase the effectiveness of educators; expand student access to the most effective educators.

Thought the applicant fails to provide the appropriate data in Section B to indicate a strong record of success in the past four years, the plan presented by the applicant does address include a description of how such data will be tracked and reported in the future. As a whole, the application meets absolute priority 1.

Total	210	149

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #1324DE-3 for Colonial School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided extensive detail for a very achievable ambitious vision. The plan coherently is built on the foundation of personalized student learning. Data is expertly presented in narrative and table format and clearly demonstrates reform structures aimed at increasing student learning. The applicant presented feasible ambitious goals for all students participating as part of the project. The applicant compiles a detailed comprehensive plan for decreasing achievement gaps, increasing student learning, and documented activities for personalizing student learning. The applicant has articulated a very strong complete comprehensive and coherent plan earning the highest score possible

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

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant earned the highest number of points for this category for the following reasons:

The applicant clearly explains the reason for choosing middle and high school students (grades 6-12) throughout the consortium to participate in the project. The applicant uses well defined tables to compare the percentage of low income and high need students in the participating schools to the number of low income and high need students in schools throughout the consortium.

The applicant provides complete documentation using a table with a detailed list of participants for the consortium.

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

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has earned the highest scores possible in this category for the following reasons:

The applicant clearly explains the goals for scaling up the project to expand their successes for how to personalize student learning environments and increase student achievement at the secondary level to other districts throughout the state,

The applicant provides a reasonable timeline for implementing the plan to meet the achievable ambitious goals set forth in the plan.

The plan names the persons responsible for assisting with the meaningful scale-up of the reform plan.

The plan provides evidence and letters of support from the Governor and state legislators demonstrating support for the delivery of goals and implementation of the plan.

The applicant provides a narrative justifying the credibility of the implementation and delivery of the plan.

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

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a narrative justifying the credibility of the implementation and delivery of the plan. The applicant received the highest score possible in this category for the following reasons:

The applicant provides annual summative information from the state administered assessment in well organized tables.

The data contains current student achievement baseline scores and projected goal increases through to the 2016-17 school year across the major content areas of Math and English Language Arts with target goals aligned to the state goal scores as well as realistic district projections.

Student sub group data demonstrating decreasing achievement percentages is also clearly presented in charted tables.

Comprehensive graduate and college enrollment rates are provided. The charts project achievable annual increases for all

required categories.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	10

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has earned a score of 10 in this category for a presentation of data to support the criteria requirements for this category"

- The applicant provides tables demonstrating that the Consortium has increased student achievement and decreased gaps among sub groups.
- The applicant has provided a list of school reforms that have been implemented in each of the low performing participating school districts for the course of the last four years. Evidence is documented with visuals that clearly portray what student achievement looks like in math, reading and graduation rates for each district.
- The applicant explains the measures that have been taken to create a seamless system for students, educators and parents to access information and use the data to inform and improve participation, instruction, and services.

The applicant did not earn the highest score available in this category for the folowing reasons:

- The applicant does not provide detailed data for demonstrating a record of success for the past four years.

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

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides evidence and documentation demonstrating that all K-12 school instruction and non instruction financial expenditures are available online for the public to access at any given moment on the state's public website. The applicant also provides evidence that the Consortium is meeting with state officials to continually improve the system so as to increase the public's ability to access and better understand each district's revenue and expenditure system. The applicant has earned 5 points for the documented evidence provided to meet the criteria for this category.

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

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides clear documentation that under the laws of the state the districts have complete autonomy for implementing personalized learning environments based upon the needs of the applicant. The applicant provides specific examples of personalized online programs that the Consortium districts have put into place with documented support from the state government. The applicant also provides letters of support and excerpts from the lawmakers and the state Governor supporting the Consortium's ability to implement successful conditions that promote personalized learning environments. The applicant has earned the total amount of points possible for thoroughly explaining the state' policies and providing specific examples related to this category.

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

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a detailed description of how the Consortium included students, families, teachers, and administrators. from participating schools in providing feedback for the applicant's proposal. The applicant thoroughly explains how the districts utilized focus meetings, committee meetings, and advisory meetings on a regular basis to take ideas for improvement and innovation to prepare the proposal. The applicant also provides documentation demonstrating that several of the ideas that were presented at these meetings were being implemented while the proposal was being prepared. The applicant provided 27 letters of support from parents, government officials, teachers, and local councils providing evidence of strong stakeholder involvement for the creation of the proposal. The applicant earned a score of 10 for providing extensive documentation related to meeting the requirements for this category.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

B5

The applicant earned 3 points in this category:

- The applicant provided a detailed summary of how the district utilized a needs assessment tool to determine district current gaps and needs for personalized learning environments. Based upon the results obtained from the needs analysis the applicant provided an extensive priority listing of the proposed activities in a precedent-based order.
- The applicant provided a clear rationale as to the needs and gaps that will be addressed. These needs and gaps were gathered from the results of a needs assessment.
- The applicant provided a table with the results of and gaps discovered from the needs assessments for each district. Within the table, timelines were addressed and individuals responsible for activities were named.
- The applicant provided a credible analysis and implementation plan that could be accomplished with the funding and timelines presented.

The applicant provided information that a future assessment will be developed by the Consortium Steering Committee with support of each district's technology and curriculum and instruction leaders. The applicant did not provide clear information as to who developed the current needs assessment, who received and completed the needs assessment, and the return rate for those who completed the needs assessment. Because the applicant did not detail the creators and receivers of the needs analysis the applicant did not earn the highest amount of points in this category.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant earned 15 points for the following reasons:

- The applicant provides documentation for three basic interventions: The *Future Links* platform, Personalized Learning Teams, High -quality instruction, and expanded opportunities. The applicant details how each of these interventions meets the requirements for helping students to understand that what they are learning is the key to their success in accomplishing their goals. In addition the applicant specifies that each of these learning tools is connected to the college-and-career ready standards and rigorous curriculum and graduation requirements.
- The applicant describes a variety of high-quality instructional extended learning activities that supports the concept of parents and educators working together with students to have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning, master critical academic content and develop skills and traits related to goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem solving. The applicant provides rationales for each of the activities proposed for improving student learning and personalizing learning environments.
- The applicant highlights explicit accommodations and high quality strategies such as online tracking systems and blended learning strategies that will benefit all students and especially high need students. The applicant provides documentation that the strategies addressed in this plan will help students to stay on track toward meeting college-and career-ready standards and graduating on time.
- The applicant details opportunities for providing training and support for students, parents and educators to assure that all understand how to use the tools and resources in order to track and manage their learning.
- The applicant provides convincing rationales for each activity that is presented.
- The applicant demonstrates a clear understanding of presenting achievable and ambitious goals and activities aimed at providing unique and innovative personalized learning opportunities that promote ongoing and frequent regular feedback.

The applicant did not earn the full amount of points for the criteria in this category for the following reasons:

- The applicant addresses personal learning teams comprised of a teacher, student, parent, and counselor. The applicant does not explain how there will be enough staff to implement this plan for each student or who will be the person

responsible to assign personnel to the team or when the teams will have an opportunity to meet. The applicant does not expand upon the specifics for supporting credibility relative to adequate time and personnel to successfully implement the activity,
- The applicant does not document timelines for starting and ending all the activities that are listed in this portion of the plan.
- The applicant does not provide for who will be responsible for overseeing each of the plans addressed in this plan.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	15

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant earned a score of 15 for the completeness of the documentation provided in this section.

The applicant provides a variety of high-quality professional development activities aligned with implementing the goals of the project especially related to digital resources. The applicant provides rationales for conducting training activities specific to the professional development, teaching and learning goals. Reasonable rationales accompany the goals and activities. Timelines are provided in an organized table.

The applicant names outside experts and internal trainers that will be responsible for providing in-house professional development.

The applicant states that the district is adopting the state's teacher and principal evaluation system. The plan accounts for frequent evaluator feedback to teachers and administrators. The applicant details professional development with copious examples that help to provide credibility for the plan. The applicant does document how the applicant will utilize and provide training for what the applicant refers to as a rigorous teacher evaluation system.

The applicant did not earn the total points allotted for this category for the following reasons:

The applicant does not detail a plan for increasing the number of students who receiving instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals including in hard-to-staff schools, subject and specialty areas. The applicant does document that due to the rigor of the new state evaluation system there may be fewer teachers deemed as highly qualified, but does not connect this concept to whether this will affect providing equitable personalized learning enviroments for all groups of students or student sub groups.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	12

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant earned 12 points for meeting criteria in this category for the following reasons:

- The applicant outlines a comprehensive plan for central administration to provide support and services to all participants in the Consortium.
- The applicant describes a specific structure for creating and organizing district Leadership Teams, School Committees, and Advisory Committees.
- The applicant presents documentation describing the flexibility and autonomy districts will have in creating school schedules and calendars, implementing shared decision making and staffing models, assigning staff responsibilities, school-level budgets.
- The applicant explains how districts will give students the opportunity to earn credit based on demonstrated mastery by presenting students with dual enrollment options available for students to take courses through an accredited community college or four-year college, community service.
- The applicant provides documentation for providing adaptaptation resources and instructional practices to all students including students with IEPs and English learners.

The applicant provides rationales for programs and key goals in this category

- The applicant does provide rationales and explanations that deem the plan as reasonably deliverable and credible
- The applicant did not earn the highest score in this category for the following reasons:
- The applicant provides some timelines and some persons responsible for completing the activities. The applicant does not consistently provide detailed timelines and persons/positions named for each activity presented

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

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant earned 7 points for the following reasons:

- The applicant documents the extensive digital and instructional opportunities afforded to parents, students, teachers, and administrators for access to a consortium-wide interoperable data system that includes human resource data, student information, budget data, and instructional improvement system data.
- The applicant provides extensive documentation for the existence of the system as well as the intensive training provided to all stakeholders. The applicant provides goals aligned to the success of the project, and reasonable rationales for the activities being implemented. The district provides documentation that the system is already in place along with credible activities to improve and expand access and use of the system. The applicant provides comprehensive documentation assuring that all stakeholders have access to the data system.

The applicant did not earn the highest possible number of points in this category for the followint reason:

- The applicant does not consistently and coherently detail specific timelines and persons/positions assigned to implement and monitor each the documented activities in the plan.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	12

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant earned a score of 12 for the following reasons:

The proposal supports the creation of a committees and advisory panels that will meet on a monthly basis to report progress on the Race to the Top initiatives. A monthly newsletter will be published on the website of each district and continuous progress will be shared with all stakeholders. The proposal documents that training will be ongoing, student and teacher needs will be assessed regularly and technology resources such as webinars, podcasts and video will be utilized to articulate progress and bring stakeholders together. The applicant demonstrates that thought has gone into creating reasonable timelines. Goals are feasible. There is documentation to support the utilization of all stakeholders in the feedback and improvement process. The applicant provides documentation for communication and articulation activities at all levels. The applicant clearly describes the process and expectations for continually looking for opportunities to evaluate and revise the plan in order to be successful.

The applicant did not earn the highest possible score for the following reasons:

The applicant does not consistently provide persons/positions that will be responsible for assigning personnel to the committees, implementing and monitoring the committees, and detailed continuous improvement activities.

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

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant scored 2 points for the criteria presented in this category for the following reasons:

The applicant explains that technology will play a key role in the communication process using such resources as webinars, podcasts, and videos.

The applicant documents use of the Advisory Council to provide feedback as part of the communication plan.

The overall plan has achievable goals and activities.

The applicant did not earn the highest possible score for this category for the following reasons:

The applicant does not provide detailed rationales for the stated activities.

The applicant does not detail consistent timelines for providing ongoing communication.

The plan does not detail who will be responsible for the leadership, implementation, and monitoring of the communication plan.

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

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant met all the requirements for this category and as a result the applicant earned a score of 5 for this category.

The applicant presents the appropriate number performance measures.

For all students:

- The applicant provides detailed charted information and performance measures that demonstrate the number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup whose teacher of record and principal are a highly effective teacher and a highly effective principal.
- In an organized table format the applicant clearly presents the number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup whose teacher of record and principal are an effective teacher and an effective principal.

In the 4-8 category, the applicant provides extensive data in clearly organized charts to report the number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup, who are on track to college- and career-readiness based on the applicant's on-track indicator.

The applicant justifies for grades 4-8 proposing a performance measure to provide students with a plan for preparing students to master college and career ready standards.

The applicant provides documentation to decrease absenteeism as a social emotional performance measure.

In the 9-12 category:

- The applicant clearly lists in chart format the number and percentage of participating students who complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form;
- The applicant clearly lists in chart format the number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup, who is on track to college- and career-readiness based on the applicant's on-track indicator.
- The applicant provides evidence by charting measures related to career-readiness in order to assess the number and percentage of participating students who are or are on track to being career-ready.
- The applicant documents convincing reasons for using college enrollment and online learning performance measures to be addressed as part of this plan.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant earned 3 points for the completed documentation related to the requirements for this category as listed below:

- The applicant provides a detailed narrative outlining the process and plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the project,
- The applicant documents that the Technology committee will meet quarterly to assess the progress of the proposed technology activities.
- The applicant provides a detailed table outlining indicators for success, questions that will justify progress, and data collection indicators.
- The applicant describes credible achievable goals and activities.

The applicant did not earn the highest number of points in this category because:

- The applicant does not consistently provide timelines and/or persons assigned to manage/monitor the evaluation process for each proposed activity.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The budget is well organized, detailed and appropriate for the investments proposed for the Race to the Top project. The budget clearly indicates one time costs and long term sustainability of the project. The applicant uses tables to clearly present the information. The applicant thoroughly explains how funding will be used for one-time investments versus those that will be used for operational costs. The budget supports the thought processes, overall goals, and goals related to personalizing student learning that are presented in the plan. The activities, interventions and strategies that will be funded are focused on maintaining long-term sustainability. The detail of the budget and the presentation of the budget in organized tables provide evidence that the district has taken extra steps to assure the sustainability of productive personalized learning environments. The applicant provides an adequate budget with reasonable and sufficient amounts to support the initiatives addressed in the proposal. Because the budget and rationales were presented in a comprehensive format the applicant earned a score of 10.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	4

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant earned 4 points for providing the following evidence:

- The applicant does account for budget assumptions, potential sources and uses of funds. The applicant describes partnerships that have been built. The applicant includes letters of support from State and local government leaders, business and community leaders and university officials.

The applicant did not earn the highest number of points in this category for the following reasons:

- The applicant does not document inclusion of a budget for the three years after the term of the project.
- The applicant does not document convincing data for sustaining the grant beyond the term of the grant.
- The applicant presents confusing documentation among the statements provided by the districts in the Appendix. Several of the documents state that the RTTT money will be sufficient to maintain sustainability after the term of the grant. This statement breaks down the credibility of the success of the project to be sustained after the RTTT funding is exhausted.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not provide consistent coherent partnerships in a united collaborative manner to qualify for a score in this category. In the appendix, each school district submitted documentation for partnerships that each individual school formed independent of each other. The applicant does not provide solid clear evidence that coordinated partnerships would be implemented uniformly based upon the criteria described in this category.

The applicant does not provide a section dedicated to this category to present convincing documentation to support the criteria in this category. As a result the applicant earned 0 points for this category.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided interventions and programs throughout the proposal that are designed to decrease achievement gaps across student groups and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers. The applicant stressed the use of technology and digital resources to achieve its goals. Throughout the proposal the applicant proposes to increase and personalize student learning through the purchase of research-based programs that have shown student gains in other districts with student demographics similar to the applicants' districts. In each of the plans that the applicant proposes there is evidence of adhering to college and career ready standards. The applicant provides coherent consistent evidence for personalized learning activities through the use of a cohort tracking system, data growth models, concentrated professional development, a schedule integrator system, and supported follow-up research. The applicant provides achievable current and proposed future decreases for achievement gaps across student groups, and provides charted data demonstrating proposed increased high school graduation rates.

Total	210	158