



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0284CA-1 for Desert Sands Charter High School

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant indicates a plan to implement a "Blended Classroom" approach combining distance learning resources with traditional classroom instruction to increase student graduation rates. Applicant further indicates use of Distance Learning Resource Centers to facilitate vision of customizing learning for students. The vision appears to build on the four core educational assurance areas including accelerating student achievement through use of a personalized learning model; deepening student learning through a blended learning approach implementing technology to motivate and engage learners at school and at home. Further through use of technology applicant intends to extend reach of excellent teachers to students anywhere, place and time for personalized learning approach targeting students who have already dropped out of traditional home schools or are in danger of dropping out therefore this element which constitutes a reasonably comprehensive and coherent reform vision is scored in the "high medium" range by this assessor.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This part of the application narrative lacks specifics noted in the notice descriptor but rather substitutes generalizations with regard to State of CA reforms. Sub points a,b&c were not specifically addressed here. Applicant notes adoption of Common Core Standards by charter schools in state of CA. without further reference to process or relevance to this application.. List of schools participating (12) and total number of students affected (6,100) preceded in A1 part of application. Since the process used to select schools (a) was addressed only as "they share a common instructional framework" and "all meet eligibility requirements" assessor scores in medium range.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>While some specifics of proposal narrative (e.g. translation of the plan into application to meaningful reform and model or theory of change) are not addressed the applicant however does make a case for the consortiums previous success in improving student outcomes ("graduated 4000 students who might have otherwise been part of CA's epidemic dropout statistics"), with baseline data charts for student outcomes as evidence noting graduation rates, drop out rates and enrollment rates. Full implementation of Zoom Data Director program for data analysis and summative assessments is also noted along with goals and evidence supporting in narrative. The scale up plan is stated simply as an increase or inclusion of an additional 10% (600 students)of participating students per year during course of the project. Due to omissions as noted applicant earns a mid range score for this portion of the application.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant indicates use of formative (curriculum embedded) as well as summative assessments in reaching stated goals. However, specifics called for in the application are lacking e.g. performance on summative assessment data, decreasing achievement gaps, graduation rates or college enrollment data as requested in RFP. Applicant does however include a list of objectives/evidence and interventions addressing decreasing achievement gaps, increasing graduation rates and college enrollment though they are not stated in a measurable format (e.g. alignment of instruction with content standards, extend learning time, increase access to technology and institute professional development aligned with standards based instructional materials) they do constitute an attempt to improve learning performance for students leading to an increase in (e) postsecondary degree attainment. Due to the lack of measurability stated here and omission of timelines, deliverables, etc. applicant earns a mid range score for this portion of the application.</p>		

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	7
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>While the applicant states a clear record of success, paragraph 2 "The DSC has demonstrated a clear record of success over the past four years in advancing student learning and achieving.", the data supporting speaks only to staffing salaries and material and supplies rather than student outcomes. Charts for staffing</p>		

and salaries are supplied but do not address items (a), (b) or (c) in the RFP for section (B) (1). This assessor must conclude either the requested data doesn't exist or was omitted, either way the conclusion is a medium low score based on these omissions. If applicant has achieved ambitious and significant reforms in the past no evidence is noted here.

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

Applicant states salary data is made available via website accessible at each school's individual website and at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/fd/cs> which is noted in the application as requested, but applicant is unclear (meaning not explained for a, b, c or d) how it is communicated to public other than references to these websites. Specifically there is no mention of how it is communicated, meaning none or zero response regarding the communication aspect of this portion of the RFP. Since this element omits the actual salary data it represents less than a high level of transparency, the applicant thus earns a medium range score since this communication element is missing.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	2
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant restates status quo descriptor of organization including demographic data (race, achievement and academic progress indicators) for students in consortia schools without specifically addressing how this information is related to implementation of personalized learning environment or autonomy under State legal, statutory and regulatory requirements to implement this proposal.. Applicant failed to demonstrate evidence of successful conditions or to address the issue of sufficient autonomy beyond describing qualifications of teaching staff therefore earning a low range score on this portion of the application.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	8
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Student and parent advisory councils are noted as vehicles for proposal input and letters of support are in evidence in the addendum from principals and community members. Applicant states leadership teams and principals have been engaged over a two year period regarding the development of a personalized learning model and key components of instructional plan are listed: 1 Dropout recovery; 2 Career Exploration, etc. Applicant further notes leadership teams are vehicle used to achieve stakeholder engagement and support along with student and parent advisory councils to communicate with various publics educational practices which have been discussed developed and had input requested. However, no reference to collective bargaining representation and whether or not it supports proposal is in evidence. The omission of teacher support data detracts from this otherwise adequate description of how stakeholders are engaged thus earning applicant high range score.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

While the applicant does not address the components, (meaning the items noted in the Request For Proposal) i.e. any plan addressing needs and gaps as stated in the application or logic behind the reform proposal, a list of learning objectives related to the plan is noted. No needs or gaps analysis is in evidence therefore a score in the low medium range is earned by applicant for this portion of the application.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	10

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant notes the implementation goal of a "Personal Learning Plan" for each student to accomplish the detail noted in the application with tutoring workshops to support authentic standards based reform in the following manner: (1)Weekly reports to parents are noted on assessing and reporting student progress (2) Applicant notes environment is personalized through a diagnostic computerized assessment of math and reading which is completed for all newly registered students. (3) In addition applicant notes communication with regard to this plan is enhanced through weekly meetings with parents and students.(4) A rotation of learning strategies is also noted as a means of personalizing learning including one to one instruction, small group instruction, tutoring and distance learning.(5) Applicant also states students are also mentored and advised with regard to post-secondary enrollment during every phase of their educational program. (6)Finally, applicant notes the consortium is currently developing an online personal profile to assist students in understanding their personal strengths and weaknesses and career related interests.While the personalized learning program is described in detail it does not completely address the specifics in either (a) or (b)of the RFP. Since what is omitted cannot be evaluated proposal earns half available points for this section.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	10
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant makes reference to Professional Learning Community approach to training for staff including strategic planning for ongoing development with clear goals over the sequence of the project including student impact, e.g. increase of 600 students engaged in distance learning each year of the plan. However some goals, e.g.(meaning for example) "all staff delivery of distance learning by end of year one", appear overly optimistic and ambitious. Applicant states DSC will

offer all teachers and staff professional development to learn how to use distance technology but offers no specifics with regard to training topics, timelines, persons responsible or deliverables. However college and career readiness for students is addressed in the context of participation in the "American Diploma Network" with the stated goal of preparing students for college and career readiness. Goals, activities, timelines and deliverables including responsible parties are outlined in tables to support this portion of the application and appear to be reasonable and realistic in support of the plan. However the majority of RFP Items (a) (i-v), (b) (iv (A) (v), and (c) (e.g. mechanisms in place to provide student training on how to use tools and track their own development) are not specifically addressed and cannot be evaluated due to omission therefore applicant receives mid range points for this component of application.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: With regard to organization of the LEA central office, DSC (Desert Sands Public Charter) appears to be adequately structured as the lead member of the consortia providing departments to serve operational functions such as facilities, human resources credentialing, business and finance, training and support for professional staff, student attendance and auditable compliance for all members of the consortium. School leadership teams are referenced but not with regard to autonomy over stated factors noted in (b) of the RFP. The use of personalized individual learning plans is cited as a means for students to have the opportunity to progress based on demonstrated mastery in which students are empowered to set deadlines with their instructors that are achievable, measurable and realistic. Also students are permitted to demonstrate mastery through weekly course progress assessment and may repeat these assessments until mastery is demonstrated thus permitting demonstration of mastery multiple times at their own pace. Students with special needs and English Language learners are provided the services of Education Specialists and meetings in small classroom environments. EL students receive "aggressive" instruction in language development by teachers especially credentialed for working with this population. Thus generally this portion of the application is well stated with regard to the role of school leaders and leadership teams and documented with reference to weekly assessments of student progress and advancement based on meeting requirements versus seat time for students. Strategies are clearly noted(e.g. diagnostic assessment, appropriate placement, flexible time allocation for assignment completion by students, scheduling appointments with tutors, etc.) and appear feasible to support the plans detailed in this portion of the application. Therefore applicant earns points in the high category for this portion of the application.		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	5
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: The consortium infrastructure is described in detail including the roles and qualifications of: Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer and Secretary of the Corporation to support the plan along with detail on the technology plan to support the project goals. However none of the subcategory indicators (a) stakeholder access to tools and other learning resources; or (b) access to appropriate levels of technical support; or (c) use of technology systems to export information in an open data format; or (d) ensuring all schools in consortium use interoperable data systems are specifically addressed therefore justifying only the award of mid range points on this section. Information from year end in-depth review analysis of the education technology plan is noted with Lead Teachers preparing an annual summary report on findings and recommendations of the analysis. This information is shared with stakeholders via posting on a all system website and in newsletters that are ongoing.		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	10
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: Social media strategies and web based tools are referenced in support of continuous analysis and improvement as well as serving as vehicles for communication to stakeholders for this plan including results of monitoring and measuring results of its implementation. Performance measures to include the requisite 12-14 measures are included with specific goals and timelines, however no (a) rationale for selecting these measures, or (b) why the measure was selected or (c) how the measure will be reviewed and altered over time is included. In addition, goals of increases of 1% per year in gains on many of the measures seem rather minimal (for example Grades 9-12 "The percentage of students scoring at proficient or advanced in math and English will increase by 1% each year"). Monitoring and measurement will be achieved through stated strategies, e.g." Summative quantitative data will be collected to determine the program's impact in four specific performance measures". No specific reference to how this evaluative information will be communicated to the public, other than the generic social media strategies and web based tools previously noted, could be found therefore this proposal is assessed mid range points on this component.		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	0
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: This element does not specifically address meaning no clear and high-quality approach or specific plan to continuously improve this plan (meaning vehicle to adjust and improve) is in evidence as a specific strategy other than previously noted general use of social media and web based tools to make information available to stakeholders. The general use of social media and web based tools for communication does not constitute a specific plan of communication that will permit adjustments and revisions of the plan. This element lacks designation of who, what, where, when and why elements of the plan and its progress will be		

communicated and specifically how other than a generalization. These omissions indicate no specific plan that will lead to future plan alteration and improvement and therefore applicant receives low range points on this portion of the application.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:
 Applicant includes five specific performance goals supported by eight charted performance measures which are stated in an objective and measurable manner e.g. all students will graduate from high school; 80% of students will have 10 or less absences per quarter. However, applicant includes no (a) rationale for selecting these measures; (b) narrative as to how the measure will supply feedback to support alteration of the plan; or (c) how it will review and improve these measures over time if they prove insufficient to support evaluation of the plan and therefore earns medium range points for this portion of the application.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:
 Applicant states Program Coordinator and DSCHS staff will work together to gather and report both qualitative and quantitative data with regard to evaluation of the plan. Specific reference is made as to how they will work together via vehicles such as school site councils which must seek input of teachers, administrators, committees, parents and community members "since the most effective plans are those supported, and presumably critiqued, by the entire LEA community". General reference is made to an SSD Plan template as an evaluation tool, but no template is included in the response other than a reference to a website so its likely effectiveness in evaluation of the plan cannot be evaluated. Specific qualitative or quantitative data that will be collected and analyzed is noted as (a) attendance and performance logs, (b) surveys as to impact of services offered at data centers, (c) staff satisfaction surveys and (d) monthly circulation data to track progress and effectiveness and impact of the DSC. How these data are connected to plan goals is not defined. Finally "a performance report, a formative summary and a final evaluation report will be made available to stakeholders and included in the final report for this project" is stated by the applicant without reference to specifically what data and report parameters might be contained in these formative and summative data concluding reports. Thus applicant earns mid range points for addressing evaluation of the plan though the evaluation narrative lacks the specifics noted.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	5

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:
 Budget appears generally reasonable and specific to project goals. However, a salary of 22,500 for a program coordinator seems low while travel at 10K per year for each of the projects four years seems excessive to remain at an even level all four years. Specific equipment costs are noted but cannot be verified by this assessor as to reasonableness given the technical aspects of the project and related hardware. Since no funds other than those requested from RT3 are noted to support the project and no rationale is provided for investments and priorities, e.g. one time vs. ongoing, these omissions cannot be evaluated by this assessor and therefore earns applicant a mid range score on this portion of the application.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:
 While plan for sustainability is specific noting "begins with MOU's" from state and local government leaders signed by these stakeholders and detailed, the over arching premise appears to be embedded in the presumed success(meaning applicant assumes the plan will be successful and therefore sustained) of the plan and communication of same to the public, which may (meaning plan succeeds) or may not (meaning plan fails to succeed and not be sustained) occur. An advisory committee of key stakeholders will be established and minutes of meetings will be available for public review. An annualized chart of goals/strategies, action steps, persons responsible, deliverables and timelines supports the implementation schedule including reference to "Year Four & Beyond" that includes components, e.g. "Develop a 3 to 5 year Strategic Plan" that would appear to sustain the project. Therefore a midrange score is awarded for this category of the application.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:
 No indication of competitive preference applied for in this application since no population groups are noted, no type of result or desired results or performance measures are included. An article entitled "Building Effective Blended Learning Programs" and "3X for All" along with a power point from a webinar entitled "Blended Learning in Charter Schools" are all included but appear to have no bearing on addressing how the applicant proposes to integrate public or private resources in a partnership to implement this project. Applicant therefore earns a score in the low range for this portion of the application.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Personalized learning strategies and an overall personalized environment are frequently, coherently and comprehensively referred to in this proposal, e.g. Personal Learning Plans for students, Blended Learning Platforms and on line as well as traditional classroom activities(see Vision Statement A 1) to increase student graduation rates. It appears from data noted in application that this charter consortium has experienced past success in saving upwards of 4K potential dropouts (Vision A2) and ensuring their opportunity to graduate high school through the use of personalized and effective learning and teaching strategies that build on the core assurance areas that will be enhanced by the implementation of this proposal, therefore applicant meets the criterion of this absolute priority.</p>		

Total	210	111
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0284CA-2 for Desert Sands Charter High School

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	5
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The proposal described a high school personalized student learning environment demonstrating a strong student need with more than 40% of students identified for free and reduced meal programs In addition, students served in the program attend schools with low graduation rates, high dropout rates, and low post secondary enrollment. However, specific data for each partner illustrating student need relevant to low-income identification was not detected.</p> <p>The response reports the use of standards that prepare students for college and career success, as well as the use of comprehensive data systems to measure student growth, success, and challenges to inform teachers and principals of student progress toward meeting standards and objectives. What was not detected in the response is a discussion on the use of an evaluation system for teachers, principals, and superintendents aligned to the rigorous student program. Finally, performance data was not provided for all 12 partner schools.</p> <p>Overall, the response places the consortium in the middle of the mid range scoring level. Strong student need and use of comprehensive data systems were illustrated, but the response was missing key details regarding educator evaluation systems and specific school data needed to satisfy the core educational assurance areas.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	2
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The response demonstrated need for eight of the 12 partner schools included in the list with data missing for three of the campuses. The 12 schools are in a consortium serving 6,100 students, but it is not clear how the schools were selected for participation. Data provided to illustrate school performance in the areas of graduation rates, dropout rates, retention and on-time graduation rates, and post secondary enrollment were shared for nine partner schools; however, no correlating data was provided for four of the partner campuses making it difficult to determine eligibility status. Finally, while the proposal indicated that highly qualified teachers would be participating, no data was shared relevant to the number of teachers or any other teacher data.</p> <p>This aspect was determined to be in the low range because required data was not included for all applicant partners and teacher information was not included.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	2
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The response indicated that the partner schools were aligned to the Career Readiness Initiative Campaign. In addition, the proposal indicated that student enrollment across the consortium partners would be increase by 10% or approximate 600 students each year of the program to scale up the program serving more</p>		

students only in the 12 partner schools. However, since the district has 64 schools, a full district scale up would be expected to meet this component of a high quality plan. Finally, since the the outcome goals were not provided in a measurable format the capacity of reform is limited.

This aspect earned low range points because the response did not demonstrate high quality planning through the use of specific goals provided in a measurable format relevant to scaling the program to the entire district, as required for district-wide change.

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

10

2

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

While the LEA-wide plans for improved student outcomes were described, specific measurable goals were not detected. It is clear that the School Pathways program will provide comprehensive data and feedback to educators for each student on an individual and by teacher basis; however, it is not clear what the expected outcome is in measurable terms. In addition, the term ZOOM was not defined or the use explained. In discussing the plans for decreasing achievement gaps, overall student data was provided, but specific subgroup data was not described in the response. Graduation rates for provided for 8 of the partners schools demonstrating low results. College enrollment plans were addressed, but specific plans to improve outcomes were not clearly articulated.

The score for this aspect falls in the low range because the goals were not measurably defined and supporting data was not discussed for subgroups and all schools.

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:		
<p>A response for this item was not specifically included in the proposal. However, relevant information was detected under (B) (3) addressing some of the criteria. Raw data for eight of the 12 schools illustrates that a few of the schools have shown slight increases in student academic success over a three year period. However, several schools did not show consistent gains from one year to the next in the four content areas included in the standardized testing table. Moreover, data for several schools was missing. The data provided in the academic progress indicators table also was missing data for four schools and four other schools met 0 or 1 of the AYP criteria out of a range of 1-22 indicators. Therefore, evidence indicating capacity to improve student learning outcomes and close achievement gaps at persistently low performing schools were not demonstrated for a sufficient number of partner schools. The consortium's capacity to achieve ambitious and significant reforms was not clearly demonstrated since many of the partners did not provided data or the data did not sufficiently demonstrate growth over time in meeting minimal academic achievement criteria.</p> <p>The School Pathways program was mentioned earlier describing the capacity to provide performance data accessible to teachers and administrators, but access to the data by students and parents was not addressed.</p> <p>This aspect earned a score in the low range because the capacity to improve student performance at low achieving schools was not demonstrated.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The disclosure of school information relevant to salaries for all school personnel was addressed indicating that each school provides full access on individual websites in the SARC report. Public access to non-personnel expenditures was not indicated, but a general budget was provided in the proposal illustrating non-personnel costs.</p> <p>A score in the middle range was earned for this aspect since the non-personnel expenditures were not addressed relevant to public access.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	0
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The response provided for this aspect did not address the criteria relevant to the demonstration of evidence for autonomy under state mandates and other requirements necessary to implement a personalized learning approach. Information relevant to partnerships with Workforce Investment, Youth Build Boys and Girls Clubs, and California Conservation Corps were provided in this response. In addition, the response addressed professional development strategies and teacher credentialing per state requierements, but a discussion on the capacity to provide personalized instruction on an autonomous basis was not detected.</p> <p>The resulting score is in the low range.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	2
(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Discussion indicating that principals and teachers were engaged in discussions relevant to the delivery of a personalized learning model were provided. Moreover, leadership teams incorporating student advisory councils and parent advisory councils were described. It is not clear if these leadership teams were in position at each campus or if they were conducted on an overall consortium level since the response did not describe site specific detail. Therefore, it is difficult to determine a if a sufficient level of site specific involvement from teachers, students, and parents was utilized in designing the program.</p>		

The response indicates that statements from the principals describing involvement levels for site teachers are included in the proposal, but they could not be located. No appendix location information was provided. Letters of support were not located in the proposal for review and only two Memorandum of Understanding contracts were included in the appendix. Without the information supporting a collective bargaining process or teacher approval of participation on each campus at the rate of 70% or more, this aspect does not demonstrate the capacity to implement the program with committed personnel and stakeholders.

The overall score for this item is in the low range. While indication was provided that stakeholders were involved in the process, minimal evidence is included in the proposal appendix and it is not clear if site specific leadership teams, teachers, and stakeholders were consulted. Student and parent advisory councils were identified as taking part in the overall design, but specific involvement information for these two stakeholder groups were not sufficiently described relevant to each site or specific contributions to the design.

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

5

0

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

A response aligned to the requested information was not detected. Information relevant to addressing the four core educational assurances was provided without analyzing needs and gaps that the plan will address. While several logical strategies were indicated, the plan cannot be considered high quality unless student data and achievement gaps are determined and the program is correctly designed to meet the student needs. Therefore, this aspect scored the low range.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	11

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The plan to prepare students for college and career readiness is reasonably discussed with specific detail shared for the Senior portfolio, as well as the parental involvement, access to data for decision making, and overall student engagement in the credit recovery and foundational core areas of reading and mathematics. Specific detail is shared to demonstrate how students will be involved in the process of course selection and understanding the pacing of their learning path in determining when all credits have or will be earned. Access to data for all parties is explained and the security of the data is also addressed.

However, except for the Senior Portfolio, the engagement of all students in the process of goal setting, critical thinking, teamwork, creativity, and problem solving was not clearly addressed in the response. Moreover, clear alignment of college and career readiness skills involvement with all students is not clearly demonstrated. While it is clear students will understand what is needed to graduate, the discussion did not illustrate emphasis on the future for each student until the senior year.

The response offered brief discussion on the specific instructional delivery methods, but the development and access to high quality content was not addressed in a manner that illustrates how the quality will be defined and monitored.

Some response were conflicting. For example, it was indicated that teacher supervisors encourage students to take all required and core courses at the beginning of the year and save electives for the end, but in another statement it was indicated that students take one core and one or electives together working to earn 1.5 to 2 credits per week. The credit requirement is also not clear. In the table illustrating each content area and required credits to meet graduation criteria, the total number of credits does far exceeds the 23 indicated as the total needed for graduation. The English requirement alone was 40 credits.

Overall, the response earned a mid-range score. While college and career readiness skills are emphasized at some point in the student program, it was difficult to determine if students will be conscientiously engaged throughout program participation.

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

20

13

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Plans and strategies were shared illustrating how teachers are trained and prepared to work with students on a personalized level addressing both content professional development, as well as pedagogical and management strategies relevant to thinking maps, data analysis, curriculum mapping, and goal setting for students to ensure a personal student learning approach is adhered to by all teachers. Teacher and principal evaluation systems were discussed, but the evaluation system discussion did not sufficiently describe the process or the specific timeline and performance criteria.

The response indicated that high quality teachers would be utilized via teleconferencing and other approaches to ensure the best teachers are providing instruction. Various types of technology were described that support and extend learning options and capacity.

Four goals were articulated, but not all indicated the specific measurement tool to be used that will indicate success. While personalized learning was indicated as the approach to the Goal outcomes, none of the goals emphasized the focus on the personalized learning absolute priority for the program.

A four-year timeline was provided that clearly identified the activities and responsibilities of the director and project coordinator, but other individuals key to the success of the program were not included in the timeline.

The teaching and leading component of the proposal has earned a score in the mid range level.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Throughout the proposal the establishment of leadership teams has been indicated and described to ensure the consortium governance structure is supportive of partner schools. Leadership teams work in conjunction with student advisory and parent advisory councils to include stakeholders in the process.</p> <p>Student capacity to learn and move through the process is facilitated by the Single Plan for Student Achievement that is required by California State law. This plan allows for students to work toward competency demonstrating mastery of standards. Emphasis is illustrated in ensuring students are engaged in the credit recovery process for graduation. Students are assessed regularly, placed appropriately, work at own pace, and have access to a variety of support and resources.</p> <p>The plan address special needs students and English learners with sufficient detail to ensure the needs of all populations are addressed on a personal level.</p> <p>The overall score range for this aspect is high based on the effective response to all item criteria.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	7
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The response clearly described the learning resources available to students utilizing campus instructional processes; however, students that choose to work from home were mentioned, but the support, tools, and other learning resources that are available to students that choose this option were not sufficiently addressed in the proposal. In addition, while the proposal addressed instructional support, technical support for online learning tools and process was not described. Further, while the use of data was clearly discussed, plans for ensuring parents know how to access student information were not clearly included in the plan.</p> <p>The discussion included a description of the overall consortium capacity for security of student data. In addition, a comprehensive program designed to track student progress, store student information for various reporting needs, and recommend student interventions and next steps was discussed for use by all stakeholders appropriately.</p> <p>The response earned an upper mid range score for demonstrating how all student data will be secured and utilized, but information was limited in demonstrating how all students would be provided access to all services and resources.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	10
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The response described a comprehensive plan to evaluate program progress toward stated goals utilizing reports to make improvements or modify practices and activities that are not working. The use of specific formative assessments were described including attendance logs, data base usage reports to demonstrate user access, and exit surveys for trainings and other activities. An external evaluator will be utilized to guide and monitor program deliverables ensuring compliance and due diligence.</p> <p>Overall, the evaluation will be difficult to implement without measurable goals that identify the measurement instruments to ensure credible and consistent data is gathered for performance analysis.</p> <p>The score for this aspect is mid range.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A detailed communication plan was described that incorporates enewsletters and social media, as well as capacity for two-way communication through on-line applications such as chat, instant messaging. This will be accessible for all stakeholders. This approach will provide for clear communication with parents and stakeholders via electronic means. Plans for communicating with parents that do not have access to technology were not clearly addressed in the response.</p> <p>The timelines and deliverables reasonably addressed communication supporting this element of the high quality plan earning the response a score in the high range.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Performance measures were specifically included illustrating how students will be monitored in meeting ambitious, but achievable performance measure through timely evaluation systems. Five areas were addressed for standards, limited English proficient, highly qualified teachers, conducive learning environments, and</p>		

high school graduation through 8 performance measures. In addition, five goals were stated, but not all were provided in a format that is measurable to indicate a specific outcome.

The response failed to meet the criteria of 12 to 14 performance measures with only 8 addressed in the performance measurement table to demonstrate a high quality plan relevant to the requirement of continuous improvement necessary to effectively modify actions, as needed.

The response earned in the low range because minimum criteria were not met for the performance measurements.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Detailed monitoring plans were described that demonstrate awareness for diligence in evaluating the effectiveness of the program investment. Formative assessments will provide data regarding attendance in workshops, exit surveys will track impact of workshops, and staff surveys will monitor satisfaction. The response also indicated that the consortium will follow the State of California accountability framework for tracking and analyzing data, which is aligned to the federal accountability guidelines. An external evaluator will be utilized to evaluate the overall performance toward program deliverables defined in the proposal. This element demonstrates the capacity to effectively monitor the program investment relevant to creating a high quality plan necessary for implementation of the program. Two specific goals were stated with supporting measurable objectives necessary to deliver a high quality approach to monitoring the program. Moreover, the table illustrated inputs, activities, and outcomes necessary for successful monitoring of program deliverables.</p> <p>The score was earned in the high range.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The budget narrative addressed all sections. However, more specific rationales and computations were needed to further describe and justify some of the expenditures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific mileage detail for the number of anticipated trips, how often, and how far were not included. • Technology purchases were identified for 70 labs, but information detailing how the total applies to 12 schools was not detected in the narrative or the proposal. • Other technology items were requested in quantities of 2 without describing the purpose for only 2 or how the use would be distributed throughout the consortium. • 70 school sites were mentioned for the bandwidth budget item without clarification as to how this applies to the 12 consortium sites. <p>Since the budget included expenditures that were not clearly described regarding the number of labs and the use of some requested items, the budget provided limited evidence that the expenditures were reasonable or sufficient to meet program needs. The overall score for this aspect was earned in the lower mid range.</p>		

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The sustainability plan identified several funding sources and strategies that will be utilized to maintain the program beyond funding. However, the response referred to the MOU contracts held for each partner and specific detail for current funding sources as being provided in the appendix, but they were not included in the proposal. Therefore, determining the full capacity of all partners to commit to the sustainability plan is limited and the determining the supporting or complimenting funding sources was not possible. Partnership commitments are one of the most crucial elements of a high quality plan and without specific evidence of commitment, this aspect did not sufficiently address the component of the high quality plan to demonstrated sustainability and credibility. Finally, while solid strategies, action steps, and deliverables were identified in the sustainability table, measurable goals were not specifically provided.</p> <p>The score for this item scored in the lower middle range.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:		
<p>This aspect was not addressed in the submission. Blank page templates were provided.</p> <p>No points were earned.</p>		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The proposal demonstrated that it was designed to provide a personalized learning environment for all participating students. While some aspects were not clearly described and specific site details were missing, the overall plan addressed an accelerated student achievement plan for students requiring credit recovery providing access to highly qualified teachers, resources, and support for most identified student populations. Teachers and principals were supported and stakeholders were informed and appropriately involved. The overall program was designed to ensure students graduate from high school.</p>		
Total	210	94



Race to the Top - District Technical Review Form

Application #0284CA-3 for Desert Sands Charter High School

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	4
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Desert Sands Consortium intends to provide personalized learning that includes self-paced digital learning, distance learning that includes face-to-face and blended learning approach. Approach allows students flexibility to access materials anywhere and any time.</p> <p>12 charter schools involved in project. All share a common instructional framework. Students are all “at-risk”.</p> <p>Project will serve approximately 6,100 students. Project plans to increase enrollment each year by 600 students.</p> <p>The vision is in line with the original purpose of these charter schools. There is no clear reform vision nor are specific student outcomes articulated. The only reform in current deliveries is the addition of distance learning equipment that will allow for blended learning. The supporting documentation in the appendix of the application is based on an article about blended learning that was published in 2003. This section earns a low-medium score.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)	10	4
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>No specific enrollment numbers for each location are provided. The demographics of the enrollment are vaguely described and not broken down by sub-group. There is no mention of the number of educators involved in the project.</p> <p>(a) 12 charter schools involved in project. All share a common instructional framework. Students are all “at-risk”.</p> <p>(b) List of schools appears in section (A)(1). 12 High School Charter Schools are listed.</p> <p>(c) a narrative of student enrollment indicate students are all at-risk and that 80% are low income. A total of 6,100 students are to be served. Project plant to increase the number of student participants by 10% each year.</p> <p>The lack of specific demographic data concerning enrollment by school, student and family demographics, student achievement data, or staff information make this a low-medium score.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	4
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:		

This application lacks a high-quality plan that includes specific measurable goals that outline specific activities, timelines for implementation, persons responsible for project activities, and identified deliverables. There is nothing in the appendix that supports narrative reform areas that are described in generalizations. A specific plan of action is lacking in the area of student outcomes, professional development activities and teacher and principal evaluation activities.

Schools all use standards-aligned materials and reading intervention programs. All schools utilize ZOOM, Data director to analyze student data. There is no explanation of what Zoom actually does, nor is there any information about what teachers do with the data.

Diagnostic assessments are conducted upon entry to high school. Benchmark assessments are administered every six months. There is no explanation of how that data is used to inform instruction.

Use of differentiated curriculum for students who are allowed to move at their own pace, however, it is not clearly articulated how these students are supported, motivated, or instructed.

The narrative indicates that these are all current practices. The only mention of change in the current method of delivery is the addition of distance education and blending learning in an effort to increase the number of students being served. There is no indication of how this will be achieved other than to increase the number of students served at a time.

The addition of blended learning as the only change in current delivery indicates a minimal reform effort and therefore indicates a low-medium score.

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

10

3

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The extent to which the applicant's vision will result in improved student learning is not clearly evident. The objectives presented in general fashion and do not clearly articulate specific activities that will support the objectives. There appears to be equity for all students enrolled in participating schools as each school is designed to serve any student choosing to enroll regardless of previous academic record.

Section (a)(4) is not clearly identified in the narrative however the previous section did include some of the necessary information.

6 objectives were presented.

1. Alignment of instruction with content standards. This objective is ambitious and possibly achievable, however, the steps necessary to meet this objective are not clearly defined. There is no articulated plan to address if this goal will be met by collaboration of staff in all participating schools, by leadership teams, or curriculum specialists for each content area.
2. Use standards aligned instructional materials and strategies. This objective is ambitious and likely achievable, however no specific explanation of how it will be achieved is evident.
3. Extended Learning Time This objective is not ambitious. The schools are open from 8 am to 6 pm which is slightly longer than traditional times, however, there is no mention of extended hours on weekends or summer months.
4. We-based resources and tutoring. This objective is not ambitious. On-line learning can continue outside of these hours, however there is no mention if access to the technology hardware and internet access necessary to access coursework is provided away from the buildings.
5. Increase access to technology. This objective is ambitious and achievable however, there is no plan provided to understand how students outside of the schools will access distance learning opportunities outside of normal school hours.
6. Institute professional development and collaboration. This objective is not ambitious. There is not a clearly defined professional development process identified other than a one-hour structured collaboration once a month for teachers.

The evidence provided for each objective was general in nature and not specifically mentioned in an organized fashion.

Extended learning time is specifically mentioned to be between 8 am to 6 pm, however, earlier indicators include anytime – anywhere references to the digital learning options.

Professional development model only mentions a one-hour per month collaboration. No specific PD model is mentioned.

While objectives were listed, they were general in nature and not articulated in any measurable format. This lack of articulated goals and measurable objectives indicate a low-medium score.

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	2

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

1. The narrative indicates that student data is included in charts listed below. No such charts are found. The narrative claims that as one of the first Learn 4 Life schools, Desert Sands Charter School has 12 years of data to measure success. No further documentation is provided.
 - a. no data or mention of closing achievement gaps is present in this section, however, it was found in section B3. The data is incomplete. While there is some growth in some buildings, it is not consistent.

- b. There is no data to support reform efforts or the demographics of the schools. Previous sections mention all students attending the project schools are at-risk students but no further data is provided. There is demographic data found in section B3, however, achievement data is not broken out by sub-group.
- c. No indication of how student performance data is made available to parents is mentioned. Previous and additional sections of the proposal indicate parents are included in entrance meetings and continued parent-teacher meetings. All teachers have access to student data through the Zoom system.

Failure to include student data information in the appropriate section, lack of charts, and sub-group demographical student achievement information make this a low score section.

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

There is little evidence in this section to indicate a high level of transparency in the LEA or at the school level. The applicant provides information to the state department of education that is posted to a website, however additional school-level information is not available for local stakeholders to view.

- a. The narrative indicates that all financial records are available on the department of education web site.
- b. The narrative indicates that the salaries are listed as a percentage of the district's budget but does not indicate if actual personnel salaries are listed.
- c. The narrative indicates that the salaries are listed as a percentage of the district's budget but does not indicate if actual personnel salaries are listed.
- d. The narrative indicates that all financial records are available on the department of education web site.

As actual personnel salaries at each school level for instructional staff and teachers only are only presented in a percentage of the total budget and not individually, the points for this section are in the medium range.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	9
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant is a consortium of Charter Schools. As such, they are allowed autonomy by the state of California's department of education. This allows each school to alter traditional seat time for students as well as specific start and end dates of coursework. This allows the schools to provide individualized instruction. All teachers hold single subject credentials issued by the State of California.

The lead of the consortium has been a charter school for 12-years and has demonstrated implementation of individualized instruction during that time. However, as specific information for each individual school is not present, a maximum score was not given. This supports a high level score for this section.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	2
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- (a) The narrative indicates that principals have been in discussions with staff for two years formulating a distance learning delivery model.

Leadership teams exist in the consortium of charter schools. Leadership teams are appointed to support the larger strategic plan.

Narrative indicates that the consortium works collaboratively with area agencies including communities in Schools, Boys & Girls club, Central Valley STEM collaborative and others, there is no clear indication that they were involved in the specific plan of this proposal. No meeting notes are present in the appendix nor is there a listing of specific committee members, meeting dates, needs surveys, or meeting minutes.

- i. & (ii) No evidence of collective bargaining representation (no signature on application) and no letter of support in appendix from teachers.

- (b) There is no mention of parent organizations other than the Parent Advisory Council. The narrative indicated that information about the planning process is shared with all staff, parents, and students thorough the Student Advisory council as well as the Parent Advisory Council. There is no mention that input from these counsels was included in the planning. No letters of support are found in the appendix. Additional support letters from partner organizations are not found.

Lack of supporting documents indicate a low score for this section.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not articulate a high-quality plan that includes specific activities, timelines, deliverables, and parties responsible for implementation of activities.

There are four reform areas identified by the applicant.

- (a) Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace. Eight performance indicators are listed with this area, however, none of the indicators identify time lines, specific activities, parties responsible, or deliverables that are measurable.
- (b) Building data systems that measure student growth and success and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction. There are six indicators listed with this reform measure. There are no timelines or parties responsible listed for any of the indicators.
- (c) Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most. There are six indicators associated with this reform area. Each indicator is general and does not identify specific activities that are measurable. There are no time lines present and the parties responsible are not identified.
- (d) Turning around the Nation's lowest-achieving schools. There are four indicators associated with this reform area. There is no correlation as to how the indicator of increasing bandwidth will support the reform effort. It does not outline the activities associated with ensuring adequate wireless connectivity outside of school. There are no time lines or persons identified to complete the indicators.

This section does not provide information of how the consortium will analyze their current status to determine how reform efforts will be infused into the daily activities and curriculum of each school.

The list of activities under each reform lack detailed information. In addition, they do not identify specific gaps in the current system. This would warrant a medium score for this section.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	15
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>a. (i) The applicant provides an individual learning environment for each student. Diagnostic computerized assessments are conducted upon student enrollment. Students study one to two courses at a time and are provided tutoring, small group instruction, and digital curriculum. Students parents are provided weekly performance assessments. Students are allowed to make individual choices on course selection.</p> <p>ii. The applicant provides for credit for students to volunteer and do work study programming to provide real world experiences.</p> <p>iii. Students are provided a wide variety of courses and a personalize learning plan is developed each year for each individual student.</p> <p>iv. The demographic data provided in previous sections indicate a diverse population. There is no mention of specific cultural or varied perspective approaches being highlighted.</p> <p>v. Common core standards have been adopted and aligned to the schools' course offerings.</p> <p>There does not seem to be specific reference to goal setting, teamwork, critical thinking, and creativity, however, personal counselors are assigned to every student. The variety of lesson delivery methods is motivating to students who may have previously been struggling in traditional classroom settings.</p>		
<p>b. (i) This proposal is built on individual choice for student courses. Several opportunities for instructional assistance are provided.</p> <p>(ii) There is a variety of instructional settings available, however, the specific instructional methods are not articulated very well. It does not mention if student work is paper and pencil, project based, or inquiry based learning. Assessment strategies are also not explained in detail to know if they are traditional paper and pencil multiple choice assessments, projects, or group activities.</p> <p>(iii) digital content is available as well as traditional group instructional offerings and individual tutoring. Again, there lacks an explanation of the actual instructional and assessment theories being utilized. It does not mention if content is teacher created, commercial products, or a mixture of many sources.</p> <p>(iv) There is evidence of on-going feedback to both students and parents. Students are required to meet once very week with teachers and parents. However, there is no indication on what is done during those meetings. There is also no indication of when or how often career and college plans are reviewed and revised and who is involved in that process.</p>		
<p>v. The narrative does not address specific strategies or materials.</p>		
<p>c. The proposal indicates that all students must be computer literate, however, it is not articulated how that is accomplished.</p> <p>The narrative explains a clearly personalized educational plan for each student. However, the lack of information concerning the specific resources utilized to provide the instruction makes the plan incomplete. The addition of blended learning does not explain how students will improve their understanding of the curriculum. Identifying specific resources, instructional methodologies, and assessment strategies would build a better understanding of the exact impact on student learning. For this reason, this section scores in the middle-high range.</p>		

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	15
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>a. i) The applicant staff all hold credentials in their content area and are certified by the state department of education. The proposal indicates that all teachers are highly qualified but does not provide specific data as to the level of their education. There is no mention of teacher educational levels, specific industry standard certifications, or specialization areas of staff members.</p> <p>(ii) There is no mention of specific strategies or student assignments in the application. There is mention that staff belongs to professional learning communities but no evidence of what specific topics are discussed, researched, or practiced.</p> <p>(iii) Previous sections identify the use of the Zoom data system that allows teachers to access individual student data, however there is no explanation or examples given of how that data is utilized to individualize actual student activities, assignments, and course selection.</p> <p>(iv) Teacher and principal evaluation practices are not specific. It is stated that they are based on California Standards for Teaching however it does not mention if a specific framework or tool is used. It mentions that rubrics are utilized, however, it does not reference any specific theory or framework. A copy of the evaluation instrument is not included in the appendix. In addition, there is no mention of student growth being an indicator of teacher effectiveness. There is also no mention of parental or student involvement in the teacher and principal evaluation process.</p> <p>b. Student data is available through current data systems but there is no clear explanation of how often the data is accessed, how it is utilized to inform instruction, or how students are instructed on the use of the data to inform their own understanding of their academic path.</p> <p>i. It is not mentioned if student interest inventories are incorporated into student course selection or how individual teacher actually interact with students in course selection.</p> <p>ii. The proposal indicates that state has joined the American Diploma Network but it fails to articulate how that impacts what is being done in project schools.</p> <p>c. (i) There is no indication of how the teacher and principal evaluation system are used to inform instruction and student outcomes.</p> <p>iii. There is no clear plan for school or consortium-wide training initiatives except to say that principals have been in constant discussion with staff about distance learning.</p> <p>d. No clear plan to indicate how highly qualified teachers will be staffed to improve achievement gaps.</p> <p>The applicant indicates that teachers and leaders are involved in continuous improvement but fail to provide explicit explanation of what it actually looks like. There is no copy of each individual school's evaluation instrument in the appendix. In addition, there are no specific examples of how teachers interact with students and the data about that student in the narrative or appendix. And finally, there are no specific student or teacher resources mentioned or explained in the narrative. This section covered a majority of the required elements but only in general terms and not specific examples. This would indicate this section scores in the middle-high range.</p>		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	4
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant established comprehensive policies and infrastructure under the ordinal organization of charter schools as outlined by the state of California. Resources including on-line data tools like Zoom support individual educators in the collection of data. In addition, students are provided a variety of content delivery models including digital content, face-to-face instruction, and one on one tutoring. However, the plan fails to deliver clear measurable goals aligned to student outcomes. There are no deliverables, timelines, or lists of people responsible for activities. While the structure of the schools may be in place in terms of potential capacity due to the regulations established for charter schools in California, it does not provide ambitious yet achievable goals in the context of this project.</p> <p>a. The applicant is clearly established through state directives and regulations. As each participating school in the consortium is a charter school and recognized by the state of California but in terms of a high-quality plan, no evidence exists to determine what exact services will be provided.</p> <p>b. School leadership has been established and has a track record of providing individual schools with appropriate flexibility to carry out the individual goals and objectives necessary to ensure individualized student programs.</p> <p>c. The structure of the schools allows students to receive credit four course work after providing proof of mastery and at the pace that best suits their needs.</p> <p>d. A variety of instructional formats are provided and selected by students as their needs determine, however, clearly specific project goals are not established in the proposal.</p> <p>e. All students are provided the supports needed to be successful through multiple content delivery methods, individual course selection, tutoring, and weekly meetings with teachers. Specific special education staff is available to assist students as needed.</p>		

This project does meet the individual need of students in terms of allowing multiple delivery methods, non-structured times, student choice of courses, and additional individual support for students with special needs or English language barriers. However, there is no evidence of a high-quality plan in terms of specific student outcomes, no deliverables outlines, no timelines, and no people responsible for each goal. The lack of these indicators place the score for this section in the low range.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	0
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- a. This section of the narrative was not found. Previous and additional sections of the proposal do not address this specific indicator.
- b. Previous sections of this proposal indicate that technology labs are open until 6pm daily and that parents and students are encouraged to attend weekly meeting with teachers. However, there is not specific information in the narrative that addresses this indicator.
- c. No information on this indicator is included in the narrative.
- d. This indicator is not addressed in the narrative.

In reviewing this application, this section is omitted from the narrative. While other sections address some of the data information systems, it is not in enough detail to support the necessary criteria associated with the points for this section. For this lack of information and narrative, this section receives no points.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	2

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal calls for both formative and summative evaluation design. However, the goals, objectives, and outcomes identified in the proposal are not student performance outcomes but rather, the implementation of blended learning.

The goals for student achievement are not articulated with the exception of increasing graduation rates by 25%.

While 8 performance measures are identified, they are not ambitious nor do they address specifically how they will be addressed or implemented. They also do not support the over all narrative about incorporating blending learning into the instructional system or how blended learning will address any of the measures.

The required performance measure table does not conform to the application requirement of identifying sub-groups and specific student achievement data.

Five other measures are identified in the narrative but they are California state board of education measures and not specific to this proposal.

Due to the lack of ambitious student based performance measures, this section is given a low score.

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

The project will utilize social media strategies to inform stakeholders. This method will work for those who have access or skills to utilize the tools. There is no plan however for additional formats that include face-to-face interactions, written documentation, and additional formats to ensure all forms of communication are addressed.

The lack of specific key goals that are articulated to include specific activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties make it difficult to clearly communicate project progress.

Due to the use of only one method of communicating results, this section earns a low-medium score.

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

The applicant does not establish a high-quality plan in terms of identifying and articulating specific student outcomes. Lacking these componants does not allow for the deveopment of a clear evaluation process to monitor progress of project goals.

There are no sub groups identified in the performance measures.

- a. No rationale is given for selecting the measures.
- b. There is no explanation of how the measures will be reported, analyzed, or used to inform the outcomes of the proposed project.
- c. There is little correlation between the measures outlined in this section with the actual implementation, budget, or activities outlined in other sections of the proposal.

The proposal does not meet the required number of performance measures of 12. There are only 8 measures identified.

The measures identified are not ambitious and therefore do not warrant a score above the middle range.

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

5

2

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

There is no evidence that additional evaluative practices will be implemented that speak directly to the Race to the Top – District funds that would be awarded to the consortium. There are no measurable goals in terms of student outcomes or teachers behaviors. The lack of specific activities associated to professional development limit the effectiveness of any evaluation efforts.

While the program indicates that computer lab logs will be kept, professional development attendance will be taken, and social media would be utilized to engage stakeholders, the evaluation plan is informal and disjointed. This indicates this section earns a low-medium score.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- a. Only Race to the Top – District funds are identified. There are no local, state, or other funds mentioned in the budget.
- b. The majority of the budget is for video-conferencing equipment. While the cost for the equipment being proposed is within industry standards, the percentage of the budget going to equipment compared to the rest of the budget seems excessive.
- c. (i) There is no correlation between student achievement and distance learning strong enough to support this budget request. There are 12 schools involved in the project and 70 video-conferencing systems requested in the budget. There is minimal funding allocated for professional development or staffing. In addition, there are two multi-conferencing systems included in the budget but no on-going budget for maintenance. Staffing for support for this high-end technology is not identified.

(ii) There is no strategy for long-term support of the technology infrastructure. There is also no reference to maximizing other funding sources for the cost of bandwidth through e-rate.

The mileage expenses seem high considering there will be 70 video conferencing units in place.

Again, this budget seems excessively high in the equipment section. There is no rationale to support the need for so much equipment. The staffing and professional development costs are low by comparison and there is no funding for any student resources, extended staff time, or additional content material. This section scores in the low range.

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

10

5

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The sustainability plan is vague and does not articulate how each funding source will be sustained. There is no long-term budget. Potential sources are identified but no plan to gain access to such support is mentioned. Due to the lack of forecasting the budget beyond the project, this section earns a medium score.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

There is no narrative for this section, therefore, the competitive preference priority is not addressed in this application. No score is awarded for this section.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

This is a poorly written and documented proposal. It was difficult to find information within each section. It did not include data tables within the sections that called for such information and some sections were clearly missing.

This application does not meet the absolute priority as outlined in the proposal. There are several key aspects of the priority in place including individualized delivery, extended learning hours, varied deliveries including digital content, and the flexibility normally associated with charter schools. However, exact detail in explanation of what instructional strategies would be implemented that are new and that support college and career ready standards were not explained. There was no detail of how teacher effectiveness would be improved, nor was there any mention of how achievement gaps would be closed. In fact, achievement gaps were not even addressed. There was no explanation on how students are engaged, what materials they use, what teaching strategies are implemented, and how students are assessed. This proposal lacked the key components that would build the case for expending the amount of money requested for equipment. The supporting documentation for blended learning is nearly a decade old and there is no supporting evidence that teachers were actively engaged or even support the proposal. There are no letters of support from potential and current partners and there is no supporting documentation of the teacher and principal evaluation systems.

Total	210	83
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