



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0867CO-1 for Durango School District 9-R

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Rural SW Consortium presents a vision that depends on the development of new assessment and accountability systems and personalized student learning environments (PSLE) that are interconnected through an Education Information Exchange(EIE). This EIE seems to be the device that drives instruction. However the proposal does not provide much information about the formation of PSLE. This area is only addressed obliquely. There is little information provided as to how they envision personalizing the environment for students, other than through concentrating on each student and educator. Information related to how these environments will be developed through new media, content and strategies would supported their vision for the future.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a)The consortium is to be commended in using both student and parent surveys is setting priorities. Based on this and meetings of the chief administrators of the consortium a decision was made to include all schools. The consortium documents that a clear instructional development piece and clear teacher involvement were integral to getting buy-in from these constituencies. Sparse information was provided relating to the exact nature or definitions of these terms. A list of schools that will participate in grant activities was provided. (c)The proposal provided basic data related to high need students, free and reduced lunch, and the number of teachers participating in the grant activities.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The consortium presents a detailed list of goals and projects that are a combination of currenet initiatives and future goals and projects. The consortium provides ample detail as to how these goals will be met and projects implemented. Appendix A.1 is purported to be a logic model. While it is an excellent implementation plan complete with goals, activities, timeline, performance measure and responsible parties, this is not logic model that would reveal the underlying academic and leadership philosophies upon which the project is based. This lack of a logic model has a tendency to isolate each project from the other rather than tying them together.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The consortium presents a general list of goals. The data presented are achievable but modest. An average of a 1-1.5% growth rate per year across indicators appears to be modest at best. Graduation rates are projected to increase by only 4%. This 4% rate appears to be the norm across all categories.</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	8
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a)The proposal presents sparse evidence to support a clear record of success. The proposal inadequately lists Check and Connect Grant, OPWR grant. However the proposal does not present data that would support evidence of growth among students in the proposal. Data from the previous section's tables also do not support a record of growth or closure of achievement gaps. The data present in the previous suggests that there has little to no growth in the indicators. (b) The proposal notes that the consortium is committed to achieve reforms in its persistently lowest achieving schools. Several awarded grants were annotated as proof that the consortium seeks to enact significant reform. However, data and verbiage are inadequate to support that reforms were successful. (c)The consortium is in the process of running a Beta model of the EIE. The proposal adequately annotates reports and data systems that are available to primary stakeholders to track students' progress. The proposal also annotates the consortiums success in securing funding for innovation and improvement as well as progress being made in identifying gaps and needs for each school district in the consortium. Sparse detail would presents an ambiguous picture of current success and potential for future reforms.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal indicates that they already post budget information on the four indicators mentioned above. The proposal presents adequate information showing that annual budgets, district budget documents, uniform budget summary sheets and financial audits are made available to the SJBOCES website. The consortium provides appropriate evidence that they have transparency in their processes.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The consortium presents adequate evidence that there are successful conditions under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement PLEs. The proposal notes that the consortium has a strong history of working together. More detail would have been helpful to the proposal.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	8
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal provides evidence that all stakeholders were included in planning phases of the proposal. The diagram in this section provides the path used to solicit this buy-in by various stake holders. MOUs are presented as strong proof of partner buy-in. MOU's from teacher associations also provide evidence that most teachers are willing to support this process. One area of weakness is the survey of non-unionized teachers. The figures given for this population appears to be slightly less than 70% (about 67%).</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	2
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal seems to focus primarily on a data delivery system, EIE, as the solution to the gaps and needs that are identified. While having an effective data delivery and analysis system is important and clearly linked to developing PLEs, there is inadequate information presented in relation to other needs and challenges. Little information is provided about the specific needs of different student populations and the PD needs of stakeholders. Other than disseminating information, little information is provided as to how these data will be used to improve teaching and learning goals. The information provided on gap analysis is insufficient to accurately assess the quality of the plan.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	10
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This proposal seems to be focused on gathering data and disseminating it to stakeholders. There is scant information available</p>		

in relation to how students and parents would learn to understand that their earning is key to the academic goals; Identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college- and career-ready standards; career-ready graduation requirements, understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals; are able to be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest; have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning; and master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving. The proposal seems to place a great deal of emphasis on the Data system. Less information is provided as to how these other goals will be accomplished. While the system will deliver recommendations, the stakeholders must be trained to use these recommendations to develop a personal learning environment and personal learning plan. While adequate evidence is presented that the data system is capable of providing ample information about the student, it is not clear how these suggestions will be approached so that students "own" their educational path. There appears to be a variety of accommodations and adaptation available for students. However, the evidence presented does not seem to portray a coordinated effort of all stakeholders. Sparse information is provided as to how students will be trained to use the data and technology and other resources (as well as other stakeholders). More precise details were found for some activities in the Appendix on the table named the Logic Model.

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

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal provides some information about their plan to improve teaching and learning. There is adequate information related to assessments and the data systems. However sparse information is provided about the Principal and teacher evaluation systems. It is noted that the consortium will use Bloomboard for administrators and an assessment rubric for teachers. The teacher rubric in the appendix does not seem to take account of PLE or PLPs. This makes it difficult to see how these environments will be created. The narrative states that these rubrics will help to decide what the teachers' needs are. However, there is scant evidence that there are strong systems in place. A lot of these decisions seem to be made by the database, with little information provided relating to what initial PD systems need to be in place. There does not appear to be a comprehensive evaluation plan in place.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	8

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

There appears to be adequate supports in place in the consortium governance structure to provide support and services to all schools. This support includes two data coaches, EIE data, and support groups such as: Superintendent's Advisory Council and Southwest Colorado e-School. The consortium seems to have standardized school days etc. but all schools will have PLCs. There is scant evidence as to a student's ability to earn credit based on mastery. The narrative mentions differentiated assessment but inadequate information is provided relating allowing students to progress through earning credits at their own pace. More emphasis seems to be placed on students who are at risk attending summer school, but there is no mention of other alternative. The consortium is still in the process of investigating mastery other than instruction that occurred in class. The narrative provides adequate evidence that it has in place some methods available to make instructional practices available for all students. However most of these resources seem to center on traditional special education and gifted education classes, with little information for using other formats.

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

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	9

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal annotates a general overview of the continuous improvement process. Little detail was provided as to ways that this improvement process will be implemented. It is noted that the CFA, educators evaluations and Personalized Instructional Content will all be integrated into a feedback loop, but it is not clear how this loop will be implemented. there is scant information presented as to how the applicant will monitor measure the quality of its investments by Race to the Top-District projects, The proposal does annotate that information will be shared with stakeholders through press releases, the SJBOCES website, District websites, District newsletters and targeted reports.

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

5

3

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The consortium seems to have intentions of disseminating information through its website and the EIE information site. Progress reports will be issued twice a year. Other important milestones will be announced via press releases to the media. This appears to be an adequate plan for releasing data.

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

5

5

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The consortium's proposal provides appropriate performance measures for RTT-D. The proposal discusses its new teacher evaluation system but does not include information on how they will track the number of students who are with effective and highly effective teachers. It is commendable that there is a new evaluation plan, that is tied to % of students in highly effective teachers' classes. The proposal does propose both grade appropriate academic and health/social-emotional indicators.

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

5

1

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Sparse information was directed toward this indicator. Though there was some narrative related to ongoing assessment throughout the proposal, there was little information as to specifics about evaluating the effectiveness of investments. There were a meeting mentioned where one might assume that some evaluation might occur, few specifics are provided.

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 narrative adequately describes funds that will be used to support the project. The district provides a thoughtful process to continue the program after the end of the term of the grant. These include reduction of startup costs, funds to come from the consortium partners "regular" budgets, and an aggressive grant writing campaign. The budget narrative provides sufficient evidence that the project is achievable and sustainable. The budget clearly annotates one-time investments as well as ongoing operation costs.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	7
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: The proposal does not contain a budget for three years post grant. However, their narrative does include commitment by the partners to continue funding through normal budget venues. They also plan to aggressively pursue other grants to ensure the sustainability of the grant.		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The consortium has put together a credible plan for the Competitive Preference Priority. The proposals sets five desired results in relation to the pre-school population that this partnership targets. The proposal states the indicators will be tracked by the EIE hub, which would be available for all stakeholders. This data will be used to target students (especially high risk students) with special services to help ensure they enter Kindergarten ready to learn. There is a general statement that data will be used to improve instruction and integrate other education services. The proposal does indicate that other Headstarts will be added to the program as time progresses. They plan on using a trained psychologist and leverage other community resources to achieve a high level of success. A complete table of performance measures and goals was presented. These goals and performance measures were achievable and ambitious.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Total	210	135
-------	-----	-----



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0867CO-2 for Durango School District 9-R

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has described a reasonable, achievable and coherent reform vision. A strength of the reform vision is that the applicant will build upon the existing efforts of the seven district consortium, in all four core educational assurance areas.</p> <p>Part of what makes the applicant's approach credible is the long standing (10 years) collaborative reform efforts of this consortium. That seven superintendents can agree upon 3 projects with 5 goals - and obtain teacher support is evidence of the collaborative efforts that will be necessary for the success of this project. Additionally, the consortium has demonstrated its ability to collaborate and implement reform efforts through the Integration Project, where it is one of only five sites (the only consortia) implementing educational reform. The reform efforts for the Integration Project (teacher evaluation, formative assessments and the integration of literacy across all curriculum) are also consistent with the RTTT application criteria.</p> <p>The proposal to establish a common school year, common extended day professional development calendar and a regional Educational Information Exchange (EIE) hub is reasonable, appropriate and an efficient way for small rural districts to exercise efficient use of time and resources.</p> <p>Overall the applicant's reform vision has a strong likelihood of improving student achievement, increasing equity across he districts and improving personalized learning for participating students. The applicant has scored high on this criterion.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has proposed to implement this reform across all seven districts and all schools in the districts in an effort to model a comprehensive system of regional reform..

The applicant stated that the regular monthly Superintendents' meeting was part of the process used to select participating schools. The RTTT Proposal was brainstormed and discussed over the course of several meetings. At the school and district level, staff had an opportunity to provide input via the District Advisory Committee (DAC). Additionally, teachers in LEAs without bargaining representations (6 out of 7), teachers were surveyed, as were students and parents.

The applicant has indicated that all participating schools and LEAs individually and collectively meet the competition's eligibility requirements;

In Table (A)(2) the applicant very completely provided a list of each participating school, the total number of participating students (10,183), participating students from low-income families, participating students who are high-need students, and participating educators, that will participate in grant activities.

Overall, the applicant has addressed all criteria in this section and has scored in the high range.

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

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has provided a reasonable and workable plan describing how the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change. As a regional model of systemic reform - the intent is to share meaningful reform lessons beyond the participating schools and districts.

A strength of the plan is that it clearly builds upon existing consortia infrastructures and is aligned to local and state reform efforts, which is not only efficient - it allows the applicant to "hit the ground running", as the LEAs are already in initial stages of some of the proposed reform efforts (i.e. beta testing for the EIE). Additionally, with five main goals that are well incorporated into the 3 projects, the plan is focused and has a strong likelihood of success.

The applicant proposed a logic model, though, it did not addresses, outcomes or impacts and appears to be a plan for implementation.

While the theory of change graphic - if that is what it is, provides the big picture to support individualized learning environments, it is global with non-specific inputs such as, the CO Legacy Foundation, CO and district Initiatives. Though, these components were more fully described in the narrative.

The plan in Appendix A.1 did provide what the applicant proposes as key goals, activities, a timeline, performance measures and the responsible staff.

While the plan addresses the key components, the proposed goals and activities were global in nature with no rational and there were no targets for the performance measures. As an example, Goal 2 is simple described as Assessment and Monitoring: It is not written as a clear, specific measurable goal. Additionally, the activities are equally vague (i.e. CFA Master teacher leaders, etc.).

Overall, the applicant has adequately responded to the criteria and has scored in the low-high range.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	9
---	----	---

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's reform vision is likely to result in improved student learning and achievement and increased equity as demonstrated by the focus on strong teacher professional development.

In most cases the applicant has proposed ambitious yet achievable annual goals for performance on Reading, Writing and Math summative assessments (TCAP proficiency status and growth) that are equal to or exceed State ESEA targets for the LEAs, overall and by student subgroup. Though, the applicant did not provide this information for each participating LEA, rather it was in aggregate for the consortia.

Based on the noted differences between the student subgroups and the overall subgroups in Table (A)(4)(b), and the proposed goals in Table (A)(4) there is a strong likelihood of decreasing achievement gaps in the noted subgroups, if the applicant meets its goals in Table (A)(4). The same holds true for the proposed graduation rates in Tables (A)(4)(c).

In (A)(4)(d) the applicant did provide the college enrollment rate goals by LEA and if met, could decrease the gap between overall students and the subgroups within the course of the grant period.

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

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	7
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>While the applicant noted that they have demonstrated success in improving graduation and college enrollment rates and supports the CAS and CCSS, the applicant did not provide any evidence of a clear record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching. While there was narrative that claimed such success, there were no descriptions, charts or graphs, raw student data, or other evidence that would clearly demonstrates the applicant's ability to improve student learning outcomes and close achievement gaps in any of the LEAs.</p> <p>The applicant noted that one of the LEAs slipped into Priority Improvement Status, though did not provide any specifics regarding ambitious and significant reforms in the schools in this district.</p> <p>The applicant did address reform efforts at the consortia level, as evidenced by the Legacy Foundation and CDE grant work in math instruction and post-secondary workforce readiness, the continuing efforts with state initiatives on CAS and CCSS, and the beta model of the EIE.</p> <p>Every student and parent in all participating districts can access student performance data at any time. Additionally, the Alpine Achievement.com reports provide annual and longitudinal academic achievement information as well as growth over time. Lastly, the AIMSweb progress monitoring system provides a graphic representation of student progress in reading and math and has a parent login option.</p> <p>Overall with no actual data to support a track record of improving student achievement the applicant has scored in the moderate range.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has indicated a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments. This is evidenced by making publicly available via district websites, the actual school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration - by school, per the CO public School Financial Transparency Act. This information includes the required four categories of school-level expenditures from State and local funds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actual personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff • Actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff only • Actual personnel salaries at the school level for teachers only • Actual non-personnel expenditures at the school level - which includes all certified specialists and psychologists serving the 7 districts in the consortium. <p>Additionally, all RTTT project information is posted to the Durango District website.</p> <p>All participating districts post on their websites, annual budgets, district budget documents, uniform budget summary sheets, financial audits, quarterly financial statements, salary schedules, accounts payable, credit and debit statements and investment performance reports.</p> <p>The applicant has completely responded to all criteria and scores high for this section.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has noted that each district in this consortia is a recognized LEA under the CO DOE. Additionally, each district has obtained formal approval from their Board of Directors and signed an MOU to commit to and participate in this project.</p> <p>Most importantly, by CO law, statute and regulation, school districts have home-rule and autonomy to implement the proposed plan.</p>		

Having demonstrated sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in this proposal the applicant has scored in the high range.

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

10

7

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has indicated that it has garnered meaningful stakeholder engagement and support in the development of the proposal. This is evidenced as follows.

- The applicant surveyed students and parents (for satisfaction data)
- Student Advisory Committee meetings were a platform to gather student input and ideas
- Teachers and principals provided input via the School Advisory Committees (SAC) and District Advisory Committees (DACs)
- Signed MOUs from each participating LEA
- The Superintendents from the seven districts discussed and planned the proposal at the monthly Superintendent and DAC meetings

There is also evidence (letters and emails) of the state DOE and local level review and response to the proposal.

While only Durango school district has collective bargaining representation (the DEA did sign the assurance statement and provided a letter of support). The teachers in the other six LEAs were surveyed via SurveyMonkey to determine their support. 96% of the over 70% of teachers who responded were in support of the grant.

While student and parent surveys were administered, the applicant did not provide response rate or survey summary information. Thus, it is unclear as to the extent of student or parent support for the proposal. As well, a survey has limited options for providing input. There was no indication of any meaningful engagement from students, parents, higher education, early learning, and other partners in the development or review of the proposal. This was in part evidenced by the lack of letters of support from parents in any of the participating districts, parent organizations, student organizations, the business community, and civil rights organizations,

The applicant provided letters of support from Head Start, the Southern Ute Community Action Program, the Boys and Girls Club, and two community colleges.

The applicant has scored in a moderate range.

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

5

2

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant noted that it has continued to identify needs and gaps over the course of 5 years. These gaps are noted at several levels in the system.

- School: student, faculty, administration (SAC, PLCS, RTI teams)
- District: system, administration (DAC, principal meetings)
- Regional (SJBOCES): system-wide, administration (monthly meetings)

The applicant has identified flat student growth, one size fits all teaching, low math scores, and the need to create a cohesive, uniform regional system as areas of improvement or need.

The applicant did not provide a plan with key goals, activities, rationale, a timeline and parties responsible as a means of analyzing or addressing the gaps/needs in their current status in implementing personalized learning environments. Nor, was there a logic model behind their reform proposal. Stating that the EIE "will deliver individualized best practice recommendations" is insufficient evidence of the applicant's logic model for implementing a PLE.

Overall, the applicant has insufficiently responded to this criteria and scored in the moderate-low range.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

While the applicant has stated that it will implement an approach to learning that engages and empowers all learners, including high-need students, in an age-appropriate manner so that they understand that what they are learning is key to their success and linked to their college and career success, the applicant provided global and big picture descriptions of what that would look like for students.

This is first evidenced by the proposal to have "standardized sequence of content, instructional approach, and supports for a rigorous course of study aligned to college- and career-readiness standards and college and career-readiness graduation requirements. It will also be *tailored and targeted* to individual student needs..." While, the applicant proposes that the "tailored" PLE would include "comprehensive and demanding academic content and skill building... team work, collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving... deep and experiential age-appropriate learning opportunities based on student interest and aptitudes, real world projects, guest speakers, internships, job shadowing, mentors, and community service", it is unclear how this would be implemented and how much different this is from current practice or standardized approach. It appears to simply be a reiteration of the criteria rather than a complete description of how implementation of a PLE would happen and what it would look like.

The applicant proposes to enter into the EIE, substantial student level information as evidenced by the following:

- Free or Reduced Lunch;
- Special Education IEP or eligibility
- Unsatisfactory CSAP/TCAP and/or ACT scores
- Failed two or more classes
- Over-age for grade, insufficient credits for grade
- Are absent 10% or more of the school year
- Dropped out of school
- More than two significant behavioral incidents
- Involved with drugs, tobacco and/or alcohol
- Are culturally and/or linguistically diverse
- Identified as being at-risk
- Significantly unengaged or disenfranchised students;
- Identified through School-Based Health services

From this data and twice a month Common Formative Assessments (CFA) data, the EIE system will provide personalized student data and recommendations. Though, this is still only data, and not necessarily ongoing and regular feedback based on individual student need. The applicant did not describe *how* academic learning improvement recommendations will be generated from this information. The applicant did not go the next step and describe how teachers will use that data to personalize instruction or describe the available content, instructional approaches, and supports. Nor, did the applicant specially speak to the personalized learning needs of ELL students and students with disabilities.

As an example, simply proposing to provide "targeted academic supports through flexible skills groupings and online video-based content, accommodations, more relevant course opportunities, post-secondary concurrent enrollment, College in Colorado and the ICAP; and social/emotional supports such as SJBoces-wide Check and Connect, access to school counselors, Smart Card attendance tracking" is not necessarily evidence of personalized learning. More importantly, many of these opportunities already exist, in the LEAs, thus, it is unclear as to what will be different for students' PLEs, or for instance, what specific accommodations or social /emotional supports would be available.

The applicant noted that students and parents will have training on EIE access to student records, so that they understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals. Though, there was no description of the training content or, when or how that training would take place,

While the applicant stated that students would be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest and have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that deepen individual student learning, the applicant did not describe or provide specific evidence of such learning opportunities. The listing of existing High School programs did not provide convincing evidence of any new or innovative deep and personalized learning opportunities, rather it appeared to be a listing of traditional alternatives to learning.

While some of the alternative secondary options are on a diploma track, the applicant did not specifically describe any high-quality content and/or if it was aligned to college and career-ready standards.

Overall, while the concept to use CFA and a student information system (EIE) has great potential to personalize and improve student learning, the applicant did not provide a plan with key goals, activities, a timeline, rationale and or persons responsible and has incompletely responded to this criteria and scored in the moderate-low range.

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

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant described in global terms how all teachers would receive professional development and participate in PLCs, to support their capacity to implement personalized learning environments and provide strategies that meet each student's academic needs. A description of the professional development is a critical missing component of this proposal as one of the proposed projects focuses entirely on the development of a common professional development calendar and the addition of 10 common professional development days.

The applicant proposes to utilize the *The Educator Effectiveness Rubrics* to measure teacher and principal effectiveness. While these state evaluation rubrics are comprehensive and complete in and of themselves, the applicant did not address how it would use feedback from these rubrics, the state evaluation system, and individual and collective effectiveness feedback, to provide support and interventions for teachers and principals in need of improvement.

While the applicant reiterated the availability of the CFA, EIE, Universal screening and the Resource Toolbox, the applicant did not specifically address or describe the content, scope or sequence of any professional development for teachers on how to use, the Resource Box, CFA and EIE data, to personalize and accelerate student learning. Nor, did the applicant delineate professional development for teachers or principals on policy or utilizing processes and tools to match student needs with specific resources and approaches that enable them to structure an effective learning environment that meets individual student academic needs.

The applicant did not address or provide a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals including in hard-to-staff schools and subjects (such as mathematics and science), and specialty areas (such as special education).

Overall the applicant has insufficiently addressed these criteria and has scored in the moderate-low range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	5

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

With the SJBoces as the Lead Agency Central Office for this project, the applicant proposes a standard administrative staffing for all participating LEAs. Additionally, the applicant proposes to standardize the PLCs and Teacher Leadership Teams across all 7 districts for the purpose of reviewing data and making recommendations for resource allocation.

The specific focus of Project 2 of this proposal is to establish a common school calendar across all 7 districts, thus, school leadership teams in participating schools will not have the flexibility and autonomy over school schedules and calendars, and potentially, over staffing models.

Even though, mastery based learning is a key component of this proposal, the 7 district consortia will be investigating ways to document credit for mastery based learning verses seat or class time. At present mastery is demonstrated by the CFA. The applicant did not address how it would, if at all, provide students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways.

While flexible grouping based on skills and interest, concurrent enrollment, and ELL and Special education programs are currently available, this information insufficiently describes how the applicant will provide learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English language learners.

The applicant has not provided a high-quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator and level of the education system (classroom, school, and LEA) with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed. This criterion was incomplete and insufficiently addressed and has scored in the low moderate range.

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

10

4

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

While students, parents, educators will have access to the EIE and student level data, the applicant did not address *how* it would provide technical support. The EIE Hub only provides student data. The applicant has not provided a description or evidence as to how educators or students will learn how to access EIE and then utilize the information to personalize learning.

The applicant proposes a conference, online coursework, materials, digital content and access to assistive technology and other supplemental material, or referrals as opportunities for key stakeholders to receive guidance and support on PLE recommendations from teachers and the EIE hub. These strategies are somewhat generic and not specific.. It is unclear what specific materials or assistive technology, or digital content the applicant will have access to.

Merely stating that the EIE is an inter operable data system and that parents and students will have easy access "via family/student portals to the EIE hub", is insufficient evidence to support *how* the applicant will ensure the availability and access to information technology systems that allow parents and students to export their information in an open data format and to use the data in other electronic learning systems.

While the applicant indicated that the EIE will "collect student data (CFA), personnel data and system data" (school and district performance and regional SJBoces), it did not provide evidence to support how this would happen.

The applicant has very globally described how it would ensure that all participating students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders have access to the necessary content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of this proposal. As an example, the applicant did not describe how it would ensure parental access for parents and families that do not have a home computer or internet access, or who speak a language other than English.

Overall, the applicant has minimally responded to these criteria and scores at a low moderate range.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

As proposed by the applicant good data is key to continuous improvement. As a current assessment, the applicant has indicated that they "don't know who is doing what, much less how effectively they may or may not be doing it". Subsequently, the applicant has proposed that this project will collect, "consistent, timely, accurate and individualized data" and entered into the EIE, for every student (via the CFA), teacher and principal (via educator rubrics and evaluations).

In spite of the intent to collect good data for continuous improvement, there were no specific strategies or, a description for *how* the applicant would implement the continuous improvement process. Nor, were there any indicators for timely and regular feedback to teachers and principals on progress toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the term of the grant.

Along with TCAP measures of student achievement and growth, the school specific Unified Improvement Plans (UIP), and other overall measures (dropout rate, graduation rate, ACT scores, the CFA, educator evaluations and Personalized Instructional Content - integrate into a "reciprocal feedback loop". Beyond this description, the applicant did not comprehensively or, convincingly describe a process for *how* it will monitor and measure the quality of its investments funded by RTTT most specifically, the large investments in professional development, technology, and staff.

The applicant will publicly share information on the project via postings on district websites, press releases, newsletters and targeted reports. The applicant did not provide alternative options (i.e. translated, oral presentations, etc.) for parents and the public to access this information.

Overall, the applicant has very globally addressed the criteria for continuous improvement and has scored in the moderate range.

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

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has proposed to post updated RTTT project information on the SJBOCE website, issue twice a year Progress Reports, share important milestones via press releases as strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. Though, there were no timelines or other specific communication plans other than twice yearly Progress Reports.

Additionally, the applicant plans to make available "any information and direction that is relevant and appropriate to a student's academic success" to school counselors, classroom aides, health professionals, private counselors, providers, etc. While collaborative in intent, of concern, is the generality of this statement and adherence to FERPA regulations.

Overall, the applicant very generically described how it would provide ongoing project communication and encourage project engagement with the participating teachers, principals, parents, students and partners.

Overall, the applicant has insufficiently addressed this criterion, and has scored in the low-moderate range.

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

5

3

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

For the most part, the applicant has provided the required 12 performance measures, overall and by subgroup, with ambitious and achievable annual targets. Additionally, there are 15 applicant-proposed performance measures.

The applicant has indicated the following as applicant-proposed measures: LDC and MC, CFA, NWEA MAP assessments, vision and hearing screenings, and DIBELS. As such, the applicant has described the following rationale for selecting these measures.

- LDC and MDC to expand the prevalence of the Literacy and math Design Collaborations
- CFAs promote locally developed assessments and will be used as frequent check-ins.
- NWEA -MAPS provide detailed, actionable student data
- Vision and hearing screening is required by law.
- DIBELS is used for frequent progress monitoring to inform interventions.instruction

The rationale for the applicant-proposed measures will not in all cases to improve rigor or necessarily provide timely and formative leading information. For example, while important, it is unclear how determining the number of students participating in the Healthy Kids Survey or, the number administered vision and hearing screenings increases rigor in PLEs.

While the CFA is major component of the proposed project and was noted numerous times to be a core assessment for the EIE, the other proposed measures are not noted anywhere in the proposal narrative. It is unclear why NWEA MAPs, and DIBELS were not specifically noted as performance indicators for the EIE. Given the large number of proposed performance measures, it remains unclear as to their reasonableness and the utility of including them for purposes of this project. This is of concern, as the applicant did not describe how it will review and improve the measures over time if they are insufficient in gauging implementation progress.

Another concern is that the applicant did not, in all cases describe the methodology for calculating the measure. As an example, the CFAs are administered every two weeks. It remains unclear how the applicant will determine which periodic CFAs to measure or, how it will average or aggregate the measure over time.

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

5

2

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has proposed that the Project Director will be the responsible party for evaluating the effectiveness of each element of the RTTT plan, including the three major projects: common school calendar, the increased professional development days, and EIE data hub.

Simply noting that the EIE data hub will track formative and summative student progress, accurately interpret data, deliver actionable, best practice recommendations and track teacher and principal effectiveness data - does not sufficiently demonstrate how it will evaluate the effectiveness of this 25 million dollar investment.

The applicant did not specifically and sufficiently demonstrate how it would evaluate the effectiveness of the three projects. As an example it is unclear what evaluation indicators would support the quality, intensity, duration and/or effectiveness of the 10 extra professional development days as they relate to and support the provision of PLE to improve student learning. Nor, is it clear how the applicant will determine the impact and effectiveness of the common school calendar in terms of productively, scheduling, efficient use of time, staffing, costs, or other LEA service delivery and decision-making structures (e.g. SACs DACs, Superintendent's meetings, etc.), or in providing PLEs and improved student achievement results.

Additionally, the applicant did not describe how it would evaluate its efforts working with parents, its teachers and their bargaining representation and community partners.

Overall, the applicant insufficiently addressed this criteria and has scored in the low-moderate range.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

--	--	--

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's budget, including the budget narrative and tables was clear, concise and tied to the three major projects and five goals. The budget is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal.</p> <p>Other than \$175,000.00 coming from three different sources (CDE School Counselor Grant, CO Legacy Foundation and CO Health Foundation grants), it appears as if the large majority of funds for this project will come from the RTTT grant.</p> <p>The applicant has clearly indicated the funds that will be used for one-time investments (iPads, new employee desk top computers and office equipment) versus funds that will be used for ongoing operational costs that will be incurred during the grant period. Personnel costs for Projects 2 and 3 (common calendar and common extended professional development days) are the bulk of the budget, at about 75%. This large outlay for personnel costs is a concern for sustainability after the grant period. The other major cost is the EIE system, which is very reasonable.</p> <p>As described in the proposed budget and budget narrative, the personnel costs do not all have a focus on strategies that ensure the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments. It could be said that the 10 extended professional development days and the EIE data system and staff (in their creation and maintenance of the EIE system) are both contributing to the implementation of personalized learning environments. The establishment of a common school calendar across seven districts, it can be justified by the increased efficiency and resource saving potentials.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant has scored high for this criteria.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has proposed that as a result of the RTTT project, the infrastructure, systems and processes from the project's goals will be in place after the term of the grant, such that the consortium can sustain maintenance costs through cost sharing. The proposed cost sharing plan for sustainability requires district contributions from each of the participating districts (based on number of students). Additionally, the lead agency SJBOCES will continue with an aggressive grant writing campaign.</p> <p>As an example, of having an infrastructure in place after the grant period, the applicant notes that once Goal 1 (work on state standards) and Goal 2 (new assessment processes -CFA, Educator Effectiveness Rubrics) are established and routine, few new costs will be required. Basically, the work will be sustained by the new data infrastructure (EIE). The applicant did not address continuing costs for training new teachers and any necessary re-training.</p> <p>The applicant proposes to sustain each of the remaining 3 major project goals as follows.</p> <p>Goal 3. Education Information Exchange (including Resource Toolbox): will need one Programmer/Tech Support position and one EIE data evaluator position. These positions, any new purchases and continued in district new resource development will be covered with new grant funds, or paid for, jointly by all 7 districts.</p> <p>Goal 4. Personalized Learning Experience: The Project Manager at each district will remain after the grant. Again, paid for by all 7 districts.</p> <p>5. Expanded Staff Contracts: is a notably difficult sum to sustain. The Project Director and the Executive Director of SJBOCES will work with all 7 District Superintendents over the course of the grant to build a sustainable plan.</p> <p>While the applicant's rationale is that the major costs of the project will have taken place during the grant period and that the infrastructure will sustain the work is reasonable, there are two concerns. The first, is that there is no specific plan to build sustainability into the system, with key goals, activities, a timeline and persons responsible. The second concern, is that without a specific plan and projected sustainability costs, the applicant has not factored in the possibility that the infrastructures are not in place after the grant, that some districts can't contribute to the costs, or, that other grant funding doesn't come through. This is of concern because a large portion of this grant project is in Goal 5 - staff contracts and there is no evidence that the cost sharing approach will even cover these costs.</p> <p>The applicant did not note financial support from State and other sources.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant has scored in the moderate range.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	10
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant proposed to expand their existing relationship with the Tri County Head Start. The following are the intended results of this expanded partnership and support the plan described in Absolute Priority 1.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Early identification of high-need Head Start preschool students for readiness to enter Kindergarten. 2. Children identified as being at-risk of poor success in Kindergarten would be offered a series of interventions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral, socio-emotional support • Parenting classes for parents • Pre-K Summer School <p>3 Head Start Preschool Teachers will be offered targeted Professional Development to help them meet the needs of high-risk children and their families.</p> <p>4 Children who are identified and receive targeted interventions will enter Kindergarten ready to learn.</p> <p>5. Preschool student evaluation data will be entered into the RTTT EIE data hub system as part of the longitudinal tracking of each student's school career.</p> <p>The applicant has identified 6 population-level educational and other education results for this partnership. Data collected at the Head Start preschools will be entered into the EIE system where it will be interpreted and then targeted recommendations delivered to teachers to create a Personalized Learning Environment for each student. Those children identified by a professional evaluation to be at high-risk of a poor transition to Kindergarten would be offered a series of interventions tailored to their unique needs (2 above).</p> <p>The plan to develop a strategy to scale the model beyond the participating students over time, begins with the Durango Head Start, and then expands to first Bayfield Head Start in 2014, then Montezuma-Cortez in 2015. These locations were chosen as they represent the highest low-income, Native American/Hispanic populations. This appears to be a reasonable approach to scale up as it does focus on high-needs children.</p> <p>This project will improve results over time by identifying at risk children at the very beginning of their school careers and providing needed interventions and supports. This initiative will also provide professional development to preschool teachers in service provision to high-need students.</p> <p>This proposed project directly integrates socio-emotional, physical, behavioral, cultural, and community services for high-risk pre-school children. It will deliver culturally appropriate educational, behavioral and community-based interventions targeted to the unique needs of each child and family.</p> <p>The applicant proposes that as soon as a child is identified as being in need of extra support, parents will be brought into the process and offered a menu of supports that include parent classes to help them assist their child. Community supports will be brought in as needed to address unmet needs such as medical care, housing, or food assistance.</p> <p>This project will be routinely assessed as part of the RTTT continuous improvement process just as all the other RTTT projects with twice a year evaluation by the Project Director.</p> <p>The project demonstrates a partnership that has a strong potential to support preschool students and their families and improve student learning. As well, the identified performance measures tie directly to the RTTT plan Performance Measures.</p> <p>The applicant has scored in the high range for these criteria.</p>		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

While the applicant has to some extent addressed how it will build on three of the core educational assurance areas (adapt

standards to assessments, build data systems, recruit, develop, reward and retain effective teachers), there was minimal, if any description of specific strategies and efforts to turn around the lowest performing schools.

The applicant globally spoke to ways in which it would create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies (e.g. the CFAs, Resource Toolbox and the EIE data system), though, there was no specific evidence on the tools, and supports for students and educators. As an example, there was no explicit description of the content, scope or sequence for the 10 days of common professional development to be provided across all districts, or the impacts expected from this huge structural change.

Despite the numerous mentions of improving opportunities for students to graduate from high school prepared for college and careers, the deepening of student learning by meeting the individual academic needs of each student; and increasing the effectiveness of educators, the applicant did not provide specific processes or strategies as to it would accomplish this. Nor, were there specific strategies, processes or plans (other than the performance measures) that spoke to the needs of students with disabilities, ELLs and decreasing achievement gaps across these student groups.

Based on the comments above, the applicant has not sufficiently met the Absolute Priority.

Total	210	131
-------	-----	-----



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0867CO-3 for Durango School District 9-R

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant provides a strong vision of how to move the consortium forward. The vision consists of multiple elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common Formative Assessment system, • Enhanced rubrics for evaluating teachers and principals, and • A central Education Information Exchange (EIE) data hub for integrating the data The response does not create a clear link between improving these elements and heightening student success. This puts the response in the lower end of the high range.		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: (a) All schools in the consortium will be participating schools with the proposal taking a regional approach to implementing all facets. The project design was well vetted within each district and then built up from teacher and student input. (b) All schools including early learning centers and preschools are listed. (c) The project will include 10,183 participating students and 745 teachers. The participating students are 25% high need and average 41.3% low income.		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	6

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal strengths include reviewing a myriad of activities and reform elements to be continued or carried out under the grant. The range of reform activities is a striking positive for this proposal. There are weaknesses however in that it is not obvious which activities are continuations of activities already funded through other grants, which are continuing activities to be funded under RTTD, and which are completely new. There is additional information provided in the budget section, but that information also lacks clarity. The specific deliverables under the RTTD grant are obscure.

This response is somewhat on target without being compelling. This places the response in the middle score range.

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

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The annual growth goals are not ambitious. No initial growth and improvement is indicated in the proposal until the second year of the grant. The proposal does not explicitly address why this may be expected. It is clear that many of the activities and project elements will not be completed until the second or third year. For most of the measures, the growth from baseline to the post grant year is four percent overall and seven percent for the subgroups.

(b) The proposal indicates subgroups will improve more rapidly than the overall group. The decrease is only 3% which is a small change on par with what one might expect in normal year to year fluctuation. However, the proposal does not show the majority population for comparison. Because the overall group contains the subgroups, the implied decrease in the achievement gap is lower than the true rate.

(c) Graduation rates are expected to improve slowly - a total gain of 4% in four years. The rates indicated are far below state targets.

(d) College enrollment is also expected to improve slowly - the same increase as the graduation rate. The rates seem to suggest that all of the additional graduates would go on to college.

The applicant's vision of improved student learning is very strong when stated in descriptive terms. However, when that vision is translated into specific improvement goals, the vision is not ambitious. The goals do show some attention to and focus on closing achievement gaps. As such, this response is in the upper level of the middle range.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	3
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: (1)(a) The first portion of this response seems to be an instruction to someone to check the results of a previous grant and to give the evidence. The longitudinal data included in the proposal to demonstrate a clear track record of success is very sparse. The Catch-Up percentages presented for Reading, Math, and Writing are difficult to understand as success. The proposal definition of the Catching Up category on TCAP might be summarized as those students who previously scored poorly but have shown enough growth to be projected as Proficient or better within three years or by 10th grade. The graphs for Reading and Math show the percentage of students who are "Catching-Up" declining. This does not seem to be success. None of the discussion or data in this response address closing achievement gaps. (1)(b) The consortium has received a number of grants but it is unclear if the reforms supported by the grants have led to success in or changes within low or lowest performing schools. (1)(c) The consortium is moving forward with providing student performance data to students, parents, and educators. Their software system is in Beta testing in one LEA. Other LEAs are relying on more traditional means of sharing this data. This response is very weak. The track record of success is obscure even though the consortium has received a number of other grants for reforms which were intended to lead to improved student performance. This places the response in the low range of scores.		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	4
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:		

(2)(a) (b) (c) Each of the consortium LEA's posts the applicable personnel salaries on their websites down to the school level.

(2)(d) The non-personnel expenditures posted at the school level apparently include the salaries of certified specialists and psychologists. It is unclear if the posting include only those salaries, if the salaries are separated or combined with other non-personnel expenditures.

This response is in the high range of scores, but the lack of clarity in area (2)(d) prevents it from receiving all of the possible points.

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

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:
 The proposal cites the MOU agreements from each LEA and the state statutory authorization for School Districts to have home-rule and autonomy as needed to conduct the activities of the RTTD proposal. All points are awarded.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	7
---	----	---

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(4)(a) The proposal engaged students through a Student Perception Survey although it is unclear if the survey was done specifically in reference to the proposal or if the survey was done independently and the input was incorporated into the proposal. Teachers and principals were more directly engaged in outlining their school improvement needs and identifying the elements required for improving school performance. As a consortium, the input of LEA Superintendents was also an important element of engagement.

(4)(a)(i) One of the LEA's in the consortium has collective bargaining. The application does have a letter of support from the teacher's association although it does not cite their having been directly engaged in the preparation of the proposal.

(4)(a)(ii) The other six LEA's do not have collective bargaining. Their support for the project as indicated through a survey (96%) far exceeds the 70% threshold required.

(4)(b) The proposal includes many letters of support from elected individuals and civic groups. The level of family or parent engagement is unclear.

Given the regional nature of this consortium, the proposal has done an excellent job of engaging stakeholders other than families/parents. It is unclear if families were engaged in the process. The response scores in the upper end of the middle range.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	4
--	---	---

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:
 The proposal presents the gap analysis prepared for general school improvement planning rather than a high-quality plan for an analysis of their current situation. The gap analysis presented suggests additional attention is needed to the following areas: (The proposal addresses these areas.)

- student growth on summative assessment
- coordinated school calendars (across LEAs)
- coordinated and shared professional development
- shared data systems

Although a high-quality plan with timelines, goals, deliverables, and responsible staff is not present, it is clear that the applicant has done considerable gap analysis in preparing the key elements of the proposal. The response deserves to be in the high range.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	16

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- (a)(i) Students will remain abreast of their learning goals through frequent Common Formative Assessments (CFAs). The twice monthly CFAs will guide the student and alert educators to students who are behind.
- (a)(ii) Professional development will raise to a higher level as PD schedules among the consortium schools are coordinated and shared. This will result in working more effectively with students and better personal learning experiences.
- (a)(iii) There are some references to e-learning and project based learning however these are not a central focus of the proposal. It is unclear how students will deepen their learning in their areas of academic interest.
- (a)(iv) The ways in which the consortium might increase student exposure to diverse cultures is obscure.
- (a)(v) The frequent CFA's will help educators adjust instruction and create interventions to match student needs. There are references to the Education Information Exchange (EIE) program (being developed) making prescriptive recommendations for interventions, but it is unclear how the relatively small database within the consortium's students would support specific recommendations.
- (b)(i) The bi-weekly CFA's will drive the student personalized instructional content in combination with the EIE recommendations.
- (b)(ii) The regional consortium has a wide variety of Tier 3 type intervention modalities and sub-organizations to provide high quality intense instruction. It is less clear that there is presently a wide range of early intervention strategies and modalities in place. Although there has been training in many intervention strategies, it is unclear how well those strategies have been integrated into instructional practices. The proposal addresses this gap by extending the school year and coordinating PD calendars.
- (b)(iii) The availability and planned use of high quality, aligned content is obscure. The role of digital content is also obscure.
- (b)(iv)(A) Student data including performance data will be updated twice a month. This high level of feedback is a very strong feature of this proposal. The CFAs will be developed by teachers and aligned with college and career readiness standards.
- (b)(iv)(B) Student feedback based on the CFA's and EIE will give the student ample opportunity to know how they are progressing toward graduation and college/career readiness,
- (b)(v) The proposal lists 15 ways a student might be classified as high need. The application does not detail accommodations for ensuring these specific students are on track toward graduation.
- (c) The mechanisms and training for students to use the EIE are not spelled out.

This response is strengthened by the high frequencies of Common Formative Assessments designed by teachers in alignment with Colorado and CCSS. The specific points listed above temper the score on this response to the low portion of the high range.

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

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- (a)(i) The strong focus on professional development is key to the regional approach to reform within the consortium. Creating 10 common days for PD and establishing common calendars among the 7 LEAs will give them the opportunity to deepen their capacity in providing personalized learning environments.
- (a)(ii) The Common Formative Assessments will assist in providing educators and students solid feedback on which to adjust and adapt content and instruction on an individual basis. The use of common (collaborative) student learning does not seem to be an emphasis within the project.
- (a)(iii) Working within the Common Formative Assessment framework, they will be sharing project progress across entities using the Educational Information Exchange as a mechanism for prompting continuous improvement.
- (a)(iv) The consortium has developed training materials on their new common teacher and principal evaluation system. It is unclear if the training has already taken place or when it will take place. Continuing PD support for the evaluation system is also not elaborated.
- (b)(i) All educators in the project will have access and training in the Educational Information Exchange (EIE). This tool is being developed to provide a hub of actionable data for use in accelerating student progress toward standards aligned with college and career-ready standards. This important tool will not be completed until midway through the grant period. This will delay its full effectiveness on student progress until near the end of the grant.

(b)(ii) There is very little discussion of high quality resources (digital or otherwise) within the application. The Educational Information Exchange is expected to generate recommendations of individualized prompts for applicable resources and tools for improving both student learning effectiveness and teacher instructional effectiveness.

(b)(iii) These processes are expected to be imbedded within the Educational Information Exchange.

(c)(i) The key purpose of the Educational Information Exchange is to create a hub of information and algorithms for moving each student, educator, and LEA within the consortium forward in continuous improvement.

(c)(ii) The additional professional development days, shared training and common PD schedules will include attention to closing achievement gaps.

(d) The elements of a high-quality plan for implementation are obscure. The proposal does not lay out a full implementation plan with timelines, deliverables and responsibilities in a coherent fashion.

The applicant's overall response to improving teaching and leading is very good. However, the specifics of the plan are vague. The lack of clarity regarding how the Educational Information Exchange will develop the algorithms for student and staff recommendations also substantially weakens this response. The response is in the lower end of the high score range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	6

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The consortium governance structure is well established and has been functioning for some time. The consortium has mechanisms in place for coordinating grants and has practice doing so with previous grants. The support elements for the project are in place.

(b) The basis for this reform proposal is rooted in creating more consistency between disparate LEAs and schools. Creating consistency is inconsistent with increasing school level autonomy. There are provisions for district, school, and classroom PLCs to make recommendations and provisions for resource allocation and reallocations. Within the scope and direction of this proposal there appears to be sufficient flexibility and autonomy for adjustments as needed.

(c) (d) There is an emphasis in the application on increasing numbers of instructional days in the regular calendar and having a consistent 25 day summer school session. There is minimal indication of students moving through material on the basis of mastery. Student instruction will be differentiated based on assessments, but it is unclear if that means moving through material at a more rapid pace to achieve mastery. The consortium is investigating means for granting credit for mastery demonstrated through the CFAs. Although they are exploring the idea, it is unclear if they are committed to finding a way to do so.

(e) Adaptability and accessibility will be built into the Educational Information Exchange. This seems to center on differentiated instruction with the intention of developing personalized instructional recommendations based on CFA results to address the needs of ELL, GT, and special education students.

The preexisting consortium structure is a solid plus in this response. The tension between creating consistency and providing autonomy to schools and LEAs, though difficult, is sufficient to meet the basic requirements of this response. There is a fundamental inconsistency between emphasizing days of instruction and allowing students to earn credit through demonstrated mastery. The proposal does not lay out an explicit high-quality plan on how it will create pathways to mastery that are not related to seat time. The lack of clarity regarding how the Educational Information Exchange will develop the algorithms for student and staff recommendations also substantially weakens this response. The response is in the middle score range.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	3
--	----	---

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The applicant acknowledges equity issues for families with low income, but primarily addresses the issue in terms of making educational content available whether or not the families have the means to access it. The applicant asserts that by providing educators with more knowledge of student/family financial and other needs the educators will be able to overcome

this limitation. The proposal is unclear on how families will overcome the digital divide if they do not have resources such as computers and internet access.

(b) The application describes counselors and partner stakeholders as receiving guidance and support from teachers using EIE for supporting the student's educational progress. The technical support for families and students is unclear.

(c) The EIE will provide recommendations for student progress. It is unclear if there are provisions for exporting student performance data in open formats needed for other learning applications or for personal record keeping.

(d) The Educational Information Exchange will be built based on interoperable specifications for interconnecting the seven LEAs and 38 participating schools.

The response is particularly weak in addressing access by low income families. The level of technical support for families that do have internet access is vague. Support is discussed more from the viewpoint of educational recommendations than the support needed to access those recommendations.

This response is in the lower end of the middle score range.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	4
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application provides a general overview of the continuous improvement process. It is unclear how the feedback loops on student, teacher, school, and district performance would get translated into project changes. The overall measures described focus on high school students and thus reflect many years of student instruction. This makes them less sensitive to changes related to the proposed reforms which begin with preschool students. The impacts on lower grade levels are not measured. The progress would be shared through state reporting channels, press releases, and consortium and district websites.</p> <p>The overall continuous improvement process is sparsely described and the text provides insufficient detail regarding the processes for making changes in the project. This response scores in the lower portion of the middle score range.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application mentions a few ways in which stakeholders will be updated on the project's progress. Internal communication is expected to be frequent with semi-annual progress reports from the project director to the public. There will be press releases for important milestones and successes. The mechanisms for public feedback and/or other engagement are unclear.</p> <p>This response describes a moderate communication effort and is very vague regarding opportunities for input and engagement of external stakeholders including but not limited to families and students. The response scores in the middle score range.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) Student assessments and teacher and principal evaluation instruments were chosen to provide frequent data and create actionable information.</p> <p>(b) The applicant describes a wide variety of performance measures by grade level. These measures, particularly the Common Formative Assessments, are designed to meet the RTTD requirements for rigorous, timely and formative information. This is a strong element of the proposal.</p> <p>(c) The applicant sets ambitious goals for many of the performance measures it proposes. For example growing from 8.5% to 77.2% on a process/participation module is quite substantial. Also, raising demonstrated growth on the Common Formative Assessments by 25% in four years is ambitious. The applicant is equally ambitious on the required performance measures. The percentages of students being taught by effective and highly effective teachers and principals increase by 25% to 35%. The applicant is considerably less ambitious regarding the proficiency based measures with overall increases in the 4% range and subgroup increases in the 7% range. In Section (A) Vision, the applicant focused on these proficiency based performance measures which are not ambitious. It is unclear why the goals on these measures are not as ambitious as the process level goals.</p>		

This response provides some rationale for the selection of measures and is ambitious in setting most of its goals. This places the response in the high range of scores.

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

5

1

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The evaluation plan described in the proposal is informal and does not include rigorous third party analysis of progress. The plan includes monitoring effectiveness and reporting results. The project director is charged with continually assessing the effectiveness of the calendar and the increased PD days. It is unclear what authority he has or processes he might use to change the project if it appears the proposed structure and activities are not effective. It is unclear who will monitor the effectiveness of specific interventions, the EIE recommendations, and how improvements would be suggested and made. The opportunities to evaluate the relative value of the investments are unclear.

This response is in the low score range.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Overall

There are a few mathematical errors on some of the budget tables and some inconsistencies between tables regarding the funds from other sources.

(a) Most of the funds for the project would come from RTTD. Some would be carrying over functions and funding from other grants. It is a positive to see the application dovetail grants as it has done.

(b) Projects two and three appear to be funded sufficiently to implement the proposal. Project one, the Education Information Exchange (EIE) is not sufficient. The EIE is described as pulling data together from a wide range of information sources including HR systems, student information systems, student performance measures from multiple vendors and systems, incorporating the Common Formative Assessments, interfacing with a teacher and principal evaluation system, building parent and student portals, creating and applying algorithms to make recommendations regarding educational resource and instructional modalities for individual students and staff. The scope of this project exceeds the budgeting for the equivalent of one and a half programmers for four years.

(c)(i) The sources for all proposed project funds are fully described.

(c)(ii) The anticipated expenditures are described in sufficient detail to understand which would be ongoing and which would be one-time expenses.

The budget for the proposal is not sufficient to carry out the bold and ambitious Education Information Exchange (EIE). Large scale data systems are difficult to build and secure. Given that the applicant strongly expresses the intention to build a system instead of purchase one, underfunding here may cause significant issues in reaching the overall project's goals. These concerns place the response in the lower portion of the middle score range.

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

10

4

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes that the project will be sustained after the grant period by the consortium members. The Superintendents and School Boards of all consortium LEAs have agreed to sustain the grant elements. The funding will come through efficiencies learned through collaboration and by continued aggressive grant writing. The applicant explains that most of the development and training costs will have been incurred so that only one programmer and a small amount of continuing PD will be needed. The applicant does not address the nearly \$1,000,000 in equipment that will be aging and in need of replacement soon after the end of the project. The applicant acknowledges that the substantial staffing costs in extending the school year will be difficult for some consortium members to sustain. (Under the grant, one LEA will be adding 41 new student days to reach the new level of 181 contact days. Other LEAs will also be adding some additional student days. All LEAs added 10 PD days.) These additional days are substantial. They are a significant element to the success of the

proposed reforms. The ambiguous plan to maintain the student contact days and PD days leaves the sustainability of the project in question. The applicant does not provide a high-quality plan for sustainability. The timelines, deliverables, and persons responsible for achieving sustainability are not explicitly expressed, but fall to the RTTD Project Director and the consortium Executive Director to develop over the course of the five year funding cycle.

The limited plan for sustainability places this response in the middle score range.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	9

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

- (1) The expanded partnership with Tri-County Head Start is directly aligned with the educational purposes of the proposal.
- (2) The applicant identifies six clear educational results and educational outcomes desired from this partnership. The results and outcomes are tied directly to entering Kindergarten with the skills and family support to succeed.
- (3)(a) The students would be tracked through the EIE the same as students at other levels. It is unclear how the selected specific population measures would be tracked.
- (3)(b) The partnership is designed very clearly to improve early identification of students in need, target them immediately and track them into future years for continued support. The Personalized Learning Environment would begin in preschool.
- (3)(c) The project strategy would begin at one head start location and then expand to others beginning with the head start locations with the highest concentrations of low-income, Native American students.
- (3)(d) Results will improve over time as preschool teachers receive more support and become better tooled at working with high needs students.
- (4) The interventions developed for these students would be culturally adapted to the unique needs of each child and family. The students in the participating partner/head start schools would have their social-emotional support needs identified and integrated in the same setting as their preschool.
- (5)(a)(b) A child psychiatrist working with child behavior specialists will evaluate children and develop actionable recommendations. They will also work with families in their home communities to identify needs.
- (5)(c) The applicant will rely on the EIE to create intervention and support recommendations.
- (5)(d) This partnership will create one on one interaction with families of high needs children so they will be directly engaged in solutions to their child's needs. The application is vague regarding any community or other stakeholder input on these aspects of the proposal and partnership.
- (5)(e) The applicant provides a general reference to the continuous improvement process and the semi-annual evaluation reports of the Project Director. The application has sparse discussion of evaluating this aspect of the plan.
- (6) The performance measures and goals are confusing. It is unclear if these goals are ambitious or not.

The applicant presents a strong response to the competitive preference priority. The partnership is tightly woven into the overall proposal with clearly aligned desired educational results and outcomes. The specific performance measures are unclear and confusing. The partnership is with head start preschool and performance measures are particularly difficult for such young children. The response is in the high range of scores.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

This applicant has met Absolute Priority 1. The proposed projects, strategies, and relationships are well aligned to create

personalized learning environments for students in the region. The alignment with standards and frequent monitoring of progress offers strong hope for success in preparing students for college and career-ready standards. The project focuses on standardizing and deepening the quality of instructional practices and holds promise for success. Although there are weaknesses in some areas such as the extensive dependence on the Educational Information Exchange and the future sustainability of the project, Absolute Priority 1 is met.

Total	210	128
-------	-----	-----