



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0626MI-1 for Eastern Upper Peninsula ISD

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 applicant provided a clear vision in the development of a regionalized, multi-tiered system of support in reading and mathematics for all students in seventeen school districts. The plan incorporates a common approach to continuous improvement around curriculum, instruction, assessment, based on the works of Bob Marzano and the What Works in Schools-Translating Research into Action (2003). Each of the seventeen school boards adopted a resolution in support of the comprehensive approach to school improvement and reform. The framework for the project provided a common approach, common vocabulary, and methods to share in training opportunities.</p> <p>The applicant provided detailed information on the current data collection procedures and outlined plans to expand existing data collection for all schools in the region. A K-12 regional data system now houses seven years worth of local, regional and state level K-12 standardized assessment data with plans for expansion to include progress monitoring and skills based data in reading and mathematics.</p> <p>The applicant incorporates a detailed plan to employ data coaches for data collection and intervention specialists to support student learning and teaching. The data would be collected and used to measure student growth and success and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction. Support would be provided for data collection and implementation of research based programs to accelerate student achievement.</p> <p>The applicant did not include in its vision statement specific strategies to address recruitment, rewarding, retaining, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most. It is unclear to the reviewer how hiring data coaches and intervention specialists would address this core area.</p> <p>The applicant's vision incorporates the use of data specialists and intervention specialists in each district that will identify specific student weaknesses in math, match the student with an appropriate, research based intervention strategy, facilitate the delivery of the intervention by tapping into existing offerings, and work with classroom teachers to deliver the intervention. This will occur in class or in an extended learning program. This will deepen student learning, and increase equity through personalized student support.</p> <p>Overall Eastern Peninsula Intermediate School District scores in the middle of the scoring range for this section as the vision statement does not address key provisions of the competition criteria.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant identified noted that the Western Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District represents seventeen small, rural districts in the easternmost end of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Charts were provided with the seventeen school systems selected to participate in the project. The reader was unable to determine if individual schools were selected, and if so how they schools were selected. The applicant did not discuss this in this section of the narrative. It was noted that there are five Focus schools and one Priority School in the region.</p> <p>The applicant provided data on the number of participating students, participating students from low income families, participating students who are high needs students, and participating educators within the seventeen school districts. A total of 7430 students will be served in the project. The number of high needs students is 3286. The number of low income students is 3810 (51%).</p> <p>The grade band of students selected for inclusion in the project was K-12, and the content areas identified for improvement are Reading and Mathematics. Specific program interventions are identified for implementation in all schools for all students.</p>		

This section of the application scores low. The applicant did not provide descriptive information clearly explaining the school demographics.

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

10

4

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant identified plans to scale up various parts of the project. This includes the one to one student to laptop initiative, which provided notebooks for students on a 24/7, 365 days/year model and build up the Cloud” that houses educational content, file storage, student email, etc.

Moreover, the applicant identified plans to provide each student with a login number that would take them to the appropriate tools and resources now in place as well as additional or alternate digital content that has been selected to best address their learning needs. Mentors would also be available for students in need of extra support.

This section of the application scores low. The applicant did not provide a comprehensive high quality describing how the project would be scaled up and translated into meaning reform. Descriptive information was not provided on the theory of change and logic model, and the connections between each and student achievement.

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

10

4

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant reported that approximately 35% of the students in the region are Native American and 51% of the students are considered economically disadvantaged. Summative assessment data was provided on these two subgroups by grade and academic content. The scaled scores are higher for Native Americans than Economically Disadvantaged students at each grade level. The goals identified in the reading and Mathematics are ambitious and achievable. It would have been helpful if data were provided for other student populations to obtain an overall perspective of student achievement levels.

The applicant provided data from three groups in describing the achievement gaps. This consisted of Native Americans, White Students, and Economically Disadvantaged and Non-Economically Disadvantaged. Based on the data, the largest achievement gaps are in 5th grade Reading (-11.9%) and Mathematics (-13.2%), specifically among the Economically Disadvantaged students. The data further revealed that Native Americans achievement scores are higher than White students at all grade levels, with exception to the 3rd grade in both Reading and Mathematics. The goals identified for closing the achievement gap among the subpopulations are reasonable and attainable. It is unclear whether goals equal to or exceed State ESEA targets for the LEA(s), overall and by student subgroup (as defined in this notice), for each participating LEA iNarrative information was provided along with the data, specifically describing the state ESEA targets.

The applicant reported graduation rates for students in each of the school districts. Based on the information provided, Economically Disadvantaged students graduate at greater rates than Native Americans in seven of the school districts. In most districts these two subpopulations have graduation rates that are significantly lower than the overall rate for their respective district which indicates the need for targeted interventions. A key component of the project is to increase the number of on line courses for students and to offer courses working with colleges and universities (dual enrollment). The goals established by the applicant are overly ambitious and unrealistic based on current proficiency and graduation rates. The applicant did not provide information on the number of graduating students in each district, coupled with the percentages. This would assist in making comparisons and obtaining a clearer view to assess goal attainment. The goals established are overly ambitious and unrealistic.

The applicant provided college enrollment rates and proposed goals for future rates. Based on the data provided, three of the districts identified have college reenrollment rates around 50%. The applicant proposes to increase the percentage of Native Americans attending college to at least 80% and the percentage of Economically Disadvantaged Students to 75% in most districts. While the applicant has identified plans to increase on line courses and dual degree programs the percentages are high in comparison projections. The goals are overly ambitious.

This section of the application scores in the mid range. The applicant did not provide descriptive information to accompany the data further explaining the numbers. Additionally, specific information was not provided to link the vision, goals, and proposed program interventions.

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>The applicant has successfully collaborated with several schools and districts to establish a region wide data system. Data is available at the individual teacher, classroom, grade level, building, and district. Districts have been using the data to focus on strategies to instruct specialty populations, inclusive of economically disadvantaged and Native American students.</p> <p>This also included the use of classroom observation tools to gather data on effective student engagement and instructional practice. The applicant also discussed its role in developing grade level specific common assessments in reading and math that have been in use in the region. This work has occurred over the last 7 years. Most recently, the applicant partnered with several Regional Data Initiative partners to align the common core assessment for grades 1-8 in reading and mathematics. Professional development was also provided to teacher son specific strategies to meet the needs of economically disadvantaged students.</p> <p>Through data analysis appropriate professional development for teachers, differentiated instruction at the classroom level, and providing additional interventions the applicant and local school districts have closed achievement gaps among Native American and Economically Disadvantaged students.</p> <p>While these are noteworthy practices, the applicant does not provide evidence to link these activities to high school graduation rates, and increases in college enrollment as identified in the competition criteria.</p> <p>The applicant provided descriptive information on several programs and system level interventions over the course of several years. Information was not provided on ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently low performing schools or its lowest achieving schools as required in the competition criteria.</p> <p>The applicant provided several examples of data being shared with students and educators to inform and improve participation, instruction, and services. Information is not provided detailing how data would be shared with parents. The applicant did not identify procedure for sharing student performance data with parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and services.</p> <p>This section scores in the mid point range as information is provided on most indicators.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant referenced a State law that requires individual districts and intermediate school districts to post budget and salary compensation transparency reporting. The applicant further stated that within 30 days of any change in the operating budget the district is required to make that information available on its website home page.</p> <p>The applicant reported that the intermediate agency and all school districts that are part of this project have fully complied with this legal requirement and data is available on their respective websites.</p> <p>The applicant met the requirements of this category as identified in the competition criteria.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant identified specific examples of programs that are within state context for implementation. Intermediate service agencies have been in existence for nearly many years. The applicant referenced interactive television due to lack of staffing to offer advanced level courses, which districts sought and received approval to pilot. That grew into blended and online courses. The Stay on Track Program consists of program interventions delivered through various mediums to include computer based, face to face, and on line courses.</p> <p>Intermediate agencies now purchase online courses from the Michigan Virtual High School. Most courses are taught at high schools in each of the districts. This service provides results in a significant cost savings, especially for rural districts with limited personnel and budgets.</p> <p>More recently the applicant sought and received a seat time waiver (STW) from the state of Michigan on behalf of its</p>		

constituent districts. The waiver affords districts the opportunity to provide online or blended courses for students in alternative settings. Students can also take personalized courses which might be out of rotation at the home school.

All districts are taking advantage of Compass/Odyssey Learning, a modular based on line repository of K-12 digital content aligned to state and now common core standards in reading and math. This will ensure that students are receiving supplemental curriculum support that is aligned to state standards which will inevitably assist in increasing achievement.

The applicant provided solid examples of activities and programs that fall within the states context for improvement and innovation and scores in the high point range in this category.

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

The applicant reported that several projects which were already underway served as the impetus for the success of this project. This consists of program efforts around curriculum, instruction, assessment, data, and technology, state and federal requirements for teacher and administrator evaluations.

The applicant reported that the organization has been transparent with stakeholders around student achievement data, finances, and staffing. The Race To The Top-District application was endorsed by all parties to include superintendents, teachers unions, and school boards. This is crucial to the success of the project.

Stakeholder meetings were held in each region and in school to discuss the project and gain support from all parties. The sessions were facilitated by representatives from the American Federation of Teachers, Michigan Education Association union leaders, and district representatives. Additional information was presented on the teacher and principal evaluation system.

The applicant hosted two informational meetings to discuss the project and to solicit input prior to the development and submission of the application. To ensure equal access the event was also provided in a webinar format. Input was sought on the program. As a result of the measure identified above all required signatures were obtained indicating broad support for the project.

The applicant addressed this criterion as described and receives a score in the high point range for this category.

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

The applicant reported while achievement was increasing in the districts, the achievement gap was widening among Economically Disadvantaged Students and Native Americans. Based on this premise, it was asserted that the key need for this project is additional staff to support project activities. It is unclear whether a formal needs assessment was carried out to identify specific causes for identified gaps. The premise of the model is that staff members would be assigned to each district to provide support to the Principal and teachers. The staff would be comprised of a Data Specialist and an Intervention Specialist. One of each would be assigned to each district.

Based on the information provided, the Data Specialist would collect data on student achievement and provide the data to building administrators and teachers to support the learning and teaching process. The role of the Intervention Specialist is to ensure that all supplementary intervention programs are in place at each school to address identified student academic needs (e.g. Computer assisted, after school, etc...).

The use of commercial programs to address identified student weaknesses is effective. It is unclear how the Intervention Specialist would coordinate and be trained on the various programs identified in the application. The use of Data Specialist for data collection is a valuable strategy. The critical component in the process centers on the use of the data to improve learning and teaching, specifically utilizing research based strategies to address learner diversity. The specific roles of the Data Specialist and Intervention Specialist are not clearly defined.

The applicant's score in this category is in the mid point range.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	12

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant referenced that the benchmark exam in Michigan is the ACT Benchmark in English, mathematics, reading, and science. The assessment is currently embedded in the states high school assessment, the Michigan Merit Exam. It was further reported that the state recently adopted new cut scores for all state assessments that are aligned to the ACT benchmarks, to include college and career ready standards.

A significant part of the applicants plan for improvement and personalized learning is transparency relevant to expectations for success. Timely data from multiple sources will be made available to assist parents and students in developing a pathway to success. Students will have learning paths created in Compass/Odyssey Learning based on the most recent standardized testing data available. Data will be derived from tests administered three times each year.

The applicant identified specific programs and interventions to ensure students stay on track to graduate. This consists of Achieve 3000 to provide remedial and accelerated activities for students, participation in extended day programs, and use of wireless cards for additional support while students are home. The applicant reported that this support would be available during the first year of the project. It would be helpful to provide an explanation why this service would be discontinued after the first year.

A variety of instructional approaches were identified by the applicant. Students will be afforded opportunities to engage in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest. Students that finish courses early will be afforded the opportunity to participate in courses of interest to them.

Several courses will be offered through Michigan Virtual, GENet and Compass. Districts will develop and offer mini courses for middle and high school students that will address individual student strength and weaknesses through the digital content and targeted classroom activities.

The applicant did not provide strategies to ensure students having 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, and problem solving.

The applicant identified plans to frequently provide data to all educators. This would consist of student and program data. This will assist in monitoring programs for use and effectiveness in increasing student achievement.

The program interventions identified in the Stay on Track program will provide high quality strategies for high need students to help ensure that they are on track toward meeting the college and career ready standards or college and career graduation requirements.

The applicant reported that data support will be provided to students and classroom teachers, and parents to ensure their success in using the online tools. Students will be able to monitor and track their learning through this additional support. Students will be connected to specific digital and classroom level content that addresses their identified needs.

The applicant met some of the requirements for this category. The score is in the mid point range

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

(a. i) The applicant identified plans to provide professional development for teachers and administrators as part of their evaluations. This professional development will center on the area of weakness identified on the individual evaluation. The applicant did not provide a comprehensive approach for teachers to employ in creating personalized learning environments. Teachers would participate in training on math and reading content. School teams, teachers, students, and administrators will be provided support, and invited to share success stories on data use for instructional improvement.

(ii). The applicant provided information on the major thrust of the project which is to employ Data Specialists and Intervention Specialists in each school district to collect data by school and classroom and student level. Specific interventions (programs or activities) would be available to address identified student weaknesses. Intervention specialists would support teachers in program implementation and student placement.

Information was not provided on training for teachers on effective instructional strategies to meet the needs of students and measure progress toward attainment of college and career readiness. This would include common and individual tasks as identified in the competition criteria (discussion and collaborative work, project based learning, videos, and manipulatives).

(iii) The applicant reported that students will all have, at a minimum, learning paths created through Compass/Odyssey Learning based on the most recent standardized testing data available. In most instances, data will be derived from grades 1-8 grade math and reading assessments currently given 3 times/year or course end exams given quarterly in high school. While the data would be used to frequently monitor student progress, the applicant did not address its use in improvement of

the individual and collective practice of teachers.

(iv) The applicant reported that as teacher evaluations evolve and teacher data sets indicate weakness in specific content or processes teachers and administrators will take part in professional development to improve practice. Information was not provided on specific procedures outlining methods to provide recommendations, supports, and interventions as needed.

(b.i) The applicant identified specific tools that will be available for teachers and administrators to use in data collection and program intervention. While the tools would be available, information was not provided regarding specific training for teachers to identify optimal learning approaches that respond to student academic needs.

(ii) The applicant identified several high quality learning tools. All districts currently use Compass/Odyssey Learning, a modular based online repository of K-12 digital content aligned to state standards and now the common core standards in reading and math. Additional tools consist of Moodle and Discovery Education. The applicant did not provide specific information on trainings for teachers on effective use of the tools to accelerate student progress in meeting college and career-ready graduation requirements.

(iii) The applicant provided information on the process to be used in matching student needs. Data Specialists would be employed in each district along with Intervention Specialists. The data specialist would monitor student achievement scores and provide information to teachers and building administrators. Teachers would work with the Intervention Specialist using data from the Compass/Odyssey program to plan program interventions for individual students. After completion of the lessons, students would participate in after school activities, if deemed appropriate.

(c.i) The applicant reported that as teacher evaluations evolve and teacher data sets indicate weakness in specific content or processes teachers and administrators will take part in professional development to improve practice. The applicant did not address use of data from teacher and leader evaluations to improve school culture and climate, or for the purpose of school improvement. It was noted that state level information on teacher and leader effectiveness will be posted on the website when available.

(ii) The applicant reported that leaders will be participating in McREL's Balanced Leadership Training during summer 2013. Teachers will also be participating in Reading Recovery Training and Math Trainings to provide quality instructional support to students. While the applicant provided information on specific trainings during the first year, a comprehensive approach to monitoring and improving school and student performance and practices was not provided, specifically plans for closing achieving gaps.

(d.) The applicant did not provide a high quality plan for increasing the number of students that receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals as specified in the competition criteria.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(D.1a) The applicant is an intermediate agency and has coordinated several region wide undertakings around shared services. This includes a regional technology consortium and professional development services. Given the structure of intermediate agencies, they are by their nature, structured for regional support to schools and school districts.

(b) The applicant has provided regional support teams to schools for many years. However the applicant did not provide information to address questions of flexibility and autonomy within districts.

(c) The applicant reported that hundreds of courses will be offered to students that would not otherwise have an opportunity to participate. This includes courses in foreign languages and calculus over the years. The applicant has identified plans to use the Compass/Odyssey program that requires students to demonstrate mastery over content, and not the time spent on the topic. This will ensure that students gain deep understanding of core content areas.

(d) Through use of the Compass/Odyssey program students will demonstrate mastery of standards from a question bank. This will assist students in learning test taking skills, in addition to mastery of content.

(e). The applicant provided information on programs and resources available to all students, but did not specifically identify materials for students with disabilities and English Language Learners.

The applicant addressed some of the criteria in this section and the score falls in the low-middle point range.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	5
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) To ensure success in reaching goals related to closing achieving gaps, increasing high school graduation, and college attendance, all students would need access to content tools and other learning resources both in and out of school, regardless of income. Parents and educators would also need access to these learning tools. The applicant did not provide a plan to address this area as specified in the competition criteria.</p> <p>(b). The applicant currently operates a technology center that provides technical support to educators in individual school districts. Technical support is also provided to teachers and building leaders on programs and services. The intermediate agency also serves as a regional site for Reading Recovery program. Staff members provide direct instruction to students and professional development for teachers in local school districts. The applicant did not provide a plan for providing technical support for parents and other stakeholders.</p> <p>(c) To accomplish the goal of increased student achievement, students and parents need access to information in an open data format to support the learning process. It is ambiguous if parents have access to these electronic learning systems. The applicant did not provide a specific plan to ensure access as specified in the competition criteria.</p> <p>(d) The applicant reported that data systems are deployed, as much as technically possible, in the organization with interoperability being a primary requirement. This is to ensure that educational stakeholders have meaningful data at the right time. The advantage of the system is that data can be shared between systems with students being automatically guided to specific solutions.</p> <p>The scores for this category fall within the middle range given the current infrastructure within the organization.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	5
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(E.1) The applicant identified several activities to be executed throughout the grant period. This includes reporting requirements, school improvement planning cycle, planning team monitoring their progress, and the team monitoring the progress of activities delineated in the grant proposal.</p> <p>While the applicant identified several required activities in the implementation, the majority of the activities center on data collection. The applicant did not provide specific activities related to program implementation and impacts on student achievement outside of data collection.</p> <p>Additionally, the applicant did not provide strategies to publicly share information on the quality of the investments funded by Race to the Top-District and progress on improvements after the grant. A plan was not provided that clearly explained how technology use and effectiveness would be monitored. The activities outlined by the applicant do not include timelines for accomplishing specific aspects of the plan.</p> <p>The applicant provides descriptive information on district improvement plans, but does not provide information on individual school improvement plans, and the processes that be utilized to ensure continuous improvement.</p> <p>The score for this section falls in the low-middle range.</p>		

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	0
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>School and system improvements require implementation of a high quality plan that is frequently monitored, with adjustments made as needed to ensure success. The plan also requires ongoing communication and engagement of multiple stakeholders. The applicant did not provide a plan or strategies to engage internal and external stakeholders to continuously improve the project.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provided charts with baseline and projected scores in each category for the required performance measures. However, the proposed goals are ambitious and achievable. The applicant did not specify goals related to the number of students completing the FAFSA form.</p> <p>The applicant addressed the criteria with most responses and is awarded points in the high category.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provided narrative information on the procedures to evaluate effectiveness of investments. A timeline was provided for initiating and implementing key provisions in the project related to quality of investments. The timelines are realistic given the scope of the project. This consists of hiring staff, obtaining professional development for newly hired staff, and materials acquisition.</p> <p>However, detailed strategies related to evaluate effectiveness of project activities are not provided. This includes descriptive information on professional development and technology purchases.</p> <p>A high quality plan was not provided related to the return on investment related to funds expended. This ROI could be related to increased student achievement, cost savings, travel reductions for professional development, or other cost savings.</p> <p>Likewise, the applicant did not provide strategies to work with community partners, compensation reform, and modification of school schedules and structures.</p> <p>Responsibilities for the Data and Intervention Specialists were not clearly identified. This would provide clarity to the work and assist in salary justifications, specifically for external assistance providers.</p> <p>The applicant addressed portions of the criteria. The score in this category falls in the mid range.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a)The applicant did not provide information on funds from other sources to support project activities</p> <p>(b)The budget request is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant’s proposal.</p> <p>(c)The proposed plan for the project includes employment of data specialists and intervention specialists for 17 school systems. Data Specialists will collect data on student achievement from multiple programs in each district. Intervention Specialists will coordinate specific interventions based on student academic deficiencies. The project also invests in specific program interventions, technological programs, and professional development for teachers and building administrators, and training for parents. All program expenditures will be derived from the Race to the Top-District allocations.</p> <p>The applicant met all criteria with the budget and is awarded full points.</p>		

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	2
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provided information regarding plans for the program after the grant period. Based on the information provided it is unclear how the activities initiated during the grant will be maintained. The applicant does not make reference to any additional funding sources or support from State and local leaders or external providers.</p> <p>Several activities were provided in relation to activities after the grant period. The plan consists of fully integrating all aspects of the original structure into the work of the agency and local districts. Program interventions will be reviewed for effectiveness and possible elimination. Staff members currently serving as Data Specialists and Intervention Specialists will remain in their positions given funding consideration. If funds are not available they will migrate back into the classroom or administrative position. Technology systems would be fully operable and will continue use through interoperable platforms. The digital components will be sustained via seamless integration into the "Cloud system" hosted by the applicant. Teachers and other staff members that received training will use the research based strategies to increase student achievement for future students. Administrators will continue meeting on a regular basis as part of the Balanced Leadership Training.</p> <p>The applicants score in this category is the lower point range</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant did not apply for competitive preference points.</p>		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Throughout the application the applicant has provided a comprehensive narrative that discusses how it will adopt standards and assessments that prepare students to graduate college and career ready, build data systems that measure student growth and success and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction, increase the effectiveness of educators, and turn around low performing schools.</p>		

Total	210	110
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	0
<p>Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:</p>		

The applicant did not submit an optional budget.



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0626MI-2 for Eastern Upper Peninsula ISD

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

1) The Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District application demonstrates a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that builds on its work in the four core educational assurance areas by

a) Adopting curriculum and assessments that prepare students to succeed.

Career and college readiness standards adopted by the state of Michigan in 2010 will be used and will focus all districts on student achievement of these standards. The high level of assessment data already online is important. Elsewhere in the proposal is information indicating that the data system includes common formative assessments as well as summative assessments.

Assessment for learning is a focus of this project and will provide information needed to select the appropriate intervention in a timely manner. Another strength is the region embracing Robert Marzano's work "What Works in Schools- Translating Research into Action."

b) Using an established k-12 online regional data system containing 7 years' worth of local, regional and state level standardized assessment data that measures student growth and success and informs teachers and principals with data to improve instruction. Having a data system already in place to build on is critical to the project.

2) Though recruiting intervention and data specialists is addressed there is no mention of recruiting, retaining and rewarding effective teachers and principals.

3) There is no mention of strategies for turning around low achieving schools.

4) The plan to accelerate student achievement involves a team of intervention and data specialists at each district who will identify student weaknesses in reading and math and match the student with interventions in segments of eight weeks or less. If students are not progressing a different approach will be taken. This is a highly personalized and potentially effective plan.

5) Common and individual tasks based on student academic interests available through an array of digital content and opportunities to participate in alternative, online programming for all or part of the day/year is a feasible approach.

6) The response to this criteria is scored at the low point of the high range due to the lack of specific information on effective teachers and principals and turn around of low performing schools.

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

1) EUPISD represents seventeen small, rural districts which have been involved in a collaborative curriculum, instruction, assessment and data effort for over ten years. The applicant will build on this strong foundation of collaboration to include all students and teachers in the participating districts which should provide the high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation of the proposal required.

- a) The participating schools collectively meet the competition's eligibility requirements.
 - b) A list of schools that will participate is provided.
 - c) The 7,430 students in the districts will participate. 3,810 of these students are from low income families. This percentage, 51%, exceeds the 40% threshold required by the competition. Number of educators participating is 488.
- 2) The applicant's implementation approach score is in the high range due to the evidence that there will be high level implementation and all information required is provided and meets the competition requirements.

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

- 1) The plan described in the application does not describe how the reform proposal will be scaled up beyond the participating schools, however, this is appropriate as all schools in the districts will be participating initially.
- 2) The applicant's plan describes a high-quality proposal to improve student learning outcomes for all students. The districts have already established a data system, bolstered technology infrastructures, provided students with devices, adopted a teacher evaluation system linked to student progress, and adopted a common curriculum. Their timeline includes two phases, The hiring, placement and training of intervention teams and coordinators is project 1 and the expansion of existing intervention programs and strategies as well as an adaptive assessment system will be project 2. Balanced Leadership training for area administrators is in the second phase also. The timeline should be achievable during the four years of the grant.
- 3) Investing in and supporting educators that are providing diverse and appropriate instruction to all students in EUPISD to assure the project outcomes of all students staying on track toward high school graduation and career and college readiness is ambitious but achievable.

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

- 1) Performance on summative assessments proficiency status methodology is by mean scaled score determinations provided by the state of Michigan and should be achievable. All students are projected to be at the proficient level at least by the end of the grant based on state cut scores. Performance on summative assessments growth methodology is by mean scaled score growth score changes for each specialty population (subgroups) as determined by the state and should be achievable. The project plan to provide individual learning paths and targeted interventions checked regularly for effectiveness is an appropriate strategy to achieve these goals.
- 2) Decreasing achievement gaps methodology for determining achievement gaps is the difference in mean scaled score on state assessments between each subgroup and comparison group. The state provides this data for each LEA and ISD and it should be achievable. The attention paid to all students by intervention and data support teams, regular education teachers and special education teachers is an effective strategy to decrease achievement gaps. A focus on constant monitoring and adjustments is sound.
- 3) Graduation rates methodology for determining yearly targets is not included in the narrative or in the table. The goals post grant are provided for each school and range from 50 to 100%. This is achievable based on the intervention plan and the option of extended day or extended year offerings as needed.
- 4) College enrollment data is calculated based on criteria provided. However, subgroup data will not be available until National Student Clearinghouse data is received and subgroup population determinations are made. Because of the small sample sizes at most districts percentages vary greatly from year to year. Regional goals are applied to all districts for this reason. Goals range from 75 to 80%. The provision of an alternative, online and blended learning program with seat time waivers and online mentoring provided by teachers selected because of their proven success should help to make these goals achievable.
- 5) This response is in the mid medium range as aggregate data only is included in (A)(4)(a) and (b). Tables include an explanation of methodology for determining status as mean scaled score provided by the state but does not mention ESEA targets and there is no mention of them in the narrative. There is a likelihood that the mean scaled scores provided by the state are the ESEA targets. There is also no mention of the method used to determine annual targets for graduation rate.

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	4
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>1) There is some record of success in the past four years on Improving student outcomes and closing achievement gaps based on the previous state cut scores with Native American and economically disadvantaged students from 2007-2011 with scores in reading and math showing little or no gap in achievement with the comparison subgroup. This success is attributed to a focus on using data to improve student outcomes. When gaps for these two subgroups were identified over ten years ago strategies were identified to address the gaps and were successful. They included professional development from experts on effective communication strategies for ED students and a year of training on effective instructional strategies from the Marzano group. Work with tribal educational leaders to expand programs such as Tribal head start and supplementary programs has been successful. Reading Recovery intervention has been effectively used with both groups. Building on these strategies and adding others through the Stay on Track program should assure success in narrowing achievement gaps based on the 2010 cut scores.</p> <p>2) Insufficient data is present for the past 4 years on student learning and achievement for each LEA.</p> <p>3) No historical data is provided on improvement of high school graduation rates and college enrollment.</p> <p>4) Evidence is lacking on reforms in lowest achieving or low performing schools.</p> <p>5) Student performance data has been available to educators in a regional data system for just over seven years, The use of that data to narrow achievement gaps and target interventions has been exemplary. However there is no evidence in the narrative that students and parents have had access to personalized performance data online. The Stay on Track plan would make that access a reality. The EUP cloud is already in place allowing single sign on capability and a variety of resources for improving student outcomes.</p> <p>6) This response is in the low mid point range based on the lack of historical data on improvement of high school graduation rates, college enrollment and reforms in lowest achieving and/or low performing schools.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	0
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This response receives no points because required financial transparency information is not provided for each school and in the four categories of school-level expenditures from State and local funds.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>1)This response is scored in the high range based on the evidence below.</p> <p><i>a) Three years ago EUPISD applied for and received a seat time waiver (STW) from the state of Michigan for its constituent districts' high schools for credit flexibility with student online, blended and project based learning opportunities as either part of their school day or instead of coming to a school building each day. Numbers of students taking advantage of STW has increased each year to 2% of high school students in 2011-12. The 2012-13 STW request was granted and was expanded to include grades 6-8.</i></p> <p>The STW positions the ISD well to implement the flexible, personalized learning pathways in Stay on Track. Up to 25% of high school students may use the STW which provides for an increase in participation resulting in increased ability for students to meet achievement goals.</p> <p><i>b) Schools in the region are conscientious about monitoring compliance around pupil accounting rules for online learners. This confirms that students are logging in and making progress. Building communication requirements between teacher mentors/facilitators, students and parents into the pupil accounting rules for online learners helps keep students on track toward the goals of college and career readiness.</i></p> <p>With the implementation of Stay on Track this built in capability for compliance and communication becomes even more important as more online opportunities and interventions become available.</p> <p><i>c) EUPISD sought and was granted authority to create online assessments using the items made available from state generated secondary course end exams due to the security of the EUPISD data system. Approximately 20% of local teachers</i></p>		

each year serve on region wide curriculum review teams (CRTs) and have been developing content and grade level specific common assessments in reading and math that have been in use for over seven years. With the adoption of the Michigan Merit Curriculum in 2007 and the release of items from the state generated assessments the CRTs have created course end exams for all the Michigan Merit Curriculum required courses using the items made available.

The use of these assessments for learning are a useful tool for student progress toward high school graduation and college and career readiness.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	5
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- 1) This response is scored in the middle of the medium range because
 - a) Evidence is lacking on how students, families, teachers and principals were engaged in development of the proposal.
 - b) There is no evidence of parent and student support of the proposal.
 - c) Though teachers and bargaining representatives signed off on the proposal there is little evidence of direct engagement.
 - d) Number of letters of support is sparse.
- 2) There is evidence of stakeholder support for the proposal by district leaders.

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

Evidence is presented on identified needs and gaps addressed by the plan

- a) Economically Disadvantaged and Native American subgroups have significant gaps in reading and math with their comparison groups which opened up with the advent of new state cut scores implemented in September, 2011. Proficiency scores have been going up but the gap is increasing and the plan shows an appropriate focus on these subgroups. Five schools in the EUPISD service area were recently designated as Focus Schools under the newly developed compliance system approved as part of Michigan's ESEA waiver. A Focus School designation means there is too great a gap between the upper and lower 30% of students on state tests. With increased accountability and more rigorous targets the personalized learning environment in Stay on Track with its increased level of intervention and availability of data the staffing needs identified in the proposal are critically important.
- b) Implementation and data support staff are unavailable to support a flexible multi-tiered system of support. The Stay on Track project with the addition of these support positions will be more responsive to student needs by providing all educators with access to data reports with the most actionable data available. In addition clear reports will be made available to administrators, teachers and parents building from year to year and providing information on where each student is along the road to college and career readiness. Components of these reports are already available but they will need to be expanded to include Pre-K, early elementary and course end exam data. Keeping actionable data in order and available to staff that needs it will be the job of the implementation and data support staff. Ensuring that the Stay on Track system is working appropriately to insure student success justifies the project and the hiring of additional support staff.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	17

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- 1) The Stay on Track project is appropriately designed to engage and empower all learners, particularly high-need students
 - a) With the support of parents and educators, all students
 - i) Understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals by being clear about where students are along their pathway to career and college readiness. Stay on Track will use multiple measures of student progress to make individual reporting to the student level a reality.*

With an increasingly robust online data and learning system all EUPISD students will have the tools they need to be successful.

ii) identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college and career readiness standards and career-ready graduation requirements, understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals by having learning paths created for them in Compass/Odyssey Learning based on the most recent standardized test data available. If use of those resources do not bring improvements in ongoing classroom and Compass/Odyssey embedded assessments, students will have available individual supports in the classroom or extended day programs.

Stay on Track should build student capacity with assistance in setting goals and managing their learning to reach them.

(iii) Are able to be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest by completing courses early and having opportunities to explore areas of interest to them, via a variety of online tools, or extend their learning into the community through service learning projects.

This facet of the Stay on Track project provides a reward component that builds on individual interests to create a richer personalized learning environment and provides positive reinforcement to work toward academic goals.

(iv) The narrative does not provide information about students having access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning.

(v) Master critical academic content by accessing a system that simultaneously supports powerful classroom teaching and rich parallel intervention and acceleration programming a strong component of the Stay on Track project. However, there is no mention in the narrative of developing skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving.

(b) With the support of parents and educators, there is a strategy to ensure that each student has access to—

(i) A personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable the student to achieve his or her individual learning goals and ensure he or she can graduate on time and college- and career-ready by putting a system in place that exposes students to the content and experiences needed. Additionally, districts will develop and offer mini course opportunities for middle and high school students that will address individual strengths and weaknesses through the use of digital content and targeted classroom activities, an innovative strategy.

(ii) A variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments;

in addition to classroom environments lead by highly effective teachers and online learning paths in Compass/Odyssey Learning there will be more strategic intervention programming available in districts such as implementation of Math Recovery throughout the region.

The rich and varied options available increase the likelihood students will be successful.

(iii) High-quality content, including digital learning content (as defined in this notice) as appropriate, aligned with college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice) or college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice).

Much of the new content and programming that will be utilized in the Stay on Track project was specifically selected to engage and/or reengage students in both reading and writing, particularly at the middle and high school levels. The offerings will be delivered in multiple formats and settings and take full advantage of technology and research based strategies around reading and writing.

Literacy content is one of the effective strategies for achieving college and career readiness and on track graduation.

(iv) Ongoing and regular feedback, including, at a minimum—

(A) Frequently updated individual student data that can be used to determine progress toward mastery of college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice), or college- and career-ready graduation requirements.

Data support staff will be providing ongoing reports to classroom teachers, students and parents by exporting summary data from the various online tools students will be interacting with and importing that data into the existing data system for comparison to past data to determine growth against specific standards.

This is a strong component of Stay on Track as it will not only provide timely data on achievement levels but will provide data on effectiveness of programs to determine whether they should continue to be used.

(B) Personalized learning recommendations based on the student's current knowledge and skills, college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice) or college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice), and available content, instructional approaches, and supports.

Having timely access to meaningful data means adults, parents and educators alike will have to act on the data before them on behalf of each student. Students in preschool may need to be challenged with higher level content and activities if that is what is indicated. High school students may need to be placed in university courses in grade 9 or 10 if that is appropriate.

Stay on Track should make this type of important adjustment possible with the resources and supports that will be available

(v) Accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students (as defined in this notice) to help ensure that they are on track toward meeting college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice) or college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice).

High needs students that are struggling in early literacy or numeracy skills must be supported immediately so that they can be successful as they move forward because allowing misconceptions or skill deficits to go unattended can take students permanently off track. Teachers and intervention specialists can dig deeper on students struggling by looking a strand or standard level data and developing a learning path accordingly. This data has been available for several years, but distilling it to this level and comparing the scores to the career and college minimums as well as the goals established in this project over the next four years, will provide the focus needed to proceed. At this point students will be connected to specific digital and classroom level content that addresses their identified needs.

This is a comprehensive approach to intervention with high likelihood of success.

(c) Information is not provided to document that mechanisms are in place to provide training and support to students that will ensure that they understand how to use the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning.

The score for this criteria is in the middle of the high range due to a lack of information provided on students having access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning and mechanisms to provide training and support to students that will ensure that they understand how to use the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	12
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The Stay on Track project includes an approach to teaching and leading that helps educators (as defined in this notice) to improve instruction and increase their capacity to support student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice) or college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice) by enabling the full implementation of personalized learning and teaching for all students such that:

(a) All participating educators (as defined in this notice) engage in training, and in professional teams or communities.

The proposal states that resources and training to support the selected interventions will be provided and administrators will work closely with teachers and intervention teams to insure fidelity of implementation. The support processes and expectations for implementation will be monitored at the school improvement level as well as be integrated into the teacher, principal and superintendent evaluation process. Intervention team staff will have specific expectations as part of their evaluations and student achievement outcomes will comprise the same 50% of the overall evaluation as classroom teachers by 2013-2014. As weaknesses are observed then teachers and administrators will receive professional development and support that supports their individual and collective capacity to—

(i) Support the effective implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies that meet each student's academic needs and help ensure all students can graduate on time and college- and career-ready by establishing a time every day or two during traditional courses for working one on one or in small groups with students who are struggling the most while other students are working on their learning paths.

This is a workable strategy, however there is not a clear and comprehensive plan provided for professional learning for teachers.

(ii) Adapt content and instruction, providing opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks, in response to their academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches (e.g., discussion and collaborative work, project-based learning, videos, audio, manipulatives);

Starting over 20 years ago, the EUPISD and constituent districts set up the regional technology consortium to support the development of a robust Interactive TV (IATV) system that connected all sites across the region in order to share courses delivered via IATV. This system is still in use but has now blended the face to face IATV component with Moodle and other digital content in support of the courses. Tests and quizzes in the old model used to be faxed to receiving sites for hand delivery to students. Once completed, the tests and quizzes were faxed or mailed back to the sending teacher for scoring. This whole process now fully utilizes the Moodle learning management platform for delivery of materials, test and quizzes, and

has expanded to utilization of discussion boards and blogs to foster student to student and teacher to student. Over time, the progress of students engaged in all of the formal intervention programs, digital content delivery systems, differentiated classroom level interventions, project based learning opportunities, etc. can be analyzed to determine which models are realizing the greatest student achievement gains. These models and tools will be expanded whenever and wherever possible, and monitored in any new setting. If models are successful in one location and not in others then teams from those locations will meet to determine what is going on and whether there are factors impacting success.

Providing these opportunities and the ability to collaboratively make adjustments demonstrates an effective approach, however there is no clear plan for training teachers to implement these interventions.

(iii) Frequently measure student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice), or college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice) and use data to inform both the acceleration of student progress and the improvement of the individual and collective practice of educators.

The influx of data support staff provided by the grant will allow for frequent download of data from the various digital content programs that will be imported into Data Director. Custom reports on progress and comparisons/correlations to other data already in the system will allow all educators, parents and students to track progress against the college and career readiness standards K-12.

Classroom walkthroughs and other methods of identifying weakness will appropriately result in support from intervention teams who will provide shoulder to shoulder training/coaching as well as classroom modeling in support of teachers. It is not clear what training opportunities will be provided for all teachers by the data support staff.

(iv) Improve teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness by using feedback provided by the LEA's teacher and principal evaluation systems (as defined in this notice), including frequent feedback on individual and collective effectiveness, as well as by providing recommendations, supports, and interventions as needed for improvement.

Information provided notes that as teacher and administrator evaluations evolve and teachers whose data sets reveal weaknesses in specific content or processes like differentiation or pacing against the curriculum, then teachers and administrators will take part in professional development offerings. Support will be provided by intervention teams.

The multiple methods of monitoring teacher and administrator effectiveness to meet the requirements of the evaluation systems are a strong component of the proposal. However, detail is not provided on the professional development offerings provided.

(b) *The narrative states that provision of professional development and additional staffing to support teachers and administrators in the EUPISD service area is what this project is all about. There have been numerous efforts to support individualized instruction and learning opportunities for students throughout the region and even the most successful programs suffer from lack of appropriate staffing exclusively dedicated to both aspects of a successful program: robust intervention and acceleration opportunities coupled with close progress monitoring, data collection and analysis. The proposal provides new staff to ensure that all participating educators (as defined in this notice) have access to, and know how to use, tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice).*

The additional staff supports have been identified as the missing piece of a model for successful implementation and should ensure successful outcomes for students. The narrative states that new staff will ensure that all participating educators will know how to use tools, data and resources but doesn't provide a detailed plan for doing so.

Those resources must include—

(i) Actionable information that helps educators (as defined in this notice) identify optimal learning approaches that respond to individual student academic needs and interests.

The proposal describes an established K-12 regional data system that now houses 7 years' worth of local, regional and state level K-12 standardized assessment data and is expanding to include more progress monitoring and skills based data in both literacy and math.

This foundation and the proposed expansion of learning tools with progress monitoring data available is important. However, the timeline and detail for training is not included.

(ii) High-quality learning resources (e.g., instructional content and assessments), including digital resources, as appropriate, that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice) or college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice).

At present, when students, K-12, log into the EUP cloud, they see only the educational content and programs that are appropriate for their grade level or grade span. This can be further tailored to individuals by having each student's login take them to the appropriate tools and resources now in place as well as additional or alternate digital content that has been

selected to best address their learning needs. Approximately 20% of local teachers from around the EUPISD serve on region-wide Curriculum Review Teams (CRTs) in any given year. These teams have developed content and grade level specific common assessments in reading and math that have been in use in the region for just over 7 years. The number and scope of common assessments now available have grown.

The fact that EUPISD has been creating high quality assessments and administering them online for 7 years and plans to continue updating and adding to content and assessments is a strong component of their plan. Having the technology in place to have interoperability built into the system so that students can access appropriate content automatically is important.

(iii) Processes and tools to match student needs (see Selection Criterion (C)(2)(b)(i)) with specific resources and approaches (see Selection Criterion (C)(2)(b)(ii)) to provide continuously improving feedback about the effectiveness of the resources in meeting student needs.

The proposal notes that ISD level coordinators for district data and intervention staff will be responsible for generating monthly reports for area administrators and content level curriculum review teams outlining student achievement data summaries as well as intervention program specific breakdowns. Which interventions are having the highest impact? Can they be expanded? How quickly? How can staff be redistributed across region to support the most at risk students?

This monitoring process seems to be a feasible way to meet the criteria.

(c) In EUPISD all participating school leaders and school leadership teams (as defined in this notice) have training, policies, tools, data, and resources that enable them to structure an effective learning environment that meets individual student academic needs and accelerates student progress through common and individual tasks toward meeting college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice) or college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice). The training, policies, tools, data, and resources must include:

(i) Information, from such sources as the district's teacher evaluation system (as defined in this notice), that helps school leaders and school leadership teams (as defined in this notice) assess, and take steps to improve, individual and collective educator effectiveness and school culture and climate, for the purpose of continuous school improvement.

The district notes that the requirement to have teacher and administrator evaluation systems in place by 2013-2014 represented another opportunity for school districts in the EUP to collaborate but also represented a chance to build on an emerging instructional observation project that had been underway in the region for over 2 years. EUP Elementary Principals' Association (EUPEPA) members were instrumental in bringing McREL's Power Walkthrough classroom observation system to the region in the Fall of 2010. These efforts were born out of the need for principals to progress monitor the implementation of specific research based instructional strategies that had been outlined in school improvement plans as strategies or activities in support of various goals. There were many references to strategies and/or activities like "enhance the use of non-linguistic representations to improve student outcomes in reading and/or math" or "increase comparing and contrasting strategies and activities in the classroom to improve student outcomes in reading and/or math" popping up in school improvement plans. While it was a positive sign that language referring to research based instructional strategies was being referenced in school improvement plans, it was very difficult, or downright impossible, to progress monitor these efforts without the collection of classroom observational data that could be quantified in some way. The EUPEPA group previewed several tools that were available and ended up recommending the McREL product due to the adaptability of the product and the fact that it could be installed on a wide variety of tools (smart phones, iPads, iPods, laptops, etc.). The reporting component was also robust and would be valuable in establishing baseline data around research based instructional strategies observed in classrooms.

The McREL walkthroughs coupled with data collection efforts around student progress deficits where teacher training interventions can be triggered provide a feasible evaluation process for improving educator effectiveness. A description of these teacher training interventions is not provided.

(ii) Training, systems, and practices to continuously improve school progress toward the goals of increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps (as defined in this notice).

The district notes that at the leadership level, the project will support administrators as they migrate from managers of schools to instructional leaders. The intervention/data teams will be furnishing all administrators with frequent reports on student and program progress in their buildings or districts. They will be bringing that information to existing administrative meetings for region wide discussions on findings. The information on student progress will be integrated into that training as a component of the program that relies on the sharing of strategies and processes that are either working or are becoming a barrier to student learning. Strategies, programs and processes that are working must be enhanced and expanded, those that are not must be tweaked or abandoned.

It is not clear how administrators will be trained to act effectively on the reports provided. The practice of discussing data at leadership meetings for administrators to enhance their leadership role in improving student outcomes is valuable.

(d) Evidence is not presented of a plan to increase highly effective teachers and principals in hard-to-staff schools, subject

areas and specialty areas.

Scoring of this criteria is in the midrange due to a lack specificity regarding professional learning to be provided, particularly for teachers. Training goals, timelines and activities are missing. Additionally a plan for increasing highly effective teachers and principals in hard-to-staff schools, subject areas and specialty areas is missing.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

EUPISD has practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning by

(a) Organizing the LEA central office, or the consortium governance structure (as defined in this notice), to provide support and services to all participating schools (as defined in this notice).

The district states that the Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District (EUPISD) represents seventeen small, rural districts on the easternmost end of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. Districts range in size from 4 to 2500 students, are spread over 4000 square miles and include 3 small schools located on islands in Lake Huron that can only be accessed by airplane or ferry. The demographics of the area are unique in that approximately 35% of the students are Native American and 51% of students are considered economically disadvantaged. The EUPISD region services just over 20% of the Native American student population statewide. The total number of students served is 7430. The EUPISD and all constituent districts have been involved in a collaborative curriculum, instruction, assessment and data effort for over 10 years.

Evidence provided above detailing collaboration efforts describes a functional and effective organization.

(b) No evidence is presented on school leadership teams in participating schools (as defined in this notice) having sufficient flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators, and school-level budgets.

(c) Giving students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic.

Three years ago, the EUPISD sought and received a seat time waiver (STW) from the State of Michigan on behalf of its’ constituent districts. The STW allows students to take advantage of a wide variety of online, blended and project based learning opportunities. The waiver has been available to all high school students in the region for 3 full years and the numbers of students taking advantage of these offerings has steadily increased. In 2011-2012, approximately 2% of high school students were taking advantage of a STW option. The waiver will allow for up to 25% of high school students to participate in a STW option. The 2012-2013 STW request, granted in September 2012, has been expanded to include students in grades 6 through 8. This expansion honors the fact that all students have been exposed to many online learning opportunities from pre-K through grade 6, usually in computer labs, differentiated learning centers, extended day learning opportunities, etc. and have found them to be valuable. Middle school students now have the opportunity to take full advantage of online learning opportunities as either part of their traditional ‘school day’ or instead of coming to school buildings each day.

Having flexibility provided by the STW for awarding credit is important to students as they access alternative learning paths.

(d) Giving students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways.

EUPISD systems tie together with the EUPSchoolsID which serves not only as a primary network login but provides the core identity of staff and students to other systems. By ensuring interoperable systems with a common identification tying them together, staff can use the results of an assessment in one system to automatically drive a learning path in another system. What if a student could be assessed against a specific standard and then be automatically guided to a learning resource in areas that further understanding is required? That is in place within current systems like Compass/Odyssey but this project will expand that opportunity and have all systems “meet the student” at their login in the EUPCloud and provide extremely targeted learning paths for each. Data collected from each learning opportunity will then be imported into Data Director, in summary form, to progress monitor.

The robust technology in use in EUPISD should allow the building of an interoperable system that not only provides multiple

opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of standards but ultimately tie together the results to make progress easily accessible.

(e) There is no evidence of adaptability of resources and practices for students with disabilities and English language learners.

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

10

8

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The EUPISD LEA and school infrastructure supports personalized learning by—

a) Ensuring that all participating students (as defined in this notice), parents, educators (as defined in this notice), and other stakeholders (as appropriate and relevant to student learning), regardless of income, have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of the applicant’s proposal.

Access to an array of digital content will be a cornerstone of the project but the content will be specific to each student’s needs, be engaging and accessible. EUPISD will build on a grade 7-12 one-to-one student to laptop initiative, which provides netbooks for students on a 24hr/day, 365 days/year model. In addition, they will build on their “EUP Cloud” that houses educational content, file storage, student email, etc. The EUPISD technology consortium provides technical systems and services to all educational stakeholders in the region. Because of this collaboration, they are able to continue to leverage emerging educational data systems to benefit the educational needs of their students. Without a shared, interoperable network, individualized instruction across 4000 square miles would be virtually impossible because it would be necessary to duplicate the same system at each individual school district. For struggling students without access to a broadband connection in the home, districts will be able to offer Verizon wireless cards that can be checked out for student use. Trainings on use of the portable wireless access points will be provided as necessary. An example of regional collaboration would be the Sparking Broadband Use in the Eastern Upper Peninsula of Michigan, a Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) sustainability project. This National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA) grant to EUPISD has expanded broadband access to families across all three rural counties represented by the ISD; Chippewa, Luce and Mackinac. This project has enhanced the expansion of broadband availability across this very rural area and, in so doing, has greatly expanded opportunities for pre-K-12 students, and area adults, to participate more fully in a variety of educational offerings. The access to digital content that will be enhanced in this Race to the Top - District proposal is made more possible by the BTOP project.

The historical collaboration in these rural areas to make sure technology access is available and effective has been managed well and has been built thoughtfully to make sure it will meet the needs of stakeholders throughout the region.

(b) Ensuring that students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders (as appropriate and relevant to student learning) have appropriate levels of technical support, which may be provided through a range of strategies (e.g., peer support, online support, or local support).

The overarching technology support and physical technology network that has been established in the EUPISD rivals almost all others in the state. It absolutely rivals any other in rural areas and is a strong component of the plan. For the first year of this project, schools in the region can take advantage of BTOP program staff to assist with in home technology support.

This is a sound practice for getting families started. However, here is no mention in the proposal of home support beyond the first year.

c) No information is provided on using information technology systems that allow parents and students to export their information in an open data format (as defined in this notice) and to use the data in other electronic learning systems (e.g., electronic tutors, tools that make recommendations for additional learning supports, or software that securely stores personal records).

(d) Ensuring that LEAs and schools use interoperable data systems (as defined in this notice) (e.g., systems that include human resources data, student information data, budget data, and instructional improvement system data).

As much as technically possible, data systems are deployed in the EUPISD with interoperability being a primary requirement. In order to effectively present educational stakeholders with meaningful data at the right time, it is imperative that all systems be interoperable. The smarter data systems are in regards to the “identity” of students, the more technology can be leveraged to provide just in time, data-driven learning paths. An interoperable infrastructure for all school districts within the EUPISD has been able to be created because of the shared network system. This network is the base for all collaborative technology services and is the result of the Eastern Upper Peninsula Technology Consortium formed in the early 90s.

The proposal mentions interoperability several times but never mentions human resources or budget data.

The interoperability capability increases the likelihood of the effectiveness of the Stay on Track project.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	10
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A strategy for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the term of the grant. The strategy must address how the applicant will monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of its investments funded by Race to the Top – District, such as investments in professional development, technology, and staff;</p> <p>1) <i>According to the proposal on an interim level, the 35 + member Stay on Track team will be monitoring their own progress based on participation of students in various intervention activities, daily logins in the various learning tools that will be available to students, interim student assessment data, etc.</i></p> <p>There are no activities mentioned on the impact on student achievement.</p> <p>2) <i>The proposal state that there will be an absolute requirement that the data collected and interventions expanded or established be outlined in each building and district school improvement plan as that layer of progress monitoring will help systematize and sustain these efforts beyond the grant term.</i></p> <p>Detail is not provided on the components of the school and district improvement plans and how progress will be monitored and communicated through those plans.</p> <p>3) There is no mention of monitoring of investments in professional development and technology.</p> <p>4) Information is missing on how the district will publicly share continuous improvement information,</p> <p>Scoring on this criteria is in the midrange due to lack of detail on continuous improvement strategies, missing information and public sharing of information.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders;</p> <p>1) Project intervention specialists monitor student progress remotely, each day, for a set of students assigned to them from both the districts they are physically located in as well as from other districts in the region (as appropriate). Communication with students and parents will be critical and will be conducted via the tools embedded in the software, emails or at face to face sessions</p> <p>2) In addition to the district level administrative trainings, ISD staff hired to coordinate the intervention specialist, data support, early childhood and leadership initiatives will work together to keep coordination and communication among of all aspects of the project tight.</p> <p>Some communication and engagement strategies are included. However, detail is not provided on how the coordination and communication among all aspects of the project will be kept tight.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Ambitious yet achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup, with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures. For each applicant-proposed measure, the applicant must describe—</p> <p>(a) Its rationale for selecting that measure;</p> <p>(b) How the measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant’s implementation success or areas of concern; and</p>		

(c) How it will review and improve the measure over time if it is insufficient to gauge implementation progress.

The applicant must have a total of approximately 12 to 14 performance measures.

1) The performance measures and annual targets will be the ultimate measure of how the staffing and programs enhanced or put into place under the Stay on Track project will be measured. The student achievement targets were not pulled out of thin air, they are based on multiple years of prior data and more internal, district to district ranges already present in the region. The table provided depicts the proficiency ranges for districts in the EUPISD service area based on 2011- 2012 MEAP data. The newly adopted state cut scores have caused new gaps to be formed; not just between specialty populations of students and their comparison groups but from school to school. Part of the cause for the wide gaps is simply the small number of students represented at each grade level in some schools. This often causes big data swings from year to year in small schools. This does, however, represent the largest disparity ever noted in schools around the EUP, at least over the last 7 years since sound data has been available. This information was factored into the establishment of project performance measures and targets. There are already districts meeting some of the 2013-2014 measures; we know, from our own internal data that these are attainable goals. There is, however, room for growth at each district in order to attain the SY 2015-2016 and post grant targets.

One aspect of this project that will accelerate reaching the targets for currently lower achieving schools is the replication of programs and strategies that are working at higher performing schools in the region and the cross training and sharing of staff to provide services.

Rationale for selection of some performance measures are included as noted in 2) and 3) below.

2) The widely accepted ACT benchmark data for middle and high school students will be folded in beginning in grade 8 with Explore data now added to the regional data system and directly comparable to the grade 7/8 MEAP cut scores as well as PLAN data in grade 10 comparable to now available course end exams and ACT / MME in grade 11. With the newly adopted state cut scores correlated to ACT career and college readiness standards in grade 11, there is finally a seamless tracking goal available from grades 2-11 and this will be the universal target for grades 2-11 (since grade 3 Fall assessment data measures understanding of grade 2 standards).

3) The Pre-K through grade 1 students will be monitored against both the grade 3 state level assessments as well as now in place Pre-K literacy and numeracy standard tracking as well as skills based data represented in DRA, DIBELS &/or AIMSWEB. We will continue to utilize the newly created, common core aligned grade 1 assessments in reading and math as well. We will happily fold in the recently announced state level Kindergarten Entry Assessment data when it becomes available for pilot sites in Fall 2013 and all schools in Michigan in Fall 2014. We will go further and correlate that data with existing GSRP and local assessments to reinforce that seamless transition to the use of any new assessments and their related data sets. Pre-K performance measures will extend beyond those described in Table E3. Longitudinal feedback will be provided to Pre-K service providers beginning with the grade 1 common assessments, the emerging Kindergarten Readiness Assessment proposed by the State of Michigan and the first set of standardized state assessments in grade 3. We have begun this data feedback process and in 2011-2012 provided Great Start Readiness Program staff with data on their 2007-2008 cohort of students, from all 13 of their preschool sites combined, with regard to their academic achievement in grade 3, in both reading and math, compared to all students in the region.

4) Though a number of performance measures with targets are provided in the appropriate table format, they are mainly for the pre-K through 8 population. There is no explanation of why there are missing tables. Missing are:

- a) 4-8 Applicant must propose at least one grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan.
- b) 9-12 The number and percentage of participating students who complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form; This table is included but it has no targets and no explanation of how they will be determined
- c) 9-12 The number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup, who are on track to college- and career readiness based on the applicant's on-track indicator (as defined in this notice);
- d) 9-12 Applicant must propose at least one measure of career-readiness in order to assess the number and percentage of participating students who are or are on track to being career-ready;
- e) 9-12 Applicant must propose at least one grade-appropriate academic leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan; and
- f) 9-12 Applicant must propose at least one grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan.

5) Performance measures for effective and highly effective teachers and principals is missing data on teachers pending release by the state. Annual targets are not provided for teachers or principals though baseline numbers are included for principals.

6) Performance measures that are provided are appropriately targeted to monitor progress dictated by the goal of the project

which addresses college and career readiness standards for Economically Disadvantaged and Native American subgroups in math and reading. The targets provided are ambitious but should be achievable with carefully monitored interventions as described in the proposal.

7) No information is provided on how the district will review and improve measures over time if it is not sufficient to gauge implementation progress.

8) Scoring is in the low range due to the lack of some required performance measure data identified above and insufficient and incomplete information to meet the criteria.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Plans to evaluate the effectiveness of Race to the Top – District funded activities, such as professional development and activities that employ technology, and to more productively use time, staff, money, or other resources in order to improve results, through such strategies as improved use of technology, working with community partners, compensation reform, and modification of school schedules and structures (e.g., service delivery, school leadership teams (as defined in this notice), and decision-making structures).

The EUPISD will contract with Lake Superior State University’s Center for Social Research for project evaluation services. The EUPISD has worked with the LSSU-CSR on many state and federal programs. The evaluation measures will be closely monitored annually with interim data submissions at 6 month junctures. Annual evaluation reports will be provided to USDOE as well as all stakeholders.

The EUPISD has historically realized cost savings by operating regionally a centralized data center, and purchasing online courses together. However there is no explanation in the narrative of how to increase productivity of using time, staff, money and other resources to improve results during the Race to the Top project. Project evaluation measures are not described in detail in the narrative. It is not clear whether the evaluation extends to non-academic measures. There is no information provided on the implementation of compensation reform.

Scoring is in the low midrange due to a lack of specificity in evaluation information 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 applicant’s budget, including the budget narrative and tables—

(a) Identifies all funds that will support the project (e.g., Race to the Top – District grant; external foundation support; LEA, State, and other Federal funds); and

(b) Is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant’s proposal; and

(c) Clearly provides a thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities, including--

(i) A description of all of the funds (e.g., Race to the Top – District grant; external foundation support; LEA, State, and other Federal funds) that the applicant will use to support the implementation of the proposal, including total revenue from these sources;

Table 3-1: Project-Level Budget Summary Table line 12 Funds from other sources used to support this project is blank

indicating that EUPISD will not use any other funds for implementation of this project.

(ii) Identification of the funds that will be used for one-time investments versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs that will be incurred during and after the grant period, as described in the proposed budget and budget narrative, with a focus on strategies that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments

According to the narrative the budget delineates the primary investment in personnel this project represents. Intervention teams will be placed in each district(except Bois Blanc- they have 4 students) and the teams will work together, across the region (including Bois Blanc), to systematize the individualization of instruction for all students. ISD level staff will coordinate all efforts regionally as designated by coordination role; intervention, data, leadership, early childhood and overall project direction. The districts will be provided with funds to hire an intervention specialist and data support person for the four year grant term. Districts will be encouraged to hire their most qualified existing staff to fill these roles for the grant period and have express contract language for re-entry to classroom teaching at the end of the project. As part of the contract with each district, Stay on Track staff will have to attend all requisite trainings outlined in the grant as well as participate in monthly meetings coordinated by ISD level staff. Additionally, all classroom teachers will be required to participate in trainings associated with the intervention programming being implemented as part of the project as appropriate to their grade level and content area. Administrators that have not participated in McREL's Balanced Leadership Training in the past will participate in the 18 month program. All training expenses will be paid; trainers and materials, travel to centralized training site will be covered by district. Indirect funds will be charged as outlined. There will be three specific intervention "systems" and related content implemented as part of the project. The programs generally have three components: training, materials and software or hosted access to digital content.

The budget goals identified in the narrative above are appropriate for the project and aligned with the vision of building administrative leadership capacity and providing the support personnel necessary to implement the intervention system currently in place and due to be expanded during the grant period.

The budget amount requested \$14,388,747 falls within the award range for 5,001-10,000 students. 7,430 students will be participating in the grant.

The tables and accompanying narrative for the proposed budget indicate most expenditures requested are for project management and support personnel including supplies such as cell phones and laptop computers. This is consistent with the major goal of the project which is to provide intervention and data support at the district level. Additional funds are requested for interventions to be enhanced by the project including training and travel for staff implementing special interventions such as Math Recovery and supply costs for classroom sets of books, some with digital licenses in addition to the texts. The budget narrative and tables clearly indicate which expenses are one-time costs and which are ongoing. This is consistent with the goal of the project around enhancing interventions available for student success .

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

10

5

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. The plan should include support from State and local government leaders and financial support. Such a plan may include a budget for the three years after the term of the grant that includes budget assumptions, potential sources, and uses of funds.

The narrative states that this project represents an opportunity to build capacity throughout the EUP of Michigan and systematize a robust network of highly trained educators and a multi- tiered system of support for all students. The educators hired and trained through the Stay on Track project will be filling the void that currently exists around the collection and analysis of data, in a timely manner, so students can be quickly identified for remediation or acceleration. As importantly, educators, parents and students need access to highly diversified and tailored programming that supports all students where they are in their unique learning paths. There is no doubt that the project will have moved all districts in the region towards this highly supportive model of teaching and learning for all students and educators within the four year grant term. What is as important is the plan to sustain the model after the funding for the project is gone. The continuation of the system beyond the grant is predicated on the following:

- 1. Intervention team staff will migrate back into classroom teaching or administrative positions when the project is completed. The institutional knowledge will be maintained, to some degree, within each building. With teams of two per typical district, absorbing this number of educators will be accomplished through normal attrition alone. Similarly, ISD level program staff will be encouraged to stay within the EUPISD service area but consider classroom or administrative positions as appropriate to their own professional goals and available options. It should be noted that the region has*

seen a large increase in hiring over the past 3 years due largely to retirements; 50+ in 2010-2011 and approximately 30 in 2011-2012.

2. Programs put in place through the project will continue if proven effective in improving student outcomes based on career and college readiness standards. The plan is to replace existing programs that are not as effective with programs and processes, supported by a strengthened infrastructure of trained staff and integrated intervention programs that have been demonstrated to be effective with all students or specialty populations that have struggled in more traditional settings.
3. The preservation of the intervention programs themselves, particularly those with digital content components, will be sustained via their seamless integration into the EUPCloud. The elimination of all the passwords and “free standing” systems that are either currently located on servers or computers around the region will reduce individual license fees, time spent duplicating rosters in multiple systems, etc.. Similarly, valuable summary data from a wide variety of intervention and acceleration programming that students will have access to will be either automatically uploaded into Data Director or imports of key data elements will be exported and brought into the system at regular intervals. The integration of all programs and processes put in place through this project with the school improvement planning process will also help ensure sustainability of all components demonstrated to be effective.
4. With reporting and funding now integrally linked to the school improvement planning process, district teams will need to be more strategic in how funds for personnel, programs and supporting materials are spent. Since all programs and processes selected in the Stay on Track project were chosen based on identified needs and best practices, funds that are currently being spent on potentially less effective programming or programming that is less strategic for specialty populations of students, will be redirected to the systems put in place. Personnel currently in place to support less effective or non-research based programming will participate in the professional development offerings outlined in this project. As such, their current roles in the alignment and delivery of students with effective programming will shift and support the sustenance of this project.
5. Administrators that are involved in the project will coordinate efforts to sustain all aspects of the project in their respective districts. Through participation in the Balanced Leadership Training component, ongoing superintendent and principal meetings (where reports will be provided monthly) and the compliance efforts associated with school improvement, state and federal reporting and teacher / administrator evaluations, administrators will continue and even grow the efforts initiated here because they represent some of the only ways rural schools will be able to meet the needs of their students.

Though there is a plan to repurpose funds and some staff to support the systems put in place during the project, the plan for sustainability of support is weak as it does not seek funding for continuation of the cadre of intervention and data support positions provided in the grant but rather proposes to eliminate these positions and move staff back to administrative or teacher positions. The proposal for this grant states, "What we need are highly trained educators, on site in each of our buildings, to really analyze the data we have been collecting and connect each student to the most appropriate learning opportunities available and then carefully monitor their progress, making adjustments as necessary. It is the missing tier of support for both students and educators in our rural communities." Without this dedicated tier of support beyond the end of the grant it appears that progress made is unlikely to be sustainable.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

EUPISD meets Absolute Priority 1.

EUPISD proposes to build on existing data systems and interventions to provide each student, through single sign-on, access to learning pathways and interventions aligned with assessment data information on progress toward standards and requirements as defined in this priority. Information will be provided to administrators, teachers and parents for additional support to accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student.

This proposal focuses on economically disadvantaged and Native American subgroups, as well as all students in the EUPISD, with strategies to accelerate their progress toward standards and requirements as their achievement gaps have widened as regards comparison groups with the advent of more rigorous standards for performance levels and gains on state assessments. Performance measures are in place to increase student access to administrators and teachers who are effective or highly effective. Supports are designed to address deficiencies identified in administrator and teacher evaluations and classroom walkthroughs. Additional opportunities are provided through online and community resources to allow students who complete course requirements to move into and work in environments in their areas of interest to deepen their knowledge.

Total	210	133
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Race to the Top - District Technical Review Form

Application #0626MI-3 for Eastern Upper Peninsula ISD

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 narrative describes how the Stay on Track project extends current data systems and instructional programs into providing the resources which will be able to use the data to individualize instruction for each student in the EUPISD. In addition, the narrative included convincing information on the need for expansion of school based health clinics to ensure that students are in class.</p> <p>The narrative provided insufficient information on how the project relates to efforts in turning around low achieving schools, and retention/recruiting effective teachers/principals.</p> <p>Overall, the narrative their vision as it relates to the project goals, but the presentation did not sufficiently link to EUPISD's work in the four core assurance areas, particularly turning around low achieving schools, and retention/recruiting effective teachers/principals. Therefore, score in the middle range was given.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application provided a clear and comprehensive description of how each of the LEAs have worked together over the past 10 years in collaborative curriculum, assessment and data efforts, and how this project builds upon the foundation of collaboration among all of the districts.</p> <p>The application provides complete information from each school on grade levels involved in the project, number of participating students, number from low-income families, number of high need students, and number of participating educators.</p> <p>The successful prior collaborative work between consortium districts should provide a strong foundation for a successful project if funded. Therefore a score in the upper range is given.</p>		

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The narrative notes that all schools and students in the participating LEAs will be involved in the project.</p> <p>The level of participation (100%) indicates very strong buy in and support from each of the participating LEAs, which should translate into a positive project implementation.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application provides a table of baseline and target scores for student achievement scaled scores in reading and math, by grade, and for economically disadvantaged and native American students.</p> <p>The achievement targets for each grade level are above the proficient performance level, and increase each project year. Thus, the targets are ambitious from year to year. In the final year and post-grant, the targets are the same (or nearly so) for all students, including economically disadvantaged and Native American, which demonstrate high expectations, high achievement, and closing the achievement gap.</p> <p>The application includes a table describing the reduction in achievement gaps, with a reasonable yearly rate each project year. Similarly, a table adequately provides targets in increasing graduation rates and college enrollment at each project school.</p> <p>The application does not provide information on whether the yearly student achievement goal targets for reading and mathematics meet or exceed State ESEA targets.</p> <p>Because it is not possible to determine if the reading and math targets are at a sufficiently high level to at least meet the ESEA targets, a score in the middle range is given.</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	4
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application narrative describes a number of EUPISD efforts in the areas of technology, assessment, data systems, and teacher/administrator evaluation. The narrative provides convincing support for a high level of collaboration between the LEAs in the EUPISD.</p> <p>This level of collaboration should be beneficial to support implementation and communication between participating districts.</p> <p>The narrative provided does not provide evidence in any of the specified areas how each individual LEA in the consortium has performed over the past four years.</p> <p>The narrative does not provide evidence that performance data is available to parents, nor how the enhancements envisioned in the EUPISD data system will be available to parents.</p> <p>The narrative does not provide documentation of improved student learning outcomes over the past four years for individual LEAs.</p> <p>The narrative does not provide evidence of reforms in its lowest achieving schools.</p> <p>Overall, the narrative does not address several of the selection criteria, particularly those requiring a demonstrated record of success. Therefore, a score in the lower portion of the middle range is given.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

The narrative provides documentation that the State of Michigan website makes available a variety of district-level budget information on a yearly basis.

The narrative does not provide evidence that school-level expenditures is available on the State website.

The narrative does not provide evidence that personnel salaries for teachers only is available on the State website, and at the school level.

The narrative does not include any statements that indicate EUPISD would supplement State data to include school-level expenditures.

Overall, the narrative does not provide sufficient information on several selection criteria; therefore a score in the low portion of the middle range is given.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	7
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The narrative provides sufficient evidence that the State of Michigan is amenable to allowing districts flexibility to pursue strategies for student success (e.g., the seat time waiver for middle and high school students).

The narrative is often too general, and does not provide specifics on the number and percent of teachers using tools or applications, or the specific amount of student achievement increase. Though access to technology is available, the narrative does not provide specifics on how often it is used by students and teachers by provided data.

Overall, the narrative does not provide sufficient detail on the extent of LEA implementation and use of prior initiatives. Therefore, a rating in the upper part of the middle range is given.

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

The narrative provides only a general description of efforts on engaging stakeholders in the development of the proposal. The narrative does not indicate the level of involvement of students or parents/families, though it does provide evidence that specific efforts were made to engage tribal leaders.

The narrative does not provide information on the number of people attending meetings or involved in the webinar, nor how it was determined that agreement was reached on the usefulness of the project by stakeholders. The narrative does not provide information on how stakeholders were notified about opportunities for learning about and participating in the project/grant development.

Statements of support are included in the application from city, county, and tribal officials; however, there is little information provided on the process to engage these individuals in meaningful dialogue about the proposal.

The application includes pages of signatures from teachers indicating participation at some level, but does not indicate support of the proposal.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	2
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The narrative provides a very general description of needs and gaps that the project will address. The narrative does not provide specific data on how many educators are using data and in what ways, and how the project would address needs for those teachers and other educators.

Overall, the narrative is too general and does not provide sufficient detail to receive a high range score; thus, a middle range score is given.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The narrative provides only a basic level description of components of the project and system.

The narrative does not provide sufficient detail about goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, or responsible parties for the plan. For example, the narrative is not clear in defining what is the responsibility of the teacher in creating and monitoring individual student learning plans, and what is the responsibility of the intervention teams at each district.

The narrative does not provide a clear description of the role parents will play, or how parents will be engaged in the process and trained on understanding the data reports.

The narrative does not provide sufficient detail (timelines, activities) on how ongoing reports will be developed, data aggregation processes, and training on data use. This lack of detail makes it appear that data collection, reporting, and data use are simple to accomplish given additional resources.

The narrative does not provide sufficient detail about the engagement of students in this process, and how the project will facilitate mastering academic content and enable students to achieve individual learning goals.

The narrative does not provide a description of how this project addresses the specific accommodations and needs of high-need students.

Overall, the narrative does not address in sufficient detail and in a clear manner several of the selection criteria. Therefore, a middle range score is given.

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

It is not clear from the narrative whether educators will engage in professional teams or communities as a part of the project.

The principle component of the project is the use of data by teachers from a variety of reports, with teachers individualizing instruction through the use of digital content.

The narrative does not include a defined plan with goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties; thus, it is difficult to ascertain when implementation of project tasks would occur, and when training would occur for teachers on the various technologies.

It is not clear from the presentation who is specifically analyzing weaknesses in instruction, content or processes—the individual teacher or intervention/data teams members.

The narrative indicates that data from teacher and administrative evaluation systems will be analyzed to improve practice.

The narrative does not include sufficient detail about the training teachers would receive on the various technologies and student assessments to determine if teachers would be knowledgeable and skillful to use the data/reports generated from these assessments to improve instruction and student achievement for individual students.

Overall, the narrative does not include enough support and detailed information about several selection criteria, including the use of professional learning communities. In addition, the narrative does not include a sufficiently clear description of a plan around project tasks and professional development activities, which are key to successful implementation and use. Therefore, a score in the middle range is given.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	3

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The narrative for this section does generally not address D1. However, other portions of the application suggest that districts in EUPISD (through the State) have an opportunity to progress not on seat time, but content mastery.

The narrative is not insufficient to determine if schools have flexibility over school schedules, calendars, staffing models, and school budgets.

It is not clear from the narrative if the learning resources and instructional practices included in the project are adaptable and accessible to students with disabilities and English learners.

Overall, the application does not include sufficient information addressing these selection criteria to support a rating above the low range.

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

10

6

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The narrative provides evidence that EUPISD has provided technology and sufficient support for its use throughout the region for over 20 years, including an interactive tv system.

.The narrative provides evidence that EUPISD has the capacity and expertise to aggregate disparate pieces of data and share the data with different systems. However, it is not clear if students and parents are allowed to export their own information.

The narrative indicates that EUPISD is able to create an interoperable infrastructure.

Overall, the narrative provides information to support a high level of technology support and infrastructure; however, it is clear what level of access parents and students have to their data, and their ability to use their information as they need. Therefore, a score in the middle range is given.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	7

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The narrative provides some basic information about the project's process for continuous improvement, with a focus on incorporation of the project into school and district improvement plans.

However, there is insufficient detail on how this monitoring will be accomplished in terms of timelines, activities, responsible parties.

The narrative does not describe the requirements of the school/district improvement plans, so it is not possible to determine if the improvement plan components include the timely and regular feedback on progress, and how EUPISD will monitor, measure, and publicly share information.

Overall, the application does not provide sufficient detail to determine to quality of its continuous improvement plan. Therefore a rating in the middle range is given.

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

5

1

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

It is not clear from the narrative how ongoing communication and engagement with stakeholders will be accomplished. The narrative does not include a plan for updating the public in general or constituent groups about the project status.

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

5

2

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The narrative notes that Pre-K teachers will soon have access to performance information on students they taught in preschool. While this may provide useful information if relevant contextual information is also provided (which is not noted in the narrative), the narrative did not address FERPA issues of this process which is relevant, given that Pre-K teachers have no current interaction with these former students now in other grades.

The narrative and tables provide basic information (i.e., name of measure and grade level for administration) for performance measures, but limited rationale for their selection and inclusion as a performance measure.

The targets over time for the percentage of students whose teacher/principal of record are highly effective is reasonable.

It is not clear from the narrative or tables why the percentage of students whose teacher/principal of record is effective is

lower with each succeeding year, when the targets should increase over time.

The targets for reading and math for grades 3-8 are reasonable, close the achievement gap, and are aligned with college and post-grad success.

The table for participating students who complete/submit the FAFSA is not complete, with no targets provided.

The application does not include at least one measure of grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator for grades 3-8 or 9-12.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The narrative provides a timeline and details on interventions that will be funded and implemented as a part of the project. However, there is insufficient detail and information about a plan for determining the effectiveness of these grant activities.

The narrative does not describe how the effectiveness of training teachers on the numerous assessment and data collection technologies will be determined.

The narrative does not address the process of hiring effective teachers to replace those hired to work directly in grant funded positions, which is critical for the project to achieve it student achievement targets.

It is not clear from the narrative the current level of knowledge, proficiency, and use for various technologies and assessment software and programs, which is a key in determining the amount and focus of training activities which are grant funded.

The narrative notes that interventions will be reviewed and evaluated for their impact, but there is insufficient detail on the process, and how EUPISD will determine the contribution of a specific intervention out of the many used on student achievement.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The budget narrative and tables adequately describe the expenditures, which are reasonable to implement the project activities.

The budget narrative provides a reasoned argument for the personnel positions which are a part of the grant funding. The supplies and contractual expenditures are directly linked to the project purpose and goals, and are reasonable and adequate for the project.

The narrative adequately describes one-time expenditures, which include laptops, books, and software programs, which are reasonable and needed for the project implementation.

The budget narrative does not sufficiently address strategies that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the project components, particularly the funds necessary to sustain school level intervention and data coach positions.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The budget narrative provides an adequate explanation of how the technology and assessment programs put in place as a part of the grant will be sustained after the term of the grant.

The narrative does not address how the key project component of staff in each school in the role of data coach or intervention coach will be sustained after the term of the grant. As this is noted as the key issue not addressed by current systems, and thus the reason for the grant, the sustaining of data coach and intervention coach positions in each school is critical for sustainability of the project goals and continued student improvement.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: The narrative did not include information on a partnership with public or private organizations to augment social, emotional or behavioral needs of participating students.		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: The application adequately addresses the processes, activities, strategies, and tools EUPISD would use to create personalized learning environments. The presentation provides sufficient information to conclude that the tools and strategies are aligned with college/career requirements, would enhance student achievement, and would decrease achievement gaps across student groups. The narrative only minimally addresses the issue of effective teachers and increasing student access to the most effective teachers. The application does not adequately address turning around lowest-achieving schools, which is one of the four core assurance areas. Overall, the application addresses the majority of the selection criteria, but often the information is insufficient for a clear understanding of the project plans.		

Total	210	107
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