



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #1307NY-1 for East Ramapo Central School District

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>It is to a <u>medium extent</u> that the proposed East Ramapo School District (ERCSD) reform initiative set forth a comprehensive and coherent vision. As evidenced in the documentation what is envisioned in this proposal is a "personalized learning environment to include curriculum and instruction based on the common core state standards and college and career readiness, delivered by effective teachers and supervised by effective school leaders." This narrative supported the vision to some extent.</p> <p>Improving instructional delivery as well as parent and community engagement were strongly evidenced in this proposal. Raising the performance levels as well as accelerating student achievement, and the deepening of student learning--leading to higher graduation rates and closing of the achievement gap also were addressed to some extent.</p> <p>Missing from the narrative was support addressing how equity through personalized student support grounded in common and individual tasks and based on student academic interests would be accomplished.</p> <p>So, this response does not demonstrate that all parts of the selection criteria were satisfied. The response is of medium quality; hence, it has earned a mid-range score.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Evaluation of the ERSCD proposal revealed a <u>medium extent</u> to which the applicant's approach to implementing its reform will be accomplished</p> <p>(a) The description provided of the process the applicant used to select schools to participate was a weak and incomplete description.</p> <p>This weak description led to this criterion not earning maximum points thus, scoring in the mid-range category.</p> <p>(b) A list of the schools that will participate in the reform initiative was provided with the grade bands identified as well</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">As outlined in the demographic information presented a total of 14 schools will participate in this reform Initiative. In addition, the school demographics table presents the raw data indicating the fact that these schools do have a high needs population evidenced by 77% of students classified as low income status.</p> <p>(c) The total number of participating students was cited as 8,900 participating students with 88% of the students identified as minority groups. Approximately 75% qualify for free and reduced lunch based on the fact they are from low-income families. In addition, 22% of the students as classified as Limited English Proficiency, while 16% is classified as students with disabilities. A total of 560 educators were identified as working with this proposed initiative.</p> <p>Finally, in 2 of the three criteria addressing applicants approach to implementation, the descriptions were done to a good extent with a fair high quality response. However, in category (A), was addressed to a low extent. Thus, the final score for this criterion is a mid-range score.</p>		

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This criterion was addressed to some <u>extent</u> providing some evidence of the LEA-wide reform and change in the proposal.</p> <p>In this criterion, the following were asked for: (a) scaling-up of the reform to make district-wide changes (b) How the applicant reached its overall goal for the initiative, and (c) how a theory or logic model would help to improve student learning outcomes.</p> <p>There is some evidence that supported LEA-wide reform and change. In fact, scaling-up was alluded to in the area of "expanding its existing school turnaround process by incorporating into the instructional infrastructure; differentiated, multi-sensory personalized learning environments that integrate technology and individualized instruction based on student need. This data was strong evidence to support change.</p> <p>Finally, the logic model proposed was explained over 11 pages. Even though so many pages of information were provided, all that information did not provide a focused or supported argument as to specifically how student learning will be accomplished.</p> <p>In sum, combing through the proposal did reveal some evidences of how the applicant supported LEA-wide reform and change. Hence, a medium-range score was earned for this criterion. .</p>		

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>It is to some <u>extent</u> that LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes were addressed. Improving student learning and performances was not clearly articulated in this initiative. No goals were articulated.</p> <p>Table (A) (4) (a) indicated some data regarding summative assessments. This data showed modest incremental growth over the life of the grant</p> <p>Table (A) (4) (B) indicated the decreasing of achievement gap. This table also showed incremental growth over time. Also, evidence of delivering instruction in Creole and Spanish would serve to help accomplish the outlined goals</p> <p>Table (A) (4) (c) indicated graduation rates increasing by 10 points over the life of the grant</p> <p>Table (A) (4) (d) was blank because the district does not have the capacity to collect this data. This funding from RTTT-D would help this district to have the system in place to collect and analyze pertinent data.</p> <p>Table (A) (4) (e) is optional, but no data was provided</p> <p>Success of ERCSD initiative will be determined by each student's mastery of academics. With some evidence provided this criterion earned a mid-range score. Only some aspects of the criterion were addressed, hence, only partial scores were earned.</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	10
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>It is to some extent that this proposal has demonstrated a clear track record of success.</p> <p>(a) Information addressing improvement of student learning was <i>sparse</i>. Findings from the pre and post test administered showed some increase in student learning. Evidence addressing closing the achievement gap including by raising student achievement, graduation rates, and college enrollment also was inadequate.</p> <p>It is mentioned that "a great percentage of students are achieving at higher level" which leads to the narrowing of the gap for these students as well as being indicative of students experiencing deeper learning in the various grade bands.</p>		

(b) Some attempt was made at explaining ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools and its low-performing schools. For example teaching students in both Creole and Spanish augurs well for this school district serving the diverse needs of the community.

(c) Unfortunately, *little evidence* was provided to support how student performance data can be made available to students, educators and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and services.

Because of the incompleteness of the data to clearly illuminate this criterion, the narrative earned middle-ranking score.

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

It is to a mid level extent that this criterion has been addressed.

Evidence was provided that in the ERCSD all personnel salaries are listed in the annual budget; this information shared at the Board of Education meetings. In terms of transparency once the budget is adopted it becomes public knowledge and is posted on the website. Personal salaries are categorized and coded. No mention was made of non-personal expenditures at the school level.

With all aspects of this criterion not fully addressed, the narrative has earned a mid-range score.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	4
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The extent to which each LEA has demonstrated evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy is Low

In this section of the proposal, time was spent detailing some activities the ERCSD wishes to accomplish with the grant monies. The context for implementation was not addressed in an adequate manner. This include:

1. Developing a district wide comprehensive improvement plan
2. Implementing a bilingual program at qualifying schools
3. Enhancing parent notification etc..

A low-range score was earned in this section because the applicant did not establish the successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	7
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

It is to a mediocre extent that the ERCSD LEA has demonstrated evidence meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal.

(a) An incomplete description was provided of how students, families, teachers, and principals were engaged from the start in the development of the proposal. Evidence revealed that there were meetings at different levels to inform stakeholders about the grant.

No evidence was provided indicating whether or not the LEA is a collective bargaining union. In addition,

No evidence was provided indicating at least 70 percent of teachers from participating schools support the proposal

(b) Letters of support from key stakeholders such as the business community, civil rights organizations, advocacy groups, local civic and community-based organizations, and institutions of higher education, Department of Education and City Council were provided.

Support clearly missing were letters of support from parents and parent organizations, student organizations, early learning programs, and/or tribes were provided.

In sum, responses to the criterion were of mediocre quality because so many points of evidence in the

data were missing. It is because of the missing evidences that a middle range score was earned.

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

5

3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Evidence was provided outlining past performances and broken out into sub-populations. Data revealed that Blacks and Hispanics continue to trail their counterparts. Furthermore, the gap widened as students move into the higher grades. The evidence provided also indicated a significant gap between the performances of all students when compared to students classified as high-needs or high-risk groups such as Economically Disadvantaged or English Language Learners.

Challenges that this district faced in the past were highlighted as areas of concerns to be addressed in order to improve student learning and ultimately help to close the gaps. These challenges included:

1. Poorly designed formative and interim assessments
2. Ill-defined curriculum across grade levels
3. Low level data access
4. Limited collaboration among staff
5. Lack of resources
6. Insufficient dedicated staff to meet the needs of the students
7. Limited evidence of a culture of accountability

What was missing for the narrative was how the applicants would link overcoming these challenges with implementation of a personalized learning environment in this ERCS D initiative. Hence, a mid-range score was earned.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal outlined how learning would be accomplished to some extent in this narrative

In this crucial part of the narrative, the applicant was expected to present an approach to learning that engages and empowers all learners, in particular high-need students, in an age-appropriate manner. The evidence provides indicated the extent to which this was accomplished as it relates to :

(a) Support of parents and educators for all students—

A growing support structure in line from parents was evidenced in this narrative. In addition, a bullish support from educators was evident as the seek to work with the kids and provide them with the best learning environment possible.

(iii) Providing opportunities for students to be engaged in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest; evidenced by

- common core alignment
- data driven instruction Parent outreach programs

(iv) Providing access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning; evidenced by

- The current diversity of cultures in the school district is strong

(v) Helping students master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving; no evidence provided

(b) Supporting parents and educators with workable strategies to ensure that each students have access has

been alluded to in the narrative but not addressed explicitly

- (i) Provision of 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; not evidenced
- (ii) Having a variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments; NOT clearly articulated
- (iii) The provision of support outlined above will ensure high-quality content, including digital learning content appropriate and aligned with college/career-ready standards college/career-ready graduation requirements; was addressed to some degree
- (iv) Ongoing and regular feedback is a corner stone of how the applicants will communicate with internal and external stakeholders. However, no explicit mention has been made regarding ongoing feedback
- (v) Accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students including students from minority groups and students with disabilities--evidenced by teaching students in Creole and Spanish.

(c) Based on the evidence provided, there are some mechanisms 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.

In sum, the account provided in this narrative allowed this criterion to score in the mid range .

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

20

13

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

It is to some extent the applicant has a fair plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready.

Evidences of the planned approach to implementing instructional strategies that will enable all students to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to college- and career-ready standards include: a strong professional development model that increases teacher knowledge that will intern improve student achievement and increase their capacity to support student progress towards college and career readiness. Based on the professional development activities coupled with parental involvement/engagement, the District expects to accomplish its goals of increased academic achievement and graduation rates over time.

Based on previous student performance data and school quality reviews one of the approaches purported is to embed Literacy Across the Curriculum and district-wide foci (explicit instruction, academic vocabulary and student engagement) to drive school district improvement efforts.

Evidences were provided indicating that (a) All participating educators engaging in training and sustainable professional development activities; (b) Through these training the participating educators have access to tools, data, and resources that will be sued to accelerate student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready graduation requirements; (c) Putting in place and supporting training, policies, tools, data, and resources that enable leaders to design and structure effective learning environment that meets individual student academic needs etc.

The applicant was found to be of medium-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principal, including in hard-to-staff schools, subjects (such as mathematics and science), and specialty areas (such as special education). This criterion was not addressed in the narrative; hence a mid-range score was earned.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
<p>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)</p>	15	12
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>It is to some extent that the applicant has provided a fair-quality plan to support project implementation.</p> <p>The applicant has practices, policies, and rules that will facilitate personalized learning for the population to be served</p> <p>Evidence supported Organizing the LEA central office, or the consortium governance structure to provide support and services to all participating schools</p> <p>(A) Evidence suggests that ERCSD will work towards a harmonious partnership that provides community involvement. The governance structure as being led by the office of curriculum and Instruction was clearly illuminated having had a track record of leading and supporting initiatives in the past. Collaborative relationships among individuals and groups, the richness of serving a diverse population, addressing the needs of all students, providing a safe and nurturing environment, creative and critically-thinking individuals, and involvement in local and global issues strengthens the argument regarding the consortium's governance structure to provide adequate support and services.</p> <p>(c) Giving students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic; Although ERCSD has no policy on accelerating students, it does however, have practices that allow students who demonstrate proficiency to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic. For example, students at the 8th grade Middle School level can take Regents-level classes in Integrated Algebra and Earth Science, classes offered in the 9th grade in the high school. Students passing these classes are awarded high school credit. Student passing the Regents exams have two of the five Regents courses required for graduation, credited to them.</p> <p>(d) Giving students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways and having students learn in their native tongue was also were evidenced.</p> <p>Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and ways. Students may demonstrate mastery using a selected response and short answer (multiple choice, true/false, matching, short answer or fill in). Student may also demonstrate mastery on an extended written response involving comparison, analysis, interpretation or problem-solving. Performance assessments and personal communication may involve journals or logs, questions raised during instruction, teacher conferences with students, teacher observation of student, or the completion of an oral exam. These are strong evidences of mastery.</p> <p>(e) Providing learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners.</p> <p>Evidenced by each school receiving an allotment for supplies and materials, textbooks, library supplies, and graduation expenses, along with a certain number of "free" buses they may use for field trips. Schools have flexibility in spending these allotments. Representatives from all funding/planning areas (Title I, Title IIA, Title III, IDEA, business, personnel, and C & I) are enlisted in providing learning resources and adaptable instructional practices.</p> <p>Missing from the narrative was how school leadership teams in participating schools would demonstrate 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. No evidence was provided addressing this criterion.</p> <p>This aspect of the narrative earned mid- points because all the information needed for this criterion was not provided.</p>		
<p>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</p>	10	7

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

To medium extent was this criterion addressed

What was discussed at length in this section was the C & I team. The pertinent information asked for in this section was not provided. In essence, there was scant data to demonstrate how the applicant would:

(a) Ensure that all participating students, parents, educators and other stakeholders 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;

Little mention was made of how each stakeholder would access the needed tools. What was mentioned included the fact that some schools have a staff and faculty advisory committee that are geared at discussing school operations, parent engagement, instructional goals, goal attainment and student engagement.

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

No evidence has been advanced to justify this criterion

(c) Use information technology systems that allow parents and students to export their information in an open data format and to use the data in other electronic learning systems for additional learning supports, or provide software that securely stores personal records and

No evidence advanced to present this criterion

(d) Ensure that LEAs and schools use interoperable data systems that include human resources data, student information data, budget data, and instructional improvement system data.

Strong mention made regarding this capability to interoperable data whereby the ERCSD gets updated regularly based on the Ned of teachers and administrators. Data is also imported into the student warehousing system.

Some points were earned in this criterion because the each criterion were addressed explicitly. Hence, a Mid-range score was earned.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	10
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>It is to a <u>fair extent</u> that the continuous improvement process was addressed in the narrative.</p> <p>A continuous improvement plan was evidenced as being adopted by ERCSD. Using the guideline has proven to be helpful.</p> <p>In order to develop the goals for student learning feedback will have to be obtained from stake holders.</p> <p>The strategy outlined addresses the issue of accountability. However, little was said to address how the applicant will monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of its investments funded by the grant to impact professional development, technology, and staff.</p> <p>A mid range score was earned for this narrative based on the number of evidences provided.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>It is to a <u>low extent</u> that this criterion was addressed.</p> <p>Strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders were outlined and evidenced by:</p> <p>face-to-face meetings; phone calls, bi-monthly meetings, faculty and parent-teacher-student meeting.</p>		

The shallow narrative provided was insufficient. Hence, a low-range score was earned.

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

5

2

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

To a very low extent was this criterion addressed.

This aspect of the narrative was approached by a series of questions to which no answers were furnished.

12-14 performance measures were recommended to be addressed in this section. None was provided.

Narrative received a low-range score because the criterion was not adequately addressed

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

5

2

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

It is to a low extent that an evaluation of the effectiveness of the investment will be carried out.

Guided by a series of evaluation questions obtained from the Vermont Department of Education, evidence was found supporting this initiative would be evaluated. Goals would be revisited, student data analyzed, conducting needs and gap analysis, determining the needs of educational leaders.

Conversely, this narrative did not explicitly address the following criteria: effectiveness of 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 and decision-making structures).

This narrative earned a low score because overall, the expressed criteria were not addressed to the fullest extent.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	7
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: To some extent (mid-range) this criterion has been addressed: Applicant did the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Identified funds that will support the project from Race to the Top. A total of \$19, 744, 546.07 is requested. No other funding source identified. (b) Provided a somewhat reasonable idea to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal; and (c) Gave some rationale for investments and priorities, including-- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) A description of all of the funds will be used to support the implementation of the E3 RTTT-D initiative; and did not (ii) Identify the funds that will be used for one-time investments versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs for the initiative Having provided some information relevant to this criterion, the narrative earned a mid-range score		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

This criteria was addressed to a mid-extent

The issue of sustainability was addressed through specific projects that will be implemented at ERCSD. For example, in project 1: the alignment of curriculum will be sustained through training; Project 6: Obtaining a Library media CCSS specialist would be sustained by having had full training integrating common core literacy skills. Project 9: Parent literacy would be sustained by training and workshops to name a few. The tables provided do indicate financial support from the government. However, missing from the narrative addressing sustainability were specifically a budget for 3 years after the grant monies are no longer available as well as the potential sources and how the funds will be used. A mid-range score was earned for this narrative.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	5

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

To some extent this criterion has been met

First, the applicant provided evidence that the district has implemented the teacher rating system for the 2012-2013 school year. This is in compliance with the NYSED timeline for implementation. In the meanwhile, baseline data is being collected tracking teacher effectiveness. This evidence goes to show the extent to which there is integration of activities at the school and state department levels.

Second, home to school intervention will include providing parent competency workshops on various topics including; supporting students to HOME, POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS, Understanding the adolescent child, and dealing with societal and family stressors.

Third, having a partnership with mental-health service providers, and others, to help students who may need this service

Fourth, missing from the budget, was any other sources of funding

In sum, it is to some degree that the applicant proposes to integrate public or private resources in a partnership designed to augment the schools' resources by providing additional student and family supports to schools that address the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of the participating students. Although not a high-quality narrative, the evidences provided were sufficient to earn a passing score for this criterion. Furthermore, this is a high needs school district where by diversity seen as the greatest strength.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The total sum of this proposal was one that has potential to deliver the services envisioned in the proposal to high needs students. Although the proposal was not a high-quality plan in all aspects, enough evidence was provided to support this initiative that is needed in the ERCSD zone. The four educational assurances around which this grant initiative are important anchor. In that they are important to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college/career ready standards graduation requirements. In addition, the narrative did not explicitly support acceleration of student achievement; deepening of student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student; increasing the

effectiveness of educators; expanding student access to the most effective educators; decreasing achievement gaps across student groups; and increasing the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers. In essence, the applicant has met (to some degree) the eligibility for absolute priority 1.

Total	210	133
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #1307NY-4 for East Ramapo Central School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that builds on its work in four core educational assurance areas and articulates a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support grounded in common and individual tasks that are based on student academic interests as shown by:

1. Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed:

- The district reform plan is built around the four tenets of the NYS Regents Reform Agenda: common core, data-driven instruction, annual professional performance reviews for teachers and principals, and turnaround schools.
- The East Ramapo Central School District plans to use the proceeds of the RTTT District grant to strengthen its school and district infrastructures so they can effectively support learning environments that are personalized according to identified student needs.
- ERCSD envisions personalized learning environments to include curriculum and instruction based on common core state standards and college and career readiness, delivered by effective teachers and supervised by effective school leaders.

2. Data systems that measure student growth and success and inform teachers and principals with data to improve instruction:

- School-wide, grade-level and department-level inquiry teams have been established to examine student performance data and identify effective instructional/ intervention strategies.
- Principals and teachers continue to be trained in the use of data inquiry for assessment development, curriculum revision, lesson-planning, and differentiating instruction; and, formative, interim and daily assessments are being incorporated into instructional design.
- Through the RTTT District grant ERCSD foresees expanding upon its data systems and data-driven instruction (DDI) and leadership process by improving its data systems to facilitate the ease of use of integrated data information portals by staff and parents. The student information portal will be updated to allow for timely turn-around of data (48 hours) and teacher access to class data, and principals, teachers, and parents will be trained in the use of the updated portals.

3. Recruit, develop, reward, and retain effective teachers and principals

- Through the RTTT District grant ERCSD envisions expanding its CCSS instruction and assessment process by training/retraining

teachers as master teachers who are experts in their particular instructional level or content area.

- Through the RTTT District grant ERCSD envisages expanding upon its Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) process to build strong teachers and strong leaders and enduring teacher/principal capacity by providing experiential learning opportunities such as teacher/principal mentoring/coaching, classroom or school visitations within and outside of the district, attendance at regional and national conferences, and focused research studies.
- When positions become available, ERCSD will recruit teachers and principals who are trained in and have successful track records in meeting the needs of Hispanic students for whom ERCSD became a FOCUS District based on graduation rates; and, in meeting the needs of students in other high-need, low-performing demographic groups

4. Turn around low-achieving schools:

- Through the RTTT District grant, ERCSD foresees expanding its existing school turnaround process by incorporating into the instructional infrastructure; differentiated, multi-sensory personalized learning environments that integrate technology and individualize instruction based on student need. These approaches may include: Blended Learning, Flipped Classrooms, one-to-one School Computing programs, Independent Study Projects, Credit-bearing Work Experiences, Flexible Scheduling, and Remote Learning through a web-based, 24-hour student instructional portal.
- Extended Learning Time (ELT) will be provided for students, including: a daily blended learning intervention/support/enrichment period for all students at the elementary level, lunch-time art and music enrichment at the elementary and intermediate levels, lunch and learn language acquisition programs at the middle-school and high-school levels, after-school learning centers at all levels, and summer remedial programs for Title I and Title III students.
- ERCSD will also collaborate with community-based organizations to provide parent informational workshops on various topics including but not limited to: Understanding the Common Core State Standards and School Accountability, Understanding the new ELA & Math programs, Supporting Students at Home, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Family Literacy, and Understanding the Adolescent Child.
- Through the RTTT District grant, we will be able to provide Spanish and Haitian Creole translators at district-level parent meetings, student registration, etc. thereby, increasing the likelihood of participation for families who speak other languages.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	3
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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides no narrative for this section to define their approach to implementing its reform proposal to support high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation of that proposal. Using information from other sections and tables, it can be inferred that:

- All SINI-identified schools have undergone the School Quality Review (SQR) process conducted by NYSED, and have identified the root causes of student under performance.
- The district and the schools are in the process of developing a District Comprehensive Improvement Plan (DCIP) for the FOCUS schools, and School Comprehensive Education Plans (SCEP) for SINI schools to address and mediate the identified barriers to learning.
- The goal of the East Ramapo School District strategic reform plan is to improve the instructional delivery and parent and community engagement process for 8,900 students attending East Ramapo's public schools; The applicant provides a list of schools and demographic data for all students who will participate in a table that accompanies this section.
- The public school population consists of 88% students of color (African American/Black and Hispanic/Latino). Seventy-five percent of all students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. Twenty-two percent of students are classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP), while 16% are classified as Students with Disabilities (SWDs). ERCSD is designated by the NYS Education Department (NYSED) as a High-Needs/Low-Resource district.

The lack of a required narrative for this section makes it unclear if this criterion is adequately met.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	6
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents an 11 page logic model in its appendix for each participating school, but does not provide any narrative to describe how it will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools and how it will help the applicant reach its outcome goals. However, there is enough data within the logic models presented to indicate that each school has a high-quality plan to reach its individual goals.

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

The applicant provides no narrative for this section to define the extent to which the applicant's vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goals that are equal to or exceed State ESEA targets for the LEA(s), overall and by student subgroup.

Within the tables, the applicant provides:

- The name of the summative assessments being used, the methodology for determining status and the methodology for determining growth.
- The specific methodology for determining achievement gap and notes ERCSD aims to decrease the achievement gap for these grade levels over the course of the grant.
- ERCSD's goal for graduation rate is to achieve the NYSED set rate of 80% over the course of four years.
- The district does not presently maintain college enrollment data but intends, with improved data systems, to begin calculating this data in the 2012-2013 school year and beyond.
- The district does not presently maintain Postsecondary Degree Attainment data but intends, with improved data systems, to begin calculating this data in the 2012-2013 school year and beyond.

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	5

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The extent to which each LEA has demonstrated evidence of a clear record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching is noted by:

- The East Ramapo Central School District (ERCSD) has a noteworthy track record of success, especially with its LEP/ELL student population, and builds on the past years' performance which, in some areas, are above the state average for school districts with similar demographics.
- A great percentage of pupils in the ERCSD are achieving higher grades in ELA, ESL and Math, showing that the district's schools have a proven track record of success. It is unclear what the baseline data is or how the percentages were determined.
- ERCSD ran an ESL Summer program that was one of the first blended learning programs for which the district maintained ongoing and relevant pre-assessment and post-assessment data wherein on the post-test for Reading and Comprehension close to 80% of the students improved by one grade level or more.
- ERCSD believes that it can build on its past levels of success with other blended learning environments in which software programs were used for specific purposes and with specific demographic groups of students would like to continue to use in an expanded format via the RTTT District grant.

The applicant does not address subcategories b and c of this criterion.

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

Each LEA has demonstrated evidence of a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments, including by making public, by school, actual school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration, as shown by:

- In the East Ramapo School District, all personnel salaries are listed in the annual budget which is shared with the public at budget work sessions and regular meetings of the Board of Education prior to and following the adoption of the school budget.
- Budget newsletters are mailed to households and made available at the central administration office and at key locations within the community.

- Budget presentations also made to faculty and staff at each school, and parent-teacher-student organizations at each school share budget information with parents and students during their monthly meetings.
- The school budget, once adopted, is posted on the district website and is available in the central administration offices and schools for public review.
- In terms of personnel, salaries are listed by category under various sub-headings and budget codes in an appendix to the application.

While the applicant presents budgeted amounts for these categories, actual expenditures are not offered.

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

Each LEA has demonstrated evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in the applicant's proposal as indicated by:

- ERCSD has been identified as a FOCUS district under NCLB, for not making graduation AYP for Hispanic students at both high schools. Due to its FOCUS status, the district is in the process of developing a district comprehensive improvement plan (DCIP) to address existing barriers to teaching and learning as required by the State.
- ERCSD has undergone State Quality Reviews (SQRs) at eight of its 14 schools. ERCSD had failed to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, for several of its sub-groups. Based on the SQRs and feedback from the NYSED, these eight schools are in the process of developing school comprehensive educational plans (SCEPs) that address their identified challenges and that are designed around student learning objectives (SLOs) in accordance with the NYS RTTT state requirement, as well as district instructional goals.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	3
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Each LEA has demonstrated evidence of meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal and meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal, as evidenced by:

- Following initial planning meetings, members of the Curriculum and Instruction team contacted various stakeholder groups to share information related to the district's application for the RTTT District grant.
- ERCSDs grant application was shared with community organizations with which ERCSD had past affiliations and successful collaborations.
- Parents and attending students received information on the grant application during a Board of Education presentation of the district instructional plan.
- Central office staff members visited PTSA (parent/teacher/student association) meetings to outline the basic tenets of the grant application.
- Central Office staff members also met with PTA Council members who represent parents district-wide to discuss various school issues.
- School district and building-level staff and administrators were apprised of the grant application and application updates on several occasions during regularly scheduled Cabinet meetings, joint administrators meetings, central office staff meetings, and through liaison meetings of the East Ramapo Teachers Association (ERTA).

Although it is noted the president of the teachers' association signed the application, there is no evidence of the required support of at least 70% of the teachers.

The applicant provides letters of support from the mayor, the NYSDE, and a senator. There are no letters from stakeholders provided.

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

Each LEA has demonstrated evidence of a high-quality plan for an analysis of the applicant's current status in implementing personalized learning environments and the logic behind the reform proposal, as evidenced by:

- East Ramapo Central School District (ERCSD) has had a consistently below average level of student proficiency across grade levels for all students.
- Sub-group diversity may account for some of the performance discrepancies when compared with students statewide

and regionally.

- Out-dated curriculum programs, lack of adequate resources and generalized instructional practices may account for some of the performance discrepancies.
- Marked differences are evident in student performance across demographic sub-groups.
- Moderate discrepancies exist between the performance of All Students and Hispanic students, and moderate discrepancies between the performance of All Students and Economically Disadvantaged students.
- NYSED school quality reviews (SQRs) at the 8 SINI schools issued findings that may account for basic student proficiency and performance gap discrepancies among demographic sub-groups. Based on the SQR findings, ERCSD has initiated district-level and building-level changes.
- Several barriers to the successful implementation of corrective measures have been identified.
- ERCSD believes that personalized learning for both student and teachers is a method that can be used to support present and future educational needs.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready, as demonstrated by:

- ERCSD's goal is to have students reach high levels of academic achievement and become fully prepared for success in a wide variety of post-secondary educational and career opportunities regardless of their instructional and support needs.
- ERSCD plans to organize in a manner that ensures a wide variety of curricular and instructional programs and pathways to success are made available to all students through personalized learning environments.
- ERCSD has determined that the students most in need of intervention are: Hispanic/Latino, English language learners (ELLs), students with disabilities (SWDs) and Economically Disadvantaged students (ED).
- The applicant has conducted school quality reviews of their eight schools identified as schools in need of improvement (SINI).
- ERCSD has conducted a school quality review for one FOCUS high school (Spring Valley) identified for failure to make AYP on the Hispanic graduation rate, and are in the process of conducting a self-assessment of Hispanic student performance at the other high school (Ramapo) for its failure to make AYP on the Hispanic graduation rate.
- ERCSD, in accordance with the Regents Reform Agenda and the district instructional plan, has begun a common core state standard (CCSS) alignment in four core areas (English language arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies).
- In Grades K-6, ERCSD has adopted a common-core aligned English language arts instruction and intervention series for general education students and are piloting CCSS-aligned ELA series for special education and ESL students. In mathematics, they have adopted a common-core aligned Singapore Math influenced series for all students. In grades 7-8, they are piloting a common-core aligned literacy series in special education and ESL classes.
- They have have instituted common pre-assessments for all students in all subject areas.
- Teachers will plan and deliver instruction based on student baseline performance and SLO targets and will assess student performance informally through formative assessments and formally through interim and summative assessments. Teachers will review student performance data and actual student work during regularly-scheduled data inquiry team meetings at the departmental/grade and building levels, and adjust instruction and interventions accordingly prior to the next data inquiry cycle.
- Students will be apprised of their performance and performance targets during data-driven feedback sessions with teachers and guidance counselors.
- Parents will be apprised of student performance through a review of student performance data at Board meetings. Parents will also be trained in how to access student data during parent training sessions to be held during high school Freshman Orientation, Back-to-school nights at all schools, and at the firstmarking period, interim, and summative parent-teacher-student meetings.
- At-risk students in Hispanic sub-groups will be identified for all four cohort years. Guidance counselors will review

student data and meet with students to discuss progress, academic and post-secondary goals, interests, and preferred learning styles. Guidance counselors will bring this information to instructional support team (IST) charged with developing individual education plans (IEPs) for each student.

- Students will be exposed to various post-secondary opportunities through college and trade school presentations and visits, the recruitment of university interns, Student Resource Officer (SRO) presentations, student-parent workshops, visits to receiving schools within the district as well as to colleges, and participation in vocational and/or preparation programs such as those offered by Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) or Today's Students, Tomorrow's Teachers (TSTT).
- Students will be trained in the tenets of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and the Dignity for All Student Act (DASA) protocols.
- Training for parents in supporting academic development will be provided by all schools and by community-based organizations working in partnership with schools.
- Each school houses a half-time Family Resource Coordinator (FRC) who is responsible for assisting parents in accessing school and community resources. Critical parent information is translated into Spanish and Haitian Creole, the two dominant non-English languages in ERCSD. In addition to being provided directly to parents, the information is posted on school and district webpages.
- The applicant intends to use the RTTT District grant to meet their challenges and actuate the instructional and student-parent-community engagement plans such as: Common-core aligned instructional and learning materials, Flipped Classrooms, Student Instructional Portal, Blended learning – HS, Blended learning – MS/Elementary, 1:1 School Computing programs, Independent Study Projects, World of Work Experiences, Early Warning System, Flexible Scheduling, Extended Learning Time (ELT), Community-based Collaborations, Parent Participation, and Family Resource Coordinator.
- Through the RTTT District grant, ERCSD foresees expanding its existing school turnaround process by incorporating into the instructional infrastructure; differentiated, multi-sensory personalized learning environments that integrate technology and individualize instruction based on student need.

This approach clearly addresses learning that engages and empowers all learners, in particular high-need students, in an age-appropriate manner.

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

20

20

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has formulated an approach to teaching and leading that helps educators to improve instruction and increase their capacity to support student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements by enabling the full implementation of personalized learning and teaching for all students, as evidenced by:

All participating educators engage in training, and in professional teams or communities, that supports their individual and collective capacity:

- Through professional development activities, improvement activities, and parental involvement/engagement, the District expects to accomplish its goals of increased academic achievement and graduation rates.
- Their District Instructional plan is one that addresses the curriculum and instructional needs of staff, students, families, and community organizations.
- They have established an overarching goal of Literacy Across the Curriculum and district-wide foci (explicit instruction, academic vocabulary and student engagement) to guide their school district improvement efforts.
- ERCSD is in the process of developing agreements with East Ramapo Teachers' Association (ERTA) on the components of the teacher evaluation process and East Ramapo Building Administrators Association (ERBAA) on the components of the principal evaluation process.
- Based on the anticipated agreements, ERCSD has begun to train teacher and principal evaluators in evidence-based observations, coaching, and instructional/administrative feedback.
- The applicant will provide training for lead evaluators (district and building-level administrators) on how to conduct professional walk-throughs/ instructional rounds to observe principals and/or teachers according to the tenets of their respective evaluation rubrics. Lead evaluators will also be trained on data-driven feedback conferences with principals and/or teachers based on school comprehensive educational plans (SCEPs) and teachers' student learning objectives (SLOs).

All participating educators 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 follows:

- Professional development will be made available to district and building-level administrators and teachers in conducting

- or participating in evidence-based observations, coaching, and instructional/ administrative feedback.
- Regular data-driven feedback conferences will be held with principals and teachers based on multiple sources of data including evidence-based observations, instructional rounds, student performance data, and parent feedback.
- Professional mentoring/coaching will be provided where necessary to enable a principal or teacher to improve their practice in areas identified via the observation and evaluation process as needing improvement.
- When principal or teacher positions become available, ERCSD will advertise nationally filtering for applicants who are high-performing and hold certifications not only in the area(s) advertised, but also in high student need areas.
- Curriculum alignment teams in elementary ELA and Mathematics have been convened and alignment is in progress with the implementation of new common core aligned curriculum programs in elementary ELA and Mathematics.
- Special Education and ESL elementary and middle school teachers will be piloting common-core aligned literacy programs with the aim of providing focused literacy instruction for English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities (SWDs).
- Follow-up training will be provided by existing district-level Instructional Supervisors for ELA, ESL and Special Education and Curriculum Coordinators in Mathematics and ESL. An additional level of training will be available for teachers and administrators through state provided specialists in Special Education and ESL and district-level Mathematics and Humanities RTTT Network Team Leaders (NTLs).
- Secondary education content-area specialists in Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and English have begun to meet with content-area teachers at the middle and high schools to begin to integrate the common core shifts into the existing curriculum, and to align the curriculum where necessary with CCSS.
- All ESL students were moved back to their home schools in order to provide a continuum of services and the correct units of ESL instruction. This move necessitates intensive professional development for elementary and middle school ESL teachers who are implementing a new common-core aligned literacy series and secondary ESL teachers who are implementing a new ESL instructional framework.
- ERCSD has hired a professional developer to work with general education teachers and building-level and district administrators to understand the needs of ELLs and their families and to integrate effective instructional, supervisory, and parent-engagement strategies into their instructional and supervisory repertoires.
- Additional professional development and technical assistance will be available through an ESL specialist from the Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN).
- ESL teachers and school and district administrators will be participating in monthly seminars and on-site visits with representatives of the New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals (NYSIEB).
- ERCSD informally began its work in data inquiry in the 2011-2012 school year. The majority of schools in the district participated in the data inquiry process through building-level data inquiry teams. These teams examined student performance data to identify process and content-skill strengths and weaknesses.
- The goal of the data inquiry is to establish formal school-wide data inquiry teams at every building to examine student performance data and identify effective instructional/intervention strategies to promote student achievement and lead to on-time graduation and college and career readiness. Schools with past success in building-level inquiry teams will also establish departmental/grade-level inquiry teams to enhance the data inquiry process and to promote student achievement.
- All staff will be trained during departmental/grade level meetings, faculty meetings and data inquiry team meetings in the use of data inquiry for assessments, curriculum revision, lesson-planning, and differentiated instruction.

All participating school leaders and school leadership teams 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 or college- and career-ready graduation requirements as noted in the following:

- Teachers and administrators are expected to access various data information portals to examine and use student performance data for instructional, intervention, and feedback purposes. The portals will be continuously updated to allow for timely turn-around of data and teacher access to class data. Principals, teachers and parents will be trained on an on-going basis in the use of the updated portal.
- Teachers and administrators will participate in reviews of class performance and school performance data over time to make decisions about their own professional development.
- ERCSD will have expert assistance in the form of a BOCES RTTT NTL data inquiry specialist who worked in the district during the 2011-2012 school year. In an effort to sustain the data inquiry initiative, the BOCES RTT NTL will train data inquiry team members including principals and district-level RTTT NTLs to be turn-key trainers.
- As a part of a professional learning community (PLC), principals and other building-level and district-level administrators will, during the 2012-2013 school year, participate in a professional development book study.
- ERCSD will develop and implement a Dignity for All Student Act (DASA) plan in all schools. All faculty members, students, and parents in the district will be trained in the use of DASA protocols as well as Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). School-based DASA/PBIS programs will be conducted by DASA coordinators and

community-based parent workshops will be conducted by community-based organizations skilled in supporting the social-emotional development of students of all ages and their families. Literature related to DASA/PBIS and social-emotional growth and development available to parents and community members in a variety of languages and through various forms of distribution.

- Parent informational workshops on various topics will be conducted. Parent engagement will also be encouraged through translations of all important school and all district documents into Spanish and Haitian Creole (dominant second languages), and the posting of these documents on school and district web pages. Spanish and Haitian Creole translators will also be provided for district-level parent meetings, registration, etc.
- Family Resource Coordinators (FRCs) have established a part-time presence at each school to provide outreach to parents and the facilitation of parent access of school and community resources. The FRCs will also act as liaisons between parents and school personnel wherever necessary.

The applicant has a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals, including in hard-to-staff schools, subjects, and specialty areas.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	10

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a high-quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator, and level of the education system with the support and resources they need and has practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning, as demonstrated by:

- The RTTT District grant, based on the focus on improving student achievement, increasing graduation rates, and closing achievement gaps as well as providing a personalized learning environment for schools, will mainly be supported in all 14 participating schools by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction (C & I).
- The C & I team is comprised of the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction K-12, a Director of Personnel and Secondary Education, a Director of Elementary Education, two Instructional Supervisors (ELA & ESL), four district-level RTTT Network Team Leaders (NTLs), two elementary Math Coordinators, one Coordinator of Music/Arts, one Coordinator of Health/Physical Education, and one ESL Staff Developer. Participating members of the C & I Team are: a Director of Management Information Services (MIS), an MIS technician, and three Instructional Supervisors of Special Education (Elementary, Middle, and High).
- General responsibilities of the collective team include quarterly reviews and reports on NYS/District student performance data, the coordination of NYS and district testing, school visits and walk-throughs with Principals/APs based on district goals and objectives, teacher observations, the development of school improvement plans in conjunction with Principals, Academic Intervention Service plan review and coordination with Principals/APs, school assistance with staffing and enrollment projections and the maintenance of copies of master schedules, courses, teacher assignments, and grade level/departmental/building meeting dates.
- Members of the C & I team coordinate parent workshops with schools and school/community organizations and outreach to community organizations for goods/services to enhance instructional programs.
- Select members of the C & I team serve as co-chairpersons of the district DASA Committee, assisting building level staff with programs/materials, developing a DASA protocol, identifying and training building level DASA coordinators, updating the district Code of Conduct according to DASA requirements, updating the district's self-assessment tool, and addressing disciplinary referrals from schools/parents as necessary.
- Members of the C & I team coordinate professional development for student learning objectives (SLOs), the development of pre-assessments, data analysis of pre-assessments, and SLO development, administration, scoring and data reports.
- C & I team members assist with teacher observations and the development and monitoring of Teacher Improvement Plans (TIPS) in conjunction with the principal and teacher. They facilitate department meetings/ grade-level meetings in the absence of department chairpersons review NYS and District student performance data from NYS and District portals, participate on data inquiry team meetings for assigned schools, coordinate curriculum alignment and mapping, facilitate professional development workshops for faculty meetings, staff development days and parent education.
- C & I team members assist principals in developing school improvement plans for assigned and attend state/regional professional development for professional growth and expertise.
- For planning purposes in school leadership teams, at the secondary level, there is an executive cabinet comprised of the principals and assistant principals and staff members designated by the principal as integral to the planning

process. The purpose of the executive cabinet is to use multiple sources of available data to develop a school-needs profile and instructional improvement plan, and coordinate building-level and district-level resources to support the implementation of the plan. At the elementary level, this function is performed by the principal, central office representatives, and designated staff members.

- Some schools have a staff and faculty advisory committee which meets monthly to discuss various issues related to school operations, parent engagement, instructional goals and goal-attainment, and student engagement. Schools leverage the services of their Family Resource Coordinators (FRCs) and their school psychologists to integrate health services into a plan to support students' social-emotional health. At the middle and high school levels, schools are constantly reviewing the appropriate and effective allocation of guidance staff to meet the needs of all students on a consistent and timely basis.
- Although ERCSD has no policy on accelerating students, it does however, have practices that allow students who demonstrate proficiency to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic. Some high school seniors who, by their senior year have earned the majority of the 22 credits needed towards graduation, may, with the approval of the school and district office, take and receive college credit for college-level courses.
- Students in ERCSD are given the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times in multiple comparable ways.

The applicant does not clearly state how it will provide learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners.

ERSCD does not note opportunities for students to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic.

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

The applicant has a plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provides every student, educator, and level of the education system with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed as evidenced by:

- The data portal in ERCSD is continuously being updated and improved based on the need for teachers and administrators to receive specific data in a short space of time (48 hours). Data is imported into the student portal from several different data warehousing systems with the student portal serving as an interoperable data system.

Although ERCSD does not yet have the capacity to integrate human resources data, budget data, and instructional improvement data into its present system, it will, in the near future, be able to integrate these data.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	8

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has an inadequate approach 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 as evidenced by:

- East Ramapo Central School District has adopted a comprehensive plan that provides our system with one source for improving the academic achievement of all students.
- Their School Improvement Teams will meet at least once a month to discuss their school improvement plan and short-term action goals. Teachers use formative and common assessments, summative data, and other teacher-team/department data to monitor progress. Aligned curriculum maps have been completed and are being used in core subjects at all grade levels. Teachers in each grade or subject level meet once a week at the high school and middle schools to discuss student progress and any adjustments to the maps. The high school has increasingly focused on collaboration and planning in a systematic process.
- A variety of teams will analyze multiple sources of data in numerous groupings including high stakes subgroups. School Improvement Teams at every level will focus on data and action planning based on data. Grade levels, departments, administration, central office staff, and stakeholders study data from various perspectives in search of specific indicators

for improvement. Both summative and formative data sets will be used.

- The district is in its second year of implementing a systematic formative testing program. The results gathered through this formative program provide students, teachers, and stakeholders with periodic data to assist them in determining what students have learned and what they still need to learn to meet the rigorous standards of that subject and grade level. The benchmarks also ensure every child receives instruction at the same level in the same timeframe across the school system. Results gathered from the assessments assists teachers in diagnosing areas of additional assistance needed, adaptations to previously planned pacing, and provide quick grouping information.
- School and system personnel are provided a variety of opportunities to participate in professional development activities which are based on school and district improvement goals which are aligned to the district's survey analysis and school-identified academic targets. Additional opportunities are sought out and attended through travel such as state conferences and associations.
- The ERCSD leadership team meets on a regular monthly basis to plan, review, monitor, and enhance all aspects of the instructional program as well as the goals and guidance set forth in their school improvement plan. To effectively communicate their purpose and direction, the Curriculum and Instruction Department has created a framework that includes: Community, Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Expectations.
- The district promotes focus on accountability for results through a variety of structures and strategies.

The applicant does not address how they will monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of its investments funded by Race to the Top – District.

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

The applicant has a clear and high-quality approach to continuously improve its plan with strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders, as demonstrated by:

- ERCSD partners with local and widely accepted community organizations whose focus and resources best match their highly diverse, multi-ethnic, targeted low-income groups.
- Ongoing communication and engagement of these external stakeholders takes many different forms. School-level administrators have always been encouraged to form partnerships with approved community-based organizations to meet the specific needs of their student population. The outreach to community organizations and the students and families they support, is made effective with the presence of Family Resource Coordinators (FRCs) at each of the 14 schools.
- The role of the Family Resource Coordinator is to organize parent/family educational programs, assist parents, advocate for them, guide them towards a stronger family-school relationship, communicate in their respective languages (primarily Spanish and Haitian Creole), and to procure adult classes in ESOL/Literacy, parenting skills, and self-esteem building.
- FRCs working with parents and building-level administrators, identify the needs of students at each school, and contact the relevant community-based organizations that can meet these needs.
- At the district level, members of the Curriculum and Instruction (C & I) team, Office of Special Student Services (OSSS), and Office of Special Education (OSE), maintain relationships with various organizations that can provide district-wide services to children and their families.
- On-going communication and engagement with these agencies is usually accomplished via face-to-face meetings which occur regularly throughout the school year. Follow-up phone calls, e-mails, and faxes are other means of communication employed by ERCSD personnel to ensure the maintenance of positive and productive relationships.
- ERCSD provides school-related information at bi-monthly Board of Education meetings, via the annual school calendar, on the district website, on school web pages, through emergency phone alerts, and through the publication of a monthly Superintendent's newsletter.
- The Superintendent and members of central office administration frequently visit schools for informal visits or for specific reasons (either to train staff during school-based curriculum meetings or to provide to staff with pertinent information during faculty or parent-teacher-student – PTSA meetings).
- Central office administrators engage internal stakeholders by participating with them on various teams at the building and district-levels.
- District-level staff members also facilitate and participate in professional development workshops for instructional and clinical support staff.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	0
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

ERCSD specifically stated in its application that it is presently in the process of implementing a teacher evaluation system that

tracks teacher effectiveness. No data is available for this section.

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

5

3

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has adequate plans to evaluate the effectiveness of most of the 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, and decision-making, as shown by:

- The applicant has decided to follow a professional development model developed by the Vermont Department of Education that includes:
 - Review Goals for Student Learning
 - Analyze Student Data which includes student, parent, community satisfaction/perception surveys
 - Conduct a Gap Analysis
 - Consider the Context and Possible Barriers to Student Success
 - Find the Root Cause
 - Determine Educator Learning Needs
- Desired Outcomes of Professional Learning will be stated in terms of what the educators will know and be able to do as a result of professional learning and should be very specific in order to close the gaps between the required teacher knowledge, skills, and beliefs and their current practice.
- Desired outcomes will be evaluated in the summative evaluation to determine to what the extent once the new knowledge and skills have been fully integrated into routine practice.
- Measures of Success will include benchmarks to be checked regularly (formative evaluation) to determine if the program is succeeding or needs any changes.
- Student goals will help determine who needs to participate in the learning activities.

Evidence about the use of technology is lacking as is any information about working with community partners or compensation reform. Additionally, the goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties is not presented.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's budget, including the budget narrative and tables Identifies all funds that will support the project and is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal, and clearly provides a thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities, as shown by:

- ERCSDhas embarked upon a district comprehensive improvement plan that will improve overall students' achievement and close achievement gaps for students within specific lowerperforming sub-groups. They envision accomplishing their plan by examining present achievement and infrastructure status, identifying achievement targets and methodology for meeting these targets, and by identifying the financial and community-based assistance needed beyond that which they already receive.
- The applicant states their budget and sustainability proposal details its fiscal plan for accomplishing the projects outlined in this plan; however the district instructional plan that is supposed to be listed as an appendix is missing.
- The applicant plans 15 different projects to support their proposal:
 - The alignment of curriculum, instructional materials and assessments to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) by 2014-2015 school year.
 - Training Library-media specialists to integrate common core literacy skills of inquiry, research, and critical thinking into the library curriculum and, on how to integrate technology and various forms of media into instruction. LMS will become co-instructors with ELA/English and Social Studies teachers and professional developers in common-core aligned inquiry.
 - Conducting workshops for parents provided by school personnel or community-based organizations to increase parent understanding of student literacy, and to assist parents in building their own literacy skills.
 - Using Data Inquiry Teams for analysis of student performance data from 3 data cycles, planning and monitoring interventions, comparing student performance with performance targets across grade levels and within

subgroups.

- o Training for parents in accessing student information from the portal, and using information to determine student proficiency, student progress in light of student learning objectives and CCSS and student progress towards graduation requirements.
- o Using an EWS as a dropout prevention system that will, at the middle school, identify students not proficient in Math or ELA and students who are under-credited at the HS and at risk of failing or dropping out.
- o An IT Infrastructure upgrade for all instructional servers, IIP Portal servers, Waterford Upgrade 5.x and district Wide BYOD implementation.
- o Train administrators and teachers in the use of state-approved rubrics and student performance data for evidence-based observations and evaluations.
- o Administrators Professional Development to improve the instructional, supervisory and environmental practices of district and school administrators and to foster collaborative relationships.
- o Training for ESL teachers to enable them to improve their ESL and literacy strategies and to enable them to become ESL specialists, able to train their general education peers.
- o Provide parent competency workshops on various topics including but not limited to: Supporting Students at Home, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Understanding the Adolescent Child, Dealing with Societal and Family Stressors.
- o Promote multi-sensory, personalized digital learning for all students, with specific focus on under-performing sub-groups.
- o District-wide hardware and software upgrade (workstations, smart devices, smart boards, printers, & laptops) to support digital learning.
- o Learning opportunities for students in addition to the regular school day. Includes before-school/after-school/Saturday academies, flexible scheduling, on-line credit recovery/credit acceleration/instructional reinforcement.
- o Increase the number of Family Resource Coordinators in the district from 7 to 14, so each school has a full-time FRC whose primary role is parent outreach.

The applicant adequately describes the funds to be used, however, there is no funding source outside of RTTT-D grant monies. One-time investments are indentified with a focus on strategies that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	7
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a high-quality plan for sustainability of the each project's goals after the term of the grant, as demonstrated by:

- Teachers will, throughout this year, and in the subsequent three years leading up to a full 2015-2016 common-core assessment alignment, be trained in how to create common-core aligned formative and summative assessments. Materials will be up-to-date and common-core aligned. Periodic refresher courses will be conducted by district-based RTTT NTLs, Instructional Supervisors, and Curriculum Coordinators who will have been trained as turn-key trainers.
- By the end of the life of the grant, Library-media specialists will be fully trained in integrating common core literacy skills, and will serve as turn-key professional developers for ELA/English and Social Studies teachers.
- Schools will, through their Family Resource Coordinators, collaborate with community-based organizations to offer school and community workshops taught by school personnel and community personnel. School personnel will be paid stipends through the district general fund, and community organizations will be paid either through the general fund or through Title grants or other community-based grants for which the district will apply.
- All staff will, by 2015-2016 be trained in the data-driven inquiry (DDI) process. Periodic refresher courses will be conducted by district-based RTTT NTLs, Instructional Supervisors, and Curriculum Coordinators who will have been trained as turn-key trainers.
- School administrators and guidance counselors would, by 2014-2015, be fully trained in data-driven instruction. There would be no cost to the district for this service.
- The membership cost of the Early Warning System will be paid for through the district technology fund, while the early warning specialists' costs would be absorbed into the guidance department of each school, and be paid for through the general budget or Title III grant as a supplementary service. The district may be able to reduce the number of early warning specialists based on student performance and the subsequent training of all guidance counselors to be early warning specialists.
- The data system upgrades are heavily dependent on their ability to rebuild our infrastructure and train appropriate personnel in monitoring and accessing the portal. The upgrades, begun in the 2011-2012 school year, are expected to be on-going through the 2015-2016 school year, after which the system should be fully operable and be able to provide

a variety of data through the inter-connectedness of several different district systems.

- All staff, by 2014-2015, should be well versed in the tenets of their respective evaluation system. Periodic updates and refresher training will be provided by district RTTT NTLs who will have been trained as turn-key trainers.
- District RTTT NTLs will be trained in the PLC Book Study method, and will be providing professional development for administrators and teachers beyond the life of the grant.
- ESL Teachers will, by the end of the life of the grant, be ESL specialists, able to deliver specialized instruction in ESL and literacy, and able to be professional developers for their general education peers. The minimal costs associated with assisting ESL teachers in keeping their instruction current and professional development skills, will be paid for through the Title III or Title II grants.
- Through workshops and our affiliations with mental health agencies, ERCSD plans to train-the-trainer in an effort to sustain the proposed projects beyond the life of the grant. We anticipate being able to train school psychologists and Family Resource Coordinators (FRCs) in effective de-escalating and referral techniques, and update them on regional resources which parents may access to assist them with any issues they may be having. They will continue to collaborate with community-based organizations and build the cost into the general budget and/or the budgets for Title grants.
- The district will, over the course of the next four years, develop a long-term technology use and upgrade policy that will enable them to continue to provide digital learning to students using monies from the general budget instructional materials and supplies and software funds and other technology grants for which the district intends to apply.
- Extended learning time would be built into the regular program of studies for students. Some of the cost will be covered by Title grants such as Title I and Title III (elementary academic intervention and secondary ESL academies). Some of the cost, particularly the cost for credit recovery/credit acceleration and instructional reinforcement, will be built into the general staffing budget for middle and high schools.
- By the end of the life of the grant, the district would be in a position to absorb the cost of the FRCs into their Title I and Title III budgets, from which the FRC salaries are paid.

The applicant does not include any evidence of financial support outside of the grant.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a description of coherent and sustainable partnerships that it has formed with public or private organizations, as noted by:

- The East Ramapo Central School District (ERCSD) has in the past, and intends to continue its partnership with public and private organizations, to augment resources by providing additional student and family supports to schools that address the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of the participating students.
- They intend to give highest priority to students in participating schools with high-need students and will continue to partner with public and private organizations to provide extended learning and family supports to identified students and their families. They provide a list of organizations that is not exhaustive, but represents the core of their thrust to improve the academic achievement of all students, with particular attention being paid to our low-performing subgroups (Hispanic/Latino, English-language learners – ELLs, students with disabilities – SWDs and the economically disadvantaged –ED); and, our sub-group (Hispanic/Latino), who did not meet their graduation target in the 2010-2011 school year.
- Initial planning meetings will be held by members of ERCSDs Curriculum Planning Board (internal stakeholders – teachers, principals, curriculum and instruction staff, and FRC coordinator) with representatives of the various community-based organizations (CBOs), to provide a venue for injecting awareness of school, parental and CBO concerns. By consulting with representatives from partners about the RTTT District grant proposal, the ERCSD administration will be able to ascertain many vital school, parental and community concerns.
- The Curriculum Planning Board (CPB) will continue to facilitate focus groups for students/parents where attendees will discuss strengths/weaknesses of extended learning programs and family workshops and provide recommendations for improvement.
- The CPB will work to expand the Stakeholder Team to include parents and students of the targeted program sites. Since children may be intimidated by a large gathering of adults, a separate Student Council may be formed to help formulate program offerings and be

represented in the larger CPB.

- There will be established guidelines to recruit and select students to enroll in the extended day and summer programs. Students from low-income families as measured by their scaled scores on the New York Curriculum assessments will be encouraged to enroll. Students with single working parents will also be encouraged to enroll. Students classified as either a student with a disability (SWD) or a student receiving English as a Second Language (ESL) services, who do not fit into the low-income or at-risk category will also be considered, as will Hispanic students at the Middle and High School levels who are identified via the early warning system (EWS) as being at risk for failing or dropping out.
- Staff will carry out an identification, referral, and recruitment process that targets these students for priority enrollment (via enrollment fairs, parent teacher conferences, beginning of school open house and booths sponsored on the school sites). Referrals will be made of targeted students from school faculty, school counselors and social services.
- They will also solicit ESL department recommendations; and utilize the outreach potential of the district's Family Resource Coordinators (FRCs), who have the resources to identify and refer families with low literacy levels and difficult family situations.
- Partnering agencies also have many outreach opportunities, and a broad network of outlets to reach non-served populations. Each CBO has a system of communication with their base constituents, general communities, lay and religious leadership, which will disseminate information and search for appropriate participants.
- Retention will be supervised by each participating school and involve the efforts of school administrators, guidance counselors, FRCs, daytime intervention and after-school/Saturday/Summer-school teachers. In addition, student and parental ideas regarding retention guidelines will be requested at open meetings and in surveys during the first weeks of the program. Attendance will be routinely taken and monitored by instructional staff and reinforced by school administrators or guidance counselors who will explain to students the correlation between attendance and performance.
- Both qualitative and quantitative techniques will be used to examine program progress.

Overall this is a strong plan for effective partnerships.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant coherently and comprehensively addresses how it will build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements; accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student; increase the effectiveness of educators; expand student access to the most effective educators; decrease achievement gaps across student groups; and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.

Total	210	143
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #1307NY-5 for East Ramapo Central School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a very diverse student body with significant barriers to successful academic achievement. The student population consists of eighty-eight percent (88%) students of color and seventy-five percent (75%) of all students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. Twenty-two percent (22%) of students are classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP), while sixteen percent (16%) are classified as Students with Disabilities (SWDs). The school district is designated by the New York State Education Department as a High-Needs/Low-Resource district, and 5 elementary and 3 secondary schools were designated as Schools In Need of Improvement (SINI) for not making Adequate Yearly Progress.

The applicant's reform vision includes an approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning and increcreasing equity by proposes a a reform structure that utilizes the Uncommon Schools turnaround framework implemented by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo and his North Star Academies team in Newark, NJ. The applicant reports that this model was selected because it has been proven effective in increasing student performance and teacher and leadership effectiveness in schools with student populations similar to that of the applicant.

Other elements in the applicant's plan which will assist it in meeting the requirements of this criterion include an emphasis on Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the extensive use of data to guide instructional decisions, a strong professional development program for educators, parent engagement and education and the development of individualized and personalized learning environments for students. Teachers are presently being and will continue to be trained in the use of the CCSS to plan for instruction, assessment, and data analysis. Using student performance data derived from multiple sources, the applicant has established a district-wide instructional focus and envisions expanding its CCSS instruction and assessment process by training/retraining teachers as master teachers who are experts in their particular instructional level or content area.

The applicant also plans to expand its data systems by instituting an early-warning intervention system based on student proficiency in ELA and Mathematics by the end of 8th grade and graduation credit accumulation by the end of 9th grade. At-risk students would be assigned an at-risk counselor trained in designing student programs that maximize students' learning time and support students' learning based on student need and preferred learning styles.

The applicant also proposes incorporating into the instructional infrastructure differentiated, multi-sensory personalized learning environments that integrate technology and individualize instruction based on student need. These approaches will include such approaches as Blended Learning, Flipped Classrooms, and Independent Study Projects.

This is a very cohesive, comprehensive plan that has a great deal of potential for making a positive impact on student learning. Based on the elements of the plan discussed above this applicant merits the full amount of points available for this criterion.

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

The district provides a list of of schools that will participate in the project. The number of students participating, overall and from specific subgroups as defined by the Notice of Application, is clearly specified. This section would be strengthened by providing some narrative to give the data some context and to assist in better understanding the process used to select participating schools.

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

The applicant describes an effective plan for how this proposed project will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools. The plan will allow for expanding upon the district's data systems and data-driven instruction (DDI) and leadership process by improving its data systems to facilitate the use of integrated data information portals by staff and parents. The student information portal will be updated to allow for timely turn-around of data, as well as teacher access to class data, and principals, teachers, and parents will be trained in the use of the updated portals.

A number of approaches, such as academic coaching, flex schedule and, remote learning through a web-based, 24-hr. student instructional portal should also be effective in improving student outcomes throughout the district. The applicant will build upon its annual personnel performance review (APPR) process to build strong teachers and strong leaders and ongoing

teacher/principal capacity by providing experiential learning opportunities such as teacher/principal mentoring/coaching, classroom or school visitations within and outside of the district. By building capacity among its educators through state approved observation and evaluation systems, and on-going professional development and experiential learning opportunities, the applicant expects to sustain the impetus of the school and district turnaround effort beyond the life of the grant.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	8
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides data demonstrating that it will improve academic performance significantly over the years of this project. Measures are provided in Math and English/Language Arts for grades 3 through high school. The percent of students achieving proficiency in these areas will increase from 16 to 22 points depending on the grade level. Data provided also indicates that performance gaps between the overall school population will diminish significantly as a result of the project. However, the specific subgroups for which data are provided are not identified. Performance measures for graduation rates are provided for the overall student population, but not for individual subgroups. In terms of college enrollment, the applicant provides no data at all. As a result, this section is not as strong and thorough as it could be.

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	12

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant addresses this criterion by describing a number of programs it has implemented to improve student learning. The Bilingual Summer Enrichment Academy was composed of a 4-hour program for incoming 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade limited English proficient (LEP)/English Language Learner (ELL) students. This program was intended for current and incoming LEP/ELL students who were not meeting the standards in language arts and literacy skills in English as well as in their native language. The ELL group showed increases of almost a full grade level and almost a full performance level, respectively. The Long Term Limited English Proficient (LTL) group of students tested also showed impressive progress. Many increased their grade level by one (1) year or more.

The Waterford Early Learning program gave the applicant a complete research-based instructional program that provided a continuum of instruction tailored to each student's individual learning needs. It was used during the daily Response to Intervention (RtI) block, along with direct teacher instruction, to provide individualized remediation, reinforcement or enrichment in a blended learning environment.

To differentiate instruction, the applicant incorporates First in Math in grades K-8. The First in Math content is organized into six basic modules. Elmwood Elementary School used the program and became recognized as a high-performing school for its students' performance on First in Math.

While these programs demonstrate an innovation in quality education by the applicant and indicates a strong effort to improve student learning outcomes and close learning gaps, it does not adequately address the requirements of this section of the Application. It is focused too narrowly and does not demonstrate a comprehensive approach to reform. It does not address high school graduation rates or college enrollment, does not sufficiently demonstrate how the applicant is making student performance data available to students, educators, and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and services. The applicant, also, does not provide information or data that directly addresses its history in turning around low performing schools.

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

The applicant provides information demonstrating that it has a high level of transparency in its processes, practices, and investments, including by making public, by school, actual school-level expenditures. All personnel salaries are listed in the annual budget, which is shared with the public at budget work sessions and regular meetings of the Board of Education prior to and following the adoption of the school budget. Public commentary on the budget is allowed and recorded at these meetings, and budgets may be revised based on feedback from the public. Budget newsletters are mailed to households and made available at the central administration office and at key locations within the community. Budget presentations are also

made to faculty and staff at each school, and parent-teacher-student organizations at each school shares budget information with parents and students during their monthly meetings. In addition, once the school budget is adopted, it is posted on the district website and is available in the central administration offices and schools for public review. Personnel salaries by district and school, salaries are listed by category and budget code. By listing personnel salaries and other budget items by category and budget code, the applicant allows internal and external stakeholders to determine salaries and other expenditures that are instructional as opposed to those that are non-instructional.

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

10

9

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides several examples of how it is developing and/or implementing instructional plans that support a commitment to high student achievement, and that are in compliance with Federal and State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements. Within the past two years, the applicant has, under NCLB, undergone State Quality Reviews at 8 of its 14 schools. Based on the SQRs and feedback from the New York State Education Department (NYSED), these 8 schools are in the process of developing school comprehensive educational plans (SCEPs) that address their identified challenges and that are designed around student learning objectives. The school district has also been identified as a FOCUS district under NCLB, for not making graduation AYP for Hispanic students at both high schools. Due to its FOCUS status, the district is in the process of developing a district comprehensive improvement plan (DCIP) to address existing barriers to teaching and learning.

While these activities do indicate successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments as described in this proposal, it lacks a clear statement of the flexibility and autonomy granted by the state and the local school board to implement such environments. The applicant should provide more specific information regarding flexibility at the local school level for creating innovative and individualized learning environments for students.

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

10

7

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides strong evidence that it involved internal and external stakeholders in the development and revision of this plan. Initial planning meetings for the proposal were held in the district office by the Assistant Superintendent of K-12 Instruction with representatives of the Curriculum and Instruction team. Following the initial planning meetings, members of the Curriculum and Instruction team contacted various stakeholder groups to share information related to the district's application for the RTTT District grant.

Information related to the grant application was shared with community organizations that were contacted via phone conferences or face-to-face meetings at the stakeholder's location or at the district central office. Community organizations were primarily those with whom the applicant had past affiliations and successful collaborations. These organizations shared with school district representatives how they envisioned participating in the grant implementation by providing services to district staff, students, and/or their families.

Parents and students received information on the grant application during a Board of Education presentation of the district instructional plan. Central Office staff members also met with PTA Council members who represent parents district-wide to discuss various school issues. Based on feedback received from community organizations, parents, students, administrators, teachers and support staff, the applicant incorporated the following into its grant application: digital learning using individual apps-based tablets, flipped classrooms, an early warning dropout intervention system, expert teacher training, and teacher research groups and seminars.

This section does not receive the highest number of available points because information regarding how teachers were involved in the process of providing feedback and support for the project is insufficient. The information provided is indirect and general in this regard and there are no letters of support from teacher organizations in the Appendices.

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

5

5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides strong evidence that it has effectively analyzed its current status in implementing personalized learning environments. In reviewing student performance within the school district marked differences are evident in student performance across demographic sub-groups. When looking at student performance on the 2010-2011 NYS grades 3-8 and high school Assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics major discrepancies exist between the performance of All Students and Students with Disabilities, and between the performance of All Students and Limited English Proficient students. Moderate discrepancies exist between the performance of All Students and Hispanic students, and moderate discrepancies between the performance of All Students and Economically Disadvantaged students.

Based on the SQR findings, the school district initiated district-level and building-level changes to address these gaps including developing a district-wide focus on Literacy Across the Curriculum, disaggregating student performance data by grade and performance indicators to determine areas of strength and weakness, and implementing appropriate instructional strategies based on student need. This indicates that the applicant has implemented a comprehensive process to develop an effective plan to address student performance gaps within the district.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a comprehensive plan to address this criterion. The plan has a variety of elements designed to support students in all student groups and grade levels in developing college and career ready skills and enhancing student post-secondary success. The applicant has examined its student performance data by sub-group, and has determined the students most in need of intervention. All 14 schools involved in the project will create school comprehensive educational plans (SCEPs) that address the needs of their particular student sub-groups, and that are aligned with the Regents Reform Agenda and the district instructional plan. To ensure that all students have access to quality and rigorous curriculum that will prepare them for college and/or careers, the applicant has begun a common core state standard (CCSS) alignment in the 4 core content areas. These proposed activities address the career and college readiness components of this criterion.

Students will receive feedback and counseling regarding their performance and performance targets during sessions with teachers and guidance counselors. Parents will also be informed of student performance through a review of student performance data at Board meetings. Parents will be trained in how to access student data during parent training sessions to be held during high school Freshman Orientation, back-to-school nights at all schools, at first-marking period, and interim and summative parent-teacher conferences. In addition guidance counselors will bring student performance information to instructional support teams (IST) charged with developing individual education plans (IEPs) for each student in order to ensure that those plans effectively address student needs. These approaches support the component of this criterion that the applicant's plan include 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.

Students will be provided a number of resources to assist them with closing performance gaps. Courses and/or interventions will include such things as on-line credit recovery, after-school academies which serve as content-area reinforcement tutorials, ESL Summer School, Saturday academy, and on-line or direct- instruction. These activities will put a mechanism 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.

Students will be exposed to various post-secondary opportunities through college and trade school presentations and visits, the recruitment of university interns, Student Resource Officer (SRO) presentations, student-parent workshops, visits to receiving schools within the district as well as to colleges, and participation in vocational and/or preparation programs such as those offered by Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) or Today's Students, Tomorrow's Teachers (TSTT). These activities will also provide 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 as required by this criterion.

Based on the elements described about this is a strong and will constructed plan that should result in more students graduating ready for careers and college.

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

The applicant describes a multi-faceted professional development plan that addresses the goals and intent of this particular criterion. It incorporates a number of approaches and involves all professionals in the district's educational community. The applicant is in the process of developing agreements with the Teachers' Association on the components of the teacher evaluation process and the Building Administrators Association on the components of the principal evaluation process. The applicant anticipates that it will be using the NYS approved teacher evaluation rubric and the NYS approved principal evaluation rubric for annual professional performance review (APPR) observations and evaluations.

Based on the anticipated agreements, the applicant has begun to train teacher and principal evaluators in evidence-based

observations, coaching, and instructional/ administrative feedback. In the current school year the school district is providing training for district and building-level administrators on how to conduct professional walk-throughs/instructional rounds to observe principals and/or teachers according to the criteria of their respective evaluation rubrics. District and individual school leaders will also be trained on data-driven feedback conferences with principals and/or teachers based on school comprehensive educational plans and teachers' student learning objectives.

Professional development will be made available to district and building-level administrators and teachers in conducting or participating in evidence-based observations, coaching, and instructional/administrative feedback. Regular data-driven feedback conferences will be held with principals and teachers based on multiple sources of data including evidence-based observations, instructional rounds, student performance data and parent feedback. Professional mentoring/coaching will be provided where necessary to enable a principal or teacher to improve their practice in areas identified by the observation and evaluation process as needing improvement.

When principal or teacher positions become available, the applicant will advertise nationally through OLASjobs.org, filtering for applicants who are high-performing and hold certifications not only in the area(s) advertised, but also in one of the following high student need areas of: ESL education, Bilingual education, Reading, Literacy, and/or Special Education. The applicant will collaborate with institutions of higher learning and local BOCES centers for referrals of highly effective administrators.

All staff will be trained during departmental/grade level meetings, faculty meetings and data inquiry team meetings in the use of data inquiry for assessments, curriculum revision, lesson planning, and differentiated instruction. Once trained, staff is also expected to develop and incorporate interim and daily assessments consistent with CCSS into instructional design so data inquiry can be a regular part of the instructional and assessment process.

Professional learning community (PLC) members will learn how to conduct learning walks within schools with a team consisting of building-level and district- level administrators. They will learn how to promote and support intra-district school visits amongst building-level administrators and participate in visits to schools outside of the district that have achieved success using data-driven instruction with similar student demographic groups.

This is an excellent, well-conceived and well-constructed professional development plan that should be successful in supporting the goals of this project.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a strong plan for providing support and services to participating schools. A Curriculum and Instruction Team composed of individuals in the center administration is engaged in a number of activities to accomplish this, including quarterly reviews and reports on NYS/District student performance data, the coordination of NYS and district testing, school visits and walk-throughs with principals and assistant principals based on district goals and objectives, teacher observations, and the development of school improvement plans in conjunction with principals.

C & I team members assist with teacher observations and the development and monitoring of Teacher Improvement Plans (TIPS) in conjunction with the principal and teacher. They facilitate department meetings/grade-level meetings in the absence of department chairpersons, review NYS and District student performance data from NYS and District portals, participate on data inquiry team meetings for assigned schools, coordinate curriculum alignment and mapping, and facilitate professional development workshops for faculty meetings, staff development days and parent education.

At the secondary level, there is an executive cabinet comprised of the principals and assistant principals and staff members designated by the principal as integral to the planning process. The purpose of the executive cabinet is to use multiple sources of available data to develop a school-needs profile and instructional improvement plan, and coordinate building-level and district-level resources to support the implementation of the plan. At the elementary level, this function is performed by the principal, central office representatives and designated staff members.

At the building level some schools have a staff and faculty advisory committee which meets monthly to discuss various issues related to school operations, parent engagement, instructional goals and goal-attainment, and student engagement. At the middle and high school levels, schools are constantly reviewing the appropriate and effective allocation of guidance staff to meet the needs of all students on a consistent and timely basis.

Each school receives an allotment for supplies and materials, textbooks, library supplies, and graduation expenses, along with

a certain number of “free” buses they may use for field trips. Schools have flexibility in spending these allotments.

The school district has no policy on accelerating students. But, it does have practices that allow students who demonstrate proficiency to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic. For example, students at the 8th grade Middle School level can take Regents-level classes in Integrated Algebra and Earth Science, classes offered in the 9th grade in the high school. Students passing these classes are awarded high school credit. Student passing the Regents exams have two of the five Regents courses required for graduation, credited to them.

Some high school seniors who, by their senior year have earned the majority of the 22 credits needed towards graduation, may, upon the approval of the school and district office, take and receive college credit for college-level courses.

While there are some strong features of this plan, several elements are missing that prevent this section from obtaining the maximum number of points. The amount and type of flexibility at the building level to control critical aspects of student learning, such as calendars, courses, scheduling, instructional delivery, etc. are not adequately addressed. Also, the applicant does not provide sufficient information regarding how it will provide learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	4
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides little information to support how it will address the requirements of this criterion. The applicant notes that its data portal is continuously being updated and improved based on the need for teachers and administrators to receive specific data in a short space of time (48 hours). Data is imported into the student portal from several different data warehousing systems with the student portal serving as an interoperable data system. Based on this information the applicant is awarded some points for this section.

However, the applicant does not yet have the capacity to integrate human resources data, budget data, and instructional improvement data into its present system. The applicant does not describe in this section how it will ensure that students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders have appropriate levels of technical support through a range of strategies, or how it will use information technology systems that allow parents and students to export their information in an open data format and to use the data in other electronic learning systems. Based upon this lack of sufficient information related to this criterion, the applicant is awarded points in the low range for this criterion.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	10

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a number of activities and approaches to evaluating and monitoring instructional effectiveness. The School Improvement Teams meet at least once a month to discuss their school improvement plan and short-term action goals. Teachers use formative and common assessments, summative data, and other teacher-team/department data to monitor progress. Aligned curriculum maps have been completed and are being used in core subjects at all grade levels. Teachers in each grade or subject level meet once a week at the high school and middle schools to discuss student progress and any necessary adjustments to the curriculum maps.

To develop goals specifically for student learning needs, the applicant's improvement process requires a great deal of time spent in analyzing data. A variety of teams analyze multiple sources of data in numerous groupings, including high stakes subgroups. School Improvement Teams at every level focus on data and action planning based on data.

In addition to summative testing, the district is in its second year of implementing a systematic formative testing program. The results gathered through this formative program provide students, teachers, and stakeholders with periodic data to assist in determining what students have learned and what they still need to learn to meet the rigorous standards of that subject and grade level.

While the applicant describes a strong district-wide evaluation process, a problem with this section is that the applicant does not specifically address this project and how it will collect, analyze and use data and other information to improve and modify the project when necessary. The description of how it will make information available to stakeholders is also indirect and does not contain specific activities for how that will be done.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant describes the approaches and activities it uses to collaborate and engage with both internal and external stakeholders. It notes that the presence of Family Resource Coordinators (FRCs) at each of its 14 schools is an important aspect of engagement with parents. On-going communication and engagement with external agencies is usually accomplished via face-to-face meetings, which occur regularly throughout the school year. Follow-up phone calls, e-mails and faxes are other means of communication employed by district personnel to ensure the maintenance of positive and productive relationships.</p> <p>The applicant also notes that it provides school-related information at bi-monthly Board of Education meetings, through the annual school calendar, on the district website, on individual school web pages, through emergency phone alerts, and through the publication of a monthly Superintendent's newsletter. Central office administrators engage internal stakeholders by participating with them on various teams at the building-level.</p> <p>While the applicant describes general approaches it uses on an on-going basis to engage with various stakeholders regarding the school district, it does not provide a specific plan for how it will directly and systematically engage stakeholders in the implementation of this project. It does not explain how it will use input from stakeholders to guide and modify the project when necessary.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	0
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant did not provide any information by which to review this section. It notes that it is currently developing a system to allow it to track student access to teachers that are highly qualified, but does not have that in place yet. However, the applicant does not explain why required student data were not provided.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant presents a detailed plan to, develop, implement and assess professional development activities for the project. A model developed by the Vermont Department of Education, which includes 13 specific steps, will be used as a structure for this plan.</p> <p>While the model described provides a good framework for assessment, the applicant does not directly or specifically describe how it will evaluate individual professional development activities, including quantitative and qualitative measures collected from participants. As a result, the effectiveness of individual activities cannot be adequately assessed so that targeted changes and adjustments can be made. Another problem with this section is that it deals almost exclusively with professional development while this criterion addresses other project activities in addition to professional development, such as technology, staff, money, or other resources. There is not sufficient information provided to determine the quality of the applicant's plan to evaluate all project activities.</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>The applicant provides excellent details and explanations regarding its proposed budget. The total budget is structured around smaller, individual projects addressing various components of the overall project. Costs allocated to these individual subprojects are then provided. In addition, the applicant provides specific information on the activities that will take place in these subprojects and the costs involved with each activity. All planned expenditures are reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal. The applicant does identify other sources of funding, such as Title I and Title III, to partially support some project activities. The applicant describes strategies that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments. For instance, for professional development activities a train-the-</p>		

trainers model will be employed by which the applicant will use project funds to train a cohort of personnel and that cohort will then be able to provide ongoing professional development to other school personnel.

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

10

10

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

For each subproject of the total project the applicant identifies specific strategies to promote and support the sustainability of those activities. For instance, teachers will be trained in how to create common-core aligned formative and summative assessments. Materials will be up-to-date and common-core aligned. A train the trainer model will be used for school district personnel to provide needed professional development activities in the future without the need for grant funding. School personnel and community personnel will teach school and community workshops. School personnel will be paid stipends through the district general fund, and community organizations will be paid either through the general fund or through Title grants or other community-based grants for which the district will apply. Data system upgrades will be completed by the end of the project and will be self-sustaining thereafter. The applicant will develop a long-term technology use and upgrade policy that will enable it to continue to provide digital learning to students using monies from the general budget instructional materials and supplies and software funds and other technology grants.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	8

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents a plan to address this competitive priority that has some strong features. A number of community partners are identified with which the applicant will collaborate. These include, but are not limited to, the Mental Health Association of Rockland County, Every Person Influences Children, the East Ramapo Teachers' Center, Rockland Community College, Rockland *After* School Programs, Inc., and Volunteer Counseling Services of Rockland County. The applicant also describes a process for communication and engagement with its partners. Initial planning meetings will be held by members of the school district's Curriculum Planning Board (internal stakeholders –teachers, principals, curriculum and instruction staff, and FRC coordinator) with representatives of the various community-based organizations (CBOs), to provide a process to identify and address school, parental and CBO concerns. The Curriculum Planning Board (CPB) will continue to facilitate focus groups for students/parents where attendees will discuss strengths/weaknesses of extended learning programs and family workshops and provide recommendations for improvement. The CPB will work to expand the Stakeholder Team to include parents and students of the targeted program sites.

A number of appropriate student learning outcomes are identified and these are related to the absolute priority project. Outcomes are focused on improving achievement for targeted subgroups of students. There is also a very strong evaluation system described that incorporates both summative and formative measures and includes a mechanism for using evaluation results to guide the project.

Although the applicant is apparently delivering services for this priority through extended school day and school year activities, a better explanation of the overall design and structure of the program would have improved this section. Also, the involvement and connection of the various partners, in terms of what services and resources they will provide in relation to specific student outcomes and project activities, are not clearly identified. In addition, the applicant does not address how the partnership would, within participating schools, integrate education and other services, such services that address social-emotional, and behavioral needs, for students.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes a plan to improve student learning outcomes that has the potential to be successful. It meets the criteria of the absolute priority in creating learning environments designed to significantly improve learning and teaching

through the personalization of strategies, tools and supports. The plan as presented is data-driven and incorporates a wide variety of approaches, strategies, services and resources. Although the proposal has some strong features it could be improved in several ways. The professional development component is very comprehensive and well organized. In some ways, this is also a shortcoming. There sometimes seems to be a focus on professional development at the expense of other aspects of the applicant's plan. For instance, more information regarding how technology tools will be used to personalize and individualize learning and improve access and flexibility would strengthen the overall proposal. More direct and specific information regarding the applicant's plans to implement activities focusing on career and college readiness skills is also needed. Finally, the lack of information of any kind to address criterion (E)(3) weakens the proposal. The Applicant notes in this section that it is developing an evaluation system to track students' access to highly effective teachers. However, the applicant should have attempted to address this with the data that it has, as well as addressing the other student data components of (E)(3) that are not related to effective teachers.

Total	210	176
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	0

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Not included.