



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0376TX-1 for Galveston ISD

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant, Galveston ISD (GISD), has a comprehensive and coherent reform vision - "transformation to a high achieving district (with) an unwavering focus on three components: data, vision and leadership." The district serves 6,705 students, 71% of whom are economically disadvantaged. The proposal further delineates a plan to design, implement and evaluate school wide and district wide instructional systems for purposes of personalizing instruction according to student needs and interests. To this end Communities of Practice (CoP), to support school wide personalization of learning, will be developed. The vision for reform is referred to as My Backpack to the Future (MBF). MBF is a program that builds upon "Data, Content and Application." The applicant puts forth a compelling rationale for how and why this effort will accelerate student achievement, deepen learning and increase equity.</p> <p>Four secondary schools will pilot all three components in years 1 and 2 of the grant. All GISD schools will be at tiered levels of involvement utilizing data and linking content to student needs. It is anticipated that in year 3 and 4 several other schools will pilot all components.</p> <p>In this section, and in the proposal overall, the applicant details how grant activities build upon the core educational assurances. In A 1 the applicant notes that GISD has a Performance Based Compensation System - based in an "equitable educator appraisal system", a superintendent evaluation system under design, has adopted appropriate college and career ready standards and is in the process of aligning curriculum to those standards. Pre- selection criteria revealed a "level of readiness to implement data-driven personalized learning" in the LEA.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal clearly articulates a thoughtful process of change that includes attention to readiness factors and change research. Critical contextual factors have also been considered. First year participating pilot schools were chosen for their readiness and capacity among other factors. Other schools will be tiered into the program.</p> <p>Schools involved at all levels and total number of participating students are delineated.</p> <p>The Logic Model for the grant work builds upon a school reform and improvement model initiated in the early 2000s. After interruption due to a significant natural disaster in 2008, an evidence based "process of planning, implementing, analyzing progress and adapting through a continuous improvement cycle" was resumed. The logic model for <i>My Backpack for the Future</i> (MBF) is well detailed, in Attachment F.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>"My Backpack to the Future will be implemented through a series of processes defined through 3 components, with performance measures to quantify and monitor fidelity of implementation of each component." Scale up is discussed in other sections of the proposal and in A 3 it is noted that it will occur through what the applicant calls an iterative process. As refinements and successes occur and are documented lessons will be shared within schools and across the district. The</p>		

Logic Model envisions implementation teams at school and district level and includes a coaching model as recommended in the research. Student data will be matched to teachers and strategies/supports will be provided for each project. Project expectations will become part of recruitment and selection" of new hires and "data will support progress monitoring of effectiveness of individual components, guide program development and professional development, and encourage continuous improvement."

Although difficult to discern in the narrative for (A) (3), Table (A) (2) suggests that scale up is anticipated to involve, all schools in the district. It is unclear if full scale-up, inclusive of all components, will occur within the grant timeframe or extends beyond. Although engagement is selectively determined, it is not clear whether every school will be involved in all components and related grant activities as depicted on Table (A) (2) within the four year grant time frame. The score is reflective of this lack of clarity.

An ambitious long term goal of 100% of students graduating with "at least 12 hours of college credit or comparable progress toward a career certification" is proffered. This reviewer commends the goal but finds it more aspirational than achievable. A list of schools that will participate in grant activities is included as well as numbers of participating students, educators, students from low income families, etc.

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

10

8

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

A set of charts provides the data requested in this section, including estimated college graduation rates based on individual students GPA after the first year of college. Baseline data is provided for 2011-2012. A new value added growth measurement system was adopted in 2010-2011. GISD is at an initial configuration stage. ESEA targets are not clearly delineated.

This reviewer notes that the goals to decrease achievement gaps vary in aspirational level - e.g. in 2013-2014 the projection is that 5th Grade Limited English Proficiency Students (LEP) will reduce the gap on all state assessments by 5% from the previous year. Apparently this target was set prior to the grant and the escalation of expectations after grant implementation to 8% and 10% the following years is potentially achievable. However, goals set for other subgroups, African- Americans overall test results, as example, or reducing the gap for Hispanic Americans assessed college ready, are far more modest .

They notch up in some cases no more than 2%. Given the context this may be realistic. Alternatively, these goals may need to be revisited.

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	15
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Overall GISD has a record of making gains in the last four years in, among other areas - advancing student achievement, improving college and career readiness and raising high school graduation rates. While "overall achievement gaps based on ethnicity have 'flattened' ... " the gap remains most problematic for African-Americans and LEP students. GISD is a "low-performing district" and there are focused efforts targeted to low performing schools and at risk students.</p> <p>(B) (1) (c) This section details a multifaceted approach to informing parents of student performance data and engaging them in improving student outcomes. There is no significant description in (B) (1) (c) of ways in which the data is made available to students or educators in the system although this is well documented in other sections of the proposal.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The proposal describes multiple mediums and processes for communicating information about school and district expenditures. The State requires a level of openness concerning finances which GISD adheres to. The attachment referred to in this section does not provide relevant information for this criterion.</p> <p>A link is provided in the proposal, potentially to document the narrative statements. As RTTT protocol does not encourage reviewers to peruse these links a perfect score could not be given.</p>		

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The LEA proposal focuses on three core components for creating personalized learning environments. Each component - data - content - application - is aligned with State requirements and utilizes State developed tools. The narrative notes that the state is focused on educational flexibility supports the districts efforts. The applicant further notes that the "Texas' Legislature and State Board of Education (SBOE) continue to move educational regulation toward greater local control and autonomy within rigorous standards." Several State statutes and grant opportunities are referenced in support of this statement.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	9
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A proposal development team included "district leaders, school leaders, community leaders and three external advisors. This team met regularly for two months and consulted with dozens of constituent groups and stakeholders." The four pilot school principals and teachers from one of the pilot middle schools contributed as well to the design. An external community group conducted an assessment of college and career readiness gaps and their findings were incorporated in the plan. This reader would like to better understand why teachers were not included on the initial proposal development team.</p> <p>89.96% of all teachers voted to support the "submission of the RTTT-D proposal." Letters of support appear to represent key stakeholders although letters from student organizations are not included. Given the secondary focus of GISD's plan, the support of students (or the lack of same) should have been represented.</p> <p>The GISD Board of Trustees approved the submission of the proposal and confirmed its support to sustain the reforms beyond the period of grant funding.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	4
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Although student achievement has shown improvements the applicant says that "GISD has not met its reforms goals (given increasing federal accountability standards." Needs and gaps are clearly delineated with the core barrier , according to the applicant, being the "lack of an inter operable data system ...and the related lack of an easily managed data system to match individual students to the teacher, instruction strategies and supports."</p> <p>While there are currently personalized leaning strategies in place, data is lacking to assess their impact. It is difficult to discern how embedded or extensive or successful these learning strategies are pre-grant implementation.</p> <p>The negative impact on schools and schooling of Hurricane Ike in 2008, can not be underestimated in terms of progress to date.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	19
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The GISD proposal clearly articulates a multi-faceted program for engaging students in learning. MFB is centered around student interests while simultaneously moving them toward career and/or college readiness. The plan includes parents, individual student graduation plans and flexibility and choice of learning options. Meetings arranged in other community settings and providing various incentives is suggested as a strategy to broaden parent engagement.</p> <p>The four pilot schools have chosen a blended learning approach with particular attention to individual learning styles. Progress toward established goals will be monitored by the individual student using a "student-level dashboard." The applicant ensures that, during all years of implementation school data coaches and "personalized learning coaches" will be trained. Teachers, dependent upon their level of engagement with MFB and with their individual skill level, will also receive training.</p> <p>GISD serves a multicultural community and the proposal writer(s) notes that grant activities will "engage students in collaborative learning with and about others representing diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning." How</p>		

this will be addressed is not adequately described.

Attachment N broadly supports the narrative concerning the provision of a curricular approach that engages students in the learning opportunities as delineated in the selection criteria noted under (a - c).

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	19
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The four GISD initial pilot sites are schools serving grades 7-12. These secondary level educators will have a higher degree of engagement in years one and two. The articulated plan suggests that "any educator will have the opportunity to participate through Professional Learning Community (PLC) Implementation Teams. Additional pilot sites may implement in subsequent years. By the end of the four year grant period it is projected that:

- all schools will have personalized learning models implemented
- 100% of GISD educators, as per the proposal narrative in (C) (2), will engage in MBF training
- each school will "establish a *Backpack* leadership team"
- teacher training will be tiered, based upon teacher level of engagement in MBF and their individual readiness/skill level
- teachers professional development plans will be aligned to the Performance Based Compensation Plan.

Using data is appropriately central to the reform efforts. A well thought out structured and tiered process is articulated for ensuring frequent assessment of teaching and learning as well as student progress. GISD will employ the Texas Student Data System (TSDS) of dashboards and anticipates being an "early adopter" of the TSDS /Dashboards during the 2013-2014 academic year thus garnering professional development opportunities provided by the State Department. These will be supplemented by district supports.

Focused attention to the needs and import of district and school administrators is commended. They will attend an orientation retreat to ensure "a deep and common vision" of MBF implementation. These leaders will engage in both professional development geared to build leaders' capacity as well as join with other educators' as they engage in training.

Administrators will meet routinely with other implementation leaders.

A graphic details scale up re: student involvement and professional staffing. It would be helpful if the projected increase in number and/or percent of students involved were given in the Appendix graphic.

The applicant presents a quality plan for supporting teachers efforts to personalize instruction that will promote improved teaching and learning in GISD. There is insufficient detail provided regarding the development of leaders' skills. ISSLC Standards for School Leaders provides a compendium of skills and behaviors that education administrators need to hone.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant notes that GISD's organizational structure and policies are supportive of a successful implementation of the MBF framework. Principals are provided flexibility to set school schedules and the pilot schools have taken advantage of this opportunity. "GISD board has adopted local policies to implement state programs in ways that address the unique strengths and challenges of the district's student population and community". Inclusion of copies of some of these policies would be helpful to this reader.

Texas Education Codes that support, as example, the efforts to personalize learning, utilize data, demonstrate mastery, adapt curriculum are enumerated, in the narrative. There are multiple ways and times for students to demonstrate mastery.

All selection criteria are met.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	9
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

District and school infrastructure appears to be supportive of ensuring student success. The applicant suggests that "when

possible, content and technology resources are provided equally throughout the district" and that students have equal access to all programs and resources through school choice. A fuller understanding of how school choice is implemented in GISD is included in another section of the proposal.

The plan and budget indicate processes and resource support for establishing a data system that undergirds "accelerated achievement and equity." It is anticipated that all stakeholders, including 100% of students, by the end of the grant period, will have enhanced access to district resources, content and tools.

A Parents' Portal, currently on the website, will be enhanced as will access. The Implementation Plan for MBF includes ensuring family training and that the site is translated to Spanish. The budget supports this effort.

The proposal adequately addresses all requirements and presents an ambitious but questionably achievable interoperable infrastructure plan to support grant activities.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	13
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Methods of assessing progress are documented, less so processes for adjustment as needed. The evaluation plan detailing the evaluation tasks, deliverables, proposed methodologies, timelines, and responsible parties is presented in Attachment V. This proved helpful to the reviewer in understanding the dimensions of the improvement process.</p> <p>This reviewer found no reference in this section to how the applicant will "publicly" share information on the quality of its investments" save for a notation re: "regularly reporting progress." It would be helpful to know to whom and how this information will be reported. Appendix R clarifies these narrative gaps to a degree but this reviewer is left with the sense that this narrative is more about LEA improvement than improvement of the RTTT plan.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Ongoing communication with stakeholders is planned and is heavily dependent on data in general and the data dashboards in particular being updated and accessible. Appropriate investments and other resources appear to be allocated to this goal.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>All performance measures are addressed in this section of the proposal. Well developed rationale for selecting the measure and how progress will be reviewed over time are also described.</p> <p>A particular focus is drawn to improving the teaching and learning for black students whose suspensions are noted as particularly high. Attention to providing specific resources to educators working with the most challenging students is commended. In addition to the standard/objective performance measures proposed it is hoped that other measures indicated in the MBF graphic will also be used to determine progress and readiness of students.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Using a "competitive solicitation" the LEA has awarded a contract for evaluation to an "independent research and evaluation firm." It is noted that the team members have subject matter expertise and a positive track record for their work. The goals for the evaluation are appropriate and include documenting lessons learned. Evaluation tasks, methods and products are presented in an attachment. The budget supports this effort.</p>		

Although not stated in this section, the narrative does detail other means of assessing grant activities. These plans receive a high score.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The budget narrative explains clearly the proposed expenditures and their relationship to four primary project components clearly providing supportive rationale for the investments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds beyond the RTTT grant are delineated • A three year summary budget for sustainability is included. It is based upon current levels of federal, state and local funding • There is substantial external support anticipated totaling \$28,700,000. This is "estimated through in-kind match of current federal, state, and local funding commitments and... continued philanthropic education funding" <p>The combination of RTTT funds and external funding is sufficient to support the applicants' proposal. The Overall Budget Summary Project List for (F)(1) charts the approximately \$28,000,000 beyond the RTTT funds being allocated to activities under "District Project Management." However, precisely which activities/goals/ assessments etc. will be curtailed should the funding estimates not come to fruition is not apparent to this reviewer.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The sustainability logic model, appropriately, is substantially based on the concept of building the capacity of district personnel through grant funding thus ensuring the continuation of a personalized learning environment in GISD after the grant funds are expended. A three year summary of a sustainability budget is included. It is based upon current levels of federal, state and local funding.</p> <p>The GISD Board of Trustees has agreed to support the personalized learning environment post grant funding. The Galveston Sustainable Communities Seven-Year Plan adds to the confidence that the work begun under the grant will be supported for an additional three years.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	10
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A coherent and sustainable partnership between public and private institutions currently exists in Galveston, TX through the Galveston Sustainable Communities Alliance (GSCA). This organization helped the city develop a "shared vision to focus community resources around transformation related to recovery from Hurricane Ike in 2008." GISD and GSCA have since identified closely aligned needs and the RTTT project aligns with GSCA's vision. The applicant notes that GSCA plan will "serve as an organizing framework and supportive foundation of support."</p> <p>GSCA aligns community resources through an 8-year plan for Pre-kindergarten to Grade 12 to "ensure career and postsecondary readiness." It is uniquely advantageous that 10 foundations (together with three universities) support the Galveston community. These foundations have, according to a letter of support presented in the Appendix, been meeting quarterly to "better align their funding around a strategic education transformation plan." This Galveston Education Transformation Plan coordinates partners' work across ten key elements focused on education outcomes and other supports especially social, emotional and health related needs.</p> <p>Plans to use data to target populations, measure outcomes, engage parents and families and to continue to align education goals and family and student supports are briefly noted. This community has a "leg up" in terms of partnering around creating a social and educational safety net for its citizens.</p>		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has coherently, comprehensively and substantively delineated goals, structures and processes to implement a program and processes to expand personalized learning, improve educator effectiveness and deepen student commitment to learning. The ultimate goal is that students will attain post secondary and career readiness resulting in "all students (graduating) with at least 12 hours of college credit and/or a career certificate."

Total	210	197
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	9

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Supplement #1: Parent Portal - The expansion of the parent portal is relevant and important. However, the rationale is not as compelling to this reviewer as the other more systemic supplemental proposals submitted. Nor is the budget for this Optional Budget Supplement fully developed.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	11
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Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Supplement #2: Mental Health Support for Students proposes to contract with University of Texas Medical Branch for an array of mental health services for children 0-21 who reside in the County. The need for this service is self-evident both as a stand alone and in relation to students academic success. The budget appears to support the effort over the 4 years of the grant cycle.

The supplement mentions expanding services to other districts but no details are provided. This reviewer does not feel that the criteria for a "high quality plan "co-developed and implemented across two or more LEAs" has been met.

There are five optional budget supplements and accompanying narratives. Rationale, goals, activities and deliverables for each of the supplemental budgets are addressed. One supplemental idea focuses around the Parent Portal for Access to Student Data. It builds directly on the RTTT grant proposal submitted. Another is a Pre Kindergarten project. Three others are related to student and community health issues.

The most fully developed is a Community Health Report Card - inclusive of a Children's Report Card (CRC). The activities of this plan will be completed by the University of Texas Medical Branch Center to Eliminate Health Disparities. Total grant funds requested are \$2,000,000. Additionally there are \$2,000,000 in matching funds pledged to this project. This appears to be an adequate, well thought out budget projection inclusive of well developed rationale for activities and expenditures.

The application receives full credit for this section and is commended for posing systemic reform ideas.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	15
<p>Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Supplement #3: The most fully developed among the five supplements provided is a <u>Community Health Report Card - inclusive of a Children's Report Card (CRC)</u>. The activities of this plan will be completed by the University of Texas Medical Branch Center to Eliminate Health Disparities. Total grant funds requested are \$2,000,000. Additionally there are \$2,000,000 in matching funds pledged to this project. This appears to be an adequate, well thought out budget projection inclusive of well developed rationale for activities and expenditures. Several LEAs will be involved.</p> <p>The application receives full credit for this section and is commended for posing systemic reform ideas.</p>		
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	12
<p>Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Supplement #4: <u>Pre-Kindergarten</u> - this optional budget project is focused on providing more opportunities for early learners through an expansion of the Pre-K 3 Program from half day to full day. There is no indication of the level of community interest in such a program nor does it address the availability of space, or the involvement of another LEA, etc. This reviewer does not question the value of such a program but finds essential details lacking.</p>		
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	5
<p>Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Supplement #5: <u>Health Policy</u> - This supplemental request suggests examining the health needs of students and the families. The relationship between academic achievement and health related issues is well documented. However, activities are not delineated nor are there goals noted in this stand alone supplement. Given the absence of detail this reviewer is unable to assess whether the budget is adequate or if there are measures of progress intended. There is no mention of an LEA acting as co-developer or participant.</p>		



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0376TX-2 for Galveston ISD

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Galveston concept of a “backpack” is an innovative visualization of a focus on the learner and all the resources and data tools required for readiness for college and career. It represents a learner and teacher focus on reform. GISD will require leaders and parents rethink their understanding of learning to one centered on the student, data, and college and career readiness.</p> <p>The initially complex material was later restated in the context of other sections that demonstrate their efforts to accelerate and deepen learning through the lense of personalized learning and the four assuranceA comprehensive overview of their plan was embedded in this section , appendix C and other sections.</p> <p>Galveston has described a complex and comprehensive and coherent reform vision building on its work in four</p>		

core assurances, and articulates a clear and credible approach to goals accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity. They demonstrate an understanding of personalized student learning environments.

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

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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

GISD provided the information essential for explaining its approach to implementation:

- a. The student population to be served during the 4 years are 6,705 PK-12 students of whom 70% are high poverty students. The eligibility rationale for school selection was based on the "Fixsen" implementation model with an emphasis on the Readiness factors.
- b. A list of the schools that will participate in grant activities was provided;
- c. GISD provided a table that substantiated school need for participation due to the high percentage of High Needs and Low Income student

Based on a review of this section and other parts of the application, the description of implementation reflected a high quality effort at the LEA-level and school-level implementation.

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

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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

GISD titled its reform plan as "My Backpack to the Future" and used a logic model based on nationally recognized models for change. The model has an ambitious goal that every child will graduate with at least 12 hours of college credit or comparable progress. The model takes existing goals and transforms them into Race to the Top components.

This reform plan focuses on accelerating learning by creating a new teaching and learning relationship that is premised on a personalized, data-driven learning environment that structures a pathway towards graduation goals. High needs and low-income students are a primary focus of the logic model of inputs of instruction and outputs of achievement, attendance, and graduation.

The visual illustration of the model describes the key drivers of the plan and articulates change actions for the selected schools. An "iterative" process of Districtwide dissemination of the RTT results to other schools is described. There was evidence of scalability embedded into implementation model, used to diffuse the reform throughout the district.

In this section and in reviewing other related documents throughout the application, the "backpack" project of GISD has all the requisite elements of a high quality plan for change.

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

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9

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The vision of Galveston is that every student shall have a personal goal of completing at least 12 hours of Postsecondary coursework. It then documents a framework of goals in (A)(2); organizing the implementation of five reform goals: (1. Curriculum, 2. Data 3. Teachers/Principals 4. Collaboration-Personalization and 5. TurnAround) through three implementation Projects or Actions.

- a. In their summative assessments, Galveston outlines specific student outcomes. The tables represent a exhaustive presentation of academic goals based on a baseline 2011-2012. The academic achievement goals appear to be reasonably ambitious as they project what percent of the 7th graders would become proficient (80-95%) in reading, math, and writing.
- b. In their efforts to decrease achievement gaps, Galveston charted the gaps and goals showing strong awareness of subgroup's underachievement in a variety of grade levels and subjects, thereby enabling it to construct ambitious but reasonable goals by 2016-2017.
- c. Their awareness of unsatisfactory gap in the graduation rates is reflected in the chart depicting subgroup graduation rates and the goals to reduce the gap. Those goals including those for the total group are ambitious yet reasonable.
- d. The college enrollment gap between the whole and various subgroups was huge and considered a baseline from which GISD would work. The average baseline for Hispanics and Black was 45% with a likely overambitious goal of no less than 74% in four years.
- e. Postsecondary Degree Attainment goal of 38% reflects GISD's attention to postsecondary outcomes and emonstrates

the next step effort of Galveston to follow up on its graduates . It will determine if the Galveston RTT plan has produced results related to College and Career Readiness.

Notwithstanding the completeness of the goal setting in this section, the critical part that was not adequately explained was a discussion of state ESEA targets.

The description of GISD's plan to address a variety of achievement gaps, graduation rates, and postsecondary success reflects a plan of High Quality to achieve ambitious goals.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	13
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The appendix provides a clear and extensive track record from 2003 to 2011 to support GISD's ability to undertake this reform.</p> <p>(a). Four years of subgroup and grade level academic data (2007-2011) reported overall gains for Grades 3, 8, and 11 but not for grade 5. Subgroup gains for Hispanic, White, etc were evident except for African American students.</p> <p>The value added measures are a potential method of documenting teacher-effectiveness. They show mixed effects of instruction. Standards are still under development. Galveston has documented positive trends with some of the groups tested.</p> <p>(b) Galveston selected schools that were primarily high need and low income and the data presented reflected strong results in most areas. Galveston has embraced many of the recognized educational initiatives and reforms considered essential for academic improvement. They have taken the additional step of seeking funds that would advance their performance. A significant and unexpected bump in the road was the effects of a natural disaster on enrollment, but could not find the evidence that there were entirely negative results.</p> <p>(c) The plan documents a history in public/parent communication of student performances via publications, meetings, and contacts via parent liaisons.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant did not provide a complete and detailed response required to document the expenditures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Galveston maintains a public website that it states contains information on expenditures. Additionally, the information is purported to be media-reported but no additional evidence. The personnel information is referred to without actual delineation of any numerical quantity or listing of salaries and expenditures for any of the categories. A key source reference of Appendix E only provided academic information without any a listing of personnel or nonpersonnel costs. <p>However, after evaluating the substance of their response, there is sufficient transparency in GISD to meet this requirement</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Galveston demonstrated it has sufficient authority to undertake the personalized learning environments.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Along with the narrative, they provide the legal and regulatory allowance for Galveston to institute programs that implement the personalized learning environments. Examples of existing programs that exemplify local control included magnet school curricular flexibility; credit by examination and alternative ways of earning or regaining credit. 		

2. The information adequately explains the legislative support provided, without explicitly stating “personalized learning environments”.

GISD has sufficient autonomy to initiate changes to teaching and learning that will achieve the intent of this reform.

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

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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The District detailed the necessary participation by stakeholders.

a) In GISD's description of how internal and external stakeholders were engaged in proposal development, GISD described several activities that included participation all the stakeholders.

1. This began with the developmental process to the presentation to teachers who expressed opinions and eventually voted to support the project. School leadership teams were engaged. Ninety percent of teacher support was stated.

2. Public meetings were held with parents and the public that included students who might be potential project participants.

(b) Letters of support from such key stakeholders were obtained from a wide range of stakeholders and stakeholder groups. PTOs, School based letters, Nonprofit and profit organizations, city government, medical and family health organizations, and professionals were included. GISD has a deep history of community and organizational engagement.

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

5

4

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The district details a sound analysis of chronology of key events and educational actions taken since 2007.

1. It provides a convincing portrayal of a district impacted by unexpected challenges. The natural disaster may have influenced a more determined school/community based drive to return to normalcy and to accelerate achievement in schools for the high needs students.

2. It conveys a logical and systematic understanding of what needed to be done. GISD examined the gaps, determined that achievement had to be accelerated, and embraced the personalized "backpack" concept of personalized learning. It then focused on the content of what needed to be learned, the data that had to be generated and flowed down into the student's backpack, the technology required to manage the data, and the need to seek continuous improvement. It acknowledged that the interoperability capacity had not been fully operational.

The district did not fully explain the current status of personalized learning but was able to explain how its RTT reform effort would integrate existing elements of reform into a local design.

GISD demonstrated a high quality ability to collect and analyze the educational and academic data necessary to produce a complete picture of the needs and gaps for its high needs, low income and subgroups.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a)(i) GISD provides an opportunity for teachers to become familiar with the college and career readiness standards to be taught, the instructional strategies and RtI learning decisions to be made, and the new individualization of learning (the backpack concept) to be implemented.

Students and parents are to be informed of the backpack concept, the college and career goals to be achieved, and personal and family responsibility for learning.

Leaders are to organize school teams to implement plans to achieve the learning goals.

(a)(ii). GISD has articulated the goals that enables all students to earn at least 12 college credits. It has organized the plan into 3 approaches (content, data, and application) to implement the new learning approach. It has identified necessary types of data that will measure formatively and summatively the progress students are making towards those goals. It will provide the interoperable technology to communicate the progress to teacher, student, and parent.

(a)(iii). GISD plans on creating an individualized plan of the “backpack” that will stress a focus on critical standards learning along with additional instructional supports that deepen learning in light of any need for accommodation.

(a)(iv) GISD's student population has a higher percent of diverse cultural groups and addressing the cultural relevance or sensitivity was not adequately explained.

(a)(v). GISD' s backpack concept requires both teacher and student career and academic goal setting so that the individual or personalized plan will encompass rigorous instruction of the content standards. Those standards are meant to focus on critical thinking, communication (speaking , listening, and writing) and problem-solving abilities

(b)(i). GISD will implement the backpack concept with a personalized learning approach. Teachers will be trained how to develop a personalized plan with the requisite goals and a course schedule that leads to timely graduation. They also will provide opportunities to earn college credit prior to graduation.

(b)(ii). GISD emphasizes the need to select appropriate instructional strategies after examining the available alternatives, particularly for Tier II and III level students whose needs for instructional supports will sustain learning of the rigorous college and career ready standards of Texas. These may include tutoring, paired work, after-school and additional time.

(b)(iii). GISD has adopted Texas' version of high quality college and career ready standards. Participating students will master this high quality content via the expectation of highly rigorous instruction of the standards.

(b)(iv)(A). GISD stated that data will be accessible through online tools of their future interoperable system and entered into the students personal data dashboard.

GISD states that it will provide ongoing, periodic (six week) and summative data on student performance

(b)(iv). GISD will incorporate into the backpack of personalized learning the Rtl model of accommodating high needs students (SWD/ELL) in the utilization of Tier II and Tier III supports. Parents are required to be involved if Tier III services are required.

(c). GISD plans on a series of parent student training of the individualized nature of learning as expressed in the backpack, their goals, their individual educational plan and the instruction needed for their support.

Students will be taught by *My Backpack* Teams who will orient they and their parents towards new level of shared responsibility. The student will participate in designing individualized learning programs according to their interests.

GISD has a high-quality plan for improving learning by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready.

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

20

20

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a)(i) A master plan matches teacher professional development content to the backpack model. Professional Learning Community teams (PLCs) will be trained through a “preplanning” level of readiness to implement data-driven personalized learning.

PLC teams will identify and develop instructional approaches and strategies for PLEs (personalize learning environments) that build college and career readiness. The PLCs will design and apply 6-week personalized learning plans.

PLC teams are trained to analyze student data, identify gaps, select strategies to address gaps, and specific student needs.

PLC teams are trained to engage personalized learning through *My Backpack to the Future* will develop, implement, observe results and revise the PLEs.

Data Coaches will develop educators' capacity to analyze data for continuous improvement for subgroup and student personalized levels.

(a)(ii). GISD provides training to adapt content/instruction. A series of PLC team training will examine data, determine student need, and develop individual plans.

(a)(iii) GISD will teach teachers to use the Texas dashboard system measuring grade level standards progress of students and progress of individual plan towards graduation requirements.

(a)(iv) GISD will train teachers and principals on the utilization of the teacher performance evaluation plan to improve effective teaching, providing frequent classroom observations, conferencing and feedback.

(b)(i) GISD proposes that the use of the TSDS dashboards will provide actionable information. PLCs will access the data, analyze, meet with students and modify the learning of the students.

Personalized Instruction coaches will participate in the analysis and action to adjust learning plans.

(b)(ii) GISD states it provides sufficient technology and access to the district's aligned curriculum. The Texas dashboards will provide greater data access.

(b)(iii) GISD relies on the PLC teams to engage a process of needs identification, the use of the Rtl intervention structure to accommodate needs, the TSDS data dashboards to retrieve and analyze student information, and the continuous improvement plan described throughout the various sections.

(c)(i) GISD provides a plan for schools to use the teacher evaluation information to evaluate effects of teacher performance on the plan and strategies for improvement, enhancing school instructional culture/climate Further work is being done to promote continuous school improvement.

(c)(ii) GISD trains teachers and leaders on matching teacher effectiveness to plan outcomes and the continuous improvement model described in the plan.

(d). GISD describes the instruction of students with effective and highly effective teachers and principals in Attachment R, matching student and teacher data to support equitable assessment of effectiveness

GISD has a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment which will lead to attainment of college and career ready goals. It has the processes and strategies for accomplishing that purpose.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: The Plan explicitly includes all levels of leadership into the decisionmaking process. District Office staff are to be engaged with the principals through a process of regularly scheduled meetings. The remainder of their discussion was satisfactory: 1. Instructional time and calendars are considered to be flexible with site based authority emphasized for principals and school teams. 2. The Plan provides a reasonable approach to earning credit based on the statutory flexibility provided by the state. 3. Middle school students are afforded the opportunity to earn high school credit. 4. The Plan will provide students and teachers the flexibility of achieving mastery through a mix of intervention and accelerated programs. 5. The Plan implements the statutory requirements for FAPE and instructional differentiation for English language learners GISD has met the requirements of high-quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure.		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		

1. The Plan provides adequate information access via the Backpack technology which has a strong database feature for student progress which parents can access; the TSDS; and the parent portal on the District website.
2. Provides budgetary capacity to build family and student technology access.
3. Information describing student/family use of technology in the home was not located. So the internet portal as a key access point to information and education may have limited value.
4. There is an intent to provide family training sessions for the dashboards.
5. Interoperable capacity is not developed as yet.

GISD has a quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Plan discusses the continuous improvement effort in the narratives and in appendices: Section A, B,C, D. and appendices XVI Attachment R and V.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuous improvement is being cultivated as a regular part of the evaluation culture of individuals and schools. A districtwide system of continuous improvement and a process and timeline for the poans evaluation is extensively detailed. 2. A series of goals are identified as the basis for checking the progress of teachers and students in participating. 3. All key role players are responsible for evaluating performance and adhering to the timelines for feedback. The process is also embedded throughout the sections as mentioned here 4. It uses PLC data and sets of protocols and rubrics to monitor the feedback information. <p>GISD has a high quality and comprehensive system of continuous improvement that operates at the school and district level.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Plan describes adequately the integration of an improvement cycle using the PLC's as the mechanism for engaging the continuous improvement cycle. However, the District limited its explanation of quality communication to what it was going to do and the audience.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. GISD provides a rationale for the first three measures that would encompass all students and subgroups. Rationale for the remainder was provided also. b. Each of the performance measures include relevant annual benchmark performances to monitor progress. c. Virtually all of the measures appear to be achievable. However the 12th measure of 12 college credits earned appears to be an overreach of 92% of all subgroups earning 12 college credits by the end of the project. <p>GISD has produced a high quality plan with ambitious yet achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup, with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The narrative and appendices (V) describe a comprehensive system of evaluation that includes investment evaluation. The explanation provides sufficient information on the GISD's ability to evaluate investment effectiveness.</p> <p>They also focuses on quarterly and annual reports in professional development, implementation teams, the</p>		

blended learning, family engagement, and the dashboard.

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>GISD provides a complete project whose funds are identified and appear reasonable expenditures for the intent of the Plan.</p> <p>a). All internal and external funds are identified. How costs were calculated is evident. Total costs are shown for each year with a grant RTTT total of \$20 million. Ongoing costs (personnel) and one-time investments (technology, buses) are listed. Start and ending periods are appropriate.</p> <p>b) The RTTT funds, state and district funds, along with a substantial financial backing by key stakeholders (\$28.7 million) make it reasonable to accomplish in the four years and beyond.</p> <p>c. The GISD project is comprehensive and adequately details all the costs to be charged to the RTT grant. GISD Total Grant funds are \$20 million. The Project describes a budget breakdown by typical budget categories (personnel, travel, etc) and the justifies the costs by allocating costs to the four Project components of Backpack , Data, Content, and Application.</p> <p>GISD has provided a complete description of internal and external funding for the project. The investment of these funds in the various expenditure categories are reasonable and sufficient to adequately implement the Project. Sustainability is planned for at the conclusion of this grant.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The GISD Plan presents a reasonable justification of its internal sustainability once RTT funds are exhausted.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highly effective teachers developed through four years of training will sustain the program for personalized learning. 2. The Professional development will continue via the coaching and supervision. 3. Stakeholder support will be key to the continued evolution of the Plan beyond the four years. 4. The fiscal support will be sustained through a projected fiscal match. 		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	10
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(1). GISD identified several existing partners that provide student and family supports of the GISD programs: Galveston Sustainable Communities Alliance, Institutions of higher education, and UTMB youth centered projects. Several other community profit and nonprofit organizations were involved with GISD and supported the district in a variety of projects. They included social, medical, health, and after hours school programs.</p> <p>(2). GISD provides table information, on several performance results using GISD achievement data, attendance, behavior inventories, birth rates, dropout, achievement gaps, postsecondary completions, etc. The goals and results integrate well into the purposes of this RTTT grant.</p> <p>(3)(a). The Partners will be able to track progress on most measures as they are explicit and several are a part of the GIS data base and entered into the BACKPACK system.</p>		

- (3)(b). The data to be shared will seek improvement in the targeted population of GISD. Periodic partner meetings will monitor progress and identify change issues. Disaggregated data will lead to identification of needs for various high needs populations common to both school and community.
- (3)(c).GISD and its partners intend on scaling regionally and then nationally as a model of community/school partnerships. GISD references the GC PASS has one example of partners combined to address college readiness that could be replicated elsewhere.
- (3)(d). The data to be shared will seek improvement in the targeted population of GISD. Periodic partner meetings will monitor progress and identify change issues.
- (4). Integration is considered by GISD to be accomplished through the student data dashboard. The Partnership would enable GISD to link community information into its database and a series of meetings to ensure there is a fit of goals, services, and results
- (5)(a).The partners will share appropriate data and analyse together the results and identify shared needs to achieve common goals. Student matched database will enable modification of student school and community plans.
- (5)(b).The school and its partners will combine their shared information, (GISD dashboard, Community Report card to collect and inventory needs by various student subgroups
- (5)(c).A semiannual continuous improvement process is considered by GISD to provide the decision making information for school/community partners
- (5)(d).GISD and partners intend on increasing awareness of school/community partnerships services and support parental access of these services through media, meetings, etc.
- (5)(e) Utilizing GISD dashboard information and the partners data bases, the District states it will seek to match supports to outcomes and manage progress in District goals as well as the Galveston Education Transformation Plan.
- (6) Several tables were provided that detailed a series of population level desired results: Table 6: Population level Desired Results; Performance Measures

GISD has clearly described a long history of community partnerships that integrate internal and external resources to augment the schools' resources for additional student and family supports related to social, emotional, or behavioral needs.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

GISD has produced a comprehensive plan that achieves the intent of RTT.

1. It has created a personalized dimension to learning through their "Backpack" concept.
2. The Backpack symbolizes the individualized nature of their project and the data-driven innovations in learning and teaching that are to be piloted.
3. GISD has existing organizational improvement processes and structures to layer the RTT project upon and have the resource capacity to implement the project.
4. GISD described a feasible budget plan that acquires the necessary resources for implementing the four components: Backpack, Data, Content, and Application. The goal of having students graduate with postsecondary credit in hand, is ambitious yet achievable.
5. Increased teacher and leader effectiveness will be enhanced through the professional development plan.
6. Sustaining the effort will be led by highly trained staff, coaches and a projected fiscal matching plan beyond the end of this grant.

Total	210	200
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	12

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Project No. 1 Expansion of Parent Portal

RATIONALE:

The rationale of the Parent Portal is not clearly stated as a problem that needs solutions. Rather it is more of an proposed activity that is an extension of the current parent portal, Skyward Student Information System, used for student grades and attendance.

GISD states that the problem addressed by this application is the lack of test scores and IEP information, graduation plans, student career goals, and interventions.

The rational is clear in its intent.

Strategy/Solution:

GISD states that that the solution is to make available online for GISD parents all the data listed above for their student.

Narrative

There is a very brief narrative that explains only the rationale for the Parent Portal Project.

Objectives

Two of the objectives are technical objectives related to the database and portal.

The remaining three objectives specify parent access and use of the portal and set simple goals of usage and access.

No of students/participants

There is no quantification of numbers of parents participating. Students Measures are not enumerated either.

Measures are simple. 75% of parents are to have access and receive training.

Feasibility. If the technology is available for purchase, then it is feasible to achieve the objective.

Replicability

This project can be replicated, since the technology documentation would be available.

LEA-Co-developed.

GISD did not engage any other LEAs to co-develop the Project.

Budget Prepared

A budget of \$1,799.859 with Personnel, equipment supplies, travel and contracted services.

Adequacy of Budget

The budget appears to be adequate to start up and maintain the portal

Reasonable Costs

The costs appear to be reasonable for the scope of the project.

Significance of project

The project is significant in that it enriches the availability of information for parents.

Evaluation of project success/effectiveness

The evaluation of the project is focused primarily on the frequency of use by parents.

Adverse Affects.

There are no adverse effects as the main project can address its objectives without requiring this project.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	14
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Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Project No. 3 Community Report Card

RATIONALE:

This project proposes to develop a Community Report Card. The problem that it seeks to address involves maintaining and improving the health and social wellbeing of students, family and community. It was contended that there exists a relationship between those factors and a students' educational performance as stressed in Absolute Priority 1. The need that is to be addressed is specific to determining the extent to which health related challenges can be assessed objectively.

Strategy/Solution:

The solution, Community Report Card, will design and collect information related to health and wellbeing of the students and community. The project will be operated the University of Texas Medical Branch.

Narrative

The narrative is extensive in describing the goals, resources, timelines, and deliverables.

Objectives/Goals

The goals are statements of the final outcomes for providing this service throughout GISD; to connect it to the community health report card; the identification of medical/health trends; finding correlations between health and academic achievement.

No of students/participants

The initial needs assessment contacts will contact a random sample of 6000 participants to generate the database for the report card.

Measures

The measure of the project's success is limited to the form of website usage documentation, a trends report, and a correlational study of health and academic achievement.

Feasibility.

The District and its medical partners have established previous working relationships so as to produce this product.

Replicability

The Community Report Card, its purpose, processes, and structures can be readily replicated, if funds are available for such regional and national scaling up

LEA-Co-developed.

The project was not co-developed by other LEAs, but will serve the greater Galveston community.

Budget Prepared

A budget was prepared in the amount of \$2,000,000 with a matching from UTMB of \$1,031,161

Adequacy of Budget

The budget costs remain flat, without any appreciable reduction in costs, probably due to the annual nature of the activity for four years.

Reasonable Costs

The high costs are attributable to the complex design and sophisticated analysis required by professionals experienced by in medicine and social assessments.

Significance of project

The project is considered to be a source of significant information relative to the health and well-being of the community that sends its

students to GISD.

Evaluation of project success/effectiveness

The effectiveness of the project will be the adequacy in the sampling, the statistical credibility and reliability of the data.

Adverse Affects.

It provides additional information to the District regarding the community, but the Project and District will not be adversely affected once it discontinues.

The Community Repory card has merit and is considered a reasonable request for support . It has significance to the Project, it is clear in its purpose, scope of activity, and the community/district benefits.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	12
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Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Project No. 4. Prekindergarten

RATIONALE:

GISD contends that educational success can be achieved later by starting earlier with pre-kindergarten children. Due to the variability in development of young children, differences in behavior and social circumstances, educational success in school can be likewise variable. GISD is partially addressing this by operating a half day of Pre-kindergarten.

Strategy/Solution:

The solution GISD considers to be effective is to extend prekindergarten to a full day.

Narrative

The narrative describes the educational plan inclusive of instructional models and strategies, parental involvement and appropriate teacher pupil ratios. Professional development will be provided to teachers and parents.

Objectives/Goals

GISD will improve the developmental readiness of its pre-kindergarten students.

Collaboration with Headstart will create a seamless transition.

Improved parenting will be a result of the services of a Campus Family engagement specialist.

No of students/participants

662 students

Measures

GISD will measure academic performances of Prek students in the third grade.

Feasibility.

The implementation of this project is straightforward and requires budgetary increases with some costs for new staff.

Replicability

Extending a pre-k program to a full day program can be replicated in other schools regionally and nationally using the model proposed.

LEA-Co-developed.

The project was not co-developed and only will be expanded into other GISD schools.

Budget Prepared

A budget estimate was prepared in the amount of \$865,000.

Adequacy of Budget

The budget is adequate for the purposes and scope of the pre-k program

Reasonable Costs

The costs are based on reasonable estimates of certified staff. However, there is little budget narrative or description of some of the costs.

Significance of project

The project's significance is the probability of improving the developmental readiness of pre-k students for headstart and kindergarten.

Evaluation of project success/effectiveness

The effects of this project is to be an examination of third grade performances of these pre-k students over the next four years.

Adverse Affects.

There will be no adverse effects on GISD and the project if this is not funded as the Pre-K program would continue as a half-day program.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	8
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Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Project No. 5. Health Policy

RATIONALE:

This project intends on strengthening school health advisory committees of GISD. The applicant states that SHACs are largely made up of parent volunteers. They are unfamiliar or unskilled in the nature of their purpose. SHACS have limited financial resources to accomplish their purpose.

Strategy/Solution:

The strategy is to create a model of support for SHAC via a SHAC website.

Providing SHAC access to evidence based research.

Narrative

The narrative describes the rationale, goals, activities, and deliverables.

Objectives/Goals

1. Create a model support system for SHACs that will improve student and family well-being.

The activities include:

1. Creating and maintaining a website for SHAC information
2. Improve access to evidence based research on student and family health and wellbeing.
3. Provide training and SHAC network support for policy and practice change.
4. Lesson Reporting

No of students/participants

A specific narrow targeted population is not defined since its services are more general.

Measures

Deliverables are considered the end-products:

Deliverable 1: A SHAC website

Deliverable 2: A searchable website

Deliverable 3: Training for 5 regional SHACs.

Deliverable 4: Lessons learned.

Cost benefit/ Feasibility. 1. Development costs; and 2. Operating costs.

A cost to develop the SHAC website and the support for evidence based research outweighs the potential benefits to be derived. And the cost do not diminish over time but are sustained at over \$300,000 per year

Replicability

If similar SHACs are required in other regions or states, then this model is considered scalable to those areas.

LEA-Co-developed.

This project was not co-developed by other LEAs.

Budget Prepared

A budget was prepared for the amount of \$2,000,000

Adequacy of Budget

The budget appears to be excessive in the nature of the costs for the purposes intended.

Reasonable Costs

The costs are not considered reasonable for the purposes intended. The costs are out of proportion to the goals and the deliverables and not an entirely reasonable expenditure of RTTT funds.

Significance of project

There is potential benefit for the purposes of this project in that it increases the knowledge capacity of the SHACs in their advisory capacities.

Evaluation of project success/effectiveness

The method of measuring success was not described.

Adverse Affects.

The Project nor the GIS would be adversely affected if this program were not funded.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	12
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Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Project No. 2 Mental Health Support

RATIONALE:

GISD states that this project will provide telepsychiatry services to students in need. The problem that it seeks to resolve is the school/community partnerships that address mental and social issues will increase the numbers of students who may now need to access services more efficiently and in a timely manner.

Strategy/Solution:

The solution is to provide telepsychiatry services to address that impact. Counseling/referral services will be available.

Narrative

The narrative summarized the clinical aspects of the service as it bridges between school and mental service agencies.

The narrative needed to expand further on the details of the activities associated with the following objectives.

Objectives

The service objectives include the provision of telepsychiatry services to eligible students;

Providing awareness activities for parents and students

Coordination of of mental health therapy and telepsychiatry services

Medical related services/treatment will be supervised by UTMB

A Teen Health Center of GISD will be the staffed location of the services.

No of students/participants

Services are available to all children from 0-21

Measures

The measure of services usage by students has been performed before as the available statistics are shown.

Feasibility.

The District and community partners of UTMB already have a relationship within the District and this is a familiar strategy known to both partners.

Replicability

Replicability is possible both regionally and nationally as the type of bridging mental services can be structured in similar ways.

LEA-Co-developed.

While the project was not co-developed by other LEAs, it is expected to offer similar services to two other districts.

Budget Prepared

An extensive budget was prepared with total RTTT cost of \$1,983,000. There are no matching funds identified.

Adequacy of Budget

The budget appears to be adequate with four primary care providers and a project manager.

Reasonable Costs

The functions and responsibilities of the staff needed to be explained further. However, the higher personnel costs are related to the professional credentials required for some of the staff.

Significance of project

The presence of mental illness or issues with at risk students can be alleviated through quick onsite services by the Teen health center professional staff, the telepsychiatry program and the partnership with UTMB.

Evaluation of project success/effectiveness

The evaluation of the project is focused primarily on the frequency of use by students for the various mental issues and medically related issues that arise.

Adverse Affects.

There are no adverse effects as the main project can address its objectives without requiring this project.

The project has merit and is fundable due to the relevancy to the absolute priority, a connection to the competitive priority, and its feasibility.



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0376TX-3 for Galveston ISD

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	6
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant's vision addresses many of the grant's components, and it outlines a credible approach to reform, but it is not consistently coherent and clear in its explication of that vision. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At this stage of the application, the description of the proposed plan lacks clarity or focus – from the main graphic to the descriptions of various components, it is difficult to determine how well-coordinated the vision is, or whether the proposal will promise more than can be delivered coherently and effectively in the timeframe and budget available to the applicant; these elements are, however, addressed more directly later in the application Opening description provides glimpse of personalization, but lacks focus on how achievement is accelerated, student learning is deepened, or equity is increased by this proposed project; again, although these elements are addressed later in the application, they are not as evident here Applicant does well to acknowledge shortcomings of previous work, setting up the need for the current project in the context of steps already taken 		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant's description of its approach to implementation meets sub-criteria (a), (b), and (c) – it describes the process used to select schools, lists the schools that will participate, and indicates the total number of participating students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant identifies different levels of school engagement for each of the three components of its plan, as well as solid rationales for these different levels While the applicant's approach to implementing its reform is of high quality overall, two aspects of the section slightly weaken the strength of the described approach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The provided 3x5 table is helpful in almost all areas, but a small number of the goals outlined seem to be less closely related to the components (ex., the DATA text for the "viable curriculum aligned to rigorous college and career readiness (CCR) standards" row does not appear to be clearly or directly related to that component) than others As in (A)(1), without greater specificity about implementation of some of the more technically challenging aspects of the plan (e.g., the proposed enhancements to the TSDS dashboard), the promised reach of the plan seems ambitious but possibly more than can be realistically implemented within the budget and timeframe; also as in (A)(1), however, these elements are addressed more directly later in the application 		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	9
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has presented a high-quality plan for scaling up the reform in a way that is likely to lead to meaningful 		

district-wide change

- For example, a relative strength of this proposal is that in this section the applicant demonstrates clear planning and conceptualization of where to start big (LEA-wide) and where to start small (pilot) with different aspects of this plan
- Applicant makes the overall goal clear here for the first time – all students graduate with at least 12 college credits
- Logic model addresses the overall goal, inputs, and the DATA and Content components, and expected outputs and outcomes; the APPLICATION output is harder to locate, and it is not clear which implementation strategies are intended to support which component pieces

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

- The applicant addresses all four target areas by sub-group and overall, and integration of post-secondary degree attainment is a strength
- Many of the targets seem ambitious but achievable; some, however, stretch credibility alongside more modest goals (e.g., expected acceleration of gap closure in later years of grant, sometimes seemingly optimistic expected achievement growth for student sub-groups [ex. English I reading growth]; graduation rate approaching 90% for all groups in four years, even those starting at or near 70%)
- The applicant’s tables do not clearly indicate whether the applicant’s goals “are equal to or exceed State ESEA targets for the LEA”

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:

- Applicant’s 4-year data indicate mixed student outcome progress (as applicant alluded to in (A)(1)), though the Hurricane Ike context helps to explain this to some degree; for instance, though much of the gap closure and raw performance data indicate generally positive (if at times minor) changes in proportions of students meeting or exceeding targets, the value-added data suggest that much of that growth has been slower than expected
- Applicant indicates multiple strategies for making reforms in low-performing schools but offers little direct evidence of whether they have been successful or not
- Indications of multiple, layered tools for sharing data

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

- Applicant indicates in the narrative that all required disaggregated budget information is available on the GISD website
- The evidence provided in the Appendix, however, does not include any school-level financial data examples of sub-criteria (a) through (d) to back up the narrative

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

- The state provides GISD with the autonomy and flexibility required for meeting this criterion
- For example, the applicant notes that “Texas’s Legislature and State Board of Education (SBOE) continue to move educational regulation toward greater local control and autonomy,” and the statutes and policies cited support this assertion
- In addition, statewide public and private support for the expansion of the Texas Student Data System and for the CSCAPE curriculum support system indicate that GISD benefits from conditions that will support the success of its proposal

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	8
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant describes multiple venues in which stakeholders were engaged • Other than opportunities for some teacher input, however, there is little indication of active involvement on the part of other primary stakeholders (e.g., parents, students) in the <i>development</i> of this particular proposal • Applicant provides abundant letters of support—some from the standard array of civic organizations, but also some from individuals—though repetition of the same language across some letters of support indicates that some were provided for the writers • Applicant indicates that nearly 90% (89.96%) of teachers support the plan, as indicated by results of votes they cast in early October in response to a query about their support for the proposed plan 		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	4
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant's analysis plan is in many ways indicative of the foundations of a high-quality plan, with some exceptions • For example, the applicant provides multiple data points for supporting the logic of the proposal and for assessing gaps that the plan will address • However, it is not clear how the applicant is assessing the current status of its implementation of personalized learning environments (i.e., establishing a baseline), though the applicant does acknowledge the limitations imposed by its current lack of interoperable data systems, as well as efforts to apply a continuous school improvement rubric to begin to capture current gaps 		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	17
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, most of the components of the applicant's proposed plan described in this section coordinate to create a comprehensive, high-quality plan for improving learning by personalizing the learning environment for all students. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ A particular strength of this proposal is the detail provided about parent and student intake/onboarding to generate understanding and buy-in ((C)(1)(a)(ii)) ◦ Applicant also clarifies here important differences between personalized instruction (which will be piloted) and personalized learning strategies (which will be implemented LEA-wide) ◦ Further supporting the earlier strength related to differentiation of implementation (see comments for (A)(3)) is the plan for differentiation of strategies at the school level, based on individual school characteristics ◦ Family engagement and availability of data coaches ((C)(1)(c)) is another strong component • In some areas—such as (C)(1)(a)(i), (C)(1)(a)(iii), and (C)(1)(a)(iv)—applicant indicates that sub-criteria will be met but does not explain <i>how</i> they will be met (e.g., the application does not explain how student “expression” of life and career goals translates into an understanding of the value of her or his education, nor does it provide sufficient details about the nature of the deep learning experiences that will build upon the attention to each student's areas of academic interest) • The Backpack concept supports well the development of personalized sequences of instruction, variety of high-quality instructional opportunities, diversity of content (though quality of that content [(C)(1)(b)(iii)] is hard to judge), and accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students; however, 6 weeks appears to be the shortest student data update timeframe [(C)(1)(b)(iv)(A)], which, while better than a typical 9-week window, is probably not frequent enough to support an effective formative feedback structure for students 		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	15
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the components of the applicant's proposed plan described in this section indicate a generally high-quality plan 		

- for improving teaching and leading to support personalization of the learning environment for all students. For example:
- The addition of personalized instruction coaches is not only a strength of the plan but also likely a necessity, given the proposed comprehensive transformation of the LEA's approach to instruction delivery
 - Applicant explains clearly and coherently how identified needs will be matched to available resources, how those needs will be identified, and what resources are available
- As with some elements of (C)(1), some of the training in this section speaks more to the orientation of teachers and leaders to the components of the Backpack plan than to details about the nature of the content and structure of the trainings necessary for educators to effectively implement this plan; however, the provided table effectively outlines how trainings can be differentiated based on mastery and likely level of implementation
 - The narrative includes no clear or direct description of training for measuring student progress—narrative mostly focuses on training for interpreting data, but how teachers will be trained to generate their own differentiated measures of student progress is less clear
 - Similarly, there is little indication of the nature of the training for using feedback from evaluation systems to improve practices and effectiveness
 - The proposal provides few details and specifics about training and support for leaders and leadership teams; there is the promise of a plan without provision of an outline of what that plan might look like
 - The proposal includes internal development and support for existing staff, and it includes a performance-based incentives program, but it is unclear whether or how staff reallocation or recruitment will contribute to increases in the number of highly-effective teachers, especially in the focus areas of hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant's plan for supporting project implementation is of high quality and is supported by practices, policies, and rules that will facilitate its efforts to personalize learning • All criteria for this section are met by state law and/or local policy and local structures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ The district's flat hierarchy and size favorably support sub-criterion (D)(1)(a) ◦ Principals and Site-Based Decision-Making Teams have the flexibility necessary under state law to put the applicant's plan into motion – (D)(1)(b) ◦ There are multiple avenues provided for student advancement, including campus flex time – (D)(1)(c) ◦ There are multiple school structure-based outlets for students to demonstrate mastery beyond fixed-schedule testing alone – (D)(1)(d) ◦ The applicant provides evidence of multiple approaches to addressing resource and instructional needs for special-needs learners, including school choice ((D)(1)(e)) 		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant's proposal is supported by a generally high-quality plan for ensuring LEA and school infrastructures will facilitate its efforts to personalize learning. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ The applicant explains how access is provided for all students and how parents and other stakeholders can access and use information technology systems to export data • However, technical support for parents and other stakeholders appears to be limited to family training sessions, without a plan for ongoing support • Also, while applicant indicates interoperability of various elements of PEIMS, the narrative does not provide evidence, examples, or details 		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	11

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant clearly identifies the various discrete aspects of the proposal that are related to continuous improvement
- However, this section of the application does not provide much detail about how the applicant will define a clear and coherent overall strategy or plan for ensuring that *all* of those various pieces of continuous improvement are combined as part of a coordinated plan (e.g., plans for periodic scheduled improvement meetings, goals for the improvement process, etc.).
- There is also little detail about how the applicant plans to make mid-course corrections (if needed), though there are identified *opportunities* for such
- Narrative provides evidence of monitoring and measuring information on the quality of the investments, but it does not make clear how progress on implementation of the plan itself (not just student outcomes progress) will be shared publicly
- It is also not clear from the narrative the extent to which this improvement process will continue after the grant period
- The specifics provided in subsequent sections ((E)(2)-(E)(4)) help to clarify some of the mechanisms in place to support continuous improvement

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

5

5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- This section of the proposal is very comprehensive, especially the on-boarding component (as noted earlier re: (C)(1)(a)(ii))
- For example, in addition to an array of methods for updating and training faculty and staff to improve communications about aspects of student progress beyond grades alone, the plan includes not just one but a series of meetings for parents and students to orient them to the new approach to schooling
- The inclusion of a quarterly “data dashboard” update on plan progress also is a strength

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

5

4

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- The application provides clear rationales for the measures it has chosen, as well as explanations for how the measures will provide the information needed
- Less attention is given to describing a system for checking both the usefulness and the accuracy of the data gathered, as well as how GISD will make mid-course corrections if it is determined that some data are not as useful as originally thought (cf. similar notes for section (E)(1))

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

5

5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- Comprehensive, if general, plan for evaluation that includes quarterly and annual reports on each aspect of the applicants plan, as well as a fully-realized, high-quality outline for how the evaluation will unfold over the four years of the grant
- Applicant’s plan to engage—and to budget for engaging—an outside evaluator to handle this evaluation (instead of attempting to take on that responsibility internally) is an added strength

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant’s proposed budget will support the proposed project during the implementation period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Applicant identifies all funds that will support this project, as well as how and where they will be applied ◦ The extensive presence of outside support (more than 50% of the total cost of the proposed projects) is impressive as well as necessary, given the grand scope of the proposal 		

- o Using the matching funds to cover the cost most likely to recur (district-level management) is well thought out
- However, no section of the budget demonstrates a plan for reducing reliance on RttT-D funding as the project draws to a close, which may be problematic when it becomes necessary to shift from RttT-D funding to funding exclusively from other sources at the end of the grant

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

10

10

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- Applicant makes clear that project sustainability will depend on shifting responsibilities from grant-funded positions to permanent positions
- Evidence of likelihood for continuation of significant matching-fund support also suggests ongoing sustainability for at least some of the ongoing costs
- In addition, the evidence the applicant provides in (B)(1) and elsewhere of its past success in securing external funding further supports the likelihood of sustainability

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

- The proposal clearly meets all of the criteria for the Competitive Preference Priority, with only three minor exceptions:
 - o (3)(a) Some indicators are to be tracked via the proposed Backpack, but how others will be measured (e.g., access to early childhood education; enhancement of PK-12 choice options) is not as concrete or clear
 - o (3)(d) While the application does describe a best-case scenario for an improvement trajectory, it does not provide details about how the partnership will ensure that such a trajectory becomes a reality in practice
 - o (5)(b) Identification and inventorying of school needs and assets is handled passively via the provision of data; a more active plan for helping educators understand how to connect data to needs and assets would strengthen this component

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

- At its best, the proposal outlines a plan for a comprehensive, community-involving, pre-school through college approach to personalizing education
- The proposal is occasionally overburdened by its own complexity, but the applicant has made a concerted effort to combine the best of all of its local resources and talent and bring them to bear on attaining its goal

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	8
<p>Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Parent Portal plan is supported by a strong rationale and a clear connection to the main proposal • The success of the main proposal is not dependent upon awarding funds for this supplemental proposal • There does not appear to be any plan to complete this task in conjunction with other LEAs • Some budget costs (office supplies, but most especially \$1.2 million in programming costs) seem very steep, given the scope of the work proposed 		
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	12
<p>Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mental Health Support plan is supported by a strong rationale and a clear connection to the main proposal—adding to the main plan by proposing a way to work with the community to educate the whole child • The success of the main proposal is not dependent upon awarding funds for this supplemental proposal • Work will be completed with two other LEAs, though no details are given • A \$4 million budget (half in matching funds) for mental health work over 3 years in 4 LEAs seems both reasonable and affordable 		
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	15
<p>Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Health Report Card plan is a well-laid-out plan that builds on pre-existing work and is supported by a strong rationale and a clear connection to the main proposal—an extension of the Backpack/data dashboard concept to include related health data that also supports the Competitive Priority criterion of working with community groups • The success of the main proposal is not dependent upon awarding funds for this supplemental proposal • Work will be completed with two other LEAs • The budget is well within range and is supported by outside funds 		
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	12
<p>Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rationale for the Pre-Kindergarten plan is sound • The success of the main proposal is not dependent upon awarding funds for this supplemental proposal • Work will be completed with two charter schools outside GISD • At less than \$1 million for 4 years of work, the plan appears to be a bargain, but the budget is thinly-developed or –defended and therefore difficult to evaluate 		
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	8
<p>Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The success of the main proposal is not dependent upon awarding of funds for the Health Policy plan • There are several areas of concern related to this proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Because the plan is not clearly distinct from another optional proposal from the same group (i.e., the Community Health Report Card), indication of some coordination with that plan to ensure elimination of redundancies and/or possible efficiencies would be helpful ◦ While the plan is expected to reach out to other LEAs in Years 2 and 3, it is not clear which specific LEAs will be involved, or whether this plan is being co-developed with those LEAs or is merely being delivered to them ◦ Connections to the main GISD proposal are referenced but are not clear and compelling; linkages between the goals of the <i>My Backpack</i> plan do not appear to be fully developed • The plan's budget is reasonable and is strengthened by its inclusion of support from other sources 		

