



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0465FL-1 for Seminole County Public Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Seminole County Public Schools (SCPS) proposes to implement ePathways, an ambitious district wide program of educational reform. Two of the factors that make ePathways ambitious are the variety and rigor of new programs it develops, supports and monitors, and the fact that it includes as participants <u>all</u> the students, teachers and administrators in <u>all</u> its elementary, middle and high school.</p> <p>In addition to students in K-12 grades is an ambitious project designed to expand such existing activities as voluntary pre-kindergarten and KinderCamp to a greater number of pre-kindergarten children. This initiative adds value to the program because it reaches some who might otherwise enter kindergarten unprepared for the rigorous learning called for in the Common Core State Standards.</p> <p>Other ePathways projects (e.g., expanded virtual and mixed-media for students and support for personalized learning, can be considered ambitious because they require, among several other factors, extensive reliance on effective or highly-effective teachers and principals. Bringing educators to such high levels involves extensive and effective teacher and leader professional development. That the program does this is a strength of this proposal because SCPSs professional development is not only ambitious but also appears to be achievable due to its extensiveness, ample budget, mentoring of new teachers, effective use of district peers as well as outside presenters, and a followup system of classroom coaching.</p> <p>Because the SCPS RttT-D program is ambitious, is built on past success such as the gradual closing of the achievement gap between subgroups, is organized around the provisions of the RttT-Ds core educational assurance areas, has collaborative arrangements like summer internships with local industry and with the New Horizons program that focuses on student social and emotional competencies, develops and support Professional Learning Communities that among other things analyze a variety of data in order to improve instruction, and develops its teachers for instructional effectiveness in new curricula, it appears that the program is not only ambitious but also had a strong potential to be achievable.</p> <p>One factor that does not appear to be addressed in regard to the ePathway model is how students choose or are advised on which pathway to follow, and whether once chosen, are locked into it.</p> <p>The high score of 9 out of a possible 10, reflects these observations.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The scope of SCPS's RttT-D projects and degree of oversight indicate that the program has the potential to impact at some level of involvement all the LEA's students and educators. For example, pre-kindergarten KinderCamp cultivates early learners; expansion of the use of technology in STEM instruction promotes excellence and equity in career and college readiness as well as providing teachers with the opportunity to individualize instruction; "Schools of Promise" provide support for the most academically and socially at-risk students; and community partnerships like that with the New Horizons program in support of whole student development.</p> <p>Another strength of the program is that it assesses and addresses some of the specific needs of students in its high-poverty schools. For example, to encourage and support participation of low-income students in black and Hispanic sub-groups in advanced placement programs and impact the achievement gap, the program offers PSAT preparation camps, academic tutoring, and peer-mentoring.</p> <p>Overall, the specifics of this criterion have been adequately addressed.</p>		

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>SCPS's RttT-D application describes its plans to provide "academically rigorous, personalized and flexible learning experiences to accommodate individual needs of all students, with the ultimate outcome of improving student learning and academic achievement while closing the achievement gap." The LEA proposes to accomplish this through seven project areas (1) Cultivate Early Learners: Pre-Kindergarten Pathways; (2) Promote Excellence and Equity in Career- and College-Readiness; (3) Expand Virtual and Mixed-Mode Options for Students; (4) Accelerate Schools of Promise; (5) Foster Professional Development for Teachers and Leaders to Support Personalized Learning; (6) Nurture Community Partnerships in Support of Whole Student Development; and (7) Provide Infrastructure Support for the RttT-D Reform Plan.</p> <p>Overarching goals of these projects include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close the achievement gap between student sub-groups. e.g., the Schools of Promise provide low-income students (typically those in lower achieving sub-groups) with academic tutoring and peer-mentoring. • Prepare all students for academic and job related success in the 21st century, e.g., the establishment of a cadre of Guidance Counselors specific to Career and Technical Education / Vocational Education for middle and high schools. • Enhance the ability of educators to provide high quality instruction, e.g. the establishment of a cadre of Teachers-on-Assignment to provide professional development to classroom teachers on integration of technology into instructional plans. <p>The anticipated outcomes envisioned in ePathways appear to be achievable given the scope of activities and emphasis on professional development outlined in this proposal. These outcomes or deliverables include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide a <i>school system of choices</i> with efficient and effective structure in which to offer students a variety of instructional environments to achieve mastery through personalized learning using various modalities in diverse settings, which allows students to pursue his/her preferred learning pathway; 2. Present an equal focus on high- and low-performing students through increased accessibility to innovative opportunities to learn, including <i>pathways for acceleration and remediation</i>; and, 3. Foster access, equity and diversity in the district's current offerings through the <i>expansion of opportunities</i> currently available to specific or limited populations of students. <p>That this aspect of the plan is of high quality is evidenced by the provision of goals, activities, leadership, deliverables, and implied timelines discussed above.</p> <p>Since the structure, processes, oversight and budget (with a few exceptions such as the absence of plans and budget to maintain and repair the variety of new equipment) are in place to implement and support these projects and goals, this criterion is scored in the high point range.</p>		

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	8
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<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district has aligned its RTT-D goals for improved student outcomes to the Seminole County Strategic Plan and the State of Florida's ESEA waiver goals. SCPS has been designated as <i>an Academically High Performing School District</i> by the Florida State Board of Education which gives SCPS the ability to waive various state statutes. ePathways goals reflect the district's commitment to increased academic performance by all student groups on multiple key performance measures that center on national, state and local metrics.</p> <p>The primary assessment used to measure proficiency in Reading, Writing, Math and Science is the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT 2.0). Although there are no statistics provided to show Reading, Writing, Math and Science proficiency gains or losses in the past, gains are projected by subgroup through the 2016-17 school year. Some projected goals that reflect the SCPS Excellent and Equity Goals exceed the ESEA waiver targets goals and seem unrealistic (e.g., increase in the % above state proficiency measures of the black subgroup in reading jumps from 44% in 2011-12 to 89% in 2016-17, a 49.4% increase). The same analysis of estimates of growth generally hold true for achievement gaps, graduation rates and college enrollment.</p> <p>Given the size and diversity of the SCPS, not discounting the SCPS's strong plan for for improving student outcomes, the projected gains, especially in some subgroups, appear a bit optimistic, especially in light of the history of much smaller gains over the course of the last 4 year as displayed in this section's student performance tables. However, considering the overall strength of the plan's activities and support systems, those projections, although ambitious, appear to be achievable.</p>		
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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
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Evidence that SCPS has a reliable infrastructure upon which to build as it implements ePathways is its favorable designation as <i>an Academically High Performing School District</i> by the Florida State Board of Education. This designation is awarded to school districts that earn a district grade of <i>A</i> for two consecutive school years and with no individual schools rated <i>F</i>, comply with the state's constitutional amendment limiting class sizes, and receive a financial audit with no material weaknesses or instances of material noncompliance.</p> <p>Overall, the district has shown a modest but consistent record of increasing student proficiency for all student sub-groups and decreasing achievement gaps. For example, in Reading, the percent of full-year students who scored proficient on state assessments has increased in the last four years from 70.7% to 72.1%. Student proficiency in Reading has also increased among Language Learner sub-groups. The Reading achievement gaps in 2011 ranged from -4.5 percentage points for Asian students (Asian students outperformed White students) to 37.0 points for Students with Disabilities. Over the four-year comparison period, Black, Hispanic, Economically Disadvantaged, and English Language Learner sub-groups have decreased the achievement gap with the comparison group. Graduation and college enrollment rates show similarly modest gains.</p> <p>ePathways uses the Skyward and EndInSight digital programs as its main student data systems. Skyward EndInSight and make performance data, instructional strategies, attendance, and discipline concerns, available to students, educators and parents.</p> <p>Although performance data shows achievement gap gains in the lowest-performing schools, there is little indication in the plan that activities or strategies will differ significantly from those in the district's other schools, at least none that portend a positive continuation of even improvement in achievement in those schools.</p> <p>Because these programs are available to parents does not guarantee that they know how or have the equipment to access or interpret them. Since these issues are not addressed in the proposal, parental and even perhaps student use is questionable. Full point value is not awarded for this reason, however other aspects of the criterion are addressed.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The district's Office of Finance and Budget publishes various financial reports on the internet. The most recent eight years of budget books are available on the district's website, as well as the Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports from 2006-2011. Districtwide expenditures related to instructional support and administration are available for public access through the Florida Department of Education, Office of Funding and Financial Reporting. Further, each school website provides public access to the school budget, school financial reports, and internal accounts activities report.

The school financial report includes salary and benefits by position classification and non-personnel expenditures (*materials, supplies, and capital outlay costs*) An example of a school financial report is located in the application's Appendix. The report provides salary and benefit expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration. It does not, however, include the "high level of transparency" as called for in this criterion which calls for the actual salaries of individual teachers, not just the overall category of teacher salaries.

It is noted that salaries are listed by school and category, but actual individual salaries are unavailable. Upon award, the district intends to continue to be provided via the school website, as well as upon public record request. It should be pointed out, however, that availability doesn't necessarily equate with ease of access.

In summary, individual personnel salaries are not provided to the public and ease of access to financial information is

available through limited venues.

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

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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

SCPS has sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments. These statutes and regulations include but are not limited to Florida Statute 1003.428(2)(c) that requires high school students to take at least one course in an online learning environment to graduate from high school, and other statutes that permit school districts to fund and operate career schools, departments, and classes, establish public evening schools, and enter into agreements with other agencies for joint projects.

The district also has the conditions to implement the personalized learning environments it proposes. These include, for example, development of mixed-mode and virtual course curriculum at the elementary and middle/high school levels. The elementary content development will be focused on use within the district’s K-5 virtual school – the Seminole Academy of Digital Learning; while at the secondary level mixed-mode courses will be created to engage students in both face-to-face and virtual learning experiences. Both these initiatives foster and support personalization of instruction.

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

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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Meaningful stakeholder engagement and support by students, parents, faculty, staff, administrators, and external business/community members was a strong component in the development of the proposal and worthy of the high score awarded to this criterion. Over the span of the year prior to the completion of the application, a variety of discussions and anonymous surveys were conducted. The first step in this process was a needs assessment of students, parents and community members to elicit their opinions on gaps in educational service in their respective schools and throughout the school system.

Survey responses provided the district with the following highlighted needs that were subsequently incorporated into the RttT-D plan.

- Increased use of technology in the classroom
- Increased opportunity for advanced classes
- World languages in elementary school
- Increased support for struggling students

The next stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal was a leadership conference for district and school administrators followed by a number of “town hall” meetings for teachers, guidance counselors, business partners, and the general public. A sampling of the external stakeholders involved in these conversations includes the local League of Women Voters, Seminole County Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the Retired Educators Association.

District administrators presented to and garnered feedback from a focus group comprised of students from one high school; as well as meetings with classroom teachers, school principals at the elementary and secondary school levels, district administrators from all relevant departments, the Seminole County Council of Parent Teacher Associations, and the Seminole Educators Association (the bargaining unit for SCPS teachers). District staff members have also collaborated with representatives from the University of Central Florida and Seminole State College on portions of the proposal development. [Agendas and/or sign-in sheets for these meetings are presented in the Appendix of the application as well as letters of support from key stakeholders including the Seminole Educators Association, district representative bodies, local community agencies, the business sector, and higher education.]

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

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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The district is to be complemented for recognizing that replicating previous efforts to analyze a plan will not result in providing students with the resources needed to maintain ePathway’s high performance goals and close the LEA’s achievement gap while providing personalized learning environments that will maximize the strengths and interests of every student. SCPS also is recognized for its successes in the past. Nevertheless, the SCPS’s plan for analyzing the RtT-D plan does not provide a convincing rationale or identify activities, timelines, deliverables, or responsible individuals that would make the effort one of high-quality as specified in the criterion. The low score awarded this criterion reflects this lack of substantiating evidence.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

This section exemplifies the elements that define a high-quality plan. It provides the strongest and most compelling exposition of ePathways, the district’s comprehensive plan for equitable access to high-quality personalized, individual learning experiences that present students with options for educational success, as well as a solid support structure to facilitate heightened student achievement. This section also is the application’s most specific and organized segment.

The plan focuses on strategies that cross Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12 with a common thread of preparing students for college and/or career upon graduation. As such, the project strives to achieve the following key goals: (1) prepare and support all PreK through grade 12 students to graduate with their age-appropriate cohort; (2) prepare all students for academic and job related success in the 21st century; (3) maintain high expectations for all students and eliminate the disparity in achievement among identified subgroups that include socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, English Language Learners (ELL) and Students with Disabilities (SWD); and (4) provide first class, 21st century educational experiences for students, teachers, administrators, parents and the community through the integration of thinking, teamwork and technology in learning environments, the expansion of technology in classrooms and the work place, the infusion of good citizenship practices, and the development and implementation of the ePathways vision.

To accomplish the stated goals, the work plan will develop and implement seven discrete yet interconnected projects for students, teachers and leaders. Aligned with ePathways key goals and the district’s strategic initiatives, each of the project’s activities, timelines, deliverables, leadership, and staff, will focus on providing unique, flexible learning environments which meet students’ educational goals and desired pathways.

Following are examples of how five of the plan’s seven projects meet the high-quality plan elements and at least one of (C)(1)’s criteria.

- Cultivate Early Learners: Pre-Kindergarten Pathways. The aim of this experience is familiarize students with the terms, words, ideas and educational experiences to prepare them for formal education thereby improving progress of students through the primary grades.
- Promote Excellence and Equity in Career- and College-Readiness. Focusing on transition from 3rd to 4th grade; 5th to 6th grade; and 8th to 9th grade the project presents struggling students with opportunities for early intervention and accelerated learning.
- Expand Virtual and Mixed-Mode Options for Students. This project provides middle school students the opportunity to personalize learning aligned with common core standards through the availability of a myriad of digital content and assessment interfaces.
- Accelerate Schools of Promise. This project includes an Instructional Technology Content Support Team to provide assistance in designing lessons which integrate technology into the learning environment and provide ongoing professional development, coaching and modeling for teachers.
- Foster Professional Development Opportunities for Teachers and Leaders to Support Personalized Learning. , The district will partner with the regional university to provide Guidance Counselors with a special topics course specific to the needs of students preparing for specialized vocations post-graduation. Focusing on best practices in advising Vocational Education students and the various career opportunities for students in the area.

The top score awarded to this criterion recognizes its excellence in respect to this criterion.

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

With the efforts of ePathways to encourage highly flexible learning environments for students, it will be vital for new teachers to receive professional support in implementation of these ePathway initiatives. In addition, studies have shown that investment in high-quality new teacher induction and mentoring enhances both. Among several noteworthy aspects in its plan to address this criterion is that SCPS provides for professional development opportunities for STEM teachers, teachers of hard-to-staff subjects and those who teach special populations of students. This is significant because it prepares for and supports the effective introduction and use of new curriculum and the integration of new technology into personalized learning. Evidence of the importance leadership places on this specialized PD is the establishment of a cadre of Teachers-on-Assignment to provide professional development to classroom teachers on integration of technology into instructional plans.

Another indication of leader awareness of the power of professional development is the plan for new teacher orientation and mentoring, and teacher recruitment and retention. In addition, the goal of the SCPS Educational Leadership Academy, aligned with the Florida Principal Leadership Standards, is to attract, develop, and retain high quality leaders.

Another commendable feature is ePathways plan to promote excellence and equity in career- and college-readiness by, for example, providing personalized learning opportunities through advanced placement options such as 4th grade students taking 5th and 6th grade math courses, middle school students enrolled in virtual World Languages courses during their regular school day, and high school students and teachers being able to schedule "flex schedule" time or by means of a home-school hybrid.

Decisions involved in such a schedule designed to address personalized instruction are largely informed by data. The district utilizes Skyward for this, a student information management system that uses performance data and other student data for this purpose as well as to promote family engagement in student learning.

In summary, the strongest evidence of adherence to the criteria in this section is found in the areas of professional development including the leadership academy, data collection and use, and access to tool, data and resources. Less evident are indications that staff feedback and evaluation systems are in place that are geared to improve instruction or to assess the use of resources to meet student needs. Therefore, the score is in the high range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	14

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district is commended for having instituted adequate support and delivery systems to service all participating schools. The effort will be administered at the executive level by the Deputy Superintendent for Instructional Excellence and Equity. To address all aspects of the reform vision, the office will be staffed with positions in the areas of programmatic, financial, and performance data to support RTT-D strategy implementation (An Organizational Chart of the office is in the Appendix).

The SCPS maintains an Educational Support team and an Instructional Support Team. The teams are commended for their focus on and success in closing the performance achievement gap and increasing the graduation rates of student sub-groups as evidenced, for example, by the Math achievement gaps in 2011 ranged from -7.8 percentage points for Asian students to

34.9 percentage points for Students with Disabilities. Over the four-year comparison period, Black, Hispanic, Asian, Multi-Racial, Economically Disadvantaged, English Language Learner, and Students with Disabilities sub-groups have all narrowed achievement gaps with the comparison group.

The district is structured so that schools have flexibility to address their specific needs. For example, they may offer courses at times other than the regular school day which allows students to accommodate family/work needs. Each principal receives financial information from the school district and then creates a budget to meet the needs identified in the School Improvement Plan. This allows schools to provide learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students in the school, including students with disabilities and English learners. Each school maintains a School Advisory Council which approves the School Improvement Plan and has its own budget to support the aims of the plan. Notably, school leaders in the district have the flexibility to adjust staffing levels to meet emerging student needs and interests.

Missing but stressed in this criterion is evidence that students have the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic. However, it is noted that students have the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards, for example, by selecting to participate in advanced placement courses,

With the exception of allowing flexibility in the amount of time students have to demonstrate proficiency, the LEA's plan meets the criterion's requirements. The awarding of a high score reflects this.

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

The district's plan is both forward-looking and practical in providing support to stakeholders for personalized learning. For example, it is planned and budgeted for that all schools will be upgraded to wireless internet. This is laudable since doing so will allow students to access digital content from their own or school owned devices in the classroom, providing an incentive as well as support for personalized learning.

It is also encouraging that because most schools also have an on-site Educational Technology Facilitator who provides systems, software, and instructional support to teachers and/or a network specialist who provides hardware and network support, students, teachers and parents are likely to be able to use the equipment more effectively than otherwise

Also of note is that the district's plan includes the recruitment of twenty-one teachers to serve as members of a district Instructional Technology Content Support Team with the task to be readily available and prepared to support for teachers, students, and families at all schools,

It is encouraging to note that the plan provides open access to student information to parents. The Skyward system contains performance data and other student data as well as material promoting family engagement in student learning. Again, it is cautioned that 'access to' does not guarantee 'use-of'. The training of parents in the use and purpose of Skyward is not addressed and the absence of such support has the potential to limit parent input.

Overall, the elements of this criterion are substantially addressed.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

SCPS demonstrates that it is organized and prepared to continually monitor progress of initiatives within the schools and across various special projects which impact excellence and equity in student learning. It will follow the existing SCPS Continuous Improvement Model [displayed in the Appendix] which involves a sequence of activities ranging from identification of factors through evaluation of interventions.

Representative committees will oversee and provide direction on modifications of the plan. To increase perspectives, the district will make use of existing relationships with local colleges and universities to further enhance the work of the reform plan.

As a further indication of the degree of organization, and therefore probability of success, the leadership teams at the district level will serve as an

internal control for the plan’s implementation. The RttT-D/ePathways Director, Program Facilitator, and Coordinator for Schools of Promise, in collaboration with the district’s state Race to the Top Coordinator, will provide regular updates to stakeholders to garner feedback.

To ensure that information is disseminated in a manner that meets the needs of all stakeholders, evaluation data will be provided during presentations at meetings of relevant associations, committees, and coalitions. Key project personnel will also share information about the programs developed under this initiative to their peers through presentations or submissions to scholarly journals, as appropriate.

This is a well-conceived, organized and staffed endeavor earning a high score.

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

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3

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

To ensure that information is disseminated in a manner that meets the needs of all stakeholders, evaluation data will be provided during presentations at meetings of relevant associations, committees, and coalitions. Key project personnel will also share information about the programs developed under this initiative to their peers through presentations or submissions to scholarly journals, as appropriate.

Other venues for disseminating information would be advisable, such as local newspapers, radio, school and district web pages and newsletters, and local television news shows would be more likely to be accessed by parents and other community members than relying solely on those proposed.

Less clear, however, is the extent to which specific feedback, other than district level officials, will be solicited, received (especially external stakeholders), and modifications made as a result.

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

5

4

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

SCPS substantially addresses these criteria by attesting that all district-proposed performance measures were selected to align with district initiatives, as well as meet or exceed the State of Florida’s College and Career Ready Standards. Each of these measures is listed, along with (a) the rationale for selection, (b) link to the theory of change, and (c) methods for continuous review of measures. All 14 of these measures are listed, categorized by all populations, Grades pre-k-3, and Grades 4-8, Grades 9-12. The rationale for their selection is also provided. For example, the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) serves as the state standardized assessment for student proficiency in the core academic subjects of Reading (Grades 3-10) and Math (Grades 3-8); while in Grades 9-10 the measure for Math is the Algebra End-of-Course assessment.

A questionable aspect of the district’s process in this case is that although it provides that the performance measures will be reviewed, the plan does not specify the method for each measure. Rather it states that key stakeholders will review the effectiveness of the measures on a regular basis to ensure each of these measures is valid for the given student outcomes.

In summary, all but the review of the 14 performance measures is addressed for this criterion.

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

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4

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

With three exceptions, the district plan to evaluate the effectiveness of its RttT-D components is thorough and well-conceived. The weak or non-existent evaluation areas are professional development, use of technology, and community partnerships.

A strong feature is the evaluation of the plan’s deliverables, student achievement and teacher performance data. The plan specifies that data will be collected, examined and assessed through three evaluation intervals – short-term, intermediate and long-term. The short-term evaluation will be conducted as a process review of the activity implemented. An intermediate review will be conducted as an indicator of progress towards the district’s projected outcomes. The long-term evaluation will measure the plan’s overall results for student achievement. The evaluations will be aligned to the plan’s goals and be supported by an external evaluator (a good feature since it will tend to moderate any prejudices). Results will be shared and form the basis for possible modifications.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district has included no funds other than RttT-D funds that will support the project. This reviewer agrees with SCPS's rational that the costs of the program are reasonable given that it provides programs across all district schools, is designed increase student achievement, decrease academic disparities between student sub-groups, and increase the rate of students who graduate college- and career-ready and that costs are reasonable and sufficient to carry out program goals. This is considered reasonable given that the costs equate to approximately \$158.87 per student, per year and an estimated 62,943 students and 4,965 educators [based on 2011-12 enrollment and staff] will be impacted by the reform efforts.</p> <p>The proposal provides a clear summary in response to criterion (F)(c)(ii) which is much appreciated by this reviewer. The funds requested fall into three major categories: <i>one-time investments, short-term program costs, and on-going program costs.</i> Within each project's budget table these costs are specifically noted. One-time investments include items that will be purchased as initial "start-up" costs for implementation of various strategies. defined in sections (C)(1) and (C)(2). These costs include necessary supplies, materials and equipment for execution of these activities. Short-term program costs are those budget items that serve specific, reform-related purposes; however, are not necessary following the project period of four years to maintain the reform initiatives. Some of these short-term program costs include grant-related administration and evaluation, while others represent strategies that have clear and concise deliverables to be met by the close of the four-year project period. On-going costs include those expenses that will remain following the grant period. These costs include programs embarked upon during the reform, such as the Transition Programs or the World Languages Expansion. Across all projects, \$1,802,768 in funds requested is noted as one-time.</p> <p>There is one glaring omission throughout every budgeted program that includes the purchase of equipment - nothing is budgeted nor is any mention made of maintenance and repair of that equipment. This, of course presents serious question a to sustainability of equipment and protection of investment. Several points have been deducted from this criterion's score because of this serious omission.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	3
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Although SCPS has included in its proposal several statements that suggest that most innovations that will have been accomplished during the 4 years of the plan will have been integrated into the system beyond the grant period, there is little or no evidence to that effect. The exception is continuation of professional development, voluntary Pre-K, and CTE program development that will be assumed through local or state funds. It is also noted that since the plan proposes little or no goal, timelines or leadership, it does not meet the "High-Quality" designation specified in this criterion.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	8
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Because non-academic issues such as social, emotional and behavioral needs of students can have a profound effect on their performance and achievement, SCPS is recognized and to be complemented to have been in a partnership with the New Horizons Program since 2006 to develop and maintain the socio-emotional well-being connection of secondary grade students to academic success. To complement the initiatives under the ePathways plan, the district proposes to scale services to an additional 10 schools during the project period to ensure personalized, whole student development. Budget items and material in the Appendix further detail the program</p> <p>The New Horizons program focuses on furthering student social and emotional competencies in order to increase academic achievements. New Horizons will focus on providing service to students and families, as well as providing in-service training to instructional staff in the targeted schools to ensure school personnel are knowledgeable of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use warning signs. In question, however, is the comparatively little attention paid to the level of parents participation in this</p>		

program.

Regarding the turnaround of the district's 6 low performing schools, the plan fails to offer any specific or significant activities or strategies to achieve the reforms in student performance other than those ambitious and achievable interventions it proposes for all other schools.

The plan provides outcome data and thoughtfully charts details of the programs goals, activities, deliverables and timelines and follows the Continued Improvement Model. The inclusion of these elements in the RttT-D plan and its record of accomplishment are to be commended.

The annual ambitious yet achievable performance measures for the proposed population level are supported in the narrative section of the plan.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

SCPS's ePathways plan meets the requirements of Absolute Priority 1 by such high quality elements as

- Addressing the core educational assurance areas by assessing students and analyzing data to preparing them to inform instruction and succeed in college and the workplace, to recruit, develop, reward and retain effective teachers and principals, and to turn around low-achieving schools.
- Adopting and applying the common core standards as they relate to the plan's projects
- Employing the elements of the ePathways program as its strategy for addressing personalized learning through, for example, the flexibility of hybrid schedule opportunities and the ability of each school to tailor its budget to its specific student population.
- Implementing and sustaining extensive and comprehensive professional development and induction programs
- Providing support to the most socially and emotionally at risk students through partnership with the New Horizons local program
- Extension of services to pre-K students
- Adopting as its key goals: (1) prepare and support all PreK through grade 12 students to graduate with their age-appropriate cohort; (2) prepare all students for academic and job related success in the 21st century; (3) maintain high expectations for all students and eliminate the disparity in achievement among identified subgroups that include socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, English Language Learners (ELL) and Students with Disabilities (SWD); and (4) provide first class, 21st century educational experiences for students, teachers, administrators, parents and the community through the integration of thinking, teamwork and technology in learning environments, the expansion of technology in classrooms and the work place,

Total	210	178
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0465FL-2 for Seminole County Public Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
<p>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</p>	10	7
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The program is aligned with the current core standards and the revised vision of the district.</p> <p>The application states a clear vision for reform.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant clearly recognized the single pathway currently utilized by the school system and would like to reform that pathway to a multifaceted approach to adopt and innovative program that combines both educational research and economical drive targeted at PreK through 12 grade students. • The application has also supported the notion of the individual approach to life for students and states it clearly understands and supports the idea that student's will not all desire to attend college. • The applicant noted that some students will attend college both/either 4 or 2 year institutions and some may desire to directly enter the workforce. • The applicant also aligned the new program epathway reform plan which allows students the opportunity to engage in learning on whichever path they choose. <p>The applicant does describe the four core areas to be address by the utilization of the ePathways program.</p> <p>The applicant mentioned an individual approach to learning but does not offer details to the approach to deepening learning for the individual approach.</p> <p>There is a clear statement of goals and outcomes by the applicant but does not offer a strong explanation of detail regarding the epathways approach to individualizing the learning plan.</p> <p>The applicant fails to offer direct detailed information related to the four core areas. The applicant does not offer enough details about how deepening student learning and increasing equity will transpire by the utilization of epathways.</p> <p>The limited detail of how these initiatives will be met supports the reviewer's midrange score.</p>		
<p>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</p>	10	9
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant offers a strong narrative of the reform plan. The plan to identify and support individualized learning objectives and strategies are clearly explained within this section. The applicant has adopted a reform program classified for educational pathways across the district.</p> <p>The applicant describes a relevant target population that demonstrates a good target group. The applicant explains that it will target all students from the district that consist of nearly 63,000 students and 5,000 faculty members. The applicant offers strong data to support the target population breakdown as nearly 40 percent meet the low income classification threshold.</p> <p>The applicant also provided clear illustration of need as 92% of the target population is classified in the economically disadvantaged group. The applicant expresses a good diverse population of nearly 44%. These data clearly demonstrate the applicant's demonstration of need.</p> <p>Because the applicants target is all schools in the district, it provided a list but offered limited details of the grant activities that would transpire within these participating schools. One can assume that all programs will be available to all students, yet that wasn't clearly stated. The applicant did consistently point out that all students from all schools would be targeted.</p> <p>There was no description of how these schools were selected because the selection was all. It's a simple process. However, no details of the activities were noted in the section to meet the criteria completely, and therefore, reflected in the reviewer's score.</p>		
<p>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)</p>	10	8
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant explains the district wide plan is quality of education for all students. The applicant also continues to describe Equity and excellence in education is the force behind the plan but there is no plan described throughout this section. The applicant offers a vision and understanding of the motivation of this theoretical plan but does not break down the plan for implementation of the district wide reformation.</p>		

The new theory of change is noted and clearly stated a high quality plan for the project and supports the improvement of learning, and targets all students for participation.

The criterion is strongly supported by the applicant's appendix to clearly describe an implementation plan.

Goal to close the achievement gap was strong as indicating professional development; job and academic related skills were indicators of scaling up meaningful reform.

The applicant notes that the end goal of education is no longer just college enrollment, but securing a pathway to successful employment in an ever changing society is profound. However, the applicant fails to explain how this will be done. The applicant's appendix "Theory of Change "contributes to a high quality plan.

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

The applicant has identified goals for improving student outcomes clearly. The applicant plans to utilize the FCAT assessment to measure proficient status. The applicant goals to decrease the percent of non-proficient students by 50% are very ambitious.

The applicant discusses the changing of the district's culture which would potentially influence perceptions and growth within the district that ensure would help meet performance goals.

The applicant describes closing the achievement gap but correctly having sub goals within these criteria. It is vital to first address the basic need areas within the group without failing to recognize that the performing group will continue to make progress as well. This concept is noted within the applicant's projections that reducing the non-proficient population would also minimize the gap between subgroups. Both targets are at 50% by the end of the grant term.

The table provided by the applicant suggests an increase in graduation rates and college enrollment rates appear attainable but not very ambitious. The stated baseline score offers room for improvement.

However, given the individual nature of the project it appears that the applicant would suggest that college enrollment will increase as illustrated by the data presented by the applicant's college enrollment chart. This would suggest that students will select future opportunities that would require a 2 or 4 year degree.

The data presented by the applicant offers valid information to support the score by the reviewer but doesn't offer enough detail to explain certain data projections.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	10

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided strong supportive data to demonstrate success over the past 4 years. The applicant clearly explained that no student is left out of the calculations when attempting to measure student progress. The applicant noted that the best way to measure success is to include as many students as possible.

The applicant offered a very detailed explanation on how the achievement gap is defined by the district as it is the measure of scores by group and the difference within those groups.

The applicant then continued to report small improvements in all academic areas across the district yet the measure for success was the reading scores reported by the applicant of only a 2 percent gap variance between subgroups. Despite the small gains, the gains were still significant as some of the data illustrated an increase more by the subgroups is consequently closing the achievement gap between groups. This is a strong indicator of a good record of success.

The district has been consistent in showing increase in scores over the four year evaluation period for these criteria.

The applicant identified 6 low performing schools and explored the performance. The applicant indicated key areas of concern that would help the improvement of this lower performing school. The applicant noted that more highly qualified teachers were needed. In this subcategory the applicant fails to demonstrate ambitious and significant reforms to help increase performance of the low performing schools identified.

The student performance data are available to parents does not guarantee that they know how or have the equipment to access or interpret them. This was a weakness of this criteria, so the mid range scores was awarded by the reviewer.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	4
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant offers a clear explanation of transparency by the explanation of the Governors' executive order. The order requires transparency, helping the applicant clearly meet this objective.

The applicant also provides salary and benefits expenditures for all k-12 instruction, support staff, pupil support and school administration.

The applicant stated that upon award of this grant the transparency would be expanded to offer more public access to additional personal salaries, separating teachers from instruction support staff and all salary positions involved in the grant.

The applicant met the minimum level of transparency by stating that transparency exist but stronger evidence by the applicant was needed to receive a perfect score by the reviewer resulting in a slight deduction for this criterion.

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

The applicant offers a clear explanation of success through the recognition of SCPS as a leading school district in the state of Florida. This distinction of an academically high performing school is an example of successful autonomy by the applicant.

The applicant describes a Florida statute that requires students to perform in an online learning environment to graduate from high school. The applicant continues to describe the ability to be flexible enough to adequately address individualized needs for students.

The applicant further explains that the state was a previous recipient of the RTTT grant and therefore offers the preliminary regulatory requirements to implement future programs.

The applicant clearly provides evidentiary citation to support the score given by the reviewer.

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

The applicant has demonstrated strong support from key stakeholders. The applicant explains its pathway plan requiring partnership with community stakeholders. The applicant subsequently incorporated into the plan increasing technology in the classroom, increasing opportunity for advanced classes and other key activities noted from the survey responses.

The applicant explained a survey was administered to all stakeholders with the aim to do a need assessment of students, parent and community partners. The results provided the district with a clear foundation for development of the proposed program plan.

The applicant fails to detail the engagement of the stakeholders within this project to promote student learning and a learning environment.

The letters of support are noted by the applicant but the narrative failed to describe the involvement of the stakeholders in the development of this project.

The data from the survey identified key areas to offer support from the stakeholders to support the epathways initiative.

The applicant illustrates a commitment from the stakeholders for this program and their commitment is demonstrated in the letters of support attached to the application. The applicant provided evidence of minimal developmental engagement and support by stakeholders.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	0
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

There are no details of a high quality plan to address the individualized learning environments presented by the applicant. The applicant explored the achievement gap in this section rather than exploring the personalized learning environment and therefore the reviewer is justified in offering no score for this section.

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 applicant clearly identifies and explains seven breakout programs that are all designed to holistically engage learning for the individual student. The applicant does a great job in isolating each program and offering clear information into the program purpose and design. The alignment with the core concept of this proposal is also outlined by the applicant for each program.</p> <p>The applicant offers a high quality plan. The applicant addresses the timeline, key activities and objectives but could have offered more detailed information in each area to help reviewer better comprehend the plan. The applicant enables all students to understand what they are learning is key to success. The applicant focuses on strategies that cross PreK through 12 grade level to prepare students for college and/or career upon graduation.</p> <p>The applicant offers conclusive data to justify and explain the position of the PreK program design, goals and objectives. Previous data offered by the applicant demonstrated that over 500 families voluntarily enrolled their child in a form of PreK program. This data illustrates both a need and target market that supports the appropriateness of this idea.</p> <p>The other projects noted and discussed by the applicant explain a program designed for the next grade level of students. The applicant identifies target groups of low income students for advance placement courses that would develop, enhance and expand the learning of student participants.</p> <p>The applicant also creates a strategic plan for poor performance of students that would support a more individualized learning approach for a summer transition program. This program offers a transition model that is also a collaborative approach with the parental support and professional development for staff.</p> <p>Deep learning experiences and access and exposure to diversity of cultures, contexts, and perspectives will be experienced through a variety of choice options noted by the applicant.</p> <p>The applicant also notes in several key areas of the programs (i.e. Project 1) discussed an inclusion of parents and community as a part of the design of the project and describes personalized instruction and development to lead to a career ready student.</p> <p>The applicant offers a strong plan that results in a high score by the reviewer.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	17
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant states that there is an alignment of the reform plan with elements of the teacher preparation for professional development.</p> <p>The applicant attempts to suggest academic rigor will be achieved because of the alignment of the curriculum with STEM courses through advanced professional development that would fully cultivated teachers of the 21st century. Suggesting that this innovative approach along with epathways will "ensure" rigor is not conclusive.</p> <p>The applicant offers a high quality plan by offering detailed information into the timeline, objective, activities and deliverables of the project. Yet the applicant fails to address the level of engagement to be achieved by those participating educators.</p> <p>The applicant states that individualized learning will be achieved by instructional staff through professional development over the project. This project is targeted at all middle and high school students. It supports both tracks of career and technical education but also the regional university path. The applicant does not suggest or identify any specific partnership or plan to achieve these objectives.</p> <p>There is a strong professional development idea that is illustrated in this section of the proposal. The plan for new teacher orientation and mentoring, and teacher recruitment and retention is a strong indication of leadership awareness.</p> <p>The applicant states a strong feature is to promote excellence and equity by providing personalized learning opportunities through advance placement. There were no goals stipulated for the rationale or number of high quality teachers that the district is targeted to attain.</p>		

The plan that exists does not offer a strong individualized learning plan. It fails to meet the requirement of creating a learning environment that supports individualized learning models. The applicant discussion with the use of the epathway doesn't appear to explain how that will achieve individualized instruction. More details are needed to meet this objective.

The applicant does offer a strong professional development plan to train teachers and administrator but how does that accurately impact the learning objective of the program is vague to promote academic rigor is not automatic with the utilization of a STEM Curriculum.

The applicant explains the educational leadership is aligned with the principal leadership standards. This academy is providing future leaders with competencies to allow school leadership teams to structure an effective learning environment.

The applicant offers a strong plan for all participants as each project breakdown the targeted group and a plan for achieving learning is identified. The high quality plan offered by the applicant offers a rationale for a higher score in this criteria.

The reviewer noted several areas of weakness that didn't establish academic rigor to be associated with the STEM curriculum. These weaknesses did not detract from the overall presented information by the applicant to meet the objectives in this section, and therefore, supporting the reviewer score is in the low end of the high range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	14
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant offers significant evidence of support for the implementation of this project through comprehensive policies and infrastructure illustrated by the 2 leadership teams. The applicant explains the revised governance structure that will support and guide the execution of the program. The applicant discusses the leadership team that is led by the Superintendent and comprised of executive level leaders to offer flexibility. The applicant stated school leaders in the district will have the flexibility needed to adjust staffing levels to meet emerging student needs ad interest. The applicant offers limited information that describes the process for students to meet after school to receive credit for face to face evening classes. The applicant discusses several opportunities for students to earn credit in flexible options. The applicant discusses after school face to face and before school options for students to earn credit. The applicant also discussed an option for students to receive credit by exam to demonstrate mastery. The applicant offered a strong example of a plan as described by adding flexibility to offer courses to start school earlier or later to add an eight period. But the applicant failed to support a simple position with the face to face offering for students to achieve additional credits. The applicant continues to describe the section support team that is led by the Deputy Superintendent. The applicant illustrates the schools sites will have on site technical support that fits the need for this epathway project. The applicant provides a spectrum of services and placement options offered through the IEP developed by the IEP team. A number of placement options are also available are noted by the applicant to support flexibility. The applicant also noted that ELL follow a similar placement process for the IEP students. The reviewer noted a few areas where more information could have offered more details for the reviewer, however the information provided supports a scores for this section in the high range.		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		

The applicant stated the important component that is critical to the success of this project is the utilization of technology and the epathway program. This program is supported by the infrastructure of a completely wireless internet operation that has been installed in the district. This will allow students to incorporate technology as a part of this project.

The applicant noted academic support by the library with adopting and supporting the academic development by purchasing online educational resources to support learning.

The library purchased online journals and other periodicals to support the educational rigor of the online classrooms. Also the district will utilize Blackboard as the online portal for some of its hybrid courses.

The applicant states the students in the SCPS will have access to these learning resources but doesn't describe an initiative to engage students to use the resources.

The applicant stated that parents will receive both face to face and online technical training and assistance to support the "best of breed" approach to data. The data system is interactive with stakeholders as stated by the applicant but no details to the amount of engagement or interaction is described by the applicant.

The applicant explained that continuous modifications are made to keep up with the technology to make sure that information is accessible to the appropriate personnel. The applicant stated that the plan to continue to upgrade the current system to make sure that it meets the needs of the district is in place but offers no details.

There were limits within this section of areas needing more detail by the applicant and the reviewer offers a low high range score.

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 is clearly illustrated and explained within the narrative that supports the mission and objective of this project. The applicant describes the model for ongoing review, modification and improvements.</p> <p>The improvement plan noted by the applicant is not a part of the current district but will be used for the RTT project if awarded.</p> <p>The priorities stated by the applicant throughout this proposal are excellence and equity and the improvement plan narrative supports the initiative to reach that objective.</p> <p>The applicant also will collaborate with the Office of Accountability within the district to monitor program goals and objectives and focus on the programs impact on student achievement.</p> <p>The continuous improvement plan is grounded in theory. The applicant's illustration of the Continuous improvement model supports the score given by the reviewer for this section.</p> <p>The applicant discussed several key opportunities to share information to all stakeholders through presentations, journals, and various boards. The applicant successfully meets the criteria.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not describe the level at which ongoing communication will exist as a part of this improvement plan. There are limited details to explain the process or implementation of this plan.</p> <p>The applicant doesn't offer communication options to address all stakeholders. The current plan doesn't support areas that all stakeholders would either have access to or look at for the information provided about the grant. Parents may not look in research journals nor will they attend the meetings, but they still need to be made aware of progress.</p> <p>The applicant does discuss an effective level of engagement for those responsible for the improvement plan. The applicant notes several district level officials but does not offer a clear role and responsibility of that involvement in the improvement plan for this project.</p> <p>The applicant offers information to support a quality plan but with limited details the reviewer can support a mid range score.</p>		

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant stated the rationale for the proposed performance measures selected to be in alignment with the district initiatives to either meet or exceed the Florida's college and career ready standards. This supports the applicant's continuous improvement plan in the area of college and career readiness standards.</p> <p>The applicant describes the vision to reduce non proficiency in white students by 50% while also closing the achievement gap. The applicant states that the districts plansto completely eliminate the achievement gap by 2016. This does not seem possible given the evidence, plan and data previously presented.</p> <p>The applicant also states they will meet or exceed the state college readiness standards. The applicant doesn't mention anything about highly effective teachers as requested in the requirement in this criterion.</p> <p>There was no theoretical framework stated by the applicant. As the link to theory of change, the applicant simply stated that academic achievement and other academic indicators will serve as evidence for the district to make changes.</p> <p>The applicant failed to offer rationales for each subcategory of the grading criteria resulting in a mid range score by the reviewer.</p>		

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant stated that the plan is multifaceted as a supplement to a nationwide evaluation effort. The applicant expresses a comprehensive approach to assessing the program. The applicant states that evaluations will be conducted as a process review and then a review of activities. The final stage of review will be done of the overall results from student achievement.</p> <p>The design addresses the core components for the proposal and meets the objective of this section. The reviewer is not convinced that the stated plan meets the "investment" rationale for this section.</p> <p>The applicant is clearly restating the assessment plan that has already been evaluated but the question in this section explores the idea that the effectiveness of the investment in this project.</p> <p>The applicant clearly identifies a strong plan of evaluating performance measures that are aligned with the goals of the program. The applicant continues to describe the evaluation process to consist of a team of evaluators along with the grant staff.</p> <p>There is no mention of working with community partners within the plan nor did the applicant explain how they were going to clearly evaluate the plan.</p> <p>The applicant stated they were going to hire an external evaluate to offer a more objective evaluation for this criteria.</p> <p>There is not a clear explanation by the applicant to address the effectiveness of investment which is different from an assessment plan, resulting in a mid range score.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant clearly identifies the funds and allocation of the funds requested for this project that appear reasonable.</p> <p>There were no funds allocated for training for the professional development of teacher, yet throughout this project there were several areas for professional development and technical support to stakeholders. There was no mention in the narrative to explain this inconsistency.</p> <p>The applicant offers a strong description for justification of this budget. The purchase of the startup item and ongoing program</p>		

cost are justified according to the program plan.

The applicant offers clear understanding of the allocation and justification of the requested funds. The applicant offers a clear description on the use of those funds and the annual breakdown of those funds as well.

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

10

5

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not offer a high quality plan for sustainability. The applicant does explain key goals but doesn't include a timelines or benchmarks to sustain this project upon completion of the grant term.

Applicant states that upon conclusion of the grant the school district will be responsible for absorbing the cost of the programs implemented by the grant.

The applicant explains the district design to address infrastructure and capacity building and how that will reduce ongoing operations cost but that doesn't explain the objective for this section of sustainability.

The applicant clearly states that positions hired by the grant will not be maintained at the conclusion of the grant; this is justified if those persons primary responsibility were to manage the grant rather than supervision of programs fostered from the grant.

The applicant states they will receive state and local support to sustain the grant but doesn't explain the details of that support.

The applicant explains that the programs developed by the grant will be sustained upon conclusion of the grant term.

The reviewer must offer a medium range score for this section as the limited high quality plan for personnel lost at the conclusion of the grant raises concerns of the continued effectiveness of the programs initiated by the grant. If these persons were needed and hired they should be needed and maintained.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant explains a partnership was formed with the Center for Drug Free Living to deliver the new horizon program to secondary students to help with the development of nonacademic issues to affect the performance of academics.

The overall purpose and rationale for this partnership is to complement the initiatives under the ePathway reform plan.

The applicant explains the program to be a 10 month -weekly in school intervention program that is evidence based. The connection to the social-emotional development of the whole student is a part of this partnership.

The application states the program will be offered to 10 schools with specific focus on students with high needs. The total student population served will be over 3800.

The applicant states that previous evaluations have been performed and indicates several areas of improvement but no details to the assessment process. There was no demonstration of data to explain the evaluation process of the program.

The applicant states the alignment between epathways and new horizon program. The applicant discusses the details of both academic and non academic result to be gained through this partnership.

There is a weak parent and family level of participation within the program described by the applicant.

The applicant offers a comprehensive breakdown of output that explains the activities and deliverables of the program. The reviewer justifies the score given based on the information provided by the application of a high range score.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant offers a strong coherent plan by exploring the four educational assurance areas to create individual learning environments. The learning environments are designed to specifically support the districts initiatives of college/career readiness goals.

The district has been consistent in showing an increase in scores over the four year evaluation period clearly demonstrating a baseline for future success.

The applicant identified 6 low performing schools and explored the performance. The applicant indicated key areas of concern that would help the improvement of these lower performing schools. The applicant stated that all students will participate in the grant. The applicant will accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting academic needs. All students in the district will participate in the grant.

The evidence provided by the applicant supports this application meeting absolute priority 1.

Total	210	166
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

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

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

no budget presented



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0465FL-3 for Seminole County Public Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has successfully set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that build on its work in four core educational assurance area and articulates a clear and credible approach to the goals.

Evidence of the vision is the district's alignment with the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards to provide district students with personalized support in cultivating and accomplishing

individual goals. The plan provided supports all students district-wide using ePathways, a district-wide educational reform. ePathways promises to reinvigorate approaches to teaching and learning in order to meet the school board's strategic plan which aims to improve student achievement, eliminate achievement gaps between subgroups and increase the number of students prepared for college and career at graduation. This will support the reform effort of adopting standards that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in a global economy. However, the level of detail does not describe how ePathways will do these things it is purported to do.

This plan will further support the district's lowest achieving schools through an equal focus on high- and low-performing students through increased accessibility to innovative opportunities to learn, including pathways for acceleration and remediation. The ePathway reform plan provides for the Schools of Promise a Teacher-on-Assignment position to specifically focus on special needs with the six schools in the district with the lowest performance.

In light of the strengths identified, this application received a high score.

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

The applicant has successfully developed an approach for implementing its reform proposal that will support high quality school level implementation.

All schools in the district will participate as evidenced by the chart provided that details the competition's eligibility requirements, and the total number of participating students from low-income families, participating students who are high need students and participating educators. While the focus of the reform vision is on district-wide change, the district has included a project that will provide centralized support to the most academically and socially at-risk populations of students which supports the district's vision. Accelerate Schools of Promise will be implemented in 6 buildings with a focus on personalized learning through technology integration. School demographic data tables support the plan for all students in the district.

In light of the strengths identified, this application received a high score.

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

The applicant has successfully developed a high quality plan describing how the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools. This plan supports the district's theory of change-- *By 2017, the district will transform public education by implementing ePathways which provide academically rigorous, personalized and flexible learning experiences to best accommodate individual needs of all students with the ultimate outcome of improving student learning and academic achievement while closing the achievement gap.*

The plan provides for expansion of innovative programs across schools. By providing educational experiences that align to individual student needs, initiatives within the reform will provide struggling students opportunities for remediation, while at the same time providing acceleration for advanced students. To accomplish the stated goals, the work plan will deliver collaborative and innately proactive activities for students, teachers and leaders, target schools, timelines, deliverables, responsible parties and resources/budget.

In light of the strengths identified, this application received a high score.

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

The applicant provided a high quality plan that included extensive data relating to their ambitious yet achievable goals that are equal to or exceed State ESEA target for the LEA overall and by sub group.

The plan provided data that supports the district's commitment to increased academic performance by all student groups on multiple key performance measures. Tables included serve as evidence for the attainment of performance goals, decreasing achievement gaps, graduation rates and college enrollment. In addition, the narrative describes that the district is using the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test 2.0 as its summative assessment with a methodology for determining status and growth. The district established it own goals to close the achievement gap that will reduce

non-proficiency in White students by 50% while also closing the achievement gap in Black, Hispanic, Native American, Multi-Racial, and Free-Reduced Lunch subgroups to zero by 2016-17 with a methodology description.

In light of the strengths identified, the plan received a high score.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	14
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant successfully demonstrated a clear track record of success in advancing student learning and achievement as evidenced by a thorough description of success and identifying their commitment to focus for the future on any sub groups that are not yet performing at the level expected. There is also a proficiency chart in the appendix that shows the student subgroups and their performance for the past 4 years which clearly supports the success in advancing student learning.</p> <p>The description of performance data in the lowest achieving schools shows that the district is making gains in closing the achievement gaps for all students. The district makes student performance data available to student, teachers and parents through a tool called Skyward. The program provides data that each user would find most relevant. The district's graduation rate has increased in all sub groups over the four-year period and college enrollment at the district level has increased.</p> <p>There are many electronic based tools for parents and students to use to help remediate and accelerate learning that the district uses. However, there is no mention in the plan about how parents without access to a computer are able to participate.</p> <p>In light of the strengths and limited weakness noted, this application received a high score.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	4
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant sets forth a high level of transparency in processes, practices, and investments.</p> <p>The plan provided evidence of this by offering an explanation of the executive order. This order from the state helps the applicant meet this requirement.</p> <p>The district currently provides revenue and expenditure information at the school level which supports the criteria. Plans to expand categories for public access include personnel salaries, and separating teachers from instruction support staff will support the expectations of the grant. An example of a school financial report is included in the appendix.</p> <p>In light of the strengths identified, this application received a high score.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant successfully demonstrated evidence of conditions and autonomy for implementation under the state context as evidenced by a body of state statutes and regulations that encourage and require school districts to accommodate the needs of a variety of learning styles. This flexibility permits districts to offer flexible options to students which support the personalized education concept.</p> <p>The plan provided described an example for this district--because the district has been designated as an academically high performing school district, this designation gives the district the ability to waive various state statutes and it regularly waives the state law requiring that the school year begin no earlier than 14 days before Labor Day.</p> <p>Because of the strengths identified, this application received a high score.</p>		

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	9
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant engaged students, families, teachers and principals in the development and subsequent revisions of this plan.</p> <p>To begin the process for this plan the district conducted a needs assessment to understand the perceived gaps in educational services. Parents and community participated in a web based survey as did students in grades 6-12. Based on data provided, 4 needs were highlighted; increased use of technology in the classroom, increased opportunity for advanced classes, world languages in elementary school, and increased support for struggling students. Meetings were held with district and school administrators, teachers, guidance counselor, business partners and the general public so they could learn about ePathways. While this process supports the expectations for the grant, no mention of parents/families being specifically invited to learn about the plan was listed, except for the minimal involvement in an electronic survey.</p> <p>The RTT-D proposal was shared with some students, teachers, principals, district administration, PTA, and SEA, the bargaining unit for teachers. Positive feedback was received from all groups listed and letters of support from key stakeholders are included in the appendix.</p> <p>Because of the strengths and limited weakness identified, this application received a high score.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has not set forth a high-quality plan for an analysis of the applicant's current status in implementing personalized learning environments and the logic behind the reform proposal.</p> <p>While the applicant offers a history of student achievement in the district, there is no information of how they were previously implementing personalized learning. The plan states that ePathways holds promise for increasing the achievement of all students because of its emphasis on personalized learning, and it identifies 6 projects that will ensure the excellence and equity journey will continue for students, it does not include goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties for a personalized learning environment in this section of the plan.</p> <p>In view of the weaknesses identified, this application received a low score.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	20
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant successfully set forth a high quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college and career-ready. The plan provided includes a summary of four projects that will focus on providing unique, flexible learning environments which meet students' education goals and desired pathways.</p> <p>The application enables all students to understand that what they are learning is key to success in accomplishing their goals that are linked to college and career ready standards as well as graduation requirements. Evidence of this is through the early involvement of students in pre kindergarten opportunities. This project is aimed as familiarizing students with the terms, words, ideas and educational experiences to prepare them for formal education. Through the identification of key goals, activities to be undertaken, times, deliverables, and parties responsible, the district has offered a credible plan.</p> <p>The K-12 Transition Model is a district-developed framework for improving student achievement and reducing incidents of retention by frequently updating student data regularly through school-day intervention opportunities, and after school tutorial support. The Early Learning Family Literacy Project is evidence of accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students that captures the interest of parent and caregivers at the earliest possible moment in a child's life.</p>		

Deep learning experiences and access and exposure to diversity of cultures and contexts and perspectives will be experienced through the variety of choice options to include magnet programs at the high school, and performing arts and the elementary and middle school that will also involve a variety of learning experiences. These options also support the student's interest in their learning. Mastering critical academic content and develop skills and traits happen in a variety of ways including more flexible program offerings--mixed-mode and virtual courses.

The plan focuses on strategies that cross Pre-kindergarten through Grade 12 with a common thread of preparing students for college and/or career upon graduation. The project strives to achieve the following goals: prepare and support all students to graduate with their age-appropriate cohort; prepare all students for academic and job related success in the 21st century; maintain high expectations for all students and eliminate the disparity in achievement among identified subgroups; and provide first class, 21st century education experiences for students, teachers, administrators, parents and the community through the integration of thinking, teamwork and technology in learning environments, the expansion of technology, and the infusion of good citizenship practices and the development and implementation of ePathways.

Students will have access to a bundled tablet platform with digital content for mathematics across all middle schools for Grade 8. The tablet platform provides a 1:1 learning environment, real-time feedback of progress and personalized lesson builders. Teachers will receive professional development to facilitate instruction and ensure students are able to effectively use these tools to manage and track their own learning.

Taken together, these projects and strategies identified are evidence that the plan offers each student the assurance of strong content, high quality instructional approaches, and ongoing and regular feedback with mechanisms in place to provide training and support to students to use the tools and resources provided.

In light of these strengths identified, this application received a high score.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	18
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant successfully set forth a high quality plan for improving teaching and leading that helps educators to improve instruction and increase their capacity to support student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards.

Evidence of support for the effective implementation of personalized learning environments and adapting content and instruction in response to student academic needs and interests includes opportunities for teachers to enhance their knowledge of accelerated science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), instructional approaches which ensure a rigorous course of study aligned to the Common Core Standards and Florida's Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. In addition, a cadre of teachers will be trained provide professional development to classroom teachers on integration of technology into instructional plans and experiences to enhance knowledge of the global workforce. New teacher mentoring and induction programs will be available as well as professional development to support special student populations.

All educators will have access to, and know how to use tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress. The plan will provide for teacher leaders to support technology integration, augment the district's successful Alternative Certification and New Teacher programs through the funding of enhanced development opportunities for new teachers, and provide professional development opportunities to teachers-of-hard to staff subjects and who teach to special populations. However, it is unclear how the plan will increase the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals.

The Seminole County Public Schools' Educational Leadership Academy is aligned with the Florida Principal Leadership Standards. This academy is providing future leaders with competencies to allow school leadership teams to structure an effective learning environment. Specialized professional development will be provided for students in school with a majority of low-income families and teachers of students with disabilities and teachers of hard-to-staff content areas including reading, science, mathematics, foreign languages, exceptional student education and English as a Second Language.

In light of these strengths and limited weakness identified, this application received a high score.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score

(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant successfully set forth a high quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure.</p> <p>The plan provided evidence that the applicant supports personalized learning through practice, policy and rule. Included in the evidence is support from central office through two leadership teams that meet weekly to discuss priority issues. The district school board maintains a strategic plan with specific, measurable targets for student achievement and school leadership teams at each school giving flexibility with things such as budget, staffing and schedules. In order to assure adequate support and service delivery, the district has developed an RTT-D funded Office of Educational Pathways, ePathways. This office is staffed to support the reform vision--including programmatic, financial and performance data with the expectation that all students with increase their achievement.</p> <p>Students will have the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic as well as at multiple times and in multiple ways as evidenced that the district is working to build authentic pathways for students to accelerate in the intermediate grades as well as the high school. Middle school students have pathways for student to accelerate in content areas. A number of services and placement options are available for students with an individualized education plan (IEP) to give them full and adaptable access.</p> <p>Implementation of this credible plan is achieved through the goals, activities provided, timelines, deliverables, parties responsible.</p> <p>In light of the strengths identified, this application received a high score.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	10
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant successfully set forth a high quality plan relating to LEA and school infrastructure.</p> <p>The plan provided included that all secondary schools have acquired mobile laptop carts that teachers can check out for classroom use with wireless access in the buildings. These support students and their access to personalized instruction for both classroom use and out of school use through web-based instructional course management. Other on-line resources that can be accessed from home and elsewhere include EBSCO host (periodicals), World Book Online (reference resources) and Tumble Books (digital books).</p> <p>As a student in Florida, they also have student and family access to FCAT Explorer, a web based tool that provides enrichment opportunities for students in support of their preparation to pass statewide assessments in reading, math, science and writing. The student information data system ensures open access by giving students an access portal that allows parents, students and educators access to student grades and assignments from anywhere at any time. The data systems interact in a variety of ways using an interoperable data system so that data can easily flow from one system to another.</p> <p>Staff can receive technical support through several sources that includes a help desk at the district office. There are also support staff in place at the school site level who provides hardware and network support. Parents can receive face-to-face assistance from personnel at their child's school. Students receive technical assistance in a variety of ways including support from the network specialist, classroom teacher and support staff.</p> <p>The data systems used in the district support the instructional and operation any or all unique needs of the district. Currently parents have view-only access but the district is exploring option for providing parents and student with the ability to reach beyond the view-only function of the program and export data into open formats. These systems are supported by a Data Governance committee that to ensure data exchange among systems.</p> <p>In light of the strengths identified, this application received a high score.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
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(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant successfully set forth a high quality plan for a continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the term of the grant.</p> <p>The plan provided ensures project-level progress monitoring and continuous improvement of the reform plan through the continuous monitoring the progress of initiatives within the school and across various special projects which impact excellence and equity in student learning. Monitoring is accomplished in part, by utilizing 2 existing advisory groups and a newly developed implementation committee to provide direction on modifications to and implementation of the ePathways plan. Leadership teams in the district will serve as internal control for the plan's implementation with oversight through the creation of a RTT-D/ePathways Director position. The intent of the implementation committee is to provide an opportunity for multiple voices and a variety of inputs across the district.</p> <p>In addition, the district's Department of Assessment and Accountability has qualified personnel and data systems to ensure the ability to provide data and maintain records as required.</p> <p>It is the district's intent to use multiple formats to disseminate information about projects to all internal and external stakeholders through use of the following strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consortiums with other school districts to address issues of student achievement; • key project personnel will share information about programs under this initiative to their peers through presentations or submissions to scholarly journals, • utilization of existing advisory groups to share information. <p>In light of these strengths identified, this application received a high score.</p>		

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant successfully set forth a rigorous process for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. The Internet is utilized as appropriate, because it is cost effective and creative, to ensure project awareness and maximized through the district's website. Interim and final evaluations will be placed on the web site. However, there is very little information available about sharing information with the community and general public.</p> <p>In addition, it is the districts intent to use multiple formats to disseminate information about projects to all internal and external stakeholders through use of the following strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consortiums with other school districts to address issues of student achievement; • key project personnel will share information about programs under this initiative to their peers through presentations or submissions to scholarly journals, • utilization of existing advisory groups to share information. <p>In light of these strengths and weakness identified, this application received a high score.</p>		

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant successfully set forth ambitious yet achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup, with annual targets and applicant proposed performance measures.</p> <p>The plan provided includes district measures that align with district initiatives and support the three major measurement categories established in the reform plan. These major categories are proficiency on state standardized assessments, discipline infractions and population-specific groups.</p> <p>Academic indicators will serve as evidence of the district's success in achieving their proposed theory of change. Social-emotional indicators will demonstrate potential modification in behavior, which supports improved learning. Performance measures included in the plan will guide the level at which personalized learning is demonstrating impact on schools, which will guide the level at which personalized learning is impacting schools. The charts included outline the required performance measures based on the applicable population.</p> <p>Also, key stakeholders will review the effectiveness of the measures, in addition to the review of the data, to determine</p>		

if the measurement needs improvement or if the program needs modifications; however, the plan does not specify the method used to determine effectiveness.

In light of the strengths and limited weaknesses identified, this application received a high score.

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

5

3

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

This applicant did not put forth a high quality plan for evaluating the effectiveness of investments in district funded activities. In the plan provided there is reference to a multi-faceted evaluation plan and discusses three evaluation intervals--short term evaluation conducted as a process review of activities, an intermediate review of progress, and a long-term review to measure the overall results for student achievement.

However, the plan does not address how they plan to evaluate the effectiveness of professional development and activities that employ technology and the more productive use of time, staff, money or other resources. Further, there is no mention of working with community partners, compensation reform or modification of schedules and structures.

In light of the weaknesses identified, this application received a medium score.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	7

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant successfully set forth a budget for the project which is reasonable and sufficient to support the plan.

The budget plan provided reflects the districts effort to provide the necessary detail to support their reform efforts. Included in the documents is the identification of all funds that will support the project and clearly identifies funds that will be used for one-time investments. To further support the plan the funds requested are also broken into two additional categories--short term program costs that reflect those items that serve specific, reform related purposes but are not necessary following the project period to maintain the reform initiatives and on-going program costs include those expenses that will remain following the grant period.

However, this application identifies a large amount of professional development and while there are some budget items that reference professional development there is no fund identified for professional development in the budget nor is it mentioned in the narrative.

In light of the strengths and limitations identified, this application received a medium score.

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

10

3

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The application does not set forth a high-quality plan for determining the sustainability of project goals after the term of the grant.

The plan provided presented the alignment of the mission, goals, and outcomes of ePathways that are grounded in the district's Strategic Plan through the building principles and district priorities of Excellence and Equity that demonstrates the alignment and support of these efforts by the School Board and district leaders. The ePathways reform plan has been designed to encompass infrastructure and capacity building activities which will yield reduced ongoing operation costs. Each of the 7 major system initiatives included a plan for sustainability. The initiatives are included in the overall RTT-D plan. Sustainability is detailed below; however, the applicant does not explain key goals, timelines or benchmarks to sustain this project upon completion of the grant.

Instructional Technology Content Support Team--This team will provide focused, short-term support for teachers for new technology integration. At the close of the grant period teacher and administrators will be well versed on best practices and innovations on utilizing technology.

Career and Technical Education/Vocation Education Guidance Counselor Cadre--This cadre is to transform district staff into an awareness of career options for secondary students and will included an additional 21 Guidance Counselor positions. It is

unclear how this strategy will be maintained following the grant period.

School-based ePathways projects--Upon conclusion of the grant period schools will be requested to assume costs associated with sustaining projects under their school budget allocations.

World Language Expansion--At the conclusion of the grant period staff will make a recommendation to the School Board regarding the program's future.

Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten--Following the initial start-up costs per classroom, this expansion will be self-sustaining through the State of Florida reimbursement process for VPK programs.

Grant Support Staff--The Director, Program Facilitator, Performance Data analysts, Accountant and Executive Secretary positions will be maintained through the end of the 2016-17 school year to complete grant-related reporting and evaluation tasks. At the close of the school year these positions will not be maintained. Existing staff at the district and school administrative level will absorb continuing initiatives as appropriate.

In light of the strengths and weaknesses identified, this application received a medium score.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant successfully proposed to integrate resources in a partnership designed to augment school resources by providing additional student and family supports to schools that address social, emotional, or behavioral needs of participating students.

The plan provided included a description of the coherent and sustainable partnership with the Center for Drug Free Living to deliver the New Horizons Program to secondary school students. To complement the initiatives under the ePathways reform plan, the district proposes to scale services to an additional 10 schools during the project period to ensure personalized whole student development. This level of service in combination with externally funded counselors from the Center for Drug Free Living--will provide support to all secondary and middle schools in the district (10 new buildings). New Horizons will focus on service to students and families, as well as provide in-service training to instructional staff in the targeted schools to ensure school personnel are knowledgeable of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use warning signs.

The program is designed as a 10-month weekly in-school intervention and in addition, students participate in one to two individual sessions per month. Each student is scheduled to attend a minimum of 12 life skills session that last a full class period each week in the areas listed below:

- alcohol and other drug education
- decision making
- communication
- conflict resolution
- coping skills
- stress reduction
- anger management

Rigorous evaluation has been conducted on the existing secondary education program, resulting in evidence that demonstrates improved school attendance, increased grade point average and reduced or eliminated use of alcohol, marijuana or other substances with an expectation that these types of results will continue over time when students received this type of skills session training.

The New Horizons Program Logic Model is included in the appendix. District staff will collaborate with New Horizons counselors to ensure the academic indicators for each anticipated result are monitored on a quarterly basis. Data will target resources in order to improve results for participating students. The population-level results focuses on furthering student social and emotional competencies. Individual student success will be monitored utilizing a long term tracking system which assess student success over the full program implementation.

While families and students were provided services in the 2011-2012 by the New Horizons Program and the plan states that feedback from parents will be used, the plan is lacking specific ways as to how it will include parents and

families of participating students in both decision making about solutions to improve results over time and in addressing student and family needs.

The annual ambitious yet achievable performance measures for the proposed population level are supported in the narrative section of the plan.

In light of the strengths and limited weakness identified, this application received a high score.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has coherently and comprehensively addressed Absolute Priority 1 in the following ways:

*build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements--

- adopted Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Sunshine State Standards
- ePathways reform program
- support the most academically and socially at risk populations

*accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student--

- focus on personalized learning
- pathway to cultivate early learners
- promotion of excellence and equity
- expand virtual learning and mixed mode options

*increase the effectiveness of educators and expand student access to the most effective educators--

- professional development to support technology integration
- mentoring and induction program
- enhance teacher knowledge of global workforce
- advanced preparation for elementary teachers in STEM

*decrease achievement gaps across student groups and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and work--

- making gains in closing the achievement gap for all students
- increased high school graduation rates
- increased college attendance rates

In light of the evidence identified, this application has met Absolute Priority 1.

Total	210	187
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