



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0458CO-1 for St. Vrain Valley Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

It is to a great extent that the applicant provided a vision. First, based on the evaluation of this proposal, the vision articulated was clear and strong designed to build on previous successes. So, the vision is to "strengthen and enhance Skyline High School" and ultimately "produce a nationally replicable STEM academy model. Furthermore, the narrative indicated "we have the vision and expertise to further personalize education and amplify its reach and impact to all out students..."

Evidences supporting the following core principles were document as follows:

1. Accelerating student achievement— To be accomplished through
 - Augmented school year
 - Improved literacy and math performance activities
 - STEM integration in the early grades
 - Individual career and academic plan
 - Relationships with Educators Accelerate Learning (R.E.A.L) as well as
 - Extensive professional development activities for teachers
2. Deepening student learning—To be accomplished through
 - The strong infusion of targeted and rigorous math and literacy activities that will lead to growth to turn around the lowest performing schools and providing a framework for success at all levels
 - Expansion of STEM coursework options focusing on the high needs populations at the Middle and high school levels
 - Developing a plan for implementing P-tech in grades 9-12 by partnering with IBM and the local community college
3. Decreasing equity through personalized student support grounded in common and individual tasks that are based on student academic interests—To be accomplished through
 - Mentoring support using Relationships with Educators Accelerate Learning R.E.A.L to provide support needed for high risk students to assure success
 - Partnering with the Boulder County Prevention and Intervention Program (BCPIP) to promote resiliency in adolescents as it relates to social and emotional needs
 - The use of Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP). The bridge to work internship and mentoring programs to continue in post-secondary settings
4. Recruit, develop, reward, and retain effective teachers and principals
 - No mention was made of how St. Vrain intends to recruit, reward and retain highly qualified teachers and principals

So, it to a large extent that the applicant St. Vrain has provided a clear and comprehensive vision of the STEM initiative proposed. Whereas evidences were provided for accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and decreasing equity through personalized student support, no evidence was provided regarding how to recruit, reward and retain effective teachers and principals. Even though recruiting and retaining of effective teachers and principl were not addressed, this narrative still earned a high-range score because all the other criteria were evidenced.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>It is to the fullest extent that this narrative clearly and fully outlined the feasible approach to implementation in the following ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. A clear description of the process that the applicant used to select schools to participate was evident in the narrative. This clear and reasonable narrative outlined that the competition's eligibility requirements were met. It was clearly demonstrated that the approach envisioned to implement the STEM initiative supports a high-quality learning that will help to close the gaps among the population; produce a nationally replicable model and prepare students to be college and career ready upon graduating from high school. b. A complete listing of the 11 schools in the district 8 elementary and 2 mid-level feeder schools channeling students to Skyline High school was clear c. The total number of participating students 5, 757 with more than half the population identified as high needs (63%) clearly from low-income families. In addition, 46.5% of the students to be served are Hispanics for whom English is a second language. This number indicates the total student population being served in this initiative. d. The total number of educators working with this initiative was identified as 265. This suggests that all educators in these schools will be involved with this initiative <p>In sum, a strong narrative was presented that addressed each criterion in this section providing: a clear description of how schools were selected; the complete listing of schools; the total number of students and educators in this initiative. Based on the full information presented, this criterion earned the full points.</p>		

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8
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<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>To a great extent the evidences of this section addressed the issue of reform and change. There is evidence that a plan is in place describing how the reform proposed will be scaled up. The first phase of the plan is to work with 11 schools. Eight elementary feeder school, 2 middle level and 1 high school. In the second and scaling-up phase, the plan is to replicate the model to other school districts in Colorado. In the third and final stage, it is hoped that this model will be replicated at the national level across the USA.</p> <p>A translation of how meaningful reform will support district-wide change beyond the participating schools also was provided. This will be accomplished specifically through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Appointing a director of programming; (2) Hiring of qualifies personnel and coordinators; (3) Promoting and expansion of rigorous STEM programming in all grades; (4) Developing and implementing relationships with educators to accelerate learning (R.E.A.L); (5) Continuing Improvement and Evaluating of Program; (6) Scaling-up of Program; (7) Disseminating and replication of program; (8) Opening of the Innovation Center; (9) Opening of the P-TECH program; (10) Promoting the Tele-monitoring program; (11) Having an Augmented school year; (12) Providing professional Development; and (13) Developing and monitoring, horizontally integrated and continuously improving ICAP. <p>The applicant's logic model demonstrated just how the plan is to identify the needs and barriers, utilize needed inputs and resources obtained through the grant dollars, conduct specific strategies and activities that support the goals of the project</p>		
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leading to achievable outcomes that in turn will have substantial and sustainable impact on students. In essence a strong road map was provided that supports a meaningful reform initiative that will lead to district-wide change

Impact identified include:

- Closing of the achievement gap for Hispanic students
- Increasing student achievement
- Increasing graduation rates
- Increasing college graduation
- Increasing career readiness
- Creating a K-12 STEM Model for National Replication

What was missing was a clear note in the narrative clearly indicating that these performance measures will indeed lead to improved learning. As a result of this missing data, full points were not earned.

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

It is to the full extent that the vision articulated is likely to result in improved student learning and performance when evaluated against the goals outlined for improved student outcomes. Specifically strong evidences were provided in the following areas:

- (a) Performance on summative assessments (TCAP) was identified as the assessment that will be taken by students. It is proposed that improvement will be shown in the number of students meeting state standards by 2016-2017 school year based on the interventions that are in place to impact student learning. These intervention include: (1) the Augmented School Year; (2) Promoting and expanding rigorous STEM programming in all grades; (3) Developing and implementing Relationships with Educators to Accelerate Learning R.E.A.L. system; and (4) providing teachers with intensive professional development geared at personalizing the learning experience for all students so they can be college/career ready.
- (b) Decreasing achievement gaps for Hispanic students in Reading, mathematics and English at the tested grades
- (c) Higher graduation rates projection was made aiming at 6% increase over a 7 year period
- (d) College enrollment rate also was projected for a 7% increase over 7 years

The extent to which the applicant's vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goals for each participating LEA for Postsecondary degree attainment was projected to have an overall increase of 8% over the next 7 years and an overall increase of 100% for Hispanic students.

Overall the arguments and subsequent evidences provided were substantiated throughout the proposal. Hence, full points were earned for this criterion.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	13

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

It is to a great extent that this applicant has demonstrated a clear track record of success over the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement at St. Vrain Valley School District. The evidence shows the following:

1. Improving student learning outcomes --The Skyline STEM academy having a complete engineering curriculum; there is an increased awareness of students, discovery learning opportunities, knowledge-based skill development, and relevant real-world project experiences. Specifically improvement was registered in (1) reading for students in K-2 between 1.2%-2.8%, (2) language development for pre-k students increased by 59%, (3) high participation rates of students in the Innovative Academy

Missing from this narrative was explicit evidences indicating high school graduation rates and college enrollment over the past four years.

2. Evidence regarding the closing of the achievement gap showed that Hispanics have started to do better academically. It is also evidenced that Hispanic students are meeting state standards on the TCAP with the following improvements increases in: (1) Grade 3 Reading 20.9%; (2) Grade 3 mathematics by 20.9%; (3) Grade 8 Mathematics and Reading by 20.9%; (4) ACT English of 20.9% and above; (5) ACT Mathematics of 20.9% and above.

3. Raising of student achievement has been a constant--Use of the Phonological Awareness Literacy (PALS) screening used as a predictor for future reading success has been beneficial; student achievement was increased from 1.2% in Grade 2 to 3.9% in grade 3. Many schools in the district have been ranked very high consistently. For example, when compared to other schools in Colorado, St. Vrain achieves at a higher percent with more A and B's across the school district; Niwot School has been rated the number 1 elementary school in 2011; and Lyons High school has been rated as the third best high school in the state. Hence, there has been evidence of record improvement in student achievements in low performing schools in St. Vrain School District.

Student performance data has been available and utilized. However, this narrative lacks evidence explicitly indicating how student data has been made available to students, educators and parents in ways to inform and improve participation, instruction and service.

It is to a great extent that the applicant provided conclusive evidences that there has been a clear record of success for the past 4 years at St. Vrain. However, 2 data points were not evidenced (1) successes in high school graduation rates and college enrollment and (2) how student performance data is made available to stakeholders. However, even though there is missing information, this narrative still earned a high-range score because all the other criteria were adequately addressed.

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

It is to the full extent that strong evidence has been provided indicating that St. Vrain has a high level of transparency in the LEA processes and practices. This evidenced was specifically documented by the fact that:

- All school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil supports and school administration are made public.
- The actual personnel salaries are published yearly at the CRDC's website for all personnel at all levels.
- St. Vrain comply with all open records requests per the Colorado Sunshine Law Title 24 Article 6

So, St. Vrain has a clear strategy of transparency. Information from board meetings is shared publicly on the website, budgets are available for public review and providing the public with the opportunity to comment and all salary structures are publicly available as well. In essence, the full evidences and disclosures were provided, thus this criterion earned full points.

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

It is to the fullest extent that a convincing case outlining successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments was described in this narrative. This was substantiated by reference to the Colorado Senate Bill 09-256 and the creation of standards for Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAP). Areas such as teacher and principal evaluations are supported by this Bill. State wide quality standards have been developed--defining what it means to be an effective teacher and or principal.

In keeping with the state law that requires 50% of the teacher and principal evaluation to be based on students' academic growth, St. Vrain has demonstrated that they work within this law. For example, the applicant evidenced that at least 50% of the teacher evaluation system was based on the academic growth of students for teachers. Similarly, it was evidenced that at least 50% of the principal's evaluation was determined by the academic growth of students across the St Vrain Valley School district. This serves to show that the state helps to guide the educational activities and has shown strong support for the St. Vrain initiative. A letter of support from the state department evidenced the support and endorsement from the state level.

This narrative has clearly shown that St. Vrain possesses the specific conditions and sufficient

autonomy under state, legal, statutory and regulatory requirements to implement a personalized learning environment with the STEM reform initiative proposed.

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

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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

It is to the fullest extent that a very consistent and meaningful stakeholder engagement has been evidenced in this proposal.

(a) A comprehensive description of how students, families, teachers, and principals in participating schools were engaged from the beginning has been articulated. Qualitative feedback from stakeholders has been incorporated in the narrative via e-mail. This inclusion has strengthened the narrative. Community members were given the opportunity to submit feedback on the grant proposal through the districts' website.

Direct engagement and support from teachers is evidenced by a letter from the president of the Teacher's Union. The applicant went even further to get input and feedback from the teachers at the outset of developing the proposal.

(b) Letters of support from such key stakeholders as the Colorado Department of Energy, University of Colorado at Boulder, IBM, Boulder County Prevention Program, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, Department of Education, the Mayor, and the City of Longmont among other local, civic and community-based organizations have shown their support of this project.

There were no letters from parents, parent groups, students or student groups to support this initiative. However, when the applicants started the process of developing the grant proposal, parents and families were given the opportunity to provide input in the process. This was evidenced by the provision of a website with the capability of giving feedback to the applicants at the outset of the process. In addition, to reach families who may not have access to the website, letters were sent out in both Spanish and English for input and feedback from families--a major stakeholder in this initiative. The criterion was still met fully because the missing letters were not mandatory. In addition, there were sufficient letters of support from a wide cross-section of stakeholders to satisfy this criterion.

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

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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

To the fullest extent, a detailed analysis of the needs gap was presented in this narrative. Evidence provided indicates that St. Vrain is in the process of implementing personalized learning plan with a goal to close the gaps. Specifically to fill the gaps the following will be done:

- Hiring of a lead counselor at the middle and high school levels is part of the plan to fully support ICAP. There is a stable structure in place, state approval and support as well as the needed resources to further support ICAP
- Having an integrated approach to STEM education has been embarked on in terms of a K-12 pipeline. This will be accomplished by creating an early learning curriculum focused on STEM courses and providing a bridge to 21st century skills and early success
- Pushing to increase the number of students from under-represented groups especially Hispanics and females to be provided with accelerated, rigorous and engaging STEM integrated learning activities.
- Providing quality Math and science content in the early grades to strengthen STEM education in the early grades and so eventually transform classroom theory into practical real-world practice and application for students
- Forming assessment teams to provide formative and summative feedback that is continuous
- Placing greater focus on providing K-8 students with rigorous and engaging coursework in STEM by integrating developmentally appropriate STEM content as early as kindergarten to lead to improved grades in the STEM areas especially with high needs--low income and minority children
- Contract with EPI international to conduct external evaluation for fidelity and quality assurance purposes. A critical aspect of the evaluation process will be to analyze students learning outcomes and to identify the gaps and recommend ways to best close these gaps

Conclusively, the applicant satisfied this criterion by providing irrefutable evidences that support the analysis of needs and gaps. Specifically, applications and relevant strategies were identified to fill these gaps.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

It was to the fullest extent that strong evidences were advanced for facilitating student learning. These strategies are supported by the vision articulated at the start. In addition, the needs and gap analysis presented and the justification for increasing the STEM makes this proposal reasonable. Evidences has been cited in the following areas:

- a. With the support of parents and educators, all students—
 - i. First, with the support of parents and educators, all students at St. Vrain Valley School District will understand that the content they are learning is relevant to their success in graduating with college and career readiness skills. This is evidenced by the Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) tool they will use. The ICAP is a reflective tool to help focus students on their career and/or post-secondary options. Both parents and counselors will have access to this tool to help guide students to explore career options especially in the STEM fields. Students will enter written goals based on their career choice as they complete the career cluster inventory and interest survey available in the ICAP system. Students will also be able to: establish academic and career goals; explore post-secondary career opportunities; align coursework and curriculum; apply to post-secondary institutions; and also explore financial aid opportunities with the help of their parents and school counselors al in one place.
 - ii. Second, students with the help of parents and or school counselors will be able to identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college/career ready standards. In addition, they will develop a clear understanding of how to structure their learning to achieve their learning goals, and measure progress toward those goals over-time. Lessons will be focused high intellectual learning that prepares students to be college/career ready. The design approach also will be employed for students to experience deep learning.
 - iii. Third, students will experience deep learning in areas of their academic interest. As part of personalizing the learning experiences for St. Vrain’s students, multiple activities will be carried out that support deepening of student learning. A culture of higher order thinking will be established as evidenced below: Counselors and teachers will work closely with students in the following ways; (1) presenting students with real-world problems and asking Socratic questions of students; (2) students will be given the change to reflect and respond to problem statements to chart their patterns of thinking; (3) students will create a flow of their ideas about a problem or situation; (4) they will then develop hypothesis; (5) students will prototype their ideas; and finally evaluate the situation. All this higher order thinking, will help students deepen their learning experiences
 - iv. Fourth, having access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives...St. Vrain is already is a diverse school district with a high Hispanic population 36% underrepresented minority students and 27% free and reduced lunch representing low income families. The applicant has established a cogent and comprehensive plan that integrates STEM in the early grades. Thus, diversifying the curriculum and perspectives that students are exposed to from an early age. This will also lead to the motivation and deepening of individual student learning.
 - v. Finally, plans are in place that evidence mastery of critical academic content for St. Vrain’s students. These students will have access to: (1) trained teachers and administrators who receive additional intensive professional development (2) technology resources such as ICAP, the Innovation Center; R.E.A.L systems; (3) personalized learning environments by hosting each student’s IEP, READ plan, ELL plan and RTL plan into one interoperable system that gives access to parents and educators; and (4) continuous improvement plan having the checks and balances (both long and short term) measure student progress. Together, these strategies will help students develop goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving skills set that are needed for them to survive in college or career.;

- b. As an integral part of student learning St. Vrain will ensure there are achievable strategies in place that are supported by parents and educators to ensure such success.

- i. Students can utilize ICAP and R.E.A.L. technology systems to develop a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill for students to graduate on time being college/career ready. Students will be able to input their learning goals in the inventory and track their progress over time as they add to their profile.

- ii. A variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments will be utilized. Teachers will utilize project-based and engineer design learning strategies as part of students' educational experience. Students will strive for mastery of content as they become engaged in hand-on activities. Lessons will be sequential so that students move from simple to complex content and concepts.

- iii. High-quality content, including digital learning content that are relevant appropriate and aligned with college/career ready standards are in place. The Colorado State Standards as well as the newly adopted Common Core Standards are used to guide the creation of high-quality lesson plans by teachers. In addition, students will be immersed in the use of technology in a variety of forms to support their learning.

- iv. The capacity to establish and maintain ongoing and regular feedback is evidenced through the use of ICAP. Multiple points of data will be collected and stored in this system. Student academic progress can be easily tracked in this system (1) student academic performance based on: standardized math and literacy scores obtained from PALS, DRA-2, Galileo; TCAP and ACT scores will all be available. This data can be updated frequently to track student's progress towards mastery of content for college/career readiness. (2) The ICAP is a personalized space for all students whereby each student will enter his/her information and each will get results relevant only to his/her needs.

- vi. Appropriate accommodation strategies for high-need students are clearly evidenced in the proposal. These include: all students being able to participate in the Augmented School Year; availability of the onMY reader program; 1:1 technology devices available at the ICAP; R.E.A.L electronic system to personalize students profile; integration of STEM vocabulary and content in the early grades, and adaptations for ELL students. These strategies are all designed to get St. Vrain students on track toward graduating being college/career ready.

- c. Finally, the St. Vrain application evidenced effective mechanisms in place for student training and support. This training and support will ensure that students clearly understand how to use the tools and resources provided, in order to track and manage their learning. Specifically, this was evidenced by (1) the training that counselors will receive who in turn will be able to train parents, students and other educators to use the ICAP and R.E.A.L. technology systems; (2) professional development teachers will receive so they can train students to think critically and divergently; (3) Telementors will be available on line to help students and educators with technical issues as they use the various software programs. With these strong support systems in place, students will be able to get the training and support they need to personalize and manage their own learning as they prepare for college/career.

So, together these strong evidences demonstrate the emphatic emphasis that has been placed on student learning for this STEM initiative. Hence, full points were earned for this category. This narrative provided a high-quality plan that meets the needs of the students to be served. Accommodations will be made that support each student at each grade level. Strategies such as 1:1 technology devices, the Augmented school year, utilization of the myON reader, utilization of ICAP and R.E.A.L., throughout the initiative, personalizing the learning environment for ELL students by the integration of STEM vocabulary and language development early are all initiatives that support student learning.

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

It was to a great extent that extensive emphasis was placed on this area of teaching and leading for this STEM

initiative. The applicant was careful in designing how this approach would further help teachers to improve instruction as well as their capacity to support student progress towards college/career readiness. Again these approaches if implemented as planned will ultimately personalize learning and teaching for all students in the St. Vrain Valley School District.

(a) In the narrative, individual and collective capacity were substantiated and evidenced in the following ways:

- Support indicative of the effective implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies that will help each of the students who will be served to graduate on time and be college/career ready. Additional support personnel in the form of STEM graduate students will be on board to help lead in this initiative
- There were clear indications of how the content and instruction will be adapted in order to provide students with multiple opportunities to become actively engaged in common and individual tasks based on each student's individualized learning style. For example, evidence was provided that shows how the students served will become engaged in action research; teacher teams will be working collaboratively with students and teachers across the board will be engaged in trans-disciplinary planning so that learning is meaningful.
- As evidenced in the proposal student progress toward meeting college/career readiness will be used frequently to measure success. Evaluation data will be collected and analyzed so that decisions will be data-driven with regards to students performance as they accelerate towards graduation. Teachers will continuously participate in data-driven practices that will help identify needs and gaps.
- Furthermore, graduation data also will be utilized both formatively and summatively for teachers and principals to improve practice and effectiveness. This will be coupled with using feedback provided from evaluation systems to monitor teacher effectiveness, provide recommendations for areas of supports, needed interventions and improvements as the needs arise. All this will be coached and consistent with the broader Colorado Common Core State Standards.
- Evidence also was provided indicating the mastering of critical academic content for the St. Vrain students. As part of personalizing the learning environment students will need to demonstrate mastery of skills. For example, students will be provided the opportunity for intellectual growth to learn 21st Century skills such as goal-setting, teamwork, critical thinking, communication, creativity and problem solving. The evidence shows that this project will impact student achievement and growth by providing students with a foundation in activity-based science tasks and investigation.

(b) All participants have access to, and know how to use, tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress toward meeting college/career readiness inclusive of...

- Actionable information--This was evidenced by two systems proposed (1) the Alpine Achievement APASS data warehouse system and (2) the Infinite campus to include the parent Portal and the ICAP so parents can have access to data as well. Both systems are geared at accessibility for parents, students and educators. Specifically, these systems will provide teachers, counselors, school leaders and other staff with relevant access to data as well as data analysis that will provide specific information regarding students strengths and weaknesses that in the end will help create the personalized learning environment needed to help accelerate students towards meeting college and career readiness requirements.
- Already there are high-quality learning resources available evidenced with earlier STEM initiatives. There are High-quality learning resources such as: Galileo, PALS and DRA-2. These specific resources match the needs of students. There are other support resources in place such as advisement from consultants, business partners and mentors available to help. For evaluative purposes, there is an established teacher and principal evaluation system in place.
- The processes and tools outlined in this proposal to match student needs and to provide continuously improving

feedback about the effectiveness of the resources in meeting student needs. This feedback mechanism envelops both formative and summative assessment

(c) A strong and solid case has been made for all participating school leaders and school leadership teams to have training, policies, tools, data, and resources that enable them to structure an effective learning environment where this STEM initiative can be most effective:

- Qualitative and quantitative information, from the district’s teacher evaluation system will be made available. This data will serve to help school leaders and school leadership teams identify strengths and weaknesses and by extension take steps to improve, individual and collective educator effectiveness and school culture and climate, for the purpose of continuous school improvement; strong focus has been placed on:
 - Inquiry based learning
 - STEM curriculum development
 - Monitoring and mentoring students regarding graduation and college/career readiness
 - STEM integration
 - Targeted intervention in reading and math for elementary schools
 - Navigator math for middle school math teachers

- Furthermore, training, systems, and practices to continuously improve school progress toward the goals of increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps are already in place

Whereas the applicant has proposed a strong high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who will receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals, no evidence or mention has been made regarding the inclusion of hard-to-staff schools. Furthermore, the information has not been clearly outlined to show how hard-to-staff subjects (such as mathematics and science), and specialty areas (such as special education) will be addressed. Because of this missing information full points were not earned for this aspect of the proposal. However, the narrative still scored in the high range because all other criteria were adequately addressed.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

It is to a great extent that St. Vrain has already taken action based on its policies and procedures that facilitate personal learning for students to be served under the STEM initiative:

- a. At St. Vrain, evidences were provided that show how the LEA central office is structured to provide STEM support and services to all participating schools. Specifically, the appointment of an Executive Director for Priority Schools inclusive of all the schools in the district (feeder elementary, middle school and high school). Without strong support from the central office, such an initiative will not be fully implemented or sustained after the life of the grant.

- b. Providing school leadership teams in participating school flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators, and school-level budgets are clearly outlined in this proposal. This information was clearly evidenced in the narrative. Specifically, St.

Vrain has in place the Augmented School Days--thus giving them autonomy over the schedule and school calendars. School personnel can make responsible decisions and utilize staffing models that they deem effective to enhance student learning. However, these decisions are expected to be within the legal and statutory limits such as curriculum decisions based on the Colorado State Standards and the newly adopted Common Core Standards.

- c. Also evidenced in this application is the opportunity students have to progress and earn credits based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic. Skyline High School has an articulated agreement with the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences at the University of Colorado at Boulder. UAC at Boulder is one of the stakeholders in this initiative. Hence, each student is able to move through a personalized academic pathway that is closely monitored by the teacher or advisor based on the individual needs and performance of each student admitted in this engineering program. The pace at which the student moves is not tied to the amount of time spent on the topic. Rather it is tied to mastery. It is very important for students to master concepts and content so they will experience deep learning and have a clear understanding of the STEM subjects.
- d. The STEM initiative will allow students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple ways--The STEM activities allow for teachers to provide students with multiple activities that are STEM related and simultaneously deepen student learning. Hands-on activities; engineering design principles, project-based learning activities, rigorous math and literacy activities aimed at turning around the lowest performing schools; the expansion of STEM course work in earlier grades; and implementing P-Tech patterning with IBM and the local community college are all relevant activities that will help students demonstrate mastery of content. In addition, the outlined activities will, facilitate learning and allow student to follow their own learning path based on mastery. With the ubiquitous integration of technology and access to the Tele-mentor (online) for help, students can move at their own pace and master skills and techniques as well as source world-wide resources to assist them in the learning process. Mastery of learning will be checked by students' performance on formative and summative assessments inclusive of DRA-2 assessments, TCAP and ACT scores.
- e. Based on prior successes, St. Vrain has already committed multiple learning resources and instructional practices for the students. There are on-line technology programs such as R.E.A.L and ICAP. Teachers will employ multiple teaching strategies. St. Vrain School District offering students more time in school through the augmented school year. These additional days in school along with support both on and off line and offer acceleration and intervention to close the achievement gap in literacy and math. In addition, the support students will receive all year round will lead to deep learning and mastery. However, there is no evidence provided that clearly indicated how the resources and instructional practices will be adapted to meet the needs of students with disabilities as well as ELL students.

In sum, strong evidences were provided that addresses the LEA's policies and practices. Missing from the narrative were specifics regarding how St. Vrain intends to adapt instructional practices to provide full access to all students inclusive of students with special needs as well as for ELL students. Hence, full points were not earned because of the missing narrative. However, this narrative scored in the high-range because all other categories in this criterion were fully met.

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

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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

It is to the full extent that this proposal provided substantiated evidences that clearly indicates that LEA has the infrastructure to support personal learning. Evidences were provided in the following ways:

- (a) Ensuring that all participating students parents, educators and other stakeholders regardless of income, have

access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of the applicant's proposal. Evidenced by:

- A variety of electronic tools and resources that provide students with access to their own educational data are provided. Students will have access to learning resources in and outside of the Innovation Center having 1:1 technology. Middle grade students focusing on the STEM areas will have access to iPads and laptop carts. Elementary students from feeder schools will have increased access to technology.

(b) Ensuring that students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders have appropriate levels of technical support.

- Technical support was evidenced by the provision of access for all schools, students, staff and families to the Atomic Learning system. This software tutorial service is always available to provide "just in time" resources to support technology learning. There will be sites whereby students will take home the technology devices. There is a help desk at St. Vrain available from 7:30-5:00pm to provide the personal technology support needed. There is also a district log with training videos, trouble-shooting tips as well as frequently asked questions as an online support structure.

(c) Using information technology systems that allow parents and students to export their information in an open data format

- As evidenced in this narrative, St. Vrain has proposed to use the information technology systems in place to allow parents and students to utilize an open data format. Specifically, there is a custom Google Apps environment where student work is created, stored and also shared. This is available to students at all times. Students are encouraged to export data for their personal use upon graduation. The Google App securely stores student personal records.

(d) Ensuring that LEAs and schools use interoperable data systems

- Evidence was provided that St. Vrain utilizes interoperable data systems that are enabled through a common authentication method. Specifically, student records and work can follow them throughout their time at St. Vrain. Also interoperable were: human resources, instructional management system and the budget system

In sum, this high-quality narrative clearly addressed the LEA and school infrastructure to fully support a personalized learning environment for students to be college/career ready. Evidence clearly outlined; provision of access to content, tools and learning resources; strong technical support both online and in person with a help desk, the ability to use information and open data format successfully, and having interoperable data systems in place allowing for a common authentication method. This narrative earned full points because it is to the full extent that the relevant evidences were provided explicitly.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	14

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

It is to a great extent that this criterion was addressed. A high-quality supported strategy for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process was laid out in this proposal for the STEM initiative. The timeline of 4 years seems appropriate and timely with a regular cycle of feedback from the stakeholders and external evaluator on progress made with regarding to student learning outcomes--akin to the program goals.

In addition, a comprehensive strategy for sustainability is in place for ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the term of the grant. The evidence clearly provided was how St. Varian Valley School District will address the monitoring, measuring, and publicly sharing of information. These areas, although not explicit do include the sustenance of professional development activities, technology usage, plus staff and resources are in place to support this STEM initiative.

What was missing was a clear narrative addressing the process to measure the quality of investment feedback and ongoing corrections. Yes, there will be an external evaluation team, which conveys that such will take place implicitly. However, this was not abundantly clear in the narrative. Hence, a high

range score was achieved but not the full score.

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

5

5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

It is to the fullest extent that strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders have been outlined. Evidences included the fact that St. Vrain has:

1. Established a website for the RTTT-D project that is open and accessible to all stakeholders
2. Both formal (peer-reviewed journal articles) and informal (Newsletters) strategies were identified to disseminate information to the public
3. Local news coverage also will be welcomed to address RTTT-D issues
4. The establishment of a RTTT-D leadership advisory team that will include teachers from each school, administrators, parents and business leaders
5. Have planned meetings to update parents on goal accomplishment or the lack thereof

So it is to the full extent that this aspect of the narrative was successfully addressed, earning full points

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

5

5

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

It is to the full extent that the performance measures were addressed in this section of the proposal

(a) A clear and comprehensive rationale for selecting measures has been provided. There are ambitious yet doable and achievable goals outlined. There are annual targets to be met that are in keeping with the overall goal of the STEM initiative. Performance measures are grade and developmentally appropriate for each grade band identified

(b) In addition, how the measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant's implementation success or areas of concern have been succinctly described and is inclusive of measures that will provide information on the success of the program at key times in the areas of literacy, math and science.

(c) Finally, review and improvement of the measure over time also has been articulated. Program drift will avoided by constant revisiting of the logic model with stakeholders. So, twice per year it was proposed that the logic model would be re-visited in order to address fidelity and make recommended changes as they come along through continuous feedback form stakeholders.

Each performance measures starting at the 3rd grade has been highlighted. There were 3 performance measure outlined for grades 1-3, three for grades 4-8, and three for grades 9-12 for a total 9 performance measures. The 9 performance measures were close enough to the 12-14 required. So full points were obtained for this criterion.

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

5

4

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

It is to a great extent that evaluating the effectiveness of the initiative will be conducted. A fair evaluation plan was advanced to ensure the collection and analysis of valid and reliable data. The EPI International, INC will conduct the evaluation of the program and initiative. Multiple evaluation measures will be included in the data collection and analysis of the data that will be obtained qualitatively and quantitatively through surveys, focus groups, and interviews etc.

Together St. Vrain and EPI will collaborate on identifying and collecting reliable baseline data for program participants. The fidelity and implementation measures outlined in Attachment O further evidenced specifics regarding how each component of the projects will be evaluated using a checklist with "1" for meeting the goal and "0" for not met. For example, provision of professional development will be checked against HR records. The criterion is for 85% of the teachers to attend all PD's planned. Similarly, the criterion for fidelity for the augmented school year is to be evidenced by all 8 elementary schools providing at least 35 days of Augmented School.

Concrete evidences regarding evaluation of the effectiveness of the investment. Evidences include the contract made with EPI Inc., as the external evaluator. There will be multiple evaluation measures put in place so that valid and reliable data will be collected formatively and summatively throughout the course of the initiative. In order to evaluate if project goals are being met, internal evaluation will be

conducted as evidenced by the checklist in place to ensure fidelity of implementation measures. Conversely, the application did not document how working with community partners and compensation reform would be evaluated. Hence, full points were not earned. The applicant still earned a high-range score because strong evidences were provided for all other areas in this criterion.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>It is to the <u>fullest extent</u> that the budget was addressed in a reasonable manner</p> <p>The following budget summary (inclusive of the budget narrative and tables) provides sound information that—</p> <p>(a) Identified all funds that will support the project both external and internal funds. A total of \$17,481,561 as requested</p> <p>(b) Based on the budget and the total figure of \$17,481,561 being asked for, this is a convincing budget that is reasonable and sufficient to support the development, implementation and sustainability of St Vrain's STEM initiative</p> <p>(c) A strong and thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities also were provided. There were multiple tables that evidenced the funding of each project that has been proposed. These tables provided additional evidences regarding the budget and strengthened the feasibility of the STEM initiative proposed. Further evidence were as follows:</p> <p>(i) Hiring of staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project director to be the general liaison between and among stakeholders internally and externally • Quality control data manager • External evaluator • Lead Counselor to train other counselors • Technology support staff • STEM coordinator at each school • Additional hours for principals and Para professionals as the needs arise • An engineer/teacher advisor • A consultant in year 4 for establishing the P-Tech program <p>(ii) Purchasing of supplies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchasing of Mac desk-top computers at the outset for each new staff at the Innovation Center and for consultant use • iPads for teachers to use for both (formative and summative) data collection as well as for students to utilize when creating projects <p>In sum, strong evidences were provided to substantiate the need for \$17,481,561 from RTTT-D and \$223,002 from the local district to fund St. Vrain's STEM initiative. Also indicated was the fact that impressive results would be yielded with regards to student learning by spending \$708 per pupil each year after the first year of investing in technology. Additionally, \$265 will be spent on teachers (through professional development) for them to be able to deliver intellectually based STEM content knowledge to effect and accelerate student learning so they can be college/career ready.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>To the fullest extent possible, sustainability of project goals has been demonstrated after the term of the grant in multiple ways. One of the key features of sustainability for St. Vrain is the fact that it has a track record of successes.</p>		

1. Successfully managing a US department of education i3 development award
2. Scaling-up the successful Innovation Academy Model
3. Garnering positive outcomes for innovative programs
4. Receiving fellows award for the K-12 Engineering program
5. Having highly qualified effective leaders and principals
6. Engaging families and students
7. Reducing learning gaps
8. Increasing academic achievements
9. Increasing enrollment of students in higher education

The state and local government of Colorado are in full support of the Broomfield School District initiative. This is evidenced by the strong letter of support from Colorado Department of education as well as a letter of support from the City of Longmont stating emphatically their full support for the initiative. Budget assumptions, potential sources and use of funds have been convincingly outlined for the next 3 years. Hence this narrative earned full points.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

It is to the fullest extent that St. Vrain has evidenced its capacity to fully met the competitive priority. So, the Academic Excellence through STEM Innovation proposal met the overall criteria for competitive preferences in the following ways:

- (1) A coherent description of sustainable partnerships between public and private organizations, inclusive of health organization, Youth and Family Services; higher education and other civic and local stakeholders. The support from such a wide variety of public and private entities demonstrated their support for this plan of action improving student learning in the STEM fields.
- (2) The population level desired results for students demonstrated alignment and support for positive student learning outcomes. Educational results presented included: Improved behavior by 30% as measured by pre and post-test; decreased substance abuse by 24% for all students; for Hispanic students decrease in self-harm behaviors by 48% based on pre and post-tests conducted.
- (3) A thorough description of how the partnership demonstrated
 - (a) Tracking the selected indicators that measure each result at the aggregate level for all children within the school district will be done by the external evaluation firm EPI international., Inc;
 - (b) Using the data to target its resources in order to improve results for participating students with special emphasis on students facing significant challenges, such as 46.3% of the Hispanics that will be served by this initiative
 - (c) Developing a strategy to scale the model beyond the participating students to at least other high-need students and communities in the LEA or consortium over time; There are 7 high schools and 36 feeder schools in this district. Over time this model will be replicated as part of the sustainability plan
 - (d) Improving results over time to be evidenced by the data collected and analyzed by EPI International., Inc.;
- (4) Furthermore, a thorough description of how the partnership would integrate education and other services (e.g., services that address social-emotional, and behavioral needs) in and outside of the school were articulated. Strong and sustained partnership has been developed between Boulder County Prevention and Intervention Program (BCPIP) and St. Vrain. The purpose of the partnership is to promote resiliency in adolescents by providing school-based, health-related services that addressed social and emotional health. These important services are geared at strengthening the capacities of students to be ready to learn and be academically successful so they can graduate college/career ready.
- (5) An extensive description of how the partnership and LEA or consortium would build the capacity of staff in participating schools by providing them with tools and support for
 - (a) Assessing the needs and assets of participating students using (CAFAS)

(b) Identifying and taking inventory of the needs and assets of the school and community that are aligned with those goals for improving the education and family and community supports through collaboration

(c) Creating a decision-making process and infrastructure to select, implement, and evaluate success and utilizing the RTTT-D advisory Council;

(d) Engaging parents and families of participating students in both decision-making about solutions to improve results over time and in addressing student, family, and school needs; This will be done on a voluntary basis and is free of charge to parents. Support will not be restricted to only students struggling academically. Students with social and emotional deficits (needs) also will be supported.

(e) Constantly assessing (formatively and summatively) the progress for implementing and maximizing impact and resolve challenges and problems that are inevitable in such a large scale project.

(6) In addition, an extensive justification was made in identifying the annual ambitious yet achievable performance measures for the STEM initiative with strong emphasis on decreasing the percent of students who are truant and spend a lot of time in suspension.

Summatively, St. Vrain has demonstrated unequivocally its ability to use results, align resources and integrate a number of needed services to advance the STEM initiative. Specifically, this proposal has demonstrated the ability to plan, organize, implement, monitor, evaluate and sustain such an initiative as well as bring it up to scale while serving a high needs group of students.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

St. Vrain Valley School District has provided cogent and detailed evidences that demonstrate its capacity of implementing a meaningful STEM innovation by building on previous successes. The track record has afforded this school district both public and private sectors partners who are willing to extend this program across multiple school districts. The focus on helping students to zero in on STEM education very early in their career, coupled with strong support provide a winning formula for success. Ultimately, the goal is to get as many students learning and choosing the STEM fields and graduating college/career ready.

Significant and appropriate measures to accelerate student learning; deepen student learning; increase the effectiveness of educators; expand student and family access to resources; decrease achievement gaps especially as it relates to the Hispanic population being served; and above all increase the rates at which students graduate from high school. These complete evidences show that St. Vrain Valley Scholl District has fully met Absolute Priority 1.

Total	210	199
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0458CO-3 for St. Vrain Valley Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

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	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. St. Vrain presents a thoughtful and coherent strategy that embeds the four educational assurances within the text. The St. Vrain proposes to a plan expand on the work already started at Skyline High School by connecting the STEM Academy model to its middle and elementary feeder schools. St. Vrain articulates a clear and strong approach that will promote and expand rigorous STEM programming at all levels with a goal of improved graduation rates and improved postsecondary readiness through personalized plans and expanded opportunities.</p> <p>This plan offers to expand STEM coursework options focusing on middle and elementary schools and at risk and underserved populations. Their vision includes developing a plan in year four for implementing P-Tech a grade 9-14 program in partnership with IBM and local community colleges. For its youngest students, it is proposed to expand early learning STEM opportunities for their K-8 programs. St. Vrain presents a sound and credible approach to accelerating student achievement deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support grounded in common and individual tasks that are based on student academic interests. The applicant will utilize the Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP), Relationships with Educators Accelerate Learning Plan (R.E.A.L.), counseling, Telementoring, and augmented school year to turn around their lowest-achieving schools.</p> <p>Although St. Vrain will provide extensive professional development for teachers, the plan does not address how the applicant will recruit and retain teachers.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. The applicant demonstrates a comprehensive approach to implementing its reform proposal to support a high-quality district-level and school-level implementation in that it will focus on closing the achievement gaps by producing a nationally replicable STEM Academy model with systems in place to prepare students in elementary and middle school for graduation and college and career success.</p> <p>(a) St. Vrain's application details a thorough process to select schools within a feeder pattern to participate. The process includes conducting a thorough review to make sure the participating schools collectively met eligibility requirements. The application provides concise text as evidence that the participating schools collectively meet the competition's eligibility requirements of which 46.3% are Hispanic students and 58.9% are student s from low income families.</p> <p>(b) The applicant provides a list of 11 schools: 1 high school, 2 middle schools, and 8 elementary schools that will participate in grant activities- Table 1.</p> <p>(c) The applicant has identified that there is a total of 5,757 participating students of which 63% are high need and 58.9% are from low-income families and 265 participating educators.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. The applicant proposes to create achievable change and reform along four projects which include: 1) K-12 Connections, 2) High School Initiatives, 3) Middle School Initiatives, and 4) Elementary Initiatives. The applicant provides High-Quality Plan with a table and text that includes the goals, activities, responsibilities, deliverables, and timelines for these projects as detailed in the narrative and evidenced in Table 2- Implementation High- Quality Plan table and its Logic Model.</p> <p>The applicant presents a strong case in successfully scaling up. The St. Vrain's application explains that they will scale up program district wide for implementation with another school feeder by leveraging work started with the Investing in Innovation grant in September of 2016.</p> <p>The applicant includes hiring appropriate staff that will ensure implementation of this project, and to provide extensive training to teachers and leaders to sustain project beyond the grant. Additionally, the applicant provides justification that these staff will further the development of pipeline from the elementary school to the middle school to the high school. These positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTTT-D Director of Programming • Innovation Center Director 		

- 2-Engineering Design Project Advisor/Teacher
- Innovation Center Project Manager
- Quality Control/ Data Manager
- IT Classified Technician
- 3-Lead Counselors
- 11-STEM Coordinators

The applicant has a long history of working collaboratively with community partners such as IBM and the University of Colorado to support educational initiatives that will serve as a vehicle for students to engage in solution oriented work experience options that are relevant and real world.

The applicant's logic model presents a strong road map for this project that can be translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change.

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

The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. The applicant's vision is strong and is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goals that are equal to or exceed State ESEA targets for the LEA(s), overall and by student subgroup for each participating school.

(a) The applicant's project will measure student learning and performance using the Colorado's state assessment and ACT exams which are ambitious yet achievable annual goals.

Improvement in the percent of students meeting state standards on the Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) scores by school year (SY) 2016-2017:

- grade 3 Reading by 8.4%
- grade 3 Math by 13.8%
- grade 8 Reading by 11.9%
- grade 8 Math by 18.2%

Increased scores in the percent of students at or above proficiency by SY 2016-2017 on

- ACT English scores of 14.5%
- ACT Math scores of 17.8%

(b) The applicant has established ambitious yet achievable annual goals to reduce the achievement gaps for Hispanic students.

- Hispanic students meeting state standards on the TCAP scores by school year (SY) 2016- 2017 versus white students,
- grade 3 Reading by 20.9%
- grade 3 Mathematics by 20.9%
- grade 8 Reading by 20.9%
- 8 Mathematics by 20.9%
- ACT Math scores of 20.9%
- ACT English scores of 20.9%

(c) The applicant has established ambitious yet achievable annual goals to achieve graduation rates of 95%.

(d) The applicant has established ambitious yet achievable annual goals to improve college enrollment rates. Saint Vrain Valley Schools will achieve a college enrollment rate for the 2016-2017 cohort of graduates enrolled in a higher-education institution during the 16 months after graduation of 91%. Through articulation agreements with the college and university, St. Vrain students will be able to attend college while still in high school.

St. Vrain's vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goals for the school district in Postsecondary Degree Attainment. St. Vrain will improve student graduation attainment by 8% by SY 2016-2017. St. Vrain has established a system to monitor student successes and challenges following graduation.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	13
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. The applicant demonstrates a clear record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching through a thorough description and compelling charts both in the narrative and appendices presented as evidence that demonstrates St. Vrain's successes.</p> <p>(a) St. Vrain has improved student learning outcomes and raised student achievement as provided by the evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase of student achievement in reading for K - 2nd grade students was between 1.2% - 2.8%; • Improvement of language development by 59% to close the achievement gap for Pre Kinder students; and • Student participation in the district's Innovation Academy. <p>Although the applicant does not address high school graduation rates and college enrollment, the applicant demonstrates improvements in overall student learning outcomes and preparing its participating students with college and career pathways in their STEM Academy.</p> <p>(b) St. Vrain has achieved ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools or in its low-performing schools through the implementation of a program which provided Data-Driven Decision Making and Information Technology that led to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of Algebra I failures from 38% - 9%; • Increased reading proficiency in reading for 3rd grade in persistently low performing school by 22% • Increase Grade 9 Math to 60%; and • Increase in Grade 5 Science to 25.5%. <p>(c) St. Vrain makes student performance data available to students, educators, and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and services through the students' Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAP). The ICAP is developed collaboratively with the student and the teacher and then shared with the parents.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. St. Vrain has demonstrated evidence that it has a high level of transparency in place in their LEA processes, practices, and investments, including by making public, by school, actual school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration. The applicant provides its methodology to provide transparency seen in some examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in salary/benefit surveys. • Information shared during public board meetings and posted on the district's website. • Providing budgets for public review and providing the public the opportunity to comment on proposed budgets during the public comment section of the Board's regular open meeting. • Salary schedules and extra duty schedules are publicly available, posted on the district's website and made available with the employee handbook. • St. Vrain has provided evidence of their CRDC data that is on their district web-site that leads readers to the required data on the CRDC's web-site. The CRDC data is also provided in Attachment J in the Appendix. 		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. St Vrain presents evidence that there are successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the</p>		

personalized learning environments as described in this proposal.

This proposal demonstrates that the state of Colorado has positioned itself as a partner that will support initiatives to promote the preparation of students through college- and career ready standards. Being a recipient of the Race to the Top Phase 3 grant will advance adopted college- and career ready standards targeted K-12 reforms aimed at improving student achievement over a four year period, the last three which are in conjunction with the implementation of the RTT-D grant program. Additionally, the State of Colorado has adopted evaluation of teachers and principals of which 50% is based on student academic growth.

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

10

10

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. The applicant provides a thorough description of extensive and meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal and meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal.

(a) Students and families have been sent an e-mail through their Shout-Point system that goes to all families to visit a specially designated web-page to provide feedback and input on an overview of their plan. This feedback is consolidated in Attachment K in the Appendix.

(i) As evidence of direct engagement and support from teachers, St. Vrain currently provides a letter from the president of the Union and has shared this proposal with all teachers and has feedback from them. Please see Attachment K for comments from teachers and the public. Please see Attachment L for the letter from the president of the union.

(b) St. Vrain has received several letters of support from the following entities: The Colorado Department of Education, University of Colorado at Boulder, IBM, Boulder County Prevention and Intervention Program, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, and the City of Longmont. Provided as evidence is Attachment M in the Appendix for the letters of support. Evidence of the review by the State of Colorado and the Mayor of Longmont, Colorado are provided in Attachment N in the Appendix.

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

5

5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. St. Vrain provides a high-quality plan that includes the goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties for the analysis of the applicant's current status in implementing personalized learning environments and the logic behind the reform proposal contained within the applicant's proposal, including identified needs and gaps that the plan will address. St. Vrain conducted a very intentional and thoughtful analysis of needs and gaps.

The applicant recognizes that appropriate staff will be needed to effectively implement personalized learning such as hiring a lead counselor at each middle school and high school to support ICAP.

Efforts to create a K-12 STEM pipeline in St. Vrain are commendable. St. Vrain Valley School District acknowledges that there is a need for an integrated approach to STEM education. This proposal is focused on the high school and its feeder schools. The applicant will address this need by designing an early learning curriculum that is the bridge to 21st Century skills and early success in school leading to student interest in STEM futures. The efforts to strengthen STEM education need to intensify and begin early with a teaching/learning model that transforms classroom theory into real-world practice and application.

St. Vrain's proposed project will increase the number of individuals from groups traditionally underrepresented in STEM such as Hispanics and women who through this program will be provided with access to accelerated, rigorous, and engaging STEM integrated learning activities.

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 overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. The applicant presents a strong high-quality plan (as evidenced within the text and table) for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment for all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready through the implementation of student-centered inquiry based teaching and learning that will be achieved through Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP), the STEM Academy (existing initiative), and the creation of the Innovation Center (IC) (new initiative). The applicant presents a coherent plan with evidence in the appendix section that demonstrates its ability to support learning that will engage and empower all learners to take ownership of their own learning with the support of parents and educators.</p> <p>(a) The Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) will be utilized as a critical component of this project which serves as a common thread throughout the proposal. It will serve as an alignment and reflective tool for the student. It is important to note that the ICAP is a part of Colorado State Board of Education Rules.</p> <p>(i) Developed by the student and the student's parent or legal guardian, in collaboration with their school counselors, the students will understand that what they are learning is key to their success and in accomplishing their goals. The students will establish written goals based on career cluster inventory and interest survey to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish personalized academic and career goals, • Explore postsecondary career and educational opportunities, • Align course work and curriculum, apply to postsecondary institutions, and • Secure financial aid and ultimately enter the workforce school. <p>(ii) The counselors will work with the students to identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements; and to understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals. The applicant describes in detail the design process approach that they have chosen to involve students in deep learning experiences in their areas of academic interest. A typical lesson will focus on intellectual learning and integrating STEM as evidenced in a sample lesson plan in Attachment Q in the Appendix.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be presented with a real world problem and asked a question or will formulate a question. • The student reflects in the define stage and develops a clear problem statement; allowing the student to prioritize and communicate their thinking clearly. • The student next enters the ideate phase and creative ideas flow. • The use of the design process provides structure to test their hypotheses. • The student then prototypes their ideas and learns through the test and retest process and the feedback that process provides. • Evaluation of the solution in the test and retest phase supports vocabulary development and communication skills. <p>(iii) With the addition of their four proposed projects (K-12 Connections, High School Initiatives, Middle School Initiatives, and Elementary Initiatives), the applicant will include the addition of Lead Counselors. St. Vrain strongly demonstrates that it will improve participation, instruction, and services through their Telementoring program which will connect students to project-based learning opportunities to deepen involvement in contextual and service learning activities, strategically based on their specific goals which can be developed more fully and be inclusive of staff and family communications about each student's interest and progress towards their stated goals. To further deepen student learning in the low achieving schools students, St. Vrain has established a comprehensive plan to deliberately integrate STEM into the elementary and middle schools.</p> <p>(iv) St. Vrain will create the Innovation Center at the STEM Academy at Skyline High School in order to broaden participation, and to address the need for a model that is effective in attracting a more diverse population of learners to STEM futures. This learning model is of importance to the student's personalized learning plan this since it provides a high degree of student-directed learning in an area of interest that will ultimately translate to a high level of intrinsic motivation to deepen individual learning. St. Vrain understands that they must increase the participation of Hispanics, females, and students from low-income families in STEM focused postsecondary education and careers as evidenced in the data: STEM Academy has representation of 35% female, 36% underrepresented minority, and 27% free and reduced lunch.</p> <p>(v) Through the intentional implementation of the engineering design process STEM, St.Vrain will provide students with the opportunity for growth and to exercise and learn 21st Century skills such as goal-setting, teamwork, critical thinking, communication, creativity and problem solving having long-term improved academic outcomes as compared to students who do not receive this encouragement, motivation, and learner directed, teacher facilitated problem solving learning.</p>		

(b) (i) (ii) The applicant introduces the Innovation Center as an innovative approach for a personalized learning environment that will allow students to master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving. The St. Vrain teachers will facilitate project-based learning as a STEM inquiry-based learning strategy using the engineer design process. Teachers will make the engineering design process a part of every child's educational experience, through weekly, in-class, hands-on, inquiry-based engineering instruction. The focus of lesson planning and curriculum development is the formalized design process that leads to intellectual learning and early learning STEM integration. Lessons will intentionally include elements of the design thinking process so that this solution oriented thinking and doing becomes automatic for our students. Additionally, through the P-Tech program St. Vrain students will participate in an ongoing, sequenced Workplace Learning curriculum informed by current and future industry standards that includes career goals, mentoring, guest speakers, workplace visits and internships.

(iii) High-quality content drives the integration of STEM and the engineering design process into core curricular areas will provide all students with opportunities to demonstrate thinking and creative solutions to real world problems and challenges in science and math content areas. The applicant will provide students with digital content opportunities such as providing a wide range of online modules and the Galileo Online standards Based Assessments.

(iv) St. Vrain demonstrates its capacity to provide ongoing and regular feedback to measure student progress. (A) In addition to the ICAP, St. Vrain will utilize numerous sources of student data to measure student progress: measures of standardized math and literacy, based on, PALS, DRA2, Galileo; and the Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP); ACT as a measure of college- and career readiness. These assessments and data will link to the students ICAP and the Alpine APASS data warehouse system. (B) The ICAP provides personalized learning recommendations results that are relevant to the student's level of postsecondary and workforce readiness that guides students are guided towards participation in internships, summer jobs, part-time work or school activity based on their specific goals.

(v) The strength of this proposal is that it is designed to serve the high-need students. Appropriate accommodations will include activities such as the Augmented School Year, myON reader, and 1:1 technology devices within the Innovation Center, the ICAP, and R.E.A.L., and integration of STEM vocabulary and language development, based on the needs of second language learners.

(c) This proposal presents a solid plan that embeds training to build capacity of it its counselors so that they can work with students to ensure they understand and can fully access and utilize all the benefits of the ICAP and REAL plan so that the student can self-manage their own learning.

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

20

20

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. The applicant demonstrates a comprehensive and high-quality plan (as presented in the text and table) for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all participating students the support to graduate college- and career-ready.

St. Vrain proposes to improve teaching and leading by providing educators with professional development opportunities to improve instruction and increase their capacity to support student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements to enable the full implementation of personalized learning and teaching for all students.

(a) The applicant proposes to implement professional development for educators as follows:

(i) St. Vrain presents clear professional development that is aligned and mirrors the personalized learning plans:

- Defining specific methods for monitoring student successes and challenges following graduation,
- Defining and developing an ICAP that effectively monitors student progress toward reaching graduation goals,
- Hiring full time STEM coordinators at each grade span and in each elementary school to develop curricular opportunities and options,
- Designing and implementing a Professional Development plan that prepares teachers for the expansion of the STEM program, and
- Designing and implementing a professional development plan that supports teachers in monitoring student progress toward reaching successful graduation.

The STEM Coordinators from each site, the Innovation Center Director, and the RTT-D Director of Programming will provide professional development focused on curriculum design, and integration of activities based on the Innovation Academy model. STEM coordinators will plan, implement, and conduct teacher professional development workshops for teachers, centered on inquiry based STEM learning and data collection using identified technology and assessment. Some professional development topics include:

- ICAP,
- Monitoring and mentoring of students regarding graduation and college and career readiness,
- Innovation Center plan and implementation,
- Data driven dialogue, and
- Engineering Design Process.

(ii) St. Vrain proposes various professional development designs for adapting content and instruction. Teachers will engage in:

- Action research process where they identify areas of student need and apply technology;
- Collaborative teaming that will focus on an identified need and work with STEM Coordinators;
- Aligning STEM integrated curriculum and project-based learning with common core state standards;
- Collaborative unit planning and in project-based learning to integrate common core state standards;
- Vocabulary and language training based on the needs of second language learners;
- Using a STEM Planning template at the elementary level to document units; and
- Developing a school-wide PK-5 project-based learning program map.
- Participation in trans-disciplinary planning which emphasizes connections between curriculum areas and use of a range and balance of STEM learning and teaching strategies.

(iii) St. Vrain has multiple ways in which they will monitor student progress (i.e., Data-Driven Decision Making System, and Academic Pathways to Access and Students Success (APASS)). They will participate in data driven dialogue practices that will be helpful in identifying student need and gaps.

(iv) To improve teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness, the applicant proposes to use feedback provided by the St. Vrain's teacher and principal evaluation systems developed by the state Colorado.

(b) All participating St. Vrain educators will have access to and will receive training on learning how to use, tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready graduation requirements. The applicant has budgeted for 19,280 hours of direct teacher stipends and 7,920 hours of substitutes to release teachers for professional development. Those resources include:

(i) Actionable information for St. Vrain will be available from the Alpine Achievement APASS data warehouse System, and Infinite Campus to include the Parent Portal and the ICAP. This will help educators identify optimal learning approaches that respond to individual student academic needs and interests. Personalized information will be provided through the students IEP, READ plan, ELL plan, RtI Plan, DRA2 assessment, Data-Driven Decision Making system facilitated by the Galileo Assessment, PALS, and DRA2.

(ii) - (iii) The St. Vrain demonstrates in the plan that teachers and students will have access to high-quality learning resources, and processes and tools to match student's needs with specific resources. This includes the: Galileo, PALS, and DRA 2 ; myON reader to improve literacy at home; iPads for technology integration; professional development; conferences; a knowledge management system; learning management systems; advisement from consultants, business partners, and mentors; and other resources provided by St. Vrain.

(c) St. Vrain provides its school leaders and school leadership teams training, policies, tools, data, and resources that enable them to structure an effective learning environment that meets individual student academic needs and accelerates student progress as evidenced in Table 11 - High Quality Plan for Teaching and Leading.

(i) St. Vrain is implementing the principal and teacher evaluation system in the State of Colorado. The school district was part of the Colorado Department of Education pilot of the new Principal Evaluation System in 2011-2012 and the 2012 – 2013 teacher evaluation pilots. This pilot was highlighted in an article in the New York Times which focused on St. Vrain's implementation of the pilot (see Attachment I at the Appendix). The teachers are rated on Quality Standards that measure professional practice over time. Fifty percent of the evaluation will be based on five Quality Standards as described in the proposal while the sixth quality standard, student growth will account for the other half of the evaluation.

(ii) Professional development has been developed and the budget allows for teacher stipends and substitutes so that teachers can be a part of the professional learning needed to make impact on student progress.

(d) The applicant demonstrates that it has a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers. The applicant does not fully describe in the narrative how the campus leaders will receive training and support. However, Table 11 - High Quality Plan for Teaching and Leading demonstrates that campus leaders will receive similar training to that of teachers.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. St. Vrain has a high-quality plan to support full project implementation (as evidenced in Table 12) through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator, and level of the education system (classroom, school, and LEA) with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed. The applicant has practices, policies, and rules that facilitate and support personalized learning.

(a) St. Vrain has already taken action to organize the central office, to provide support and services to all participating schools who are implementing STEM at the priority schools. This includes appointing an Executive Director for Priority Schools which includes Skyline High School and its feeder elementary and middle schools. This strong central office support is likely to contribute to the success of their project.

(b) The practice at St. Vrain is to provide their school leadership teams in all schools with sufficient flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators, and school-level budgets. The participating campuses are well positioned to carry out the grant goals and objectives with support from the central office.

(c) The applicant describes that a college-career ready culture has been created at Skyline High School, and the infrastructure is in place to facilitate the personalized learning environments since it spent the last 4 years designing, implementing, and enrolling students to its one-of-a-kind Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) program resulting in students attending the College of Engineering and Applied Science at the University of Colorado at Boulder through a direct partnership.

The P-Tech program, which will begin planning stages in 2015-2016, provides students opportunities that are adaptable to the student so that they can attend college while still in high school in order to achieve an associate's degree. Additionally, students will have the opportunity to move through a personalized pathway to earn both high school and college credits.

(d) St. Vrain gives students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways through STEM activities and the Telementor program. The students have other opportunities to demonstrate mastery of standards as described in C(1)(b)(ii).

(e) St. Vrain has committed to provide learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners. The students have other opportunities to demonstrate mastery of standards as described in C(1)(b)(ii) and C(v).

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

The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. St. Vrain has a high-quality plan (as evidenced in the Table 12) to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator, and level of the education system (classroom, school, and LEA) with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed. The quality of the plan will be determined based on the extent to which—

(a) There is commitment from St. Vrain to ensure that all participating students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders regardless of income, have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of the applicant's proposal. For example:

- Provide 1:1 technology devices for students who work in the Innovation Center;
- Make available iPads and laptop carts in elementary and middle school participating in STEM activities; and
- Increasing technology integration and intentional to maintain a focus of STEM at the middle and elementary schools encourages.

(b) St. Vrain provides access for all schools, students, staff and families to Atomic Learning, a software tutorial service that provides a continuously available "just in time" resources to support technology learning. At sites where students take devices home, these devices themselves can be portals for accessing a variety of district resources.

- Teachers will use iPads to document data and camera's to conduct observations knowing they have support;

- Help Desk accessibility to support all technology includes Infinite Campus and Alpine achievement, myOn, and technology integration. All staff, students, and parents have access.
- District blogs with training videos, trouble-shooting and frequently asked questions are available.

(c) Aligned to selection criteria, St. Vrain has information technology systems in place that allow parents and students to export their information in an open data format to access grades, schedules, test scores, and additional records at any time. St. Vrain houses student Information in the Infinite Campus system, where it is accessible via a portal to students and parents 24-7 via the Internet. These records are stored in SQL and through several additional paired systems, inform other information systems, including:

- Alpine Achievement data warehouse, home to more assessment data;
- IEP system, currently Encore and soon to be Enrich;
- District content management system, Moodle, which is a platform for teaching and learning utilized by teachers to host and conduct online courses and blended course supports for students;

(d) St. Vrain ensures that the district and its schools use interoperable data systems that are enabled through a common authentication method as evidenced in the narrative and the chart.

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 overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. The applicant's high-quality plan includes utilizing the state requirements that ensure all students exit the K-12 education system ready for postsecondary education, and/or to be successful in the workforce, earning a living wage immediately upon graduation.</p> <p>Colorado school districts use the Unified Improvement Planning (UIP) to not only meet state and federal accountability requirements but as a critical component of continuous improvement. Beginning in 2011-12, all districts uses the same district UIP template. The state also requires schools and districts to <u>publicly share information</u>. Because schools and districts are required to publicly post their improvement plans through the state department of education web site (www.schoolview.org), Unified Improvement Planning also provides a mechanism for external stakeholders to learn about schools' and districts' improvement efforts.</p> <p>As both a state and local requirement, St. Vrain individual schools and the district improve student learning and system effectiveness by engaging in a cycle of continuous improvement to manage our performance. The theory of action (as seen in the diagram) is to focus, evaluate, plan, and implement to engage in a continuous improvement cycle to manage performance using. At different times, the schools and district enter cycle again, at least quarterly, make adjustments to planned improvement strategies, and implement revised strategies, as needed. The state's position on utilizing a continuous improvement cycle is strong. Aligned with state guidelines, the District has a website for improvement planning http://blogs.stvrain.k12.co.us/aci/. This planning process is linked to school and district accreditation and is published annually for the community.</p> <p>The applicant informs that the Colorado state accountability system, places districts and schools to one of four "plan types."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance, • Improvement, • Priority Improvement, and • Turnaround. <p>The applicant plans to continue engaging in this cycle of continuous improvement so that St. Vrain schools and the district as a whole are reaching a Performance or Advanced level identification based on the criteria outlines in the Colorado State accountability system. The applicant provides as evidence the district performance and individual school performance indicators on the Performance Measures Tables for 2011 and 2012.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. The applicant describes sound strategies that

will provide for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. They will be tailored according to the interests of diverse audiences such as current and prospective students, parents, educators, community partners, elected officials, state legislators, and the media.

- Establishing a web site for the RTT-D project;
- Making broadly available the results of any evaluations it conducts of its funded activities in print or electronically;
- Dispersing research business and community partners;
- Planning Parent Update meeting each fall to invite parents into the school and review the results of the improvement plan Framework and review the components of the Unified Improvement Plan at that site; and
- Establishing a RTT-D Leadership Advisory Team to include project teachers from each level, administrators, parents from each level, and business leaders.

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

5

5

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. The applicant has developed ambitious yet achievable goals, measures, and annual targets that are meaningful and aligned to the proposed project. The evidence provided includes a table with responses that are aligned to the applicant's project.

(a) St. Vrain purposefully selected measures that will provide them with progress monitoring at critical points in the students' learning to include 3rd grade, 8th grade, and at summative periods in high school. Measures were also selected based on their ability to baseline the measures. Measures were also selected to provide a well rounded view of the student to include literacy, math, noncognitive behavior, and college- and career-readiness.

(b) The measures are set at aggressive, yet achievable increases as evidenced in the tables. St. Vrain has chosen measures which will provide information on the success of the program at key times within a student's development at grade 3 and 8 and summative measures at grades 10-12.

(c) The applicant will collect, analyze, and disseminate data to ensure that timely and informed decisions about implementation are made throughout the life cycle of the program as well as systematic monitoring and feedback for implementation. One tool that will facilitate the feedback of information to the program is the project's logic model (evidence provided in the appendix section). The applicant proposes to revisit the logic model with the stakeholders semiannually.

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

5

5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. The applicant plans to evaluate the effectiveness of Race to the Top – District funded activities at various levels that will include:

- An independent evaluation of the RTT-D grant;
- A rigorous national evaluation of their program and of specific solutions and strategies the applicant pursued; and
- A plan for identifying and collecting reliable and valid baseline data for program participants.

To further facilitate the scale-up through-out the district, and dissemination and replication of this project, will maintain a complete description of planning and start-up activities to include a look back on the planning history and a description of obstacles and barriers and how they were overcome and a description of assumptions and facts that proved true or not.

The applicant provides as evidence, Attachment O - Measuring Fidelity of Implementation (Appendix), a tool that the applicant will use to measure the fidelity of implementation of grant funded activities.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. The applicant's budget, including the budget narrative and tables—

(a) Identifies all funds that will support the project (e.g., Race to the Top – District grant):

- RTT-D grant funding- will fund the project
- Local District Funds - St. Vrain will fund the \$223,002 a year cost out of local funds.
- Other - St. Vrain has local funds through a 2008 mill levy where STEM focus school dollars have been identified and will be accessed as programming becomes integrated through this grant.

(b) This St. Vrain project demonstrates that it has significantly reasonable costs and will yield the following results:

- \$708 per student per year after first year technology investments; and
- 265 effective teachers who are proficient in delivering intellectually based STEM content and knowledge for early learning will be produced.

(c) St. Vrain clearly provides a thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities that are evidenced throughout the project narrative.

(i) The applicant presents a budget plan to hire staff and purchase supplies needed to carry out the four projects, and includes:

- A project director who will oversee the effort and provide the USDOE a point person for this large project;
- A director, engineer design/teacher/advisor, a project manager, and a quality control/data manager to provide the students with the necessary supports of an STEM academy that fully integrates academics, technology, and project-based learning in the Innovation Center;
- Technology supports necessary for the STEM and project-based learning activities;
- A Lead Counselor at each high school and each middle school who will train counselors, teachers, staff, students, and parents on the new personalized learning environment and all its relevant systems;
- STEM Coordinator at each school who will work with teachers to integrate STEM into the Common Core Curriculum at each school;
- Additional hours for principals and paraprofessionals for an augmented school day;
- STEM based supplies and equipment;
- iPads for teacher data collection and student use during projects; formative assessments; and stipends for professional development; and
- St. Vrain will also contract with an external evaluator.

(ii) The project will have one time costs of one Mac desk-top computer for each new staff and staff at the Innovation Center at \$23,382. The other onetime cost is the use of a consultant in year 4 to establish the P-Tech program for \$80,000. St. Vrain has a plan in place to ensure long-term sustainability of the project such as:

- A \$197 million district budget;
- A grant and foundation supports totaling more than \$3,600,000 from 15 different public and private sources; and
- High-qualified district leadership as evidenced in Attachment R in the Appendix section.

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

10

10

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. The St. Vrain School District has a high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. As evidenced in the plan and supporting documents, St. Vrain possesses the energy and capacity to further develop and bring the project to a larger scale. St. Vrain provides a thorough account of its successes for which they have received recognition at the national level. Their plan includes support that they have received from grants and foundations to support STEM Academy at Skyline, and from the US Department of Education i3 Grant.

St. Vrain has a strong plan to ensure long-term sustainability beyond the funding of the RTT-D funding (as shown in Table 13). Their plan includes fostering partnerships with IBM and CU which have provided them with matches on two significant grants and continue to provide support. Their plan also includes state and local government support for the project's goals. It is evident that their Board of Education and Leadership Team have strong relationships in the community to grow additional partnerships as evidenced in the letter of support. Additionally, the St. Vrain community takes an active role in supporting educational innovation as demonstrated in the letter of support. The RTT-D Director of Programming will engage in sustainability planning and implementation of that plan in an effort to scale-up the program to other areas in our district starting in 2016.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The overall quality of this response to this criterion is rated in the high range. St. Vrain proposes to integrate public resources in a partnership to provide services focused on strengthening students' capacities to be ready to learn, to enhance their abilities to be academically successful, and to support their positive social and emotional well-being.

(1) The applicant describes its partnership with the Boulder County Prevention and Intervention Program (BCPIP) to promote resiliency in adolescents by providing school-based, health-related prevention and intervention services.

(2) (3) The program uses data to identify and understand issues and needs of middle and high school students in the Boulder Valley and St. Vrain Valley School Districts, and describes how the partnership will work.

(a) The applicant's evaluator will collect data on quarterly and annual basis.

(b) Based on the thorough and clear analysis of gaps and needs in section (D)(1), the applicant has chosen Hispanics as their target group.

(c) As part of their overall sustainability plan, they will work with districts to scale-up these programs once they prove successful and as resources permit.

(d) Data will be collected on a quarterly and annual basis by the evaluator. The evaluator will analyze the data and report findings to the RTT-D advisory team which will use the continuous improvement process to improve results over time.

(4) The program will integrate with educational and counseling services by providing educators, counselors, and students with education on mental health well-being and detection, intervention, and referral training. St. Vrain schools will access the mental health care practitioners from BCPIP.

(5) (a) (b) The applicant describes how the program which is a collaborative of many assets uses Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale as its outcome evaluation tool. Annual findings from the scale are analyzed to help direct and improve program services provided to young people and their families within the participating middle schools and the high school.

c) ST. Vrain and the RTT-D Advisory Council will identify and address critical health issues and well-being indicators and propose solutions to confront those issues to create a decision-making process and infrastructure.

(d) Vital to this plan is St. Vrain's approach to provide information to parents and students on the services available to students, and to engage parents and families of participating students as often as possible.

(e) Through the external evaluator, the applicant will assess the progress and submit report to the RTT-D Advisory team.

(6) The applicant identified its annual ambitious yet achievable performance measures for the proposed population-level and describes desired results for students as evidenced in the Competitive Preference Priority: Performance Measures Table.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has addressed Absolute Priority 1 through its thorough responses to the selection criteria. St. Vrain has developed a coherent and comprehensive plan that addresses how it will build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements; accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student; increase the effectiveness of educators; expand student access to the most effective educators; decrease achievement gaps across student groups; and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.

Total	210	206
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0458CO-4 for St. Vrain Valley Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has set forth an adequate reform vision that builds on three of the four core educational assurance areas as shown by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The focus of the initiative is to produce a nationally replicable STEM Academy model with systems in place which will prepare students in elementary and middle school for graduation and college and career success. The applicant intends to develop, implement, and continuously improve a replicable and sustainable model for increased graduation rates for all students through the implementation of STEM skills integrated into the school curriculum through its initiative of Academic Excellence through STEM Innovation. STEM curricula is currently in place which will help high school students develop a deeper understanding of science, math, technology, and engineering as well as the engineering design process. Data systems that measure student growth and success and inform teachers and principals with data to improve instruction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> St. Vrain states it will provide extensive professional development, provide learning and course management systems, assessment data systems, and knowledge management systems which will help produce great teachers and leaders. However, the applicant does not define how it will accomplish this goal. Recruit, develop, reward, and retain effective teachers and principals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant does not address this issue in its application. Turn around low-achieving schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant will use a strong infusion of targeted and rigorous math and literacy growth which will turnaround its lowest performing schools and provide a framework for success at the high school and in post-secondary learning environments. The applicant's use of Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP), Relationships with Educators Accelerate Learning Plan (R.E.A.L.), counseling, telementoring, and augmented school year for students, will help turn around our lowest-achieving schools. The applicant will expand STEM coursework options which will focus on middle and elementary schools and at risk and underserved populations. They intend to develop a plan for implementing P-Tech a, gade 9-14, program in partnership with IBM and local community colleges. 		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

The applicant's approach to implementing its reform proposal will generally support high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation of that proposal, as shown by:

- The school selection process included a thorough review which ensured that the participating schools collectively meet the competition's eligibility requirements.
- The applicant selected the Skyline High School and its feeder schools where 46.3% of the students are Hispanic and 58.9% of the participating students are from low-income families.
- The applicant provides a list of the participating elementary and middle feeder schools and the high school.
- The applicant notes there are 5,757 students who will participate in this initiative of whom 3,629 (63.0%) are high-needs students and 3,392 (58.9%) students from low-income homes. They note that 100% of the students from these schools will participate.
- The applicant's project will include 265 participating educators.

The applicant's approach seems reasonable; however, it is unclear whether all educators in these schools are included in this plan.

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

The application includes 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 and will help the applicant reach its outcome goals, as evidenced by:

- St. Vrain will undertake four projects to achieve their goals: K-12 Connections, High School Initiatives, Middle School Initiatives, and Elementary Initiatives.
 - The activities in the K-12 Connection project will focus on providing a personalized learning environment, and increasing graduation and college- and career- readiness.
 - St. Vrain will expand and enhance Skyline High School's STEM Academy with application of STEM skills and the creation of a new Innovation Center on site.
 - The curriculum plan for STEM will define, integrate, and implement core content for Middle School STEM.
 - At the elementary level, St. Vrain will provide students who live in poverty and are English Language Learners with language development supports and acceleration.
- The applicant provides a high-quality plan by Project, Activities, Timelines, Deliverables, and Responsible Parties for meeting the criteria which defines how the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools.
- Following the appointment of the RTTT-D Director of Planning, they intend to hire an Innovation Center Director, Engineering Design Project Advisors/STEM teachers, Innovation Center Project Manager, Quality Control/Data Manager, IT Classified technician, Lead Counselor ICAP, and STEM Coordinators with appropriate responsibilities throughout the LEA.

Overall, the applicant's logic model identified a strong plan that will help them achieve their student learning outcomes.

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

The applicant's vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goals that are equal to or exceed State ESEA targets for the LEA(s), overall and by student subgroup, as shown by:

- The applicant presents goals to improve student academic performance by improving the percent of students meeting state standards at the tested grades in Reading, Mathematics, and English.
- The applicant will decrease achievement gaps for Hispanic students by decreasing the gaps in Reading, Mathematics, and English at the tested grades; however, they do not specify how this will be accomplished.
- Saint Vrain Valley Schools will achieve a graduation rate of 95% by the 2016-2017 school year; however, they do not specify how this will be accomplished.
- Saint Vrain Valley Schools will achieve a college enrollment rate for the 2016-2017 cohort of graduates enrolled in a higher-education institution during the 16 months after graduation of 91%; however, they do not specify how this will be accomplished.
- St. Vrain will improve student graduation attainment by 8% by SY 2016-2017 using an established system which will monitor student successes and challenges following graduation; however, they do not specify how this will be

accomplished.

- St. Vrain uses Median Growth Percentile on School Performance Frameworks, which is part of their improvement process; however, they do not explain this further.

Overall this is a generally good plan that lacks some specifics as to how their goals will be accomplished.

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 has demonstrated evidence of a clear record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching, as demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2009, Skyline’s STEM Academy has served as an academic certification program preparing Skyline High School students for college and career pathways in STEM. • St. Vrain was able to increase student achievement by 1.2% in Grade 2 to a high of 3.9% for Grade 3 using the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) which provides a comprehensive screener of young children’s knowledge of the important literacy fundamentals that are predictive of future reading success. • The applicant has also used Data-Driven Instruction in pre-school utilizing the Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment to improve School Readiness with noteworthy results. • St. Vrain Valley School District, when compared to other school districts in Colorado, achieves a higher percentage of distribution of Grade A and B schools. • Niwot Elementary School was rated as the number one elementary school out of 1467 elementary and middle schools in Colorado in 2011. • St. Vrain’s Lyons High School is rated as the third best high school out of 364 high schools in Colorado. • Efforts that resulted in significant academic improvement for all student groups included a program which provided Data-Driven Decision Making and Information Technology supports to bear in targeted schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ The middle school/high school mathematics intervention has resulted in reducing Algebra I failures from 38% to 9%. ◦ The program produced increased reading proficiency in 3rd Grade students. ◦ The number of students reading proficiently has increased from 71% to 84% at Indian Peaks Elementary and the number of Hispanic students reading proficiently at Loma Linda Elementary, a persistently low performing school at the time, increased from 45 to 55%. ◦ They have also achieved a 60 percent increase in Grade 9 Math, a 25.5% increase in Grade 5 Science, and a 9.4% increase in Grade 3 Reading. • At St .Vrain, and in Colorado, students’ documentation of their Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAP) includes teaching staff and family involvement and assists students in developing a personalized plan that ensures readiness for post-secondary and workforce success. It is unclear to what extent students,educators, and families have been involved in this process. 		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

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

- The applicant makes public, by school, actual school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration.
- St. Vrain provides this data to the public for the following expenditures: Actual Personnel Salaries at the School Level for all School-level Instructional and Support Staff; Actual Personnel Salaries at the School Level for Instructional Staff Only; Actual Personnel Salaries at the School Level for Teachers Only; and Actual Non-Personnel Expenditures at the School Level.
- The applicant uses various methodologies, commonly used by many districts, to accomplish this purpose and

additionally will include a link to the data on the district web-site that leads readers to the required data on the CRDC's web-site.

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

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

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

- By state law, the ICAP is designed to assist students and their parents or legal guardians in the exploration of each student's postsecondary career and educational opportunities.
- The ICAP also is designed to ensure the student's readiness for postsecondary and workforce success by aligning course work and curriculum, and working with staff and parents to choose and apply to postsecondary education institutions and help the student to secure financial assistance for postsecondary education.
- Schools are required to document that a student and their family understands high school graduation requirements and uses this information to develop their academic plan.
- Since the state requires that at least 50 percent of a teacher's evaluation be based on the academic growth of their students and at least 50 percent of a principal's evaluation be determined by the academic growth of the students in the principal's school, this represents sufficient evidence of state endorsement for the program.

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

10

10

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has demonstrated adequate evidence of meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal and meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal, as shown by:

- Students and families were sent an e-mail to visit a specially designated web-page to provide feedback and input on an overview of the plan.
- The overview was emailed in Spanish and English to all families in St. Vrain and they were provided a link to the feedback survey.
- All community members were provided the opportunity to submit feedback on the grant plan through the district website.
- All school staffs participating in the grant were provided the overview and an opportunity to provide feedback.
- The Executive Director of Priority Programs met with each school principal and leadership team to provide clarification and details of the plan as well as to gather specific feedback and ideas.
- The Department of Learning Services leadership team and the union president were provided with overviews and opportunities for feedback.
- St. Vrain has a letter from the president of the Union, several letters of support from community groups and businesses, and evidence of the review by the State of Colorado and the Mayor.

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

5

5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

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

- St. Vrain is currently in the process of implementing a personalized learning plan, ICAP, which is new but for which there is a structure, state support, and resources.
- St. Vrain will hire one Lead Counselor at the middle school and high school levels to training counselors to work with students on managing their ICAP.
- The R.E.A.L. plan supplements the ICAP and acts as a mentorship program guide for the disadvantaged and at risk students.
- St. Vrain's proposed project will increase the number of individuals from groups traditionally underrepresented in STEM, especially Hispanics, who through this program will be provided with access to accelerated, rigorous, and engaging STEM integrated learning activities.
- St. Vrain will address the lack of math and science content expertise in early grades by integrating developmentally appropriate STEM content activities as early as kindergarten to improve science achievement, especially with lower

income and minority children.

- St. Vrain will contract with EPI International to conduct an external evaluation, assist in the implementation of a continuous improvement plan, and conduct needs and gap assessment on our implementation of personalized learning environment.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

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

- The Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) is designed to ensure the student's readiness for postsecondary and workforce success by working with the student to align course work and curriculum.
- The ICAP is an individualized plan, developed by the student and the student's parent or legal guardian, in collaboration with their school counselors that is used to help establish personalized academic and career goals, explore postsecondary career and educational opportunities, align course work and curriculum, apply to postsecondary institutions, secure financial aid and ultimately enter the workforce school.
- St. Vrain Lead Counselors will implement a guidance program that will prepare students for college and career and will provide coaching and mentorship to other school counselors on helping students build towards college- and career-ready graduation requirements and understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals.
- The St. Vrain counseling program will provide services and programs that help students resolve academic, course selection and progression, emotional, social, or behavioral problems to help students develop a clearer focus or sense of direction.
- The P-Tech program provides students with a high school-college-career continuum.
- The ICAP provides documentation of the student's efforts in exploring careers and students will use this information to develop their academic plan, secondary and postsecondary academic career goals, and a timeline of requirements for postsecondary options.
- Elementary Schools will embed STEM related concepts and practices from the Innovation Academy which connect with the Colorado Common Core Standards.
- St. Vrain's Lead Counselors in both middle schools and Skyline High School will work with students individually and in groups to assist, inform, encourage, and guide students towards the steps necessary to attain college- and career-readiness.
- The implementation of project-based learning opportunities provides students with deepened involvement in contextual and service learning activities, strategically based on their specific goals which can be developed more fully and be inclusive of staff and family communications about each student's interest and progress towards their stated goals.
- The new Innovation Center at the high school STEM Academy provides students with "real world" experience with researchers, developers, project managers, and data analysts from the business and research and development community.
- The Innovation Center will provide students with a real world experience as researchers, developers, project managers, and data analysts.
- The Innovation Center will be a catalyst for companies to submit R&D projects for design by talented and creative high school STEM students who will then contribute to and create viable products and solutions.
- St. Vrain will create an Innovation Center (IC) which will challenge assumptions about learning and teaching within the STEM Academy which provides a structure for discovery learning and real-world engagement of high school students with business partners.
- School counselors, under the direction of Lead Counselors, will assist students with the development, maintenance, and continuous improvement of the ICAP.
- The district will further the personalized learning environment by housing each student IEP, READ plan, ELL plan, and Rtl into one data system in which all teachers' will access and store student performance data.
- School Counselors will assist students and families in accessing and navigating the information in Infinite Campus by

training families to work on the parent portal.

- St. Vrain will implement and continuously improve the R.E.A.L. plan, under the direction of lead counselors with the support of school counselors, a framework for personalizing student support to improve academic performance and family engagement.
- St. Vrain will create partnerships between families and the student's school to promote the social, emotional, and academic growth of students.
- St. Vrain will develop and nurture effective STEM partnerships and expand upon current relationships with businesses.
- St. Vrain will offer elementary students in need of additional literacy and math support an opportunity for more time to learn by providing them with an augmented school year which will focus on improving the student literacy and math performance for students at the elementary level.
- Middle school students will experience a STEM integrated curriculum which provides students with the student directed, teacher facilitate instructional approach.
- High school students will use the Innovation Center to provide a learning environment which will have an instructional approach built on the engineering design model.
- The implementation of STEM with a focus on the Colorado Common Core Standards integration will provide the needed additional rigor to support all students in moving to higher levels of proficiency and application of knowledge.
- Each student's ICAP is accessible to educators, students, parents, legal guardians, and Approved Postsecondary Service Providers and contains the student's academic progress including the courses taken, any remediation or credit recovery, and any concurrent enrollment credits earned. St. Vrain uses multiple assessments to provide frequent feedback to students on their performance progress with all assessment data and results available for review providing information which influences the ICAP plan and goals.
- St. Vrain will also utilize the Galileo Online Standards Based Assessment to provide structured and standardized benchmark assessments on a quarterly basis for the external evaluator to measure student progress. This data-driven decision making system will provide staff with valuable formative and benchmark assessment data that will inform instruction and success of the program.
- The ICAP will be used to provide results that are relevant to the student's level of postsecondary and workforce readiness.
- The whole program is designed around the needs of the high-need students.
- Lead counselors will coach and mentor counselors and both will work with students to ensure they understand and can fully access and utilize all the benefits of the ICAP and REAL plan so that the student can manage their learning.

The applicant presents a high-quality plan to improve learning by personalizing the learning environment and lists goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties.

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

20

19

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

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

- The Academic Excellence through STEM Innovation Program will create a model feeder system with rigor, support, and improved graduation opportunities which will meet the needs of all students with a particular focus on at-risk students.
- STEM coordinators will plan, implement, and conduct teacher professional development workshops for teachers, centered on inquiry based STEM learning and data collection using identified technology and assessment.
- Teachers will participate in data-driven dialog practices that will define student needs and gaps in the curriculum. Teachers will develop observational tools using iPads and video taping of student work periods to evaluate student progress and inform teacher practice which will include technology rich professional development supports and tools for teachers to use daily to collate student data to be used to define necessary interventions.
- STEM Coordinators will provide professional development focused on curriculum design and integration of activities based on the Innovation Academy model. This professional development will focus on training teachers to effectively integrate the design process into their instructional model and develop curriculum aligned with the Colorado Common Core Standards.
- Teachers will also learn to integrate meaningful research and technology use into their core curriculum.
- St. Vrain will utilize a STEM Specialist from the Colorado Department of Education for STEM training in alignment with the Colorado Common Core.
- All teachers will engage in an action research process where they identify areas of student need and apply technology resources as tools to increase student achievement.
- Teachers in Kindergarten through grade 12 will use a Data-Driven Decision Making system to provide staff with

valuable formative and benchmark assessment data that will inform instruction for each specific student.

- Teachers will have access to assessment data which identifies and disseminates information about new and emerging academic pathways that extend from high school to college and enhance transition to postsecondary education for underserved students, particularly underrepresented minority, low-income, and first-generation students.
- St. Vrain will improve teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness by using feedback provided by the district's teacher and principal evaluation systems. This will include frequent feedback on individual and collective effectiveness, which will help by providing recommendations, supports, and interventions as needed for improvement.
- St. Vrain teachers and students will have access to high-quality learning resources that includes the: Galileo, PALS, and DRA 2 ; myON reader to improve literacy at home; iPads for technology integration; professional development; conferences; a knowledge management system; learning management systems; advisement from consultants, business partners, and mentors; and other resources.
- St. Vrain has developed processes which will help provide assessment and feedback on student learning.
- St. Vrain is on the forefront in implementing the principal and teacher evaluation system in the state that rates teachers on Quality Standards that measure professional practice and student learning over time.
- St. Vrain has budgeted for professional development in a number of Professional Development Topics pertinent to personalized learning.

The applicant presents a relatively high quality plan for organization and infrastructure including achievable goals, activities, timelines deliverables, and responsible parties. However, the applicant does not mention how they are going to recruit for hard-to-staff schools or hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	14
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant has a relatively high-quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator, and level of the education system with the support and resources they need, as shown by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Vrain has already taken the initiative to organize the central office which will provide support and services to all participating schools who are implementing STEM at the priority schools including appointing an Executive Director for the priority Schools. • St. Vrain provides school leadership teams in participating schools which have sufficient flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators, and school-level budgets. • Skyline High School, in collaboration with the College of Engineering and Applied Science at the University of Colorado at Boulder, is able to offer a direct partnership opportunity to its students and guaranteed admission through its STEM Program. • The P-Tech program, which will begin planning stages in 2015-2016, provides adequate opportunities to the adapt the pace at which they move through the high school and associate degree requirements. This will provide a personalized academic pathway that is closely monitored by their teachers and advisors and is based on their individual needs and performance. • The STEM activities allow for teacher facilitated, student directed learning which allows the student to follow their learning path and demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways. • The applicant provides learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners. 		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	10
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant has a high-quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator, and level of the education system with the support and resources they need, as shown by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Vrain provides a number of electronic tools and resources which will provide students with access to their educational data as well as to learning resources that are appropriate for their immediate use in a variety of situations. • St. Vrain provides access for all schools, students, staff and families to a software tutorial service which provides 		

continuously available access to resources to support technology learning.

- St. Vrain has 7:30 – 5:00 Help Desk accessibility to support all technology for staff, students, and parents and there is a district blog with training videos, trouble-shooting, and frequently asked questions.
- St. Vrain houses student Information in a system where it is accessible via a portal to students and parents via the Internet. Students can access grades, schedules, test scores, and additional records at any time.
- Student records are stored in several additional paired systems and are exportable through various in-place systems.
- St. Vrain utilizes interoperable data systems that are enabled through a common authentication method which allows records, data, and work to follow students throughout their time in the district.

The applicant presents a high quality plan for organization and infrastructure including achievable goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	14
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has a relatively clear and high-quality approach to continuously improve its plan that includes a strategy for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the term of the grant as evidenced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Vrain's individual schools and the district improve student learning and system effectiveness by engaging in a cycle of continuous improvement to manage performance. • To support this purpose, the District requires each school to create an annual improvement plan. • Schools and districts are required to publicly post their improvement plans through the state department of education web site. • State required Unified Improvement Planning (UIP) also provides a mechanism for external stakeholders to learn about schools' and districts' improvement efforts. 		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has presented achievable strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders, as shown by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Vrain will establish a web site for the RTTT-D project which will provide information on the program to include updated results from the external evaluator. • St. Vrain will make broadly available through formal or informal mechanisms, and in print or electronically, the results of any evaluations it conducts of its funded activities. • The District has a website for improvement planning which is linked to school and district accreditation and is published annually for the community. • Each school is required to plan a Parent Update meeting each fall to invite parents into the school and review the results of the framework and plan identification, ask questions and review the components of the Unified Improvement Plan at that site. • St. Vrain leadership will establish a RTTT-D Leadership Advisory Team to include project teachers from each level, administrators, parents from each level, and business leaders. 		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant presents nine ambitious yet achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup, with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures, as shown by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance measures were selected to provide progress monitoring at critical points in the students' learning to include 3rd grade, 8th grade, and at summative periods in high school. 		

- Measures were selected to provide a well rounded view of the student to include literacy, math, noncognitive behavior, and college- and career-readiness. The measures are set at aggressive, yet achievable increases.
- The applicant will collect, analyze, and disseminate data to project personnel and the US DOE to ensure that timely and informed decisions about implementation are made throughout the life cycle of the program.
- The logic model will be reviewed with stakeholders semi-annually to assess fidelity between the projects as planned to the project in existence and help ensure that program activities are planned with a sufficient level of frequency, intensity, and duration to produce the desired outcomes.

The applicant presents an adequate number of realistic and actionable performance measures.

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

The applicant presents adequate plans to evaluate the effectiveness of Race to the Top – District funded activities, such as professional development and activities that employ technology, and to more productively use time, staff, money, or other resources in order to improve results, through such strategies as improved use of technology, working with community partners, compensation reform, and modification of school schedules and structures, as shown by:

- St. Vrain will contract with EPI International, Inc. (EPI) to conduct the evaluation of the RTTT-D grant.
- St. Vrain and EPI will work with the Department and with the national evaluator or another entity designated by the Department to ensure that data collection and program design are consistent with plans to conduct a rigorous national evaluation of their program and of specific solutions and strategies being pursued.
- St. Vrain and EPI will develop, in consultation with the national evaluator, a plan for identifying and collecting reliable and valid baseline data for program participants.
- St. Vrain and EPI will share metadata about content alignment with college- and career-ready standards and use through open standard registries and will make all project implementation and student data available to the Department and its authorized representatives in compliance with FERPA, as applicable.
- St. Vrain will make public requests for information and requests for proposal developed as part of this grant, consistent with the requirements of State and local law.

The applicant does not present a specific plan or discuss any modification of school schedules and structures to ensure the effectiveness of investments.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

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

- All of the funds for the project will come from the RTTT-D grant funding with the exception of funds to pay for the Interventionist Program which is included in the Competitive Priority Preference which St. Vrain will fund out of local monies.
- St. Vrain has local funds through a 2008 mill levy where STEM focus school dollars have been identified and will be accessed as programming becomes integrated through this grant.
- The applicant's budget is reasonable and sufficient to support the proposal:
 - The budget includes a project director who will oversee the effort and provide the USDOE a point person for this large project.
 - The Innovation Center will have a director, engineer design/teacher/advisor, a project manager, and a quality control/data manager to provide the students with the necessary supports of an STEM academy that fully integrates academics, technology, and project-based learning.
 - The budget will fund technology supports necessary for the STEM and project-based learning activities.
 - The high school and each middle school will have a Lead Counselor who will train counselors, teachers, staff, students, and parents on the new personalized learning environment and all its relevant systems.
 - Each school will have a STEM Coordinator who will work with teachers to integrate STEM into the Common

Core Curriculum at each school.

- o The project will also fund additional hours for principals and paraprofessionals for an augmented school day.
- o Additionally, funds will be expended on STEM based supplies and equipment.
- The project will have one time costs for a desk-top computer for each new staff and staff at the Innovation Center and for the use of a consultant in year 4 to establish the P-Tech program.

All of the funds budgeted are focused on strategies that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments.

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

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

- St. Vrain is successfully managing a US Department of Education i3 Development Award.
- St. Vrain is scaling-up their successful Innovation Academy model to other schools.
- STEM Academy has received grant and foundation supports totaling more than \$3,600,000 from 15 different public and private sources.
- The Education Foundation of St. Vrain Valley has awarded over \$1.3 million in the last four years to the District in classroom grants, community projects, technology upgrades, and student scholarships.
- The Executive Director of Priority Schools will continue to foster partnerships with IBM and CU which have provided matches on two significant grants and continue to provide support.
- The applicant's plan includes support from state and local government leaders.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes to integrate public or private resources in a partnership designed to augment the schools' resources by providing additional student and family supports to schools that address the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of the participating students, giving highest priority to students in participating schools with high-need students, as noted by the following:

- St. Vrain has partnered with the Boulder County Prevention and Intervention Program (BCPIP) to promote resiliency in adolescents by providing school-based, health-related prevention and intervention services. These services are focused on strengthening students' capacities to be ready to learn, to enhance their abilities to be academically successful, and to support their positive social and emotional well-being.
- Prevention/Interventionists Staff from the BCPIP will work in concert with teachers, counselors, and school leadership to provide a variety of student-centered services.
- A guiding principle of the BCPIP is to incorporate state-of-the-art health practices into policies, programs, and services in order to correctly diagnose problems and support the community's youth.
- The program uses data to identify and understand issues and needs of middle and high school students in the Boulder Valley and St. Vrain Valley School Districts.
- The applicant presents ambitions and attainable Population-Level Desired Results that focus on all students with a focus on Hispanic students.
- The St. Vrain's external evaluator from EPI will collect data on the selected measures on a quarterly and annual basis, analyze the data and report findings to the RTTT-D advisory team which will use the continuous improvement process to improve results over time.
- Based on the thorough and clear analysis of gaps and needs, the applicant will target resources on Hispanic Students.
- The applicant will work with districts to scale-up these programs once they prove successful and as resources permit.
- The program will integrate with educational and counseling services by providing educators, counselors, and students with education on mental health well-being and detection, intervention, and referral training.
- The program uses the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS) as its outcome evaluation tool. Annual findings from the CAFAS are analyzed by OMNI Institute, Inc., to help direct and improve program services

provided to young people and their families.

- The program will address the mental health, behavioral, and substance abuse needs of students within the participating middle schools and the high school.
- St. Vrain will identify and address critical health issues and well-being indicators and propose solutions to confront those issues.
- St. Vrain will provide all students and parents' information on the services to include how to receive an appointment. Student and family participation in the program is voluntary and is available to all students in the participating school buildings and will be provided free of charge to the student.
- The RTTT-D Advisory Team will analyze the data collected by the evaluator on a quarterly and annual basis and will use this data to inform the continuous improvement process and will make necessary changes to our plan to resolve challenges and problems.
- The applicant identifies annual ambitious yet achievable performance measures that focus on a decrease of discipline problems.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

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

Total	210	196
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