Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0494MO-1 for Fort Osage R-1 School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant articulates a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that builds on its work in the 4 core educational assurance areas.

In terms of teacher/leader evaluations, evidence is provided regarding a forward thinking Learning Based Teacher Evaluation system established in 2008 that will be revised to meet 2014–15 requirements of RTTT and Missouri's ESEA flexibility waiver -- specifically evaluating student growth within individual classrooms. The research basis for this instrument is not evident, but specifics are included about its use to provide feedback to teachers, to help them develop annual individual plans for professional growth, and the delivery of feedback "across multiple criteria on a 4–point scale that includes specific descriptors of performance." Standards-based professional development is in place and evolving – Believe to Achieve -- and constitutes the core of the RTTD proposal. A principal evaluation process is in place, which was modified to more closely parallel the teacher process but additional modification is necessary to evaluate student achievement growth across the building. Rubrics for both processes are provided in the appendices.

Evidence of data systems to measure student growth and success within the context of college/career ready standards exists in the form of the applicant's "standards referenced grading system." The applicant reports that K-12 students in all district schools have received standards-based continuous feedback as a result of the combination of data management tools. These tools include a gradebook, an online parent portal, the district's assessment management system, and an instructional information system. Additional evidence is the standards-referenced grading that the district has been involved in and is advancing by developing individual four point scoring scales with the help of the Marzano Research Laboratory. Alignment with the common core standards as the SBAC finalizes its approach to assessment is planned. The Standards Based Grading "principles and practices" document is provided in the appendix along with printouts from the data management system showing an aligned sample class list report and individual report card.

There is no evidence of efforts related to turning around lowest performing schools.

The proposed RTTD project – a continuation of Believe to Achieve -- does build upon the core assurance areas indicated and does constitute a clear and credible approach to accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning and increasing equity. Specifically, it takes the three big ideas of Believe to Achieve to date–standards-based grading, effective assessment for learning, and response to intervention systems -- and evolves them into a standards-based system, personalized learning, and student interventions that address the whole child–in particular their social emotional, wellness and behavior management needs. These are fully in keeping with the RTTD solicitation and intent and common and individual tasks are outlined. A particular strength of this approach is conceptualization of the project as a community based endeavor involving families, community partners, and multiple organizations. Another strength is the Theory Of Change model. It is clear, concise, and appropriately walks through goals, outcomes, activities, etc.

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

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

There is evidence to suggest that the applicant's approach to implementing its reform proposal will support high–quality LEA-level and school-level implementation of the proposal. 100% of the district's schools are selected for participation in the proposed reform and evidence of their demographics are provided in table format. It is not evident why data for the Fort Osage Career and Technology Center are not complete and do not show percentages of low income and high needs students. The total number of participating students overall, however, are indicated and broken down as requested in the RFP. Specific numbers for population subgroups and protected classes are not indicated.

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

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Because the proposed reform will serve all schools and students in the LEA, LEA-wide reform and change is assumed. Support for this reviewer response can be found in the U.S. Department of Education guidance in Frequently Asked Questions Item E-1.

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

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's vision is likely to result in learning and performance and increased equity based on standards-based presented annual goals. Baseline data and projected annual goals are provided in the table on student performance on summative assessments by grade (3-8/Algebra 1), overall, and by "super-subgroup." Because, in about half the cases, student achievement declines between 2010–11 and 2011–12, the proposed annual targets for 2012–13 are particularly ambitious. However annual goals after that time seem appropriate and attainable - between 6 to 10% annually.

In the case of achievement gaps, baseline data seem to suggest that in most cases achievement gaps are rising based on a comparison of by grade total scores and super subgroup scores. There is some question as to whether or not this is an appropriate calculation since achievement gaps using an aggregated measure like super subgroup, should be compared against the highest scoring group. It is not clear whether by using overall measures the student subgroup scores are over represented and the achievement gap effects are diminished. As well, the super subgroup concept may mask significant disparities among sub group members that would provide explanatory power. A strength is that the grant proposes to establish achievement-gap-closing performance goals by the end of the grant.

Ambitious yet achievable annual goals are presented for graduation rates and numbers are broken out by subgroup for Black, Hispanic, free and reduced lunch, and IEP students. Again, it is not clear whether these group's scores are represented in the overall score. The chart says that subgroups will increase 5% by 2017, but the numbers in the chart would seem to suggest the improvement would be 10%. This seems attainable over a period of 5 years.

Evidence of ambitious yet achievable annual goals supporting improved student learning and performance also exist in the case of college enrollment rates. It should be noted that these rates have already improved significantly in the case of Black and Hispanic students, but have decreased in the case of students receiving free or reduced lunch or with IEP's. A 3% annual ramp up is projected to allow college enrollment rates to exceed the state's current rate of 62.5%. A weakness of this particular area is that there is no discussion about plans for these lower achieving student groups.

Evidence is provided for Algebra I, but not for students in grades 9-12 – a significant weakness.

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	11

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates a mixed record of success for the past 4 years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching. Evidence of district-wide improvement is provided in the district having met the "Distinction in Performance" award from the DESE. However, the MISP and AYP, and MAP data show this is a mixed story and, even when gains are made, the final percentages of attainment are still quite low (e.g.., 50% in both math and communication arts as reported in the MAP 2012 assessments)

In the case of the MSIP math, communication arts, and science performance of students in grades 3 through 5 and grades 6 through 8 during 2008 through 2012; consistent improvement is found for grades 3 – 5 in science (756 in 2008 to 787 in 2012) and in math and comm arts from 2008 to 2011 with a dip backwards in 2012 (744 in 2008 to 765 in 2011 with a dip back to 756 in 2012 in math; 749 in 2008 to 759 in 2011 with a dip back to 755 in 2012 for comm arts).

Achievement related to NCLB AYP district standards is a mixed bag. In the case of math, students overall and students in subgroups have improved with a small decline for year 2012. All students improved 14% between 2008 and 2011 with a dip back in 2012. Black students and Hispanic students improved 16% and 20% respectively during those years and free and reduced lunch and IEP students improved 15% and In general, the same is the case for communications arts achievement. The applicant addresses this fact by stating, "the district is pleased with the overall improvement in the past several years, and is addressing the specific situations in which scores decline in 2012." No evidence of what is being done to address the

situation is provided.

Evidence is shown of Fort Osage student achievement relative to state averages for communication arts and math for grades 3 through 8 and this evidence is provided to demonstrate the need for improving district performance. In the early grades, the district/state disparity is not so pronounced (2012 3rd grade math is on par with that of the state (52.5%) and 2012 3rd grade comm arts is 37.5% compared with 46% at the state level). However, in the later grades, the gap grows, particularly in math. Grade 8 has a 49.6% proficient/advanced rate in math in 2012 versus a 52.7% rate at the state).

A track record of success in terms of high school student gains is evidenced through ACT scorers of seniors–roughly a 15% increase between 2008 in 2012. Significant increases in the graduation rate have occurred; particularly in the past 2 years based on MISP data. AYP results show that the high school has consistently improved since 2007 and has moved out of School Improvement Status. Improvements for all sub groups are also shown. Evidence is not presented by grade, however, so it is difficult to get a very clear picture about where, within the 4 years of high school, specific improvements have been made.

It would seem that student learning outcomes have improved and achievement gaps have been closed somewhat. Evidence of ambitious and significant reform and persistently lowest achieving schools is not presented.

Student performance data is made available to families through the district's "grade book's parent portal." This mechanism has been available for some time and is further supported by a copy of the Principles and Practices of Standards Base Grading in the appendix.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	0

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Evidence of a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices and investments is not displayed. The applicant provides information about district academic performance through the copy of the webpage "All About Fort Osage." This page shows links to educational data websites and school websites. The minimally required information requested in the Notice such as actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional and support staff, instructional staff only, for teachers at the school level only, and other non-personnel expenditures at the school level is not presented in this proposal.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	5

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

This application does not show strong evidence for the state context for implementation. It states that the State board, legislature, and education department "will provide autonomy as long as the district is able to demonstrate the results of its efforts." There is no additional evidence of this commitment. The application also states "as long as students to 8th grade continue to participate in state assessments, DEST is supportive of using learning progressions and personalized instruction systems to ensure that students are acquiring the skills needed for college–and career–readiness." Again, there is no additional evidence supporting this statement.

Evidence is provided in that the DESE supports a mastery approach, which would be advanced by the technology-based personal learning proposed. There is evidence, through a letter from the state Department of Education in the appendix, that the DESE's Coordinator of Instructional Technology supports this RRTD application and the activities that will result from it. Evidence of state context of for implementation is present but not at all strong.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	8

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

There is substantial evidence of stakeholder engagement in the development of the RTTD proposal and support for it. The applicant provides an excellent chronology of the involvement and engagement of various stakeholders in the proposal development process. Particularly impressive are the many surveys that were presented to faculty and staff, parents, students, and others. Evidence of the significant participation in them regarding numbers of respondents as well as depth of response is included in the appendix. These surveys are not specifically about the RTTD proposal. Rather, they are about technology use and personalized learning. Evidence that at least 70% of teachers from participating schools support the proposal is not present. Letters of support from key partners and community and government entities such as LINC, the University of Central Missouri, Metropolitan Community College, the Buckner Chamber of Commerce, the City of Buckner, and the City of Independence can be found in the appendix and are quite strong. Clearly there is a commitment to the partnership and the

focus of this work.

Numerous meetings were held with multiple public, community, district, and other stakeholders in community and school. Evidence of these meetings is not provided outside of two concept maps representing the ideas from certain sessions.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

There is some evidence of a comprehensive high-quality plan for analyzing the applicant's current status for implementing personalized learning environments, the logic behind the reform proposal, and /or having conducted needs and gaps analyses. There is not a plan including goals, activities and rationales, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties involved in undertaking a formal needs and gaps analysis specifically for the Believe to Achieve. At the same time, the applicant suggests that the District's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) is evidence of a process in which assessment of district needs was conducted and then codified into formalized focus areas for future attention. The CSIP is included as evidence in the proposal's appendix and has significant alignment with key components of the proposed Believe to Achieve initiative.

CSIP focus areas include: student achievement, high-quality staff, resources and facilities, community relations, and governance. CSIP goals include: student achievement, parent involvement, comprehensive and standards aligned curriculum and assessment; student goal setting and college and career readiness, effective instruction with a focus on student learning, recruitment and attraction of highly qualified personnel, differentiated professional development, positive culture, responsible use of fiscal resources, effective technology management, effective facilities management, enhanced parent and community involvement, proactive communication with parents, increased participation of stakeholders in public policy efforts, and employee satisfaction and organizational support. There is evidence of conceptual alignment but there is no formal high quality plan.

In terms of demonstrating evidence of "the applicant's current status and implementing personalized learning environments" there is evidence of this capacity – but not a clear sense of the "application's current status" in the information provided about the district's K–12 standards-based grading system; its focus on District–wide personal learning; its commitment to professional development; and individualized technologies in student's hands. This constitutes evidence of activity and commitment, but sdo not constitute evidence of a high quality plan.

There is evidence of targeted needs assessment activity in the various Technology and Personalization surveys that the applicant conducted recently and provides in the appendix. These are a true strength of this proposal because they demonstrate an attempt to understand the applicant's current status regarding implementing personalized learning environments and provides evidence to support key logic in the proposal such as the need for increased internet access in homes.

Thus, the applicant has only somewhat demonstrated evidence of a high-quality plan for the selection criteria in this section.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	18

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has submitted a high–quality plan for improving learning and teaching that addresses key area of focus for RTTD: personalized learning environments, college and career readiness, a standards-based curriculum and instruction. Evidence of this plan is provided in the appendix. The plan provided is exemplary and contains goals, activities, deliverables, responsible parties, and a timeline in the 3 identified goal areas: standards-based system, personalized learning, and whole child's success.

In the applicant's very clear narrative, Standards–-Based Systems (SPS), Personalized Learning (PL) and Whole Child Success (WCS) are "explained as three inter–related project plans." These three inter-related plans are shared in the appendix, as described above. Evidence to support that what is proposed constitutes a very high–quality plan is that the plan:

- extends a prior successful district improvement initiative, Believe to Achieve
- identifies parents as educators, provides 7 Parent as Teacher positions, and offers parent development through training and ongoing support
- indicates a high level of teacher professional development and support for effective interpretation and implementation of

college and career ready curriculum and personalized learning using technological tools for goal setting, progress monitoring, curriculum and resource access, creation of materials and projects
- implements middle school “career houses” that “provide relevance and engagement for students which lead to increased achievement”
- fully implements personal plans of study for all high school students
- provides afterschool opportunities for all students that ensure intervention enrichment opportunities are available for them
- provides age-appropriate and purpose-appropriate technology devices for all students and certified staff
- provides appropriate and aligned career–interest and readiness instruction

Through these goals and activities, the proposed approach addresses all of the selection criteria including the engagement and empowerment of all students, including high–need students. The proposal explicitly addresses:

- student setting and monitoring of learning goals
- connecting current learning to future goals through a career component that is already in place in grades 5 through 8 and high school but that will be extended down to kindergarten, aligned with the standards-based curriculum, and developed so that it connects to students personal interests
- student goal-setting and monitoring supported by implementation of a student goal–setting software program that will also align to the standards-based curriculum and the personalized learning approach
- support of personal student engagement and interest in goal and outcomes through engaging projects that draw upon personal interests the line with curriculum and the current standards referenced grading system
- exposure to diversity and experiences beyond the current community through virtual connections, teacher developed technology-based resources, and experiential learning opportunities intended to also support the whole child and connect the child's experience to career and community
- funding of a universally available pre-–school program hosted at each elementary school to support the whole child and their personal skills and cognitive growth
- a standards-based achievement system through which students progress at their own pace in areas of interest to engage in deep learning and display mastery
- acquisition and development of digital resources with dedicated personnel to support their integration and use
- effective individual feedback from the data, but also from teachers and parents using new technologies including the personalized student achievement system at kindergarten to 6th grade
- after schools tutoring and supports, including transportation for students with greater needs, as well as assistive technology for students with disabilities and/or English Learners.
- A training program for students, parents and the community to understand the plan, to understand how to use technology, to understand the standards-based system and curricula, and to explore college and career readiness as an ongoing focus.

There is not a one-to-one correspondence to each of the selection criteria and subparts, but the above referenced proposed approaches and strategies as discussed in the narrative and evidenced in the plan and other references in the narrative, would suggest that the extent of the quality of the plan is quite high because all of the criteria but one – personalized learning recommendations -- are addressed thoughtfully, substantively and actionably.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	16

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

In the narrative, the applicant indicates that it has combined the learning and teaching and leading aspects of the proposal within one high-quality plan containing three separate elements relating to standards-based curriculum, personalized learning, and social emotional/wellness. Evidence is provided in the goals, activities, deliverables, and responsible parties relating to teaching and leading that are indicated in the plan provided in the appendix.

The plan includes goals, activities, deliverables, responsible parties, and timelines. The following goals and activities presented in this plan provide evidence supporting the selection criteria within the teaching and leading requirements:

- teacher training to provide resources, materials and supplies to implement the common core
- teacher support to develop curriculum resources aligned to the common core
- four days of release time per staff member for classroom observations and training
- resources, materials, and supplies for professional development
- ten lead teachers attending conferences
- hiring five faculty in to provide Early Childhood Preschool instruction
- training to implement the “standards achievement system”
- professional development and site visits for teachers and administrators

- release time for team leaders to visit job sites related to career areas
- two new hires in math to provide double dip math instruction
- implement “career teams” with and for students
- collaboration with surrounding districts as a consortium to provide online coursework

Through these activities, educators will engage in training and work in professional teams and learning communities and should be able to support the effective implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies that are tailored to students. Such training also ensures educators know how to use the tools data and resources aligned with the personalized learning approach --including actionable data. Specifically the proposal notes “in addition to training and support for staff to professional development, learning teams, and effective coaching, all teachers will also have access to and be trained to use resources to meet the needs of each student.” Technology-based resources, with the help of instructional coaches, are targeted here, as are assessments, such as the new STAR assessments diagnosing individual student needs.

Evidence of the teacher evaluation system is provided in the appendix in the narrative states that this system has been in place for some time with administrator training in the past 4 years and purchase of an evaluation management system through teachers can set goals a personalized evaluation process. The RTTD monies would be used for additional administration training. While there is evidence that a principal evaluation instrument is in place having been revised in 2011–12 (see appendix), the narrative does not supply substantial evidence to suggest how this instruments last process has been advanced and whether or not it has been successful outside of the fact that principles have been trained in the use of the instrument and “frequent conversations between individual principles in their evaluating regard to effective practice” have been undertaken.

While there is evidence that there is a desire and a plan to combine and further the various information and databased systems currently in place, there is no evidence, in this section, to suggest that these high quality learning resources and processes and tools will be available to provide feedback to students and match their needs outside of what staff might do and provide for them. This is addressed in other sections of the proposal, but not here.

The information/evidence offered above combines to provide evidence of training, policies tools, data, and resources that, together, would structure an effective learning environment tailored toward student individual needs. The standards and the standards-based curricula are a crucial part of such an environment as are the district’s teacher and leader evaluation systems, the described climate surveys to assess and improve school culture and climate; and a system of incentives and supports for teacher and leader training that should result in increased student performance. Evidence regarding closing achievement gaps was not provided.

There is no evidence of formal plan to increase the number of general students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals. There is evidence of a formal plan to hire specialists in the area of social emotional learning to support students generally and students with special needs.

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's high quality plan to support project implementation provided in the appendix does demonstrate a range of practices in the form of current and proposed goals and activities focused on delivering standards-based curriculum, personalize learning, and services to support social emotional wellness.

The plan is further narrated in the proposal and information and evidence about these higher-level, structural matters is largely provided.

Evidence of a supportive organizational structure and focus of the LEA’s Central Office is provided in an organizational chart and related narrative outlining roles and responsibilities that support the key Believe to Achieve areas and the activities and supports required to design and implement them. The narrative describes how each Central Office position connects to roles and responsibilities at the building level. That a new Instructional Technology Coordinator will be hired to support the Believe to Achieve initiative is a strength.

Sufficient autonomy and flexibility of school building leadership teams is discussed in the narrative relating to the following areas: budget, hiring/staffing, scheduling, implementing the School Improvement Plan, professional development, and implementation of curriculum and instruction.

The narrative states that the district has long supported and engaged in mastery achievement and offer students the ability to

demonstrate mastery multiple times in multiple ways. There is evidence to show this is the case in the district's Comprehensive District Improvement Plan document and the Principles and Practices of Standards Based Greeting document in the appendix.

That the District does, and will continue, to support the alternate or adapted learning needs of ALL students including students with disabilities and ELs, through curricular, staff, and technology-based supports is indicated in the narrative and the Plan (e as.g., use of ARRA funds to purchase iPads to access alternate learning tools for students with disabilities).

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	6

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not provide evidence of the district's technical infrastructure capacity, but does address its technical capacity in terms of the various data-based management systems that it operates and inter-operates. Student data, finance, assessment, curriculum, online textbook, and instructional improvement systems are identified and evidence of some of their capacity is provided in the appendix in the form of class and individual student achievement reports. The newly proposed student-driven goal-setting and monitoring system is intended to interface with, and draw upon, these earlier data systems. Technical training and support are evidenced for leaders, teachers, parents and students in the high-quality plan in the appendix.

Parents and students are not able to export information from current data systems unless they contact a system administrator. The narrative indicated that this would be changing within the year so that parents and students could download reports on their own. Evidence about whether the data is open or systems are fully interoperable is not provided.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

While evidence of the continuous improvement process is not indicated in the District Implementation Plans provided in the appendix, the narrative and accompanying performance measures and performance measure tables would seem to constitute evidence of an emerging plan that includes assessment for continuous improvement. The narrative outlines the many mechanisms and personnel already in place that undertake evaluative activities for continuous improvement at the district, building, and classroom levels -- some through statutory or board policy authority – some of whom would be employed to assess the Believe to Achieve initiative. A Race to the Top Evaluation Team is proposed to meet quarterly and to be responsible for "compiling and communicating the output and input data related to the grant." It would be populated by members at all levels of the system and would report twice annually to the Board of Education. Evidence for how the applicant will monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of its investments–for example in professional development, technology, and staff–is not provided in a way that is cohesive enough to call it a high–quality plan.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Throughout the grant the commitment to parent/community engagement is significant and ideas for how parents will be engaged and can participate and feedback into the process are offered throughout. Evidence of this commitment and for specific strategies for communicating with parents and other internal and external stakeholders is presented in the plan in the appendix and in the narrative. Solutions addressing this area include in person participation in meetings and committees, parent organization forums, and community meetings as well as print, broadcast, and electronic venues – particularly a website on which to post all things Race to the Top.

How internal stakeholders will be engaged depends upon the people intended and where they are in the system. Methods of internal engagement are indicated in the section that discusses the various groups in the district that act as evaluation teams. In addition to that role – and as part of it – such teams advance internal communications through many approaches – standing meetings; evaluative review and feedback regarding data, reports, information, and plans; teams within and across buildings and/or functions within the district, etc. The descriptions of these teams, their participants, their functions, and some of their methods indicate high levels of engagement and strong internal stakeholder engagement and communication at many levels throughout the district.

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

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

A high-quality plan to achievably measure performance is provided in this grant proposal. Evidence is provided in the local performance measures and rationales outlined in the narrative and in the performance measures tables required by the grant. These documents indicate performance overall and by super subgroup on 13 performance measures: whether or not students were taught by an effective or highly effective teacher; the percentages of early childhood students served by districts and their achievement and physical growth and characteristics; student growth on the STAR Enterprise Reading Assessment; FAFSA completion; staying on track for math: meeting Technical Skills Assessment (TSA) proficiency, etc.

The performance measure data provided shows evidence of need, particularly in the middle and high school grades. For example, currently only 8% of 7th graders are on track to college- and career readiness in Reading – a percentage that increases to 18% in grade 8 (note that super subgroup data are not supplied regarding this metric). In high school, 27% of all students and 16% of super subgroup students are on track for college- and career-readiness in Math. In the case of this key area of need, goals for elementary and middle school progress seem too ambitious (i.e., 90% of students are on tack for college- and career-readiness). That would constitute a roughly 17% annual performance growth, which does not seem realistic. In the case of high school math, growth is projected at 3% per year, which is an achievable goal, but the end target of 52% of all students and 41% of super subgroup students being college- and career-ready for math in 2016-2017 seems not ambitious enough. It should be noted that progressive improvement data are not provided for Grade 4-8 reading because a new STAR assessment was introduced in 2011-2012.

Progress monitoring via the existing district improvement process is indicated along with an expectation that this process will result in revised or evolving performance indicators. The Race to the Top Evaluation team will make revision recommendations that will be reviewed by the Superintendent's Cabinet before submission to the US Dept. of Education.

Most performance measures presented are ambitious yet achievable and seem tailored to the proposed plan and Theory of Action. Those for the core subjects of reading and math, however, are either too ambitious and not likely to be achieved, or are achievable but not ambitious enough.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides very strong evidence that there are formal organizational bodies in place that have been tasked evaluative functions and mechanisms/processes as part of their roles within the Missouri and Fort Osage educational systems. In some cases, very pointed information is provided about what these teams do/will do and in which kinds of evaluative activity they will be involved. What specific informational products and/or deliverables are not described. For example, the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan Team "will reconvene annually to review the plan, and the progress made, and to make adjustments if necessary."

There is some confusion here because the narrative speaks of a "Race to the Top Evaluation Team," but there is not evidence that the overarching group of bodies and people have been formally organized into this team.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's budget seems to identify all funds that will support the project and seems reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of all four components of the proposed plan: Standards-Based System, Personalized Learning System, Whole Child Success and the Competitive Preference relationship with LINC.

The budget narrative provides rationales for allocations that are largely supportable. The project level budget narrative, in many cases however, does not provide key assumptions underpinning proposed costs. No revenue streams are identified. There is evidence of District supports in the form of staff salaries. There is some identification of funds used for one-time investments versus ongoing operational costs, but because all ongoing costs are not labeled, it is not always clear. There is

no discussion of strategies that will ensure sustainability of the personalized learning environments, or the significant numbers of staff that will be hired. However, this is addressed in F2.

The Standards-Based System portion of the budget is focused on training, staff hires, purchase of a Learning Management System, and transportation. Rationales for each are provided and adequate although much more information in the budget narrative and in the proposal over all about what type and function of Learning Management System is needed. Two math teacher positions are also included for which there is no mention or discussion of rationale in the budget narrative.

In the Personalized Learning System portion of the budget monies are proposed for the purchase of 6000 devices for students and staff and technical components for the infrastructure. 3 Technology Department staff positions are indicated to manage a new wireless network and one Instructional Technology Coordinator is proposed for planning training and resource purchases other positions to support tech infusion (9 funded by the district). These are all appropriate. Additional funding is proposed for technology training and resource development and ongoing staff support and training. Licensing of an electronic system for student goal setting is indicated. There is no mention of coordination with the longitudinal data management system of the state.

In the budget section on Whole Child Success, monies are apportioned for embedded school activities and teacher training and support and materials for developing the whole child. One Behavior Interventionist position is advanced to support all schools in the district. Travel for training is also included. A therapist position is advanced for which no rationale is provided in the budget narrative. Outside of the lack of mention or rationale for the therapist position, all proposed costs seem reasonable and sufficient.

Competitive Preference Plan Budget – contract for three Caring Communities site coordinators and benefits seem appropriate.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	7

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

There is not evidence of a high quality plan for the sustainability of the project goals that contains goals and supporting activities and rationales, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties. That being said the applicants do provide a thoughtful and fairly comprehensive look at what funding could be garnered, or what cuts could be made to stretch monies to sustain the grant after its completion.

The applicants identify staff, the one-to-one computing initiative, and professional development as the primary costs of Believe to Achieve. They suggest specific activities to undertake for each and provide some rationales that seem appropriate. Reducing new hires to half and sharing staff across schools, reducing non-essential supports such as transportation for the Early Childhood initiative, passing a levy for additional funds, leasing computing devices, and funneling already anticipated funds for professional develop to core Believe to Achieve activities. Specific monetary amounts are not included and State and local government leader support is not evident.

The applicants indicate that they plan to move forward with Believe to Achieve to the degree that they can if Race to the Top-District funds are not awarded -- a testament to the belief in, and commitment to, this plan.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

In this competitive priority, the applicant has proposed to integrate public or private resources through a coherent and sustainable partnership with the Kansas City Local Investment Commission (LINC) “to provide services to the students and families of the district.” The applicant has been in partnership with LINC since 1992. The proposal makes the case that this organization has strong community ties and has been supporting schools throughout Fort Osage elementary schools through full-time site coordinators at each. RTTD funds would be used to expand and ramp up this Caring Communities program by providing a site coordinator to serve in each of the district’s intermediate, middle, and high schools. Such coordinators would continue to remain at all elementary schools. In-school and afterschool programming for college and career readiness would take place as well as additional links with the community and support for families to learn about, and engage in, college and career planning.

The applicants demonstrate other ways for the programs to scale. For example, LINC is connected the district with the Missouri College Advising Corps (MCAC). This organization will place a full-time “near peer college advisor” at the high

school to support 9 through 12th graders as they navigate learning about, preparing for, and applying to college. An evaluation component is included and evidence of the MCAC program's successful impact state-wide is provided. This partnership would integrally support the RTTD college- and career-ready goals as indicated by the MCAC goals outlined in the narrative.

Four population-level desired results are evidenced in the narrative: decreasing absences, decreasing summer reading level loss, increasing percentages of students applying in enrolling in college, and increasing the number and total dollar amounts of scholarships. To achieve these results, the primary approach is supporting families and parents in better understanding and better participating in school-related activities designed to improve student achievement and help students become career- and college-ready. These results are both educational and family and community oriented. Evidence is provided for how they would project over time, but not necessarily how they would be improved over time.

There is a table indicating 3 of the 4 population level results and, in it, baseline indicators and targets are included/referenced for students in the aggregate and for subgroups. Evidence of how the data would be used to target resources is not provided, nor is explicit discussion of how high needs students and their families would be addressed specifically outside of the fact that it is the core business of LINC to operate as a needs-based community program.

The evidence suggests that staff development and the ability to assess needs and assets of the school and community would be advanced by the expertise of the LINC partnership and, particularly, through the Site Council made of community and family members. These councils will also participate in the developing an infrastructure to support project goals, and engage parents and families of participating students.

The partnerships, goals and activities proposed in this competitive priority support the core work of the RTTD proposal and extend it in ways that makes its success more likely by connecting to community and business populations in significant ways and supporting the social emotional and cultural needs of students and families in K-12 schools throughout the district.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

In this proposal, the applicant has indicated support for, and demonstration of, absolute Priorities 1 through 3, but has not addressed absolute priority 4.

Specifically, the applicant proposes an initiative and a plan – Believe to Achieve -- that builds on prior work in the areas of standards-based grading, effective assessment for learning, response to intervention and attempts to further grow and institutionalize these in a more comprehensive, district-wide system. Believe to Achieve, then, is comprised of 3 components: an entire standards-based system, a commitment to providing the tools and structures for personalized learning, and intervention that addresses the whole child and which is advanced through a competitive-priority-proposed partnership with a local community-based organization, LINC.

Overall, these proposed activities are presented coherently and two of them – Standards-Based System and Personalized Learning – directly address Core Assurance areas 1 and 2. Core Assurance area 3 regarding improvement of teacher/leader knowledge and effectiveness, is also addressed within the proposal though significant teacher training and ongoing support components, some substantial leader training components, and continued development and application of the teacher and leader evaluation systems. As noted, grants funds will assist the further development of these evaluations to better time teacher and leader efforts to student outcomes. Core Assurance 4 regarding turning around the lowest performing schools is not addressed.

The proposed activities do cohere to advance a system to support increased personalized learning environments – primarily through increases in the acquisition and use of technology devices, technical infrastructure, and applications to support data-based decision-making and personalized information on student needs; but also through significant investments in the human resources and organizational structure (primarily staff positions, training for teachers and leaders, and teacher/leader evaluations) to advance and apply such a technical system well. The argument about how such a system will better personalize learning and ensure that students will improve achievement and graduate at higher rates of college and career-readiness does become diffuse at times. This proposal would meet Absolute Priority 1 if the applicant had addressed Core Assurance 4, but it did not. Absolute Priority 1 is, thus, not met.

Total	210	161

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0494MO-2 for Fort Osage R-1 School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Comprehensive and coherent vision: Fort Osage School District is proposing a vision of advancing their current Believe to Achieve program by focusing on personalizing the educational experience to meet the needs of each learner. First, educators will engage in extensive training to ensure a guaranteed and viable curriculum based on Common Core standards, differentiated instruction and integration of technology. Second, each grade band will have it's own targeted approach to ensure students are college and career ready. Universal preschool will ensure kindergarten readiness and help close early achievement gaps. Elementary school students will progress through curriculum based on standards mastery ensuring readiness for middle school. Middle school students will be organized into career focused teams and will learn through their own interests thus ensuring personalization. High schoolers will develop their own personal plans of study which will allow them to set goals and track progress towards goals to ensure on time college and career ready graduation. The district also proposes to engage students in goal setting in areas of personal wellness as well as academics.

Four core assurances:

* college and career ready standards and assessments- Fort Osage School District describes the existence of college and career ready standards and documents that they are a part of the Smarter Balance consortium.

* data systems with feedback loops and capability to track from pre K to grade twelve- Currently, the district has a number of data management tools that provide longitudinal data and complies with the requirements set forth in the notice.

* teacher, principal and leader evaluation systems- The district adopted a new teacher evaluation system model in 2008 that focuses on student learning and outcomes. Some revisions will be required to fully comply with the requirements set forth in the notice.

* Turning around low-achieving schools- Fort Osage School district does not provide any evidence on efforts to turn around failing schools. This assurance area is not addressed.

Overall, the articulation of the vision of Fort Osage School District for the RTT-D proposal is comprehensive and coherent. A strong link between past reform efforts and the RTT-D proposal is made. The district has a tiered plan in place that is age appropriate for each grade band. Three of the four core assurances are documented however evidence of turning around low performing schools is missing.

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Fort Osage School District aims to include all students at all schools in the initial 4 year project. The required lists of participating schools, students and staff members are present and the students do meet the required demographics.

High quality LEA and School-level implementation:

a. process used to select participating schools- Fort Osage School District will include all students in all schools in the project because they believe universal engagement is important as the vision is to significantly increase the achievement of students across the district.

b. list of schools that will participate- Fort Osage School District provides a list of all schools that will participate which includes schools serving K-4, 5-6, 7-8 and 9-12.

c. total number of students participating,low income, high need, and participating educators- In all, Fort Osage School District will serve 5,260 students 51% of which are considered low income which surpasses the requirement of at least 40% as stated in the application criteria. It is stated that 1,119 students are considered high need however it is undocumented as to how Fort Osage School District determined that these students would meet the high need criteria.

Overall, Fort Osage School District demonstrates evidence of high quality implementation their reform proposal at both the LEA and School levels with 100% participation. The district intends to implement age appropriate reforms for each grade band rather than a one-size fits all reform across the district.
Every school, educator and student will participate in a manner that developmentally accessible and hence will promote better outcomes. However, evidence of how high needs students are identified is lacking.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	7

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Fort Osage School District does intend to implement the reforms district wide within the four years of the grant window. Elements of a high quality plan are missing however. Timelines are not specified nor are responsible parties. Goals and rationales provided are sound and specific activities such as training and deliverables are addressed. The deliverables are extensive and would reasonably result in increased personalization and student acceleration. For example, implementing universal preschool options will ensure children entering kindergarten have the appropriate foundational skills to be successful in a school setting. This will result in closing the achievement gaps in early childhood education. A focus on allowing students in grades kindergarten through sixth to progress in their learning upon demonstration of mastery will promote personalization rather than a teach to the whole mentality. Grouping middle school students into Career Focused Teams will achieve career exploration prior to high school course selection. Personalized learning plans in high school will sufficiently allow students to set career goals and track progress towards those goals.

Overall, Fort Osage School District is ambitious in proposing LEA wide reform within the four year grant window. The activities and deliverables stated will reasonably result in goal achievement, however elements of a high quality plan are lacking.

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

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Ambitious yet achievable goals:

a. Performance on summative assessments: Targets are based on Missouri's School Improvement Program and are set such that Fort Osage School District will achieve a status of Exceeds Expectations by the end of the grant window. The district examined previous data and considered the impact of their grant proposal in delineating these targets.

b. Decreasing achievement gaps: Missouri uses a super group designation for historically low-performing subgroups. The district has established a goal of completely eliminating the achievement gap by the end of the grant reform cycle. They believe this is challenging but attainable given past performance in this area and the perceived impact of their reform proposal.

c. graduation rates:Graduation targets were set based on previous years' data.

d. college enrollment: Methodology for determining college enrollment targets is not given. Targets set for the end of the reform cycle show a continuation of the achievement gap and actually show lower than 2010-2011 numbers in the IEP subgroup and flat growth for free and reduced lunch subgroup.

Overall, Fort Osage School District demonstrates evidence of ambitious yet achievable goals for performance on summative assessments, decreasing the achievement gap and graduation rates. The districts vision of a three tier approach to expanding their Believe to Achieve program is appropriate and aligns to the goal of providing increased personalization and increasing student performance for all students. However, evidence of rationale for establishing college enrollment targets is missing and targets are not ambitious for certain subgroups.

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	2

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Clear record of success:

a. improve student outcomes and close achievement gap: Middle schools consistently lag behind elementaries. Several grades/subgroups showed decrease in performance in 2012 however no evidence of root cause provided. Graduation rates not disaggregated by subgroup. Achievement gaps in Comm Arts are increasing. Achievement gaps in math are decreasing in all subgroups except IEP. Four years worth of college enrollment data not given.

b. ambitious and significant reforms in lowest achieving schools: One elementary school entered school improvement status. New principal redefined culture and focused on data resulting in emerging from School Improvement status.

c. student performance data available: Parents have access to grade book through portal however no evidence is given to suggest that parents have access to achievement data for students. The vision section does describe educator access to data management systems and longitudinal data.

Overall, Fort Osage School District does not show a clear record of success in the past four years as achievement in certain grades and subgroups is declining, achievement gaps in certain areas are increasing and no data is provided for college enrollment. The district's one school identified as low performing was addressed by replacing the principal. There is no evidence to suggest that student performance data, other than course grades, is made available to parents or students.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	0

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) Actual personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff, based on the U.S. Census Bureau's classification used in the F-33 survey of local government finances (information on the survey can be found at http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/f33agency.asp);- not provided

(b) Actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff only;- not provided

(c) Actual personnel salaries at the school level for teachers only; and- not provided

(d) Actual non-personnel expenditures at the school level (if available).- not provided

While Fort Osage School District provided a screen shot of their website entitled All About Fort Osage, there is no evidence in the screen shot or in the narrative to suggest that any salary or expenditure data is made available to the public.

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

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Fort Osage School District demonstrates that the state board, legislature and education department provide the school districts with flexibility and autonomy so long as they continue to demonstrate results. As long as students through grade eight participate in state assessments, the education department guarantees support of innovation. Fort Osage maintains a commitment to participating in state testing as well as adopting Common Core Standards and participating as a part of the Smarter Balance Consortium. Therefore, Fort Osage has demonstrated evidence of required autonomy and there are no concerns with the district's ability to implement the reforms contained within the RTT-D proposal.

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

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Stakeholder engagement and support:

a. how stakeholders were engaged in development: All stakeholders extensively engaged as evidenced by the timeline provided. District states that final application is a compilation of input received from all stakeholders and was developed collaboratively.

b. letters of support from: LINC, Missouri Department of Education, Marzano Research Laboratory, University of Central Missouri, Metropolitan Community College, Buckner PTO, Sort Osage STUGO, Independence Chamber, Buckner Chamber of Commerce and Mayor of Buckner.

Overall, Fort Osage School District made an exhaustive effort to engage all stakeholders in the development of the grant proposal. The proposal was developed collaboratively and the feedback of all stakeholders was included.

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

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

In developing the grant proposal, Fort Osage School District has already executed their high quality plan to analyze the current status in implementing the reform proposal including needs and gaps. Through the timeline listed in B(4), the district demonstrates the comprehensive data collected to determine needs and gaps. This timeline includes the responsible parties who facilitated data collection as well as dates that activities occurred. The resulting outcomes include a list disaggregated by stakeholder delineating what barriers and needs must be addressed in the reform process. Fort Osage has addressed these needs and barriers within their implementation plan. Overall, the district has demonstrated evidence of obtaining input and feedback from their stakeholders and including this feedback into their plan. Successful completion of the plan, including addressing the needs and gaps identified, will result in the desired outcomes.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Learning:

a. Fort Osage School District details how students will be engaged at all levels kinder through twelfth grade in career awareness, exploration and goal setting processes. Students will then receive focuses instruction in their areas of interest to connect their learning with their long term goals. Goal setting software will be provided to allow students and parents to set long term goals and monitor progress towards those goals. Through the wellness component of the grant, students will be provided access to extensive cultural and community experiences that they have not previously been able to access. This will increase the link between classroom learning and real world experiences promoting deep learning and application to long term goals. Students kinder through grade six will be able to move through content at their own pace based on standards mastery. All grades will continue to report student learning based on standards mastery.

b. Students in middle school will be provided projects and content related to areas of individual career interest. Students in high school will have an individual course of study based on college and career plans. Tracking software will promote goal setting and manage on time graduation. Educators will develop high quality courses based on local curriculum standards and access will be provided for other online curriculums. Feedback will be based on set goals as well as standards mastery and is accessible at any time from the 1:1 device. Accommodations and strategies are in place for high needs students including supports built into the school day, before and after school and extended learning programs.

c. Adequate training is planned for parents/community and teachers who will then train students on the appropriate ways to utilize technology as a learning tool.

Overall, Fort Osage School District provides an extensive high quality plan to address learning and training needs. Timelines, deliverables, activities and responsible parties are thoroughly addressed.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	12

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Teaching and leading:

a. Educators engage in training and professional teams: Educators currently meet in teams to address common assessments. Through reform grant, educator collaboration time could be greatly increased to further develop resources and plans. Training

will consist of external conferences, bringing in experts and coaching with emphasis on building capacity of staff. Coaches will assist teachers in identifying appropriate resources to address individual student needs. Student progress will be assessed regularly using common assessment and STAR assessments. Teacher and Principal evaluation systems are extensive and formative, engaging the professional in goal setting and offering opportunities for improvement. Adapting content and instruction to allow students opportunities to engage in common and individual tasks was not addressed.

b. Educators have access to resources to accelerate student learning: Coaches will help educators develop capacity to identify best resources of high quality to assist students in their individual areas of need. Data management systems are now comprehensive and pull data from multiple sources to provide actionable data.

c. Leaders have resources to structure environment: Comprehensive data systems provide actionable data. Culture and climate surveys are administered and detail need for greater parent involvement. Extensive evaluation management system allows building level leaders and district leadership to monitor individual educator progress and analyze data to provide needed supports. School improvement plan process provides opportunity to continuously improve resources towards increasing student performance and closing the achievement gap.

d. High Quality Plan for addressing access to effective and highly effective teachers: This criteria was not address by Fort Osage School District.

Overall, educators and leaders in Fort Osage School District have access to appropriate data that is actionable and timely. Educators are trained in using data to inform instruction and the grant will provide personnel who will assist with matching student needs with appropriate resources. Educator and leader evaluation systems are feedback oriented and structured to provide support and interventions. However, evidence of access to the ability to adapt content and instruction by providing opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks is missing as is a high quality plan for increasing access to effective and highly effective teachers and principals.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

a. The district provides sufficient evidence to demonstrate that building level leaders feel supported by the structure and involvement of the central office staff.

b. School leadership teams are given adequate flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school schedules, school budgets, staffing models, roles and responsibilities but must comply with district policies with regards to hiring and school calendars.

c. Students in kinder through grade six will be able to progress based on content mastery however students in grades seven through twelve will not.

d. The district has provided a copy of a comprehensive plan to allow students multiple methods and opportunities to demonstrate mastery including allowing students to suggest appropriate assessments.

e. Adequate learning resources are in place for students with disabilities but are lacking for English learners. The RTT-D proposal will correct this discrepancy.

Overall, Fort Osage School District describes a high quality plan to provide adequate support from central office, autonomy and flexibility over key factors impacting the building level and has a process in place for students to demonstrate mastery at multiple times and by multiple methods. The district has responsible parties identified for each area of support as well as timelines for evaluating needed supports. Outcomes are identified through the grant proposal and the district structure in place demonstrates the flexibility and accessibility necessary to provide supports as needed throughout the process. However, only limited grade bands are able to progress based on demonstrated mastery and there is no plan to address this disconnect. Additionally, English Learners currently have limited access to resources, however a high quality plan is included in the grant proposal to remedy this criteria.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	4

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

a. The district has assessed the currently availability of hardware and internet in the homes of students. Through the RTT-D

grant, a device will be in the hands of every student. The district is working with community partners to increase wireless internet accessibility but at this time every household will not have internet access. The district plans to accommodate for this by expanding their wireless availability on site for parents to access.

b. The implementation plan calls for extensive technical support and training for all stakeholders. Parents will be required to attend prior to the student receiving a device. Educators will have three days of training annually as well as additional trainings throughout the year. Students will have ongoing training in the appropriate use of the device as a learning tool.

c. Currently, the district is unable to provide technology systems that allow parents to export student information in an open data format. The RTT-D grant would attempt to remedy that.

d. District data systems are currently interoperable and the inclusion of new systems will also comply.

Overall, Fort Osage School District provides evidence of a high quality plan to provide 1:1 devices for each student and a comprehensive training plan for all stakeholders. Additionally, the LEAs and schools data systems meet the criteria for interoperable systems and there is a commitment to continue to add systems that will be in compliance. Through the RTT-D grant proposal, the district outlines a high quality plan to provide data to parents in an open data format including timelines and responsible parties as well as a format for export. However, the district fails to identify the elements of a high quality plan in regards to proving wireless access to students outside of school. The district is working with various stakeholders to resolve barriers to wireless access but responsible parties and timelines are unable to be established at this time thus there is no evidence to provide credibility to the idea that all homes will have access.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Fort Osage School District currently utilizes a comprehensive continuous improvement process to evaluate the district improvement plan. Stakeholder teams, assigned by focus area, are identified and regular meetings scheduled. The continuous improvement process described is sufficient to provide regular and timely feedback as well as monitor, measure and publicly share information related to RTT-D. Effective and proven processes such as Plan, Do, Study, Act and data based initiatives from Professional Learning Communities, High Schools That Work, and the Leadership and Learning Center's Data Teams are utilized to monitor and measure activities and outcomes. Information is then communicated extensively back to stakeholders through the various teams.

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

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Fort Osage School District plans to utilize various media to provide communication and obtain feedback from external stakeholders including up to date information on the website, print media, parent forums, and community meetings. Internal stakeholders will be kept informed through the continuous improvement cycle listed in E(1). These methods of communication are appropriate to satisfy the communication criteria with all stakeholders.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

All students: District has set ambitious yet achievable goals to meet criteria. These goals will be feasible with the revisions to the teacher and principal evaluation systems.

PreK-3: District describes measures in place to assess both academic and motor growth as well as an additional measure to assess health and wellness. The targets set are ambitious yet achievable with rationales provided to detail how growth and targets were determined.

4-8: District provides evidence of three measures for this grade band: academic as determined by standards mastery, college readiness as determined by reading performance and a measure of health and wellness. Targets set are ambitious yet achievable with rationales provided to detail how growth and targets were determined.

9-12: District includes most measures required including FASFA, on track indicator as measured by GPA and math courses completed, career readiness as measured by the TSA and grade appropriate indicator as measured by core course

completions.

While the district has sound rationale for choosing these measures and setting ambitious yet achievable targets, the district fails to provide a heath or social-emotional indicator for grades 9-12. Earlier in the application, the district states that MO requires that students through grade eight must participate in state assessments, yet those assessments are not listed as performance measures. The measures chosen for grade bands 4-8 do not include a math assessment beyond course completion reports. Due to these concerns, the district scores in the low range on this criteria.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The district proposes to convene a stakeholder team specifically dedicated to RTT-D who will meet quarterly to review data, monitor expenditures and make recommendations. This team will then report out to all other stakeholder groups described in the continuous improvement process in E(1). Grant goals will be evaluated as part of the current system utilized by the district as the grant goals are an extension of current goals set forth in the district improvement plan.

Overall, Fort Osage School District described the creation of a team to monitor RTT-D goals but does not specifically address activities set forth in the grant proposal. The results in limited assurances of plans to evaluate the effectiveness of the RTT-D grant activities as a whole.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	5

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

a. Fort Osage identities additional funds, both federal and local, that will support the reform initiative. The budget is detailed in such a way as to provide justification for annual expenditures with initial emphasis on purchasing technology and providing professional development and concluding in year four with an emphasis on staffing and training.

b. The budget as proposed is reasonable and sufficient to accomplish the grant reform proposal. The majority of costs are incurred in supplies which will include needed technology. The bulk of the remaining funds will be utilized in the contractual, travel and fringe benefits categories.

c. Each activity/expenditure is outlined with it's associated cost and a rationale for it's inclusion in the grant. Each is also identified as an ongoing expense or a one time expense. The district identifies which of the listed activities/expenditures is currently funded through other sources. In the case of Fort Osage School District, the only other funds identified are district funds allocated through the local and state foundation formula.

Overall, the proposed budget is reasonable and sufficient to fund the reform proposal. However, it is unclear as to what other funds will be utilized to assist with the proposal. In certain parts of the grant proposal, the district discusses IDEA funds and Title funds but in the budget spreadsheets the district states that district funds from local and state sources fund $4.5 million. This is contradictory and brings into question what additional financial support will be available to the district aside from RTT-D funds.

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

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Fort Osage School District intends to continue the initiatives set forth by the RTT-D grant after the four year grant cycle. However, no additional funds are identified to support continued efforts. The district details efforts to pass a bond to assist in replacing some funding. No additional local or state funds are specified. The district is prepared to reduce the staff provided for during the grant term and share staff between schools. They are also examining a lease option plan to address the 1:1 device initiative. Overall, the district identifies no further support from local or state agencies to sustain reform efforts.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	2

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

1. The district provides evidence that a strong partnership has been in existence between Fort Osage School District and the Kansas City Local Investment Commission since 1992 through a program entitled Caring Communities. This program currently focuses on academic, health and social services for elementary students but the proposal would expand services to secondary students with an emphasis on college and career ready experiences. Fort Osage School District also proposes a new partnership with Missouri College Advising Corps aimed at improving college outcomes for students.

2. The district identifies five population-level desired results that address both academic results (increasing reading levels and college enrollments) as well as non-academic (decreasing absences). They also address family services and supports (increasing parent involvement). These results correlate to the RTT-D goals.

3. The district does not provide evidence of how two of the five results would be tracked and assessed nor is baseline data and targets presented for these two results. Plans to scale the model beyond the existing schools is undocumented. With the lacking information, the ability to improve results over time is obscure.

4. Through the Caring Communities program, the district effectively demonstrates how social services would be integrated into the educational setting to provide extended care and learning opportunities in the community.

5. Caring Communities sites would be managed by a site council comprised of family and community members who would assess the needs at the school and community level and design interventions to meet those needs. The grant application is ambiguous on a methodology for inventorying needs, a decision-making process to determine interventions and how progress would be assessed. The district states that because the needs of each community vary, site councils would need to be unique to each site.

6. Ambitious yet achievable performance measures are not provided for two of the five desired results. Two of the remaining results are targets listed in Absolute Priority 1 and the remaining result, decreasing absenteeism, provides for a 2% decrease each year which is achievable but not ambitious.

Overall, Fort Osage School District demonstrates evidence of a strong partnership with LINC and presents information to show how social services would be integrated into the school setting. Five population-level desired results are detailed however, evidence of how the majority of those results would be tracked and assessed is missing. The district also fails to adequately address how they will increase the capacity of the staff to assess and inventory needs, implement a decision-making process and measure progress. The lack of baseline data and targets for two of the desired results makes performance measures neither ambitious nor achievable. Therefore, the competitive priority scores in the low range.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Fort Osage School District demonstrates how they will build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to improve learning and teaching through the expansion of their Believe to Achieve initiative. This system will adequately provide access to resources and educational experiences that are aligned to college and career ready standards. Students will be provided the opportunities to accelerate and deepen their learning through a three tiered approach: Standards Based Learning, Personalized Environment and Whole Child Success. New data management systems will provide educators will access to data that has been analyzed at the individual student level thereby allowing educators to more effectively address student needs. Overall, the district does demonstrate evidence of meeting the components of Absolute Priority 1. However, the proposal fails to address components of recruiting, developing, rewarding and retaining effective teachers and principals.

Total	210	136

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0494MO-3 for Fort Osage R-1 School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	5

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Fort Osage School District (FOSD) presents its vision for comprehensive reform: (1) adopting standards and assessments - FOSD reports an existing teacher evaluation system that they have been using since 2008 that already meets many of the RTTD criteria along with an evaluation system for principals, required mastery of standards for students, and assessments that along to both state and federal requirements (2) building data systems that measure growth and inform educators so instruction is improved - FOSD reports having some components of a data management system already in place something that they intend to enhance with funding from an approved RTTD application, (3) recruiting, developing, rewarding and retaining effective teachers - FOSD, through professional development, will address developing teachers and principals but they make no mention of their methods for recruiting, rewarding, or retaining effective teachers and principals and, (4) turning around lowest achieving schools - FOSD reports that they have no low achieving schools; however, they have identified their Focus Schools (those identified under federal criteria) for added attention and support.

The district reports an intent to embark on a three component path linked to their "Believe and Achieve" initiative. FOSD's RTTD process will involve a Standards Based System directly tied to their decade old practice of Standards Based Grading, the provision of professional development aimed at instructional and expectation shifts required to successfully implement Common Core Standards by 2014-2015, and the effective integration of technology at all levels for all students. FOSD plans to ensure these components are firmly in place first then they intend to concentrate on effectively personalizing what students are taught. Their plan places an emphasis on Universal Preschool, a Standards Achievement System targeting all levels and ages of learners, Career Focused Teams aimed at the middle school level, and Personalized Plans of Study at the high school level. Personalized learning at levels below high school are not as specifically addressed as they are at the the high school level.

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)	10	6

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

FOSD's approach to implementing its reform proposal is a close match to the requirements of this section of the application. Fort Osage reports that their Believe and Achieve initiative has always included all eleven (11) schools in the district. Therefore since they intend to use Believe and Achieve in the RTTD project, this project, too, will include the entire district. No explanation of the "process" involved with making the choice to serve all schools is provided and there is no specific statement included regarding what FOSD will do to ensure that their approach to implementing LEA and school level implementation of their proposal . The applicant has included a chart that shows all participating schools. As required in the notice, the chart specifies the grade spans (all) , the number of educators participating at each site, the number of high need students participating , the number of low income students participating, the total number of students in each school (which is all students), and the percentages of students by income/ free reduced lunch percentages. The included tables report the numbers of students and the percentages as required.

	Available	Score
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	6

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

At the outset, the applicant selected all schools to be participants in the grant. Therefore any scaling up to occur would primarily focus on more improvement among the lowest performing students and at Focus Schools within the district where certain subgroups of the students need the most assistance to close gaps. It is difficult to identify components of FOSD's high quality plan for reform embedded in the general text. Evidence of LEA-wide reform included in the narrative fits with the applicant's statement that reads "once curriculum and resources are in place and staff has been trained to more

effectively personalize education, the standards based system can take full form". The applicant did an analysis of the district's previous data resulting in the creation of a Theory of Change diagram that they included in the appendix. This diagram included the 3 components of RTTD efforts and the anticipated changes that would result but no specific measurable outcomes.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	6

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

By selecting all schools and all students to be participants in the project, the district is automatically ensuring equity in both effort and approach. Table A4 identifies the components of Missouri Assessment Program which this district uses as its summative assessments. These assessments are described to include MAP End of Course Test and ACT. The applicant intends to rely on the state's formula for determining proficiency status and growth, opting not to set its own statuses at this point. While the A4 Tablet calculates baselines and projected growth over the course of the grant cycle, no specifics are included regarding the specific processes to be employed in the district to close the achievement gaps that exist in college graduation rates (especially with the Hispanic student population and in the Black and F/R Lunch populations relative to graduation rate). Baseline data is provided and goals reaching into school year 2016-2017 are included with particular focus on improving in 3rd grade. The applicant seeks to close the gaps with Black and Hispanic students by setting higher mastery rates than other subgroups but the particulars of how they move to this level are not included. These goals and the vision demonstrate high expectations for student growth. The likelihood that the vision set for this project will result in improved student learning and performance appears very possible. Missing are the actual activities to be implemented, parties responsible, deliverables, and incremental timelines which are components of a high quality plan.

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	9

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

FOSD's response to this section reveals consistent gains in student achievement over the past four years. This includes including the meeting of all fourteen state accountability standards. Tables are also provided to reflect the growth by grade and by subject over the 2008-2013 timeframe. Growth percentages reflected in the tables vary by subgroup but is reflected in all areas except science. The response further reports that AYP was not met in the year prior to the new AYP waiver the state just received. The graphs included in this section (ACT %, MSIP Graduation rate, Blue Hills AYP Results for 2007-2011, District and State Comm. Arts % of Proficient and Advanced, and District State Math MAP % Proficient and Advanced) reflect the narrowing of the achievement gap between subgroups but not the attainment of the FOSD goals and expectations. Fifth grade and above perform consistently below the state. There is also no explanation for the dip in graduation rate that occurred in 2010 even though the graduation rate has increased in the most recent two years. Information is presented about student performance data being already accessible to parents through the district's parent portal. Teachers are reported to also have access to the data. Teachers are slated to have additional training on the proper use data . There are no persistently low achieving schools in this district based on the data that is provided. It is admirable that the FOSD seeks to continue its improvement though they do not appear to be a district with the forced necessity to initiate reforms to turn their district around.

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

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

FOSD reports that it uses a page on its district website called "All About Fort Osage" to provide detailed information about the district's performance. The page includes other data pulled directly from state and federal databases. The applicant lists that it shares information in this manner with parents and patrons. This type of access points to the existence of transparency. There is no mention in the application about the actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff, teachers, or support staff in the application nor that of personnel expenditures are available. This was a minimum requirement of this section.

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

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The district has provided sufficient evidence for this criteria. FOSD stated in the application that conditions for success and sufficient autonomy were afforded the district by the MO State Board of Education and the MO Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The district reported that the "show me" philosophy of their state results districts not being constrained by strict rules. If they can show results, then they have autonomy an dflexibility to make choices about approached, personawere not constrained by requirements. Since 2007 high school graduation requirements have been allowed to be met and credits awarded based on mastery of competencies. The district's designation of "Distinction for Performance" is a a further indicator that FOSD has met all 14 performance standards which resulted in additional flexibility for the district in decision making about what is best for its students. The district's selection for a $$96,857 eMints grant form Title II.D to infuse technology (iPad carts) is a further indicator of successful conditions being set for personalized learning to move forward.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	8

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

FOSD does an exceptional job of providing evidence to meet this criteria.The district supplied a chronology of efforts to plan and involve stakeholders in this effort that dated back to August 14 of the current year and ended on October 19. Outlined within the chronology are a variety of meetings with administrators, instructional staff, the Superintendent's Cabinet, the Superintendent's Advisory Council, and mayors of the town and surrounding communities. Surveys in full and modified versions were distributed and results tabulated. The appendices include letters of support from the Department of Elementary and Secretary Education, local Chamber of Commerce, local governments (mayors), heads of area institutions of higher learning, the Fort Osage High School student council president, and FOSD employees. The district's response states that Missouri is not a collective bargaining state and that 98% of employee respondents (and 88% of certificated staff) supported the proposal. The only thing not mentioned in this section is whether there were suggestions for revisions to the proposal and, if so, how those suggestions were incorporated into the final version.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The district indicates the approach they took as part of analyzing their current status. They reported using the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) revised in spring 2012 to review the central focus area, goals, and strategies. The applicant reported the involvement of over 50 stakeholders in this effort. The standards based grading system used throughout the district is given as "a prime example of a district wide focus on personalized learning". The evaluation of the CSIP review revealed what appeared to be an expectations gap by staff between what the staff believed students should learn at each grade and what external assessments determined was expected. Student and staff survey results about barriers that created gaps are included but no parent survey results are included. While these aforementioned areas were provided, there was no written plan provided that included the deliverables, parties responsible, timeline for how the project would unfold which central elements to a high quality plan.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Throughout the grant review, FOSD reports the importance of standards based grading and its key connection to their *Believe and Achieve i*nitiative. All schools, all students and staff will be impacted by FOSD's RTTD project according to the narrative.The applicant presented a multi-page table titled the Fort Osage Race to the Top District Implementation Plan that contains the following sections: personalized learning goals, activities, deliverables, responsibility and timeline (month/year range). These areas are evidence of a high quality plan. This portion of the application does a noteworthy, job in presenting its plan for meeting the expectations of this section.

There is evidence of ongoing feedback on student skill mastery where teachers, students, and parents know that mastery of skills is required to move through the grades successfully. Personalized learning is repeatedly addressed in the application. The district also states that this grant will help them elevate the use of technology to make learning even more personalized. The expectations for teacher performance are outlined in the teacher evaluation instrument included as a part of the appendix. Accommodations and interventions are mentioned more than once as a strategy for making sure that all learners get their needs met. While the district reports that they are closely aligned to the state system and its goals there is limited mention of

how individual student data is updated, shared, and used to inform instruction. The district is seeking to improve on what they view as an already strong instructional program via the provision of more resources and more training to provide more personalized learning experiences. The district is commended for focusing on the future though its plan to ensure that Common Core Standards are entrenched and that all stakeholders understand their use and the rationale behind them to ensure college and career readiness. Some of these mechanisms already appear to be in place and the district expects that RTTD funding will do more to move them in that direction. It is difficult to glean from the submission the actual levels of parental support for the RTTD effort as these results do no get clearly identified in the narrative or appendices.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	13

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

FOSD included a RTTD Implementation Plan in the application appendix. In it, the district reports the provision of ongoing professional training for its teachers as one strategy in use for improving teaching. The plan reports that FOSD configures its teachers into learning teams (grade level and department teams) to increase collective capacity for success. Teachers are evaluated based upon a number of expectations. Leaders are also evaluated according to the evaluation instruments included as examples in the appendix.

The applicant reports that state of Missouri has an expectation that districts spend one percent of their revenue for professional development. Due to budget cuts occurring in recent years that expectation has not held firm resulting in the district allocating just over $400 per staff member for professional learning. Supplements to this $400 amount are reported come from Title I, Special Education and other district and building level sources so they can provide combination of on-site and off site training.

The plan addresses state assessments and indicates that they required at specified intervals during the school year. The district further reports using ongoing assessment aimed at determining skill mastery. Specifics about the frequency of student assessment measures are not spelled out in the application. No mention is made regarding whether FOSD faces a challenge in staffing its schools with highly effective teachers or teachers in specialty areas such as special education. Also while there is a teacher evaluation system already in place in the district, no numeric summary information is provided to reflect how current teachers rate as far as being effective or ineffective. One is left to assume that the district's current achievement levels can be attributed in part to highly effective teachers. While there is great detail in what is reported, all indicators of a high quality plan are not apparent in the response provided (i.e. the parties responsible for teaching and leading, the timelines for the activities, the deliverables).

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	9

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

FOSD meets the bulk of the criteria for section (D)(1) a-e. It has a plan that is aligned to support the implementation goals of its RTTD project. It identifies the participating schools---in this case all schools. It addresses having school school leadership teams. FOSD has a Central Office organizational arranged around a central office led a by a superintendent and 3 assistant superintendents plus a Director of Public Relations. Principals are directly supervised by the assistant superintendent for educational services. The central office level positions form the district leadership. At the building level, there are building leadership teams configured in varying arrangements of personnel. Twice monthly meetings of the two leadership teams are structured so that one session focuses on communication and business items and the other is focused on professional development and collaboration for building leaders. The applicant reports that building level administrators have autonomy to make most building level decisions not dictated by policy or regulations meaning that such things as schedules, hiring, roles and responsibilities, and even budgets come under a principal's authority.

No evidence is provided that this autonomy extends to the school leadership team. As mentioned in previous section responses, students are required to demonstrate mastery of standards in FOSD; mere seat time will not equate to the rating of mastery on a standard. Students are given multiple opportunities to evidence mastery and only progress when mastery is documented. The district admits that resources limitations have not allowed for an extensive array of resources to reach such groups as ELL students and disadvantaged students. They appear to be saying that they will rely on RTTD funding to address this issue. FOSD reports special education students have had access to more resources. Based on the provided responses, the applicant presents a quality plan, not a high quality plan, to address this criteria of the grant.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	7

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

FOSD reports are plan for addressing infrastructure. They provide a description of the organization of the LEA but say nothing about a plan (that includes deliverables and parties responsible) to keep or modify the current LEA policies. They write a great deal about plans for infrastructure improvements. FOSD reports that it supports the further implementation of personalized learning. There are some portions of personalized learning already in place in the district, especially in the area of standard based mastery of standards and matched grading, yet the district acknowledges the need to do more in this area. FOSD is focusing on creating more access to appropriate learning tools and resources despite family income levels.

This grant application is aimed at securing the funding that will further the vision for personalized learning enhancements possible. There is already sprinkling of updated technology in the district. Now FOSD has securing more technology plus more and better professional training. FOSD conveys that appropriate training is necessary to ensure proper use of technology and resources.

The current parent portal allows parents access to a wealth of data; the district desires to make even more data accessible quickly and comprehensively in formats that are user friendly. Currently the existing databases in use require parents to have to make contact with the district's grade book manager to gain full access to student achievement data---thus the current data format is not completely open. In school, access to content, tools, and other learning resources is accessible though it is not clear about the levels of access out of school which is determined to be another limitation. No specific mention of policy changes that have been made or are planned is provided in the applicant's response. Though these items listed are just planned at this stage, the district does present a quality plan for addressing this criteria in the future.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(E)(1) requires a rigorous continuous improvement process and clear strategy for accomplishing the goals. The review identifies the existence of a narrative plan lacking rigor. FOSD's response begins with a mention of their Board of Education. FOSD describes how the board, through its meeting structure and duties, at least annually evaluates the cost and effectiveness of student learning. FOSD outlines a strategy that begins with the review of the school improvement plan (CSIP). The Comprehensive School Improvement (CSIP) is reported to have been created the past spring. The plan is to be reviewed annually. Then twice a year meetings of the Superintendent's Cabinet are to be held to review the plan. Similar reviews are slated to occur at building level and grade level meetings. These reviews then cross over into the review of academic content and standards mastery. No information is provided about what happens with suggestions that come out of these meetings especially those where higher levels of authority to implement the suggestions /recommendations are required. Also no measure or specific method for public sharing of the content from the discussions held at each level is included in the (E)(1) response by the applicant.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

FOSD provides a high plan for ongoing communication and engagement regarding the RTTTD project. FOSD's response lists that it intends to "maintain" a RTTD page on the district website. This page is slated to be available throughout the term of the grant so information may be shared. The website will provide one means of ongoing communication.Updates to the page are indicated that they will occur as appropriate. Also in their plan is an intent to hold meetings to achieve engagement. The annual or semiannual schedule of meetings listed and outlined in the narrative are firm for the district. This schedule is intended to continue over time. Parent meetings and meetings with other external stakeholders are not expressly addressed (with regard to timeframe, meeting structure, or meeting frequency) in the applicant's response.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

This portion of the plan reflects high quality and goals that are ambitious and likely to be achieved. Each grade span, from pre-k through 12, specified in this section of the application is addressed in the applicant's listing of performance measures. The tables provided reflect the required range of between 12 and 14 performance measures needed to satisfy this criteria. FOSD

describes that it will use a"super subgroup" as one additional group whose performance they intend to measure. Members of this super subgroup may be Black, Hispanic, eligible for free/reduced lunch, IEP students or ELL students. At least 90% of students within this group must be taught by an effective teacher and will be assessed as such. For each measure selected to measure performance, a rationale is given by the applicant. The application explicitly states that evaluation will be ongoing. The applicant identifies an intent to revise the teacher and principal evaluation instruments within the next eighteen months. They further acknowledge that during the course of the grant some academic measures may need to be revised. The applicant identifies a Race to the Top Evaluation Team as the group responsible for making recommendations for revisions. Revisions must then be approved by the Superintendent's Cabinet before submission to the U.S. Department of Education.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The School Improvement Plan and Believe and Achieve plan expectations included in the applicant's response to this section are key components of the plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the RTTD and school district success as a whole. Little detail is provided to demonstrate what will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of investments other than these two aforementioned items items. There is also no mention of compensation reform, modification of school schedules (except to say school leaders have autonomy in this area), modification of school structures, or service delivery.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	5

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

FOSD's RTTTD request is for $18,637,887.79 in funding. This requested amount appears sufficient to support the planned initiatives of the grant. It is noted that a large amount of the requested funding is for personnel and the recurring costs associated with hiring personnel. No information is included in the budget pages or subparts regarding external foundation financial support, state or federal funds. The applicant does include that district funds will continue to be used to fund 7 instructional coaches, the existing Parents as Teachers program, at risk tutoring, professional development, textbook purchases and curriculum work. The first year of the grant appears to be primarily one of planning, program evaluation, and professional preparedness. Personnel costs are reflected as recurring though the major personnel expenditures are not intended to begin until Year 2. Only preschool teachers and math teachers are listed a personnel to be funded during the earliest stages of the grant. Race to the Top Funds are clearly identified in the budget pages The district states that sustaining the project at the levels possible with RTTD funding is not likely to be possible. The applicant reports that they may need to pass a bond levy and if that is not possible to scale back on personnel and share retained personnel. The district reports that is has 1 percent of its budget reserved for professional development. Keeping the technology up to date after the life of the grant, the district reports, may have to result in the use of lease purchase programs rather than outright purchases grant funding can support. These comments do raise the question of long term sustainability.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	6

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Support from the Missouri Department of Education and local mayor is evident in the FOSD application's response. Letters of support from each are included in the grant application appendix. The applicant's plan shows the RTTD budget for the life of the grant but not for the three year period after the grant (which was optional to include). Feasibility is difficult to assess based on what is included for review.

The applicant talks about the excitement generated from the group discussions stakeholders about the possibilities a successful grant application will afford. The applicant further discusses how they believe this excitement will impact sustainability. Bond issues passed previously are identified as possible new funding mechanisms to sustain the gains the RTTD grant will yield.With a personnel price tag of over $2 million dollars annually, it appears that the district views a new bond program as the most likely way to retain the personnel needed to keep the gains from RTTD going. Without success with a bond, the district's next reported option would be to reduce some personnel to part time status and by sharing the preschool teachers across buildings rather than each building having its own preschool teacher.

This begs the question of true sustainability. The district addresses the fact that after a four to five year period, the grant purchased and district purchased technology devices may need repairing or replacing. The district identifies as a possible option the process of lease purchasing to have up to date equipment to continue the efforts to personalize learning through

technology use. These indefinites about how the project can be sustained at implementation levels draw sustainability of goals and gains into question. This plan has quality but does not rise to the level of high quality based on the uncertainties of future funding.Even with all of this information provided, FOSD omits in this section the parties responsible for implementing the activities, the specific timelines, and the deliverables which are part of the logistics need identify how the budget will be sustained. Therefore this plan is not rated as high quality.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	6

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

FOSD includes in this section information about a two decade old partnership with Kansas City Local Investment Commission (LINC,) a non-profit community based organization. The fact that this partnership has endured for this length of time is considered as evidence of commitment and sustainability of the partnership. LINC's primary funding is reported to come from Missouri's Department of Social Services, a public agency. LINC uses some of its funding to place full time site coordinators in the 5 elementary school. The site coordinators provide a range of services to students and families. The RTTTD application aims to expand the existing partnership to bring three more coordinators to serve the intermediate, middle, and high schools in the district.

Another partnership with the Missouri College Advising Corps (MCAC) based at the University of Missouri-Columbia uses advisors to "Empower Missouri Students to Go to College and Succeed. Through RTTTD funding and expansion, the partnership with this agency is intended to expand. MCAC has 7 measurable outcomes and deliverables included in the application which include, increasing the % of seniors who apply, are accepted and enroll in college, increasing the # of parents who have the information needed to encourage their children to attend college, increasing the % of graduates who prepare for and take ACT, those who complete FAFSAs, calculating the # who complete at least one college application, and the % of students who seek scholarships.

Limitations to the included responses are the lack of any mention of district funds set aside for these partnerships, the lack of a description of how data will be used to target resources to improve student results, the limited information about the engagement of parents and families of participating students in the decision making about solutions assessing the applicant's progress the absence of logistics of the tracking process intended for use are not specifically outlined.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

FOSD did not restate in this section that it met Absolute Priority 1 (or Absolute Priority 4). However since the applicant is not held to the standard of having to present a separate section addressing how it meets Absolute Priority 1 information found in other locations within the application is used to substantiate that this priority is met. First, Priorities 1 and 4 are checked on the Program Specific Assurances Page. The district has a a vision located throughout the application indicating that FOSD aspires to provide substantially personalized learning through improved instructional strategies gained from teacher and administrator training. Further the applicant has ramped up achievement expectations and requires standards mastery of students. Having adopted its Believe and Achieve focus and adopting the Common Core standards each support the emphasis of students exiting school college and career ready. The applicant's emphasis on making technology accessible for parents and students alike indicates that they do not intend to let the effects of poverty hinder increased achievement. Their focus on setting high expectations for the performance of teachers and students alike through the use of challenging evaluation systems and better professional development further substantiate that the priority is met. Finally the district's intent to use data and its analysis to identify and find ways to eliminate gaps in the curriculum and achievement gaps across subgroups is additional support for them meeting the priorities requirement.

Total	210	135