



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #04671N-3 for Fort Wayne Community Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Program BEST A+ EVER has a complete 4 part program that strengthens its work within the school structure as well as the state and federal government by breaking down the plan into categories</p> <p>Three Tier model is implemented which has a comprehensive plan around academic pathways and speaks to the strength of this application</p> <p>Program includes behavior and academic goals for all students which clearly connects student achievement and increasing equity through student academic interests</p> <p>Structured Learning and Teaching Framework for Success, LEAD School Project and RISE Pilot Project show strength in building a vision on what already exists and works on the four education assurance areas</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The BEST A+ EVER was designed by all players, teachers, leaders, principals, which shows that the vision has been built by all stakeholders, which strengthens the likelihood of implementation without hesitation on the district at a teacher level</p> <p>The list of schools is present and it is clearly stated that all schools will be participating. All schools are present with the table completed as to percentages of participants in students and educators, which strengthens this application by showing exactly who is participating</p> <p>Section C of the proposal is very lengthy and very difficult to work through as far as which official sheet should be attached to which data in the application. This makes it difficult to find information which is a weakness of this implementation plan</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Some schools are LEAD schools and some are not, so the plan is to get the non-LEAD schools up to speed and in line with the LEAD schools. It is not clear how this will be implemented.</p> <p>A weakness of this proposal is that the timeline does not reach past 2012 and go into future application of this program.</p> <p>A lack of specific student improvement learning for all students is a weakness of this area</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This district has shown significant growth per their charts of five years. This shows language arts and math growth for five</p>		

years with a steady climb in standardized achievement scores which shows a strength in their past ability to increase performance.

Decreased achievement gaps are also noted in the data

Graduation rate is 88% which is higher than the state. This shows ability to improve graduation rates and keep them high (data from the last four years)

These pieces of the application are weakened by the lack of connecting the vision to the four key pieces from this section

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	8
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The charts clearly show the graduation rates have increased over the last four years which strengthens this area for this application</p> <p>There is a clear record of performance data and it appears to be available to all parties involved which strengthens this application</p> <p>Dropout rates have declined in the last 8 years</p> <p>There is no comment on the lowest-achieving schools in particular but total data for the district is included which shows a lack of information</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This district makes available all the personnel salaries on all levels. These are a matter of public record. The non-personnel expenditures are available upon request from the district office. All other data is available on line.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>With several specific legislation passed, this project is being implemented with successful conditions</p> <p>The strength of this score is being given due to the non profit and legislation in place that is supporting changes that will be brought by this program.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	9
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A strength of this section is that fact that an independent research and communication firm collected and tabulated anonymous responses which shows feedback from various sources. With 75% feedback from teachers and principals, that is a significant amount of input.</p> <p>Letters of support from each group are present and are strongly supportive of this application.</p> <p>This section is strongly supported by the community, education community, and parents at large which results in the score given</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Even though specific gaps are mentioned and there is a proposed solution, the solutions are not specific, such as integrating technology, but specific technology and the specific links are missing which weakens this portion of the application. Also, each school and their specific gap is not addressed and this causes some confusion about whether each gap is associated</p>		

with each school in the LEA.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	19
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The three tier pyramid is the key driving force in C(a)(i) with little more than a description of this pyramid and connecting this to specific needs for students. This section is not strong when it comes to the implementation plan</p> <p>C(a)(ii) is built around Navigation 101 software which is built to help students write goals and assess these goals with a direct connection to college readiness. Portfolios are also connecting students to their goals with a connection to adults personalizing these goals which strengthens this response</p> <p>Specific feedback to each student based on personalized goals and a connection to the community strengthens this piece</p> <p>Academic interest in each individual student is well thought out and integrated at each school.</p> <p>Ongoing feedback is a strength of this proposal with multiple ways students can access their scores and information they need to meet their goals</p> <p>Various mechanisms make this plan strong so that students have various ways to access tools, such as student support teams, trainings on the various tools</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	18
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Very specific programs for each of the sections provided great strength to this program. Each section has well thought out programs and very specific support for students, teachers, counselors, parents, and administration which leads to a strong score</p> <p>Each of the sections is broken down and spoken to directly in this application with overlap in each section to provide support.</p> <p>There is training provided to teachers and school personnel in strengthening their academic and relational support to students which shows strengths in this application, specifically HOPE, LEAD, Data Manager, and Teacher System of Support</p>		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	11
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This application is strong in breaking down very specifically the way in which this district will be organizing it's central office and providing school leadership. Each support is broken down into specific meetings, how often they will meet and specific jobs that will be hired to meet these needs. A six part plan is broken down and each part is specific to a task to support school leadership. These elements are a strong part of this application.</p> <p>D (1)(c) and (d) is weakened by non specific ways in which students will demonstrate mastery. There is no clear connection with the plan, just overarching ideas. Not bad but not specific.</p> <p>D(1)(e) Study Connection and tutors are mentioned which are good plans for connecting to schools. There is little mention of specific tactics to reach every students and ELL students.</p>		

Overall two of these sections is very strong and three are adequate but have weaknesses, which leads to my scoring in the middle range.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	6
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The lack of specifics in section (a) leave it weak and lacking information on the tools that are accessible.

Five different technological supports are listed and their function noted. No discussion of how participants utilize these is lacking and leaves this section weak

Edmodo and Pinnacle are named and various uses are listed which gives some indication of using technology systems to support students and parents.

Student information access is available and shown

Overall, this section lacks strong characteristics in section a and b and adequate information in c and d

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	9

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

This section speaks to feedback but not specifically how that will be accomplished. There is a Project Director that will be hired and responsible for getting and evaluating this feedback which would be a strength of this project to have someone specifically in charge of this feedback and sharing with everyone what is happening. Weekly Advisory meetings are scheduled. Lack of the mention of technology and its part in this section weakens the score.

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

Participants are listed with no specific ways in which this communication will take place. Lack of specific strategies weakens this score

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Measures are specific and a timeline is present but this section is lacking

Evaluation measures are in place but vague as to how they will be used and what will be done with the data when it is evaluated. Surveys and reporting are mentioned with vague connection to improvement

Breakdown of grade level expectations and percentage goals strengthens this section

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	1
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

There are a list of eleven bullets that do not integrate activities and with no strategies. Lack of information in the section leads to the low score

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Budget is complete and succinct. There are specific categories and a timeline in place for using the money allotted. Each category and each year is accounted for which leads to a strong score

Each person hired for this project implementation is accounted for each year

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

10

6

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

No specific budget is given for after the grant which weakens the response but there is a plan in place for phasing out personnel in order to sustain the program.

There is not much mention of support from state or other funding sources but rather an integration of the people funded through other avenues already in place by the district

Vague plan leads to the medium score

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	4

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

Each of these sections is present but vague. There are no specific answers to each of these questions but each answer is present which leads to a low medium score to this section

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Personalization of strategies, tools and support for each student are not as strong as they could be but all are accounted for and spoken to in this application. College and career ready standards are spoken to and accounted for in this project. Closing the achievement gap is a big part of this plan as is individualizing each student's education process. One way this application could be improved would be to strengthen the science and social studies targets in this application.

Total	210	150
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #04671N-4 for Fort Wayne Community Schools



A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant provides a compelling overview of the district, the state's largest, and how it is impacted by multiple community risk factors that promote low academic achievement and college degree attainment lagging behind the state and nation. Student demographic data confirm the district's needs and highlights the challenges such a district faces, with challenging social conditions negatively impacting student performance. Applicant demonstrates that the district is on the rebound after a prolonged cycle of academic under performance, and this grant application is part of a series of education reforms efforts begun in recent years that has led the school district to be the only urban district in the state with a state performance rating of "A." Applicant is guided by a moral purpose (that equitable access to a high-quality education is a civil right for all students) and its "Triple P" philosophy of reform (education that is personalized, precise, and enhanced through ongoing professional learning). The visionary reforms described provide a convincing re-imagining of the future of education in the district focused on personalized learning plans for all students, technology-driven education that diversifies learning, collaborative learning environments, self-paced learning options, highly effective educators and academic leaders, and expanded early childhood programs. This grant will help the applicant realize the potential of its reform vision--which has already been launched in part and requires additional funding to sustain and bring to scale existing efforts and to build on successes to provide continuous school improvement in the district's schools. Past and current reform efforts are described in detail, portraying a series of efforts, which when combined with the a 2012 Teacher Incentive Fund grant recently funded by the U.S. Department of Education, and this grant proposal, will allow the district to promote improvement across all preK-12 education and address the four core educational assurance areas of the Race to the Top (RTT) program through specifically detailed actions that set forth a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant's proposal was developed by a planning Task Force that met extensively to assess needs, identify gaps, prioritize schools, conduct teacher and parent surveys, and research effective reform models. Through the work of this Task Force, the applicant outlines well-organized and carefully detailed and clear implementation plans to guide efficient delivery of services that improve teaching and learning, promote success for all students, and ensure equity in education opportunities across the district's schools. The process used to select--and prioritize--schools to participate is clearly presented, including eligibility requirements being met collectively. A list of the schools participating is provided, as is all required information on the participating students (overall, low-income, and high-need) and participating educators.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant provides a clear direction for how this proposal will fund the next step in the district's evolution of schools from low-performing district to academic powerhouse and provides a coherent mode of reform: the scaling up of piloted strategies to reach all schools and expand reforms to focus on improving data management systems, assessment protocols, technology, and learning options for students in all grades. The district will prioritize implementation of limited capacity and targeted reforms across four levels of priority, through a multi-year, deliberate, and ongoing effort to revitalize schools by creating learning environments that value and promote achievement. Detailed timelines of each year of a five-year "Best A+ Ever" program (four years of the grant plus a post-grant year) are provided with specific well-defined activities and clearly identified responsible parties, by quarter and year, under various categories of administrative, student strategies, and educator strategies (included at the end of grant narrative and also in appendices). The timelines, combined with the narrative and key goals outlined in the application, lend significant overall credibility to the plan and include all the elements of a high-quality plan.</p>		

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant provides baseline data and five years of ambitious, yet achievable annual goals that are equal to or exceed State ESEA targets for the district, overall and by student subgroups in the areas of performance on summative assessments, decreasing achievement gaps, graduation rates, and college enrollment. Particularly robust growth is anticipated among African Americans, Asians, Hispanic, and Multi Racial subgroups, and (in the results from high school end of course exams provided in grades 9-12) over the course of the grant, due to the proposal's focus on math with the addition of STEM coaches and targeted interventions, and other efforts aimed at preparing students for college and careers. Achievements gaps are projected to decrease, particularly among Caucasian and African-American students, and Caucasian and Pacific Islander students. Graduation rates in the district have increased every year for four years, and are projected to increase, although at a diminished but realistic rate of improvement. By the end of the grant period, the applicant expects college enrollment rates to nearly double, when compared to the baseline. Taken all together, applicant has translated its vision of reform into quantifiable (and voluminous) specific annual targets in all four areas. Evaluated in the context of the rest of the application, these annual goals are convincingly ambitious and yet achievable and likely to guide the applicant's work to improve students learning and performance and increase equity in its schools.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	10
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant demonstrates that for the past few years, graduation rates and student achievement rates have improved, achievements gaps have closed, and dropout rates have declined. Graduation rates have steadily improved at an impressive rate, surpassing state averages. Applicants posted gains and outpaced state averages in every academic indicator and grade level on the 2012 state exam, receiving an overall district performance score of "A" from the State department of education for the second consecutive year. Gaps between state and district student performance in elementary and middle school math and English language arts state test scores have decreased by 40 to 67 percent. The district has also made progress in closing achievement gaps based on ethnicity, poverty, language barriers, and special education, but at a slower rate of change, with the exception of strong improvement in special education versus general education students. Dropout rates have been on a steady decline since 2005. Historical data was only provided for one year of college enrollment rates, so that gap sizes were not identified, nor trends demonstrated.</p> <p>The narrative for (B)(1) does not directly address subparts (b) and (c). However, applicant throughout the application's narrative and appendices shows ample evidence of the district's ability to develop and implement significant reform efforts in its underperforming schools--although the discussion does not specifically identify implementation in (as defined by the notice) persistently lowest-achieving schools and low-performing schools. Limited information is provided on how, through recent reforms, the applicant has specifically made student performance data (as defined in the notice) available to students, educators, and parents, although there are references to ways that such past reforms can be built on to improve participation, instruction, and services.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	4
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant demonstrates a reasonably high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments by making available on websites or by request the actual personnel salaries at the school level in the required four categories. Applicant states that it will continue to increase transparency by expanding the disclosure of salaries and compensation packages across all district employee groups and for all individuals so that, by the end of the grant period, all salaries will be publicly disclosed via multiple public communication vehicles.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

Applicant outlines the state's aggressive implementation of RTT reforms outlined in the state's unsuccessful RTT-State application, including Adoption of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and English/Language Arts and its participation in the 23-state Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) consortium. The State has also created an Office for College and Career Readiness that is responsible for standards, curriculum, and instruction for all subject areas, preK-12. A state Education Roundtable has also begun tackling the issue of college and career ready graduates.

Two 2011 statutes (establishing an annual staff performance evaluation system and limiting collective bargaining rights for all unionized school employees to matters related to salaries, wages, and benefits) have improved conditions for implementing the applicant's reform vision. Applicant also demonstrates that the state has sufficient conditions in place to be a state with a growing readiness for virtual learning. The state's reform agenda in recent years has helped create a legal and regulatory environment that promotes and encourages aggressive reforms such as the one outlined in this proposal.

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

10

10

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant has provided an extensive selection of letters of support from a very broad range of key stake holders. Partners will also provide expertise to the applicant's advisory board and serve on task forces.

The applicant's RTT Task Force was comprised of students, parents of students from all age-levels, district administrators, curriculum specialists, technology specialists, school site administrators, teachers in both common core and non-core subjects and who also worked with special populations, and community members (Mayor's office, higher education, social services agencies, businesses, and district support services). During the planing and design stages of the application, applicant contracted with an independent research and communication firm to survey, collect, and tabulate anonymous responses to an Educator Evaluation Survey from teachers and principals throughout the district. Key highlights demonstrate high educator engagement and support for the reforms being proposed, including launching and sustaining an educator evaluation system based on validated educator evaluation models.

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

5

4

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant's narrative describes how the district has embarked on a well-documented reform effort to turnaround failing, high-needs schools and promote systemic improvement yielding positive student academic outcomes. The district's collaborative assessment of needs and gaps and collective design of reform strategies focusing on validated practices has led to widespread educator buy-in and support of the core areas of the reform agenda--from college/career readiness to data systems to great teachers and leaders to improving low-improving schools. Most of the required elements of a high-quality plan can be gleaned from the narrative and appendices throughout the application, although detailed timelines with specific activities, responsible parties, and deliverables are not explicitly provided. Further evidence that this analysis occurred is found in the chart of 14 specific needs and gaps identified by the RTT Task Force that the proposal integrates and addresses throughout the narrative and appendices.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant provides a detailed plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. The plans focus on all four Core Educational Assurance Areas. After completing extensive professional development in student assessment and academic accountability mode, the applicant has developed a Pyramid for Success learning management framework that will be the center of the district's efforts to promote individualized instruction for all students across all grade levels by allowing faculty to assess individual social, emotional, and academic needs, and to connect students to learning resources, strategies, and interventions that best meet identified needs. The Pyramid includes three tiers or levels of responses that become more intensive and personalized for students as data indicates more challenge or support is needed. The district will also use Navigation 101 software to develop college and career-readiness in secondary students, guiding students in 21st century skills and assisting them in the selection of careers, occupations, and professions which best suit them. The applicant's reform will allow the district to create linkages in upper elementary and middle schools that strengthen the pathway to successful results in high

school, leading to preferred college and career outcomes. The applicant has a diverse menu of schools and classrooms to promote deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest, including magnet and theme-based schools, high ability programs programs of study, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Dual Credit, College Attendance, Distance Learning, and Online Courses. Several specific programs are highlighted to demonstrate the ways in which all students have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives, including use of digital media content, iPad pilot programming, and language study. A rich assessment suite, mostly digital, and aligned with district and State academic standards in the core subjects, is used to allow the district to align written, taught, and tested curricula to improve student learning. Applicant also details an array of available interventions to help struggling students master critical academic content and catch up with their peers.

Applicant provides detailed strategies for providing personalized sequences to enable students to achieve individual goals, graduate on time and college and career ready, and receive a variety of high-quality instructional approaches. Applicant provides ample evidence of well-developed strategies and multiple opportunities for students to have access to high-quality content, including digital, aligned with standards and graduation requirements, and to receive ongoing and regular feedback meeting the minimum requirements of the selection criteria concerning frequently updated student data and personalized learning recommendations based on student knowledge and skills. Additional supports and strategies are well outlined for high-needs students.

Mechanisms are in place at all three levels of schools in the district to support students in understanding how to use tools and resources to track and manage their learning.

By considering the exhaustive narrative detail in this section of the application with the timelines, responsible parties, deliverables, and goals outlined in other areas of the application, applicant has provided a very high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment.

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

20

20

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant provides detailed explanations and examples in the narrative and appendices of how the district will approach teaching and leading in ways that will help educators improve instruction and increase their capacity to support student progress by promoting the implementation of personalized learning and teaching for all students. The narrative in this section, when considered with the timelines and action plans detailed elsewhere in the application, provides a high-quality plan focused around a System of Support teaching improvement framework that will measure critical components of educator effectiveness. The System of Support is designed to provide professional growth opportunities to educators, which can then lead to higher student achievement. By utilizing the teaching improvement framework and student data, education will be able to design and implement effective classroom differentiated instruction to improve teaching and grouping strategies. The Pyramid for Success, the expansive assessment suite, project-based learning protocols and progress monitoring all promote frequent measurement of student progress that can then be used to inform student progress and educator practice. The proposal's plans will supplement tight general funds at the district level to provide the human capital needed by the district for data management and analysis that will inform the acceleration of student progress and educator practice. The proposal provides for staffing to ensure ongoing quality control of project data, including training and dissemination of information to educators and providing a deep understanding of data so that educators can confidently act upon it to improve individual student performance. The proposal will provide educators with the processes and tools they need to match student needs with specific resources and approaches for continuous effectiveness feedback and school improvement. A particularly detailed and high-quality plan is provided for the implementation of the summer teaching and leadership academy. A process will be designed to offer Highly Effective Teachers an incentive to teach in a low-performing school, where they would serve on a Triage Team aimed at turning the school around.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant provides evidence it will coordinate a strong management plan from the central office to ensure efficient and timely

expenditure of funds and thorough implementation of all project services. The dedicated leadership team will have supervision from the central district administrators and oversight from an Advisory Board. Each role to be filled through grant funding is outlined and described in detail with an explanation as to how each person will contribute to the implementation and success of the proposal. The plans presented constitute a strong grant management plan likely to lead to successful attainment of identified project goals, objectives, and outcomes.

Each school site has multiple leadership teams (professional learning communities, quality improvement teams, and reading leadership teams) that have the flexibility and autonomy to facilitate personalized learning. Applicant also outlines the many ways in which a student may progress, earn credits and demonstrate subject mastery in the district. The proposal also embraces strategies for giving students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery at multiple times, in multiple comparable ways. Outside the classroom, Study Connection will be a learning resource available to all students who want additional help.

In general, applicant demonstrates it has a very high level of practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning.

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

The BEST program was designed to give students, teachers faculty, and parents, equal access to services. Grant staff will encourage culturally competent and linguistically appropriate exchanges and collaborations among families, professional, students, and communities, fostering equitable outcomes and services responsive to issues of race, culture, gender, and socio-economic status.

The district's technology department has been designed to meet the technical infrastructure planning, construction, and implementation needs of the application and provides hands-on resources at each school.

The applicant supports personalized learning through various information technology systems and provides a history of technology in the district as well as details plans to create an environment based on individual logins through which students and others may access their applications and store their data from any device.

The applicant's major application systems have the capability to communicate with each other and specific examples of how that works are provided.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	9

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant provides a reasonably strong plan for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process with timely and regular feedback on progress towards goals. Both evaluator, educator, and student feedback will help project leaders align and improve services. Each school's Quality Improvement Team will convene quarterly to assess progress and identify opportunities for improvement at each site. School-level progress towards meeting goals will be shared during professional development meetings at each school, area administrators will share at weekly Advisory Board meeting, and the Board of Education will assess progress at its bi-monthly meetings. A score in the higher end of the middle range is provided.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Strategies for ongoing communication with stakeholders is detailed and involves the Project Director, the Advisory Board, site-level Quality Improvement Teams, and Area Administrators. Parents, the community and the Board of School Trustees will be updated at regular, televised board meetings, with chances for providing input. The application focuses on meetings and provides scant discussion of other means of communicating to stakeholders, especially parents and community members, who may not be directly involved in the implementation of the grant proposal.

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

District provides 15 detailed performance measures that meet the requirements set forth for measures relating to all students and specific grade bands. The measures are sufficiently ambitious and yet achievable overall and by subgroup with annual

targets. However, the applicant does not always describe its rationale for selecting specific measures it chose, or a narrative for how the measures will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to the proposed plan and theory of action, nor does it describe how it will review and improve the measures over time, if needed.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:
 Applicant details a plan to evaluate the funded activities that centers on an independent evaluation team. Evaluators will use the research-based FORECAST model to evaluate the program. Specific, objective performance measures are provided that will serve as indicators for assessing progress and as activities to determine the impact of each objective. Evaluation of each goal will include both process and outcome evaluations involving a range of evaluation methods. A detailed timeline by year of the grant for the evaluation is provided.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:
 The applicant provides a rich and detailed budget, with narrative and tables, that identifies all funds to support the project (including a federal TIF grant). The budget is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal and provides a clear and thoughtful explanation for the various investments and priorities.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:
 The budget charts provide for a fifth year of budget detail, showing the district general budget funds that will be used to continue implementation of the reforms. Such district general budget funds in year 5 will equal about 40% of the level of the federal grant request for years 1-4. Additional funds may be available through Perkins funding for additional development of standards and assessments for online and career courses. Many of the data systems/technology infrastructure, and low-performing school turnaround budget items are one-time investments. Upon completion of the four-year BEST initiative, BEST programming would be sustained through the Office of Strategic Initiatives and the Project Director's position will be absorbed in that department.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:
 Applicant describes a coherent and sustainable community partnership with the city to align school and neighborhood development activities in a project titled "School System of Choice: Promise Neighborhoods Pilot Project." The project is a continuation of neighborhood revitalization work begun by the city many years ago. Participating district schools will be retooled into magnet schools that serve the pilot community and give students and families full access to coordinated and fully integrated community and school-based early childhood, academic, health, safety, asset development, unemployment, and higher education resources.
 Nine population-level desired results are detailed at various levels of schooling. Applicant describes how it will track the selected indicators, use data to improve student results, and plan for the ability to scale the pilot to other neighborhoods. Details of how to integrate additional services into participating schools in the pilot will occur in year 1 of the grant (planning year). An assessment of needs and assets of participating students is already underway, with an assessment of the needs and assets of the schools and communities to be done during year 1 of the grant. Specific performance measures have been identified that are ambitious yet achievable.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: This is a consistently outstanding application across the various selection criteria, and it coherently and comprehensively addresses how it will build on the core educational assurance areas to promote personalized learning environments.		

Total	210	193
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0467IN-5 for Fort Wayne Community Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant provides extensive background information regarding district reform efforts that have been in progress. After creating a foundation, based upon existing practices, the applicant provides a clear and comprehensive vision for reform. The applicant provides a thorough description of how each of the four core educational assurance areas will be addressed in the district's RTTD plan. This is a strength. It is evident that the district has carefully considered all of the elements required to create effective change. The proposal provides a strong plan, aligned to the district's vision, the vision for the RTTD project, and existing practices. This is a strength in the application. As a result of the noted strengths, this section warrants a high score. 		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This section is well-written and the applicant includes a thorough description of a carefully constructed method/rubric to identify participating schools. The rubric includes components that will allow the district to identify schools that currently implement practices leading to change/reform. The district should be commended for its attention to detail in analyzing all aspects of eligibility and school performance in identifying schools that will participate in the proposed plan. The identified schools may be more likely to successfully implement the proposed plan due to their track records of best practices implementation. A list of schools, number of students, and information regarding high-need subgroups is included and comprehensive. This section warrants a high score. 		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	5

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- In this section, the applicant describes efforts to sustain reform/change created by existing programs.
- In addition, the applicant does a good job committing to sustained implementation of effective practices started through the RTTD plan.
- The weakness, in this section, is the lack of a clear plan describing how the reform efforts will be scaled up and translated into district-wide change. Based upon the history that the district has shared, it seems likely that effective practices will be scaled up, however, due to the lack of a specific plan, this section warrants a medium score.

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

10

10

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant does identify ambitious, yet achievable goals in each area.
- Performance goals are clear and allow the district to meet, and exceed, state targets. The goals seem to be carefully constructed based on an analysis of existing data.
- The goals identified do lead to a significant decrease in achievement gaps, over the course of the grant. The applicant does a good job of establishing goals for each specific subgroup, that gradually decrease the gap. For students with disabilities and ELLs, goals result in a decrease in achievement gaps, but efforts will need to continue beyond the grant period in order to completely close the gaps for those two subpopulations.
- This section is strong and warrants a high score.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	9

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- Excellent description of demonstrated evidence of success. The applicant provides data that show increasing achievement and decreasing achievement gaps over the previous four years.
- Data regarding improvement in the lowest achieving schools does not appear to be highlighted - instead, the data is presented by sub-populations or whole district compared to the State. This is a weakness in this section.
- A description of the way student performance data is made available to stakeholders does not appear to be included.
- The data are summarized in a clear, concise manner.
- This section is strong in that it includes evidence of a prior record of success, however, information regarding some of the elements in this selection criteria is missing. The section warrants a medium score.

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

5

4

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant addresses the transparency level of all four expenditure categories described in the selection criteria.
- Based upon the description provided, it seems that all information listed is available and is considered public information.
- The applicant noted the changes and increased transparency that has occurred over the past several year. In addition, the applicant adequately describes plans to increase accessibility to this information.
- The applicant describes transparency in the identified areas. Although it seems like all areas are transparent, it also seems like stakeholders would have to take specific steps to gain access to that information (rather than it being available online and easily accessible).
- This section adequately addresses current transparency and future plans for increased transparency. It warrants a high score.

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

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant provides extensive evidence that the State has created a climate, as well as specific statutory, legal and regulatory requirements to support change/reform. This climate is designed to create career and college ready graduates.
- The level of support from the State is admirable.
- This section warrants a high score.

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

10

10

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant solicited stakeholder input and summarized efforts to gather that input.
- The applicant provides evidence of support from community members as well as specific evidence of support from educators within the district.
- Given the short turn around time for the grant proposal, these efforts are admirable.
- This section warrants a high score.

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

5

3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant provides a table with identified gaps and plans to address each gap. The information provided is clear, easy to follow and aligned to the information provided in earlier sections.
- A specific description of the logic behind the proposal is not included, and as a result, this section warrants a medium score.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	20
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent description addressing all items within the selection criteria. • The applicant provides a rationale for creating personalized learning environments for all students, including providing an initial screening (for academic, social and emotional needs) for all students. This is a strength in the proposed plan. • The applicant provides extensive information about how the plan will address support for students with the greatest needs as well as how it will assist students in pursuing college and career ready goals. The plan is well-designed and thorough. • The plan includes alignment information for each specific gap identified in earlier sections. • The applicant clearly describes plans to address individual student interests using a number of strategies. In addition, the proposal includes many options for advanced study and opportunities for specific career-related study. • The applicant also addresses access to diverse cultures and diversity that exists within the district through in-depth information about many existing programs and proposed strategies. • Finally, the applicant ends by providing information about both technology-based learning resources and access to data. Both descriptions include detail that indicates the applicant has planned to provide support that meets the requirements of the RTTD selection criteria. • This section includes very detailed information about every element in the selection criteria. This is an outstanding section and warrants a high score. 		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	20
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Again, very detailed description of many efforts to ensure students have access to personalized learning environments and high quality instructors by designing professional development opportunities, leadership teams and processes for improving instruction. • The applicant does a good job describing the "how" for each item within this selection criteria . . .for example, when addressing frequent progress monitoring, the applicant describes how educators will be taught to analyze data in order 		

to improve instruction.

- The applicant includes a thorough description of the system of support in place to provide feedback, support and evaluation for both teachers and principals (and the superintendent). This is an important component in the reform effort and the applicant clearly identifies the way the district will assist its educators in continuous improvement as professionals.
- Excellent response!

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	10
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant focuses primarily on the teams or individuals that will support the RTTD plan. The proposed activities are likely to provide the level of support necessary for success, however, there is a concern that existing personnel may be stretched thin if the plans described are fully implemented. • The applicant describes ways that students can demonstrate mastery in sufficient detail. • The applicant also includes a brief description of how the district will provide appropriate resources for students with high needs. • This section adequately addresses the required items, however, some of the plans described may be unrealistic given the responsibilities of the personnel involved. • This section warrants a medium score. 		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district has a history of providing adequate infrastructure and technology to support efforts to improve as well as to provide parents, students and educators the tools necessary to access data. • The applicant indicates that interoperability exists. • This section provides a sufficient description of LEA and school infrastructure. It warrants a high score. 		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	6
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant addresses components of creating a continuous improvement process, however, a strategy specifically designed for the district does not seem to be included. • The applicant does indicate that results will be shared with the staff members and general public. • These descriptions are brief and it is difficult to evaluate whether the district's plan will be high quality due to the lack of information. • This section warrants a medium score. 		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	1
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant provides a very brief response to this selection criteria indicating that ongoing internal and external communication will occur. • This response lacks enough detail to evaluate whether the applicant has strategies identified, as a result, it warrants a low score. 		

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
(E)(3) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant provides all of the required performance measures, along with specific methodology for each measure. Some measures seem to have realistic targets that will decrease achievement gaps, however, those related to college and career readiness seem rather low. How the method will provide information to inform practice, during the grant period, is not detailed. This is a weakness in the section. The section warrants a medium rating due to the level of detail included in the performance measures and the lack of detail in addressing E3 (b) and (c). 		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	1
(E)(4) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant includes a list of indicators, but does not provide a plan to evaluate - as a result, this section warrants a low score. 		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The budget narrative provides good information regarding the rationale for each expense as well as specific information about one time expenses and sustainability of ongoing expenses. It is well-written and provides the level of detail necessary to understand the applicant's approach to implementing a plan regarding project expenses. Expenses outlined in the budget are reasonable and a high level of detail regarding line item expenses; expenses by project, and expenses by year is included. This section warrants a high score due to the level of detail and explanation provided. 		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	8
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant includes a thorough and realistic plan to sustain the efforts started in the RTTD. Source of funding for ongoing expenses is included. This section provides sufficient description of sustainability plans and warrants a high score. 		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	8
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant provides an extensive description of how each item within this selection criteria is addressed. It is unclear whether other partnerships exist (it seems like they do, based on the stakeholder support letters and the description of many existing programs). This section warrants a high score due to the high level of support but question regarding whether those partnerships in place and how they will work together. 		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant does an excellent job of providing a comprehensive plan for reform. The plan addresses all core educational assurance areas and exceeds the requirements for absolute priority 1. The applicant has developed a clear vision, aligned with the RTTD vision, and developed specific plans to address all of the components of effective reform. The applicant includes data that show a history of attention to student needs and continuous improvement. The proposed plan builds on that foundation. 		

Total	210	165
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