



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0958TX-3 for Frenship ISD

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: A.1. The applicant has set forth a achievable reform vision that reforms how students are educated across the District through a multi-faceted approach drawing upon online learning platforms; computers and mobile devices; virtual and blended learning; uniquely configured learning environments that promote collaboration and inquiry; project-based instruction which can incorporate service learning; a modified “flipped” learning model (i.e., compressed content followed by problem-solving); and additional activities aligned with learning objectives. Through this new paradigm of student participation, collaboration and critical thinking, we will build upon state adoption of core curriculum standards focused on developing skill sets for success in college and career. It will be a seamless transition to college and career. The proposed approach has the potential to intrinsically engage students in meaningful and rigorous academic learning strategically applied to real-world issues.		
(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: A.2. The applicant presents information on the target population to help demonstrates its approach to implementing its reform proposal that will support high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation of that proposal. All schools and all grades in both districts will be included in the project, including Pre-K and the Friendship alternative high school for high need students, Reese Education Center. Collectively, these schools meet the eligibility requirements for the Race to the Top District initiative. The initiative will be implemented in a manner that ensures sufficient staff and time will be given to the implementation of the proposed reconfigured classrooms and new curriculum approach, and to provide adequate professional development and supervision to all teachers, the innovations will be introduced in two phases. For example, in Year I, the proposed innovations will be implemented at the secondary school level and will include all secondary schools in both districts. In Year II, we will implement the approach in all Pre-K and elementary settings. Participating schools Year I will include Frenship Middle School, Heritage Middle School; Terra Vista Middle School; Frenship High School, Slaton Middle School, Slaton High School. Participating schools Year II will include Frenship Elementary Schools: Crestview; North Ridge; Oak Ridge; Westwind; Willow Bend; Bennett; Slaton: Cathelene Thomas Elementary; Stephen F. Austin Primary. The total number of participating students is 9305; participating students from low income families: 3732; participating students with high needs: 258; and participating educators: 924.  Weakness: The applicant does not describe a process by which it used to decide that all school in each school district in the consortium would be included in the reform initiative.		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:  A.3 The applicant demonstrates how the reform initiative will be scaled up. The consortium will contract with an institution of higher education that demonstrates curriculum and educational instructional technology expertise to assist in this process. A team of higher education experts and consortium educators will collaboratively plan, create, train and support implementation and		

evaluation of the program with school personnel. In addition, the Consortium will contract with a nationally renowned expert in the condensed classroom model. Some of the key components of the reform will include: project based learning; a compressed content, and mobile computing devices for teaching and learning; college and career readiness activities and coordination with Texas Standards; professional development; and Career and Technology Pathways. The contractor will be required to provide training and technical assistance on a regular basis with regard to curriculum planning, ongoing technical assistance, professional development, and utilization- focused evaluation. The effort is appropriate to results in student increased ability to integrate academic skills into all life situations and possess the ability to analyze, think critically, problem-solve, and produce creative solutions.

Weakness: Key activities and associated actions; a timeline; person(s) responsible; and deliverables are not specified to help ensure implementation. The information would be valuable guides to ensuring major tasks were accomplished.

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

A.4

The applicant demonstrates how the applicant's vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goals. For example, the applicant outlines some ambitious goals for performance on summative assessments in the participating schools; for decreasing achievement gaps in the targeted service area for academic performance; for increasing graduation rates; and for goals for increasing college enrollment. Goals for growth from 2013-2017 and post-grant are incrementally appropriate and achievable.

Weaknesses: The applicant does not describe a methodology by which baseline data and projected growth are calculated.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	12

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

B.1

The applicant details information to demonstrate its efforts to advance student learning and achievement within the last four years. The trend data reflects the trend of subgroup growth and performance in meeting the state's passing standard on the state assessment. For example, The trend data reflects the trend of subgroup growth and performance in meeting the state's passing standard on the test. For example as evidence, 64% on a graph for the first year of math would indicate that 64% of students in the subgroup met the state passing standard. The first year of the trend chart for math at Slaton ISD shows an achievement gap of 31 percent between the African American and white subgroups (47% compared to 78%). The most recent math test shows the gap for the same subgroups has closed to 21 percent gap – a 10% improvement. Slaton ISD's initial reading achievement gap between African American and white subgroups was 20 percent (70% compared to 90%). For spring 2012, the state assessment was changed from TAKS to a new assessment: the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR). Data is not available to extend the TAKS performance graphs into year 2012 because the STAAR test is not a comparable measure to TAKS. State proficiency data from the STAAR test for spring 2012 will not be available until January 2013. Consortium districts utilize a transparent approach to data dissemination. Each parent of a secondary student receives a personal planning and review session in the spring and summer of each year. This model is scheduled for implementation at each elementary campuses as progress allows. Student data is also shared with each student both privately and together with parent/guardian. Each stakeholder is allowed to contribute to the planning of enrichment or support that each student will receive the upcoming year. There is also continuous formative data that is discussed periodically with parents and students. Friendship ISD teachers meet with every parent individually during the month of October. The conferences are formally scheduled to begin immediately following the end of the first grade reporting period. The conference includes current student progress academically and behaviorally.

Weakness: The applicant does not elaborate on areas where there is a decline in proficiency.

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

B.2

The applicant demonstrates increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments. The consortium districts follow the legal, statutory and regulatory requirements in their district work of educating students. Both districts are part of the Texas school funding system where a large portion of school funds are generated from the local property tax effort. These are property taxes paid by residents and businesses which are established within the district geographic boundaries. This circumstance makes transparency of financial information a high priority for both districts. The district website serves as one manner that the information is made available. In accordance with local, state and federal requirements, the following information is made public: Federal grant Awards totaling more than \$25,000 ; Notice of a School Board Meeting; Agenda for a School Board Meeting; posting of vacant positions; School Board Employment Policies -Evaluation of State Compensatory Education' nnual Financial and Compliance Reports; Performance Rating of the District; and a Summary of Proposed Budget and Post Adopted Budget.

Weakness: The applicant does not provide information that indicates how the consortium District make available to the public actual personnel salaries for teachers, instructional staff, and support staff by building.

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

B.3

The applicant presents evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy requirements to implement the personalized learning conditions. Both districts follow the legal, statutory and regulatory requirements in their district work of educating students. The conditions and autonomy in the environment of both districts represent an atmosphere of freedom within the parameters of state and federal laws, school board policies and guidelines associated with the Texas Education Code and the Texas personalized learning environments in both districts. The environments in both districts currently allow for innovation for personalized learning. One example of this freedom and autonomy is demonstrated through the Frenship Superintendent Select Program. The district identified the top ten percent of students in each class. Then, with parent permission, the district scheduled the students into 8th grade English classes where the curriculum adds content and strategies to prepare students for the PSAT and SAT college admissions tests. The students are identified as Superintendent Select participants. They are receiving instruction in the state curriculum, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. The proposal creates an opportunity for students to progress individually through lesson content at their own pace through software providing content acquisition at the level of knowledge and comprehension.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	8
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

B.4

The applicant demonstrates meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal and meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal. Students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members and group from participating schools were involved during the planning process through meetings. For example, starting last Spring and continuing into early October of this year, the process progressed from one of considering models and planning for change to one of mutual decision-making and development of a proposal for a consortium proposal. Research indicates school-community partnerships can be successful, provided there is willingness to cooperate and learn from each other, and this is the spirit and approach embraced by all involved in our respective small communities. Letters of support from the community and school supporters are provided. collective bargaining

Weakness: The applicant does not specifically elaborate on teacher involvement, with a collective bargaining or without collective bargaining representation, to help demonstrate evidence of direct engagement and support for the proposal from teachers.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

B.5

The applicant describes the process by which it used to identify gaps in current processes and practices of providing student instruction and support. The analysis of consortium needs began in January 2011 when each school district initiated a series

of school and neighborhood meetings as well as sessions with business partners and civic organizations with the aim of not only assessing needs in their respective communities, but also bringing the communities into closer contact with the effort to reform curriculum. Parents and teachers expressed concern about the new Texas rigorous standards and the related standardized tests ("State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness or STAAR"). They wanted curriculum to correspond to the new assessments, with particular concern for how the new tests and methods would affect students with high need. This recognition aligns with the core elements of the reform initiative. These areas are likely to be impacted by implementing the initiative.

Weakness: More detail is needed on how the applicant intends to analyze internal services to determine gaps and weaknesses.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

C.1

The applicant outlines a strong plan for improving learning and teaching. For example, to help students *understand the key to their success, the initiative will transform* classroom learning environments where students will be engaged in personalized learning through content delivery software. The software will provide continual formative assessment and feedback on individual progress. Student learning objectives will be individualized and communicated in order for students to understand the goal for their learning.

To promote learning and *development linked to college and career success, and students learning to structure learning, the applicant will ensure* the newly adapted Texas Core Curriculum standards for kindergarten through 12th grade are in alignment with the Common Core standards. The standards are designed for college and career readiness and college and career graduation standards. The standards were designed to prepare students to be ready to take credit-bearing courses. In addition, the standard emphasizes critical thinking, problem solving and skills needed in the 21st century work force. In addition, the Consortium, with the assistance of the Work Keys Assessment, teachers will be able to align instruction with employment skills required in authentic settings. These efforts are appropriate, as students will gradually become more proficient in posing questions and generating solutions that allow them to proceed to the next level of understanding, and then applying and reporting their findings.

*Teachers will guide students through cues in posing their own questions in project-based applications. No limitations will be placed upon the breadth or depth to which students can go in their searches. By design, students will pursue applications that most interest them in the project and service based lesson. Groups will be assembled according to interests in specific questions. Mastering content, and developing skill Such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving, will occur* at the individual classroom level. Teachers will use cues to guide students in the process of collaborating to form the questions they will pursue in order to complete an assignment, determine how to access the information, analyze it, synthesize it with other sources, evaluate its validity, and decide how to demonstrate the results by the end of each class module.

Additionally, both districts work collaboratively with families, starting with an open house in each school at the beginning of the school year. Throughout the student's tenure in the school district, parents, teachers, and administrators work as a team on behalf of the student. During the first phase of each unit, students will engage in personalized standards based learning through content delivery software which continually provides formative assessment and feedback on individual student progress. The content is based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills curriculum. The instructional pace will be determined by individual student success on each readiness standard. The will help ensure a personalized sequence is being utilized.

*Further, a variety of high-quality approaches and environments will be used in the initiative.* Involvement in collaborative learning shows results consistent with information processing theory: making internal connections among new ideas; making external connections between new ideas and previous learning; organizing learning in meaningful ways; enhancing encoding and retrieval skills. In addition to the variety of experience offered through the online learning platforms and group problem-solving model, the Consortium will apply multiple approaches including: Dual enrollment classes with local colleges; high school to college transition activities including college fairs and tours of campuses; GEN TX, a statewide initiative to mobilize communities to encourage students to attend college, with tuition and fee waivers for students; Service-Learning opportunities that help to reinforce student feelings of self-efficacy and self-agency. Elementary school students' attending their classes,

hosted for the day at the Lubbock Christian University campus.

Both Districts have adopted a viable curriculum system across all core content areas which provide alignment of objectives that progress seamlessly from kindergarten to twelfth grade to demonstrate use of high quality content in the initiative. This will likely reduce the chance that objectives are missed or lack appropriate depth in each grade. This resource will provide the teachers with instructional focus explanations, critical vocabulary, and possible learning misconceptions.

Opportunities for ongoing and *regular feedback will be addressed through frequently updated individual student data*. For example, content delivery software will provide immediate benchmark data that focuses on individual student progress and growth. Formative assessment and end-of-unit quizzes through the software provide timely reports to the teacher, which aid in the Response to Intervention placement and implementation. This is also appropriate for Teachers to also identify areas where students are accelerating through content knowledge and enrichment models.

*Accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students will be met through the implementation of the Response to Intervention process*. A student support team and parents are called together to review student data, response to attempted interventions in the classroom, and prepare an individual plan for additional interventions that is very focused to specific student needs. Staff responsible for delivering the interventions is identified along with the resources to be used.

*Mechanisms to provide training and support to students help them understand tools and resources to track and manage their learning are appropriate and will likely impact student learning and achievement*. The school media specialists and teachers, in consultation with a college/university contractor, will develop a scope and sequence for training students in the use of devices and software. The training of teachers will include instructions for how to help students interpret software feedback.

The overall plan is of high-quality for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. This plan is also a solid plan containing instructional strategies for all participating students that is likely to have impact on their learning.

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

C.2

The applicant outlines a strong plan for improving teaching and leading to improve instruction and increase their capacity to support student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements by enabling the full implementation of personalized learning and teaching for students. This is evidenced by a structure to provide personalized professional development for educators presented in the proposal.

The proposal incorporates a transformation in classroom instruction to help support an effective implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies that meet each student's academic needs and help ensure all students can graduate on time and college- and career-ready. First, students will be engaged in personalized standards based learning through content delivery software which continually provides formative assessment and feedback on individual student progress. The content will be based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills curriculum, and students will manage their own progress toward goals, and the immediate feedback will provide individual incentive and relearning opportunities

Efforts to adapt content and instruction, providing opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks, in response to their academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches is innovative and appropriate. This will occur during a second phase whereby upon completion of the content module for the first portion of a day's lesson, the students will enter phase two of the lesson involving collaboration, exploring curiosity, communication and context of the same learning objectives. Classrooms will be arranged for collaboration and computer and tablet use. Each workstation facilitates collaboration and utilization of technological interface.

Student progress will be frequently measured through a variety of means. First, content delivery software will provide immediate benchmark data that focuses on individual student progress and growth. This is a feasible and useful ways that provide immediate feedback to individual students on their progress. Additionally, formative assessment and end-of-unit quizzes through the software will provide timely reports to the teacher, which will likely aid in the Response to Intervention placement and implementation. Teachers will also likely be able to identify areas where students are accelerating through content knowledge and thus design intentional enrichment models. Secondly, application and exploration of content will be measured through rubrics which include collaboration criteria, research technique and depth, and communication expectations appropriate for the grade level.

The proposed reform plan will help improve teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness by using feedback provided by the LEA's teacher and principal evaluation systems, including frequent feedback on individual and collective effectiveness, as well as by providing recommendations, supports, and interventions as needed for improvement. This will occur through an updated teacher evaluation system for the 2013-2014 school years. Teacher evaluations will consist of multiple walkthrough

observations of 3 to 10 minutes along with at least one long observation (approximately 45 minutes) during one lesson. Feedback will be given during each walkthrough utilizing electronic delivery providing immediate feedback and suggestion for teachers. Additionally, more in depth and rich feedback will be provided using a comprehensive formative evaluation provided immediately after the long observation. The campus administrator and the teacher will conference to provide feedback on effective strategies that were observed, incorporate self-reflection, and include action plans for improvement.

All participating educators will have access to, and know how to use, tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready graduation requirements. Those resources include materials, technology, and additional learning time provided to remediate individual weaknesses. Members of the consortium will continue to utilize the Work Keys assessment, which is aligned to career skills. The data will be utilized by educators to identify and improve areas of weakness and expand upon strengths identified. Student progress and achievements are measured against college- and career-ready state standards.

Further, through a weekly professional learning team, grade level and same-course teachers will share best practice experiences among the teachers. Teachers search for and prepare optimal learning resource materials as well as the methods for delivery of application experiences. The teachers establish learning outcomes and measure those against the college and career ready standards for the grade and subject area. The selection of application experiences enables student choice to go further in depth with their interests. This is a clear demonstration of actionable information that helps educators identify optimal learning approaches that respond to individual student academic needs and interests.

Learning resources are evaluated through selection committees at each district. Both print and digital resource samples are measured against several areas. State curriculum expectations, rigor comparisons of state assessments, and compatibility with college- and career-ready standards are measures for which each instructional content resource is scrutinized. Those materials that attain the highest quality standard are then recommended for adoption by each LEA's local school board. Each member of the consortium has established effective and efficient processes that assist in the selection and validation of resources.

A standard process is in place for the selection of learning resources and instructional tools that allow for matching student needs with specific resources and approaches to provide continuously improving feedback about the effectiveness of the resources in meeting student needs. Periodic data reviews are scheduled to ensure that the programs are being utilized and student-centered focus is maintained by breaking down progress by state standards.

All participating school leaders and school leadership teams have training, policies, tools, data, and resources that enable them to structure effective learning environments that meets individual student academic needs and accelerates student progress through common and individual tasks toward meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements. For example, professional development needs are considered in the spring and summer months prior to the coming school year. The teams base their needs assessments on reviews of student performance, trends in instructional weak areas as determined by administrator observations of classrooms, and planned innovations to enhance classroom instruction. School leadership teams allocate campuses resources to develop focused plans to increase teacher effectiveness and target individual student academic needs.

Individual formative assessments are embedded in digital content. Teachers will apply interventions with individual students or small groups. Reports of student progress will create time for remediation to occur within the same class period rather than a day or so later. This is a sufficient manner to measure student performance against college and career ready objectives at each grade level and subject. This is an appropriate way for districts to utilize the professional development opportunities to improve the capacities and structure of a more effective learning environment.

Training, systems, and practices to continuously improve school progress toward the goals of increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps is evidenced by intentions are to provide timely response during the school year to address identified needs. Training for staff should be timely to address identified needs as determined through data. Data sources that impact training topics are monitored regularly in both districts. The disaggregated data includes subgroup performance results by ethnicity, economically disadvantaged status, Limited English Proficient and Special Education populations. School administrators and teachers continually monitor student successes and struggles with the taught objectives and monitor instructional strategies demonstrated by the teachers.

The applicant has a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals. Use of comprehensive evaluations which include provision of formative feedback is designed to contribute to educator and student growth and serve as a means to ensure that every year, district teachers and principals meet criteria as either effective or highly effective with regard to student growth.

#### D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

D.1

The applicant describes appropriate practices and rules to help demonstrate it has a plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student the support and resources needed. The applicant reports that the West Texas Consortium governance will enable the management and organization of grant activities to provide systems of coordination and quality assurances. This model includes a first step as identifying instructional goals and objectives. The model continues with steps to refine process and outcome evaluations resulting in improved instructional practices and student performance. The proposal includes a Project Coordinator to be employed in each district. Financial supports would be provided with the proposed single position of Administrative Coordinator. This position would reside in the Frenship ISD central office and would serve as the financial resource for both districts.

Both districts in the consortium follow Texas (BQB Legal) state and local policies regarding school leadership teams as evidenced by the statutes described. For example,

- The District shall maintain policies and procedures to ensure that effective planning and site-based decision making occur at each campus to direct and support the improvement of student performance for all students. Texas Education Code 11.253(a)

- A principal shall regularly consult the campus-level committee in the planning, operation, supervision, and evaluation of the campus educational program. Texas Education Code 11.253(h); and

- In accordance with the administrative procedures established under Texas Education Code 11.251(b), the campus-level committee shall be involved in decisions in the areas of planning, budgeting, curriculum, staffing patterns, staff development, and school organization. Texas Education Code 11.251(d)

The policy information described provides the flexibility and autonomy of each participating school to implement objectives of this proposal.

Both Frenship ISD and Slaton ISD follow Texas state and local policies regarding the opportunity for students to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery. In keeping with the policies, the criteria for demonstrated mastery has been approved by both district's board of trustees and there is no reference to a time requirement for students to progress. Three policies required by Texas Education Code related to mastery and academic acceleration are stated as evidence.

The proposal includes content delivery, feedback and assessment utilizing technology resources. This would serve as one avenue of demonstrated student learning. Other methods for students to show mastery will occur through the research and communication of findings which surround the content objectives. Students will collaborate about their areas of interest within the context of the learning objectives. Students are empowered to make choices in their depth of research and the manner that they choose to communicate their learning to their peers.

The proposal enhances opportunities for communication through technology and individualized learning. For example, the mobile technology devices would enable an English learner to make audio and video recordings of teacher instruction. For students with disabilities, the content delivery provides ongoing formative assessment within the session. The districts will determine software resources and online resources appropriate to student level. Student interactions and feedback within collaborative groups will drive common understandings of the content. The result is every student in the group benefits from efforts.

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

D.2

The applicant describes Local Education Agency and school infrastructure that are feasible to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure and provide every student the support and resources needed. The proposal includes infrastructure expansion in both districts to accommodate multiple devices and tools. The mobile device kiosk plan allows for efficient technology availability for each student when they need this resource. All students will be able to pull a device from the kiosk and have access to resources on an equal basis. Both districts will seek access opportunities to allow every student who need tools and resources beyond the school day to have access regardless of income. The proposal includes opportunities for student mentors from Texas Tech University to serve as supports and tutors for students both in and out of school. In addition, parents, community and civic organizations and businesses have offered to provide volunteers as evidenced by by Letters of Support in Appendix F. The proposal includes the addition of one technical support specialist at

each district. This position adds to the technical support efforts in each district. This type of support would allow for assistance beyond the levels currently available in the districts. Time for assistance in schools for technical support on site would increase with the added position. The response time to address technology issues would be reduced, enabling more time for learning as accessed with technology resources and tools. The districts will be utilizing resource systems such as iStation, Think Through Math, Read 180 and iLearn. These resources allow students to access the programs for use outside of the school setting. Student performance levels and education progress are allowed to continue just as it would if accessed during the school day. Reports for status and results will address learning objectives that can be associated with learning objectives priorities in other electronic learning systems. The districts in the Consortium are described as having student information systems that include human resources data, student information data, budget data, and instructional improvement data. Both districts utilize data systems in accordance with the Texas public education information access and management system standards. This system likely requires each district to standardize data management in each area for state reporting purposes. Inclusion of appropriate stakeholder (i.e., all students, parents, educators and community and civic), the availability of technology and interoperable data systems will ensure student academic needs are met and that the proposed initiative is conducive to meeting the instructional needs of educator; thus creating a personalized learning environment to increase student learning and achievement. Efforts will also ensure students are college and career ready.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: E. 1 The applicant outlines a strong continuous improvement plan that provides timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements. The process is evidenced by clearly defined graphical illustration. A utilization-focused evaluation approach that includes both process and outcome evaluation will be used by the Consortium. Process evaluation will determine the extent to which the components are implemented and outcome evaluation will focus on the degree to which the outcomes are met. Additionally, informal formative review of progress will be conducted by project staff in an ongoing manner throughout the duration of the project. The Consortium Management Team will meet at least once a week during the first three months of the project and once a month at a minimum thereafter, and always on an as-needed basis. The Project Coordinators from each district and the college/university contractor will meet with school staff at least weekly to review project progress and incorporate informal feedback into continuous program improvements. In addition, they will keep logs monitoring the implementation of the project, problems and challenges along the way and changes or additions made to the model. These activities are appropriate in a continuous improvement process and efforts to ensure students are achieving.		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: E.2 The applicant describes a thorough system of communication and engagement. As noted the Consortium will implement procedures for informal formative review of progress in an ongoing manner through the use of weekly staff meetings with Consortium staff and the college/university contractor for purposes of incorporating informal feedback into continuous program improvements. Improvements will focus on individual teaching strategies as well as, project-wide course corrections. Beyond the communication and engagement strategies with internal stakeholders, the Consortium also has a plan in place for continual two-way communication with other constituents, including parents, civic organizations, business partners, nonprofits, and community members who do not have children in the schools. The proposed plans are evidenced by Table E-2, to include Open-Ended Surveys at All Transparency Events; Current Open-Door Policy; Project Team meetings Held in all schools; Informal Surveys; Parent Conferences.  Weakness: The applicant does not describe the employment of multiple outreach methods to ensure ongoing communication and engagement such as District TV segments, use of a District Website; the use of bi-monthly district-wide newsletter, or the use of social media (i.e., Facebook and Twitter).		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

E.3

The applicant outlines ambitious and achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup, with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures. Performance measures are aligned with achievement and performance on teacher evaluation and state assessments.

Weakness: The applicant presents information that shows no change in increasing rates from the 2011-12 (baseline data year) to the 2012-13 (the first projected growth year) on many performance measures. No information is presented explaining why no growth is expected.

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

E.4

The applicant outlines a focused plan to evaluate the effectiveness of its investments. As evidenced in a clearly defined chart, In addition to the Process Evaluation described in E.1., the West Texas Consortium, in conjunction with a college/university contractor, will conduct a Summative Evaluation. Data for the final evaluation of the project will come from several sources, including pre-test, post-test data, formative assessments, specific historical controls comparison assessments, and a summative product evaluation. The final product will include results of outcomes, but will also provide cost analysis, analysis of cause and effects, application of ethical, professional and research standards and the educational significance of the initiative. The Consortium and contractor will also conduct a Return on Investment Evaluation as described in Table E. 4, where outcomes for years 1-4 will be quantitative and qualitative data-based information to be used in ongoing improvements in structures, procedures and programs; show institutional change based on demonstrated results; and show best use of human and financial resources in prioritizing & institutionalizing improvements. Proposed evaluations are adequate to determine the impact and success of the initiative and demonstrate academic progress of students. Evaluation results will also allow for opportunities to adjust the initiative activities as needed.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>F.1</p> <p>The applicant has requested the designate mount, \$2,064,0823.00 The Consortium proposes to completely redesign lesson structure and delivery through a combination of professional development and appropriate evaluations for all levels of educators; reconfiguring student workspaces; acquisition of computers and mobile computing devices for students; upgrading building infrastructures; and ongoing formative evaluation with built-in feedback loops for continuous instructional improvements and course corrections where necessary. The efforts are sufficient and will likely impact teacher capacity and improve learning among students. The proposed costs are necessary for the scope and scale of this redesign to be effective for all students, including those with high need. The Budget has been organized under four Projects: Purchase Equipment; Training Educators; Student Instruction; and Evaluation. The applicant provides an adequate non-federal match for the project. Further, information is presented in a manner to justify the inkind/non-federal sources and related expenses to include descriptions and cost calculations. A description of all of the funds that the applicant will use to support the implementation of the proposal, including total revenue from these sources are reasonable to support the initiative are described in detail and are adequate. One-time investments that will help sustain personalized environment in future years for all students are explicitly described.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

F.2

The applicant outlines thorough measures to sustain the project. Once the project is operational, many components will be self-sustaining. It can be seen that the amount budgeted for the project diminishes by the fourth year due to several factors: Infrastructure is in place; Major equipment has been purchase; All educators have been trained; Staff time devoted to project at no cost will continue, e.g., Administrative time, existing technology specialists, and Online learning platforms provided by the state. After the completion of the grant, these one-day sessions will eventually be absorbed into the routine sessions offered by the school districts at the beginning of each school year at no extra cost to either school district. In addition, teachers trained in the new approach will serve as role models for new teachers. In this way, there will be perpetual continuation of the condensed content/reconfigured/project-based model. Furthermore, applicants being considered for teaching positions will be screened and only those amenable to the districts' model will be selected. Support from State and local government leaders and financial support are demonstrated as each school district will continue to contract for the infrastructure that makes the learning model possible. Likely, they will periodically phase in equipment replacement on an as-needed basis. All technology personnel in both districts will be cross-trained in servicing the equipment to the proficiency level of the project technology specialists. Thus, they could step in if these individuals did not continue in their roles.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The District meets the Competitive Priority. From the beginning stages of planning for a West Texas Consortium proposal, an important component of the process has been the broad-based involvement of the communities: parents, neighborhood volunteers; civic groups; local employers; churches; social service agencies; corporate partners. Not only did they provide input in the planning process, they also stepped up and offered to help in the delivery of an integrated approach that went beyond classroom learning. Thus, the foundational relationships built during the planning stage will be the basis on which the applicant can build a structure of integrated services that extend beyond the traditional classroom walls. Coherent and sustainable partnerships is evidenced thorough community volunteer, business, and professional services resources being integrated into the multi-dimensional model proposed. As evidenced Appendix F contains letters are presented from volunteers, community organizations, and professional service providers who will be contributing to the project. Fusing community and school resources will add up to more than the sum of its parts; thus desired results in the development of a sense of agency and improved student learning. Throughout the training for this project, teachers and administrators will receive formal training as well as coaching with regard to specific innovators introduced in this project. In addition, existing policies and procedures for identifying and meeting the needs of specific students are evidenced in Section D. Processes will be maintain such as data on student performance on state assessments being routinely tracked and reported by the Consortium members, as is data on college enrollment, numbers of absences, disciplinary referrals, and parents involved with school activities. It will be possible to disaggregate this information for the students who have participated in each of the activities. As part of the counseling process, students and families will self-report on their perceptions of the value of participation in the counseling process.

Weakness: The applicant states Prior data is insufficient with regard to tracking purposes ,and that it will report initial results as baseline data. No explanation is provided to support this statement.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score

Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Absolute Priority</p> <p>The applicant has presented a reform initiative that will build on the core educational assurance areas as a personalized learning environment is implemented. The initiative concentrates on improving teaching and individual student achievement through the provision of a rigorous course of study focused on: accelerating and deepening each student's learning, critical thinking and problem solving; development of collaboration skills; introduction of reconfigured classrooms; and phasing in a learning paradigm which build on a students' interests. Furthermore, these innovations have shown promising results in decreasing achievement gaps among students with high need. The initiative is comprised of a multi-faceted approach drawing upon online learning platforms; computers and mobile devices; virtual and blended learning; uniquely configured learning environments that promote collaboration and inquiry; project-based instruction which can incorporate service learning; a modified "flipped" learning model (i.e., compressed content followed by problem-solving); and additional activities aligned with learning objectives.</p>		

Total	210	190
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0958TX-4 for Frenship ISD

### A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant articulates a reform vision of utilizing the transformational model to improve teaching and individual student achievement through the provision of a rigorous course of study focused on: *accelerating and deepening each student's learning, critical thinking and problem solving; development of collaboration skills; introduction of reconfigured classrooms; and phasing in a learning paradigm which build on a students' interests. Furthermore, these innovations have shown promising results in decreasing achievement gaps among students with high need.*

The Applicant plan is based on a multi-faceted approach drawing upon online learning platforms; computers and mobile devices; virtual and blended learning; uniquely configured learning environments that promote collaboration and inquiry; project-based instruction which can incorporate service learning; a modified "flipped" learning model (i.e., compressed content followed by problem-solving); and additional activities aligned with learning objectives.

The proposed academically rigorous, intensive curriculum approach will be an ongoing process of planning for, implementing, and evaluating within the context of the Texas academic standards frame for college and career readiness. The primary means for accomplishing project objectives will be through project-based learning within a re-configured teaching/facilitating/learning setting.

The Applicant states that their project goals, objectives and means of implementation are based on a logic model congruent with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs whereby each stage of development is built upon a previous foundation. To support this claim the Applicant provides an evidence matrix in the index which provides evidence for proposed solutions and also provides diagram of their logic model that depicts how they plan to address readiness to learn, thinking outside of the box, and self fulfilment.

The Applicant has not comprehensively and coherently provided a reform vision that builds on its work in four core educational

assurance areas as defined in this notice (i.e. Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy; Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals with data about how they can improve instruction; Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and Turning around lowest-achieving schools).

Although the Applicant does describe activities for accelerating student achievement and deepening student learning, the Applicant does not clearly explain how their vision relates to the four core educational assurance areas, including a clear and credible approach to accelerating their vision.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant' approach to selecting participating schools includes a two-phase process that will include all LEA high and middle schools in year one and all elementary schools in year two, ultimately including all schools. This process is based on the Applicant's stated desire of adequately providing sufficient staff and time to implement reconfigured classrooms and new curriculum approaches, and to provide adequate professional development and supervision to all teachers. The Applicant did not comment on their process to ensure that the participating schools collectively meet the competition's eligibility requirements.

The Applicant does provide a list of the schools that will participate in grant activities. The data table provided shows the total number of participating students; however, the column on the data table for participating students from low-income students in LEA or Consortium is blank for listed schools. the same is true for the column requesting the total percentage of LEA or Consortium Low Income Population. In both instances, in the total column numbers and percentages are listed. This appears to be an omission for which the Applicant offers no explanation. The Applicant provides numbers of participating students who are high needs and the total number of participating educators.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	6
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant does not present a high quality plan because the Applicant does not provide key goals, timelines, and persons responsible. The Applicant provides activities, that include a "*shift to the new teaching and learning paradigm, with accompanying reconfiguration of work spaces to allow for collaborative, project-based learning*", including the following:

1. Project-Based Learning- An approach to teaching and learning whereby students explore real-world problems and challenges
2. Compressed Content Learning, and Mobile Computing Devices for Teaching and Learning- An approach consists of "*allowing students to access basic facts and foundational understanding in advance of a school day which is then filled with hands-on, student-directed and teacher-facilitated learning*"
3. Kiosk Check-Out of Mobile Computing Device- allows students who do not have access to computers or mobile computing devices to use their ID cards to "check out" a mobile computing device for a specific period of time
4. Innovative, Customized Group Workstations- School computers would be arranged in differentiated configurations based on student age and the specific content areas
5. Professional Development- Training provided to students and teachers to facilitate project- and service-based learning, "flipped" instruction, and enriched learning experiences
6. College and Career Readiness Activities/Coordination with Texas Standards- Use the State College Readiness Standards (EPIC, 2008), a multi-level framework that focuses on subject matter as well as knowledge and skills that students need for entry-level college courses
7. Career and Technology Pathways- Use will be made of the WorkKeys Skill Assessment which helps educators align instruction with employment skills that are required in the real world (ACT, 2006).
8. Coordination with Community and University/College Contractor- The contractor will be required to provide training and technical assistance on a regular basis with regard to curriculum planning, ongoing technical assistance, professional development, and utilization-focused evaluation.
9. Contract with National Experts in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning- Contact experts for annual training in re-designing learning environments and methods for the classroom of the future

Although the Applicant list nine activities, the Applicant did not clearly explain how tying all of these activities together would result in district wide reform. It is important to note that explaining how these activities are tied together in terms of timelines for implementation, and clear plans for and implementation process would further support LEA wide reform. Elements of a high quality plan (i.e. key goals, timeline, persons responsible, deliverables) are missing , with the exception of activities; and the activities provided do not fully address how the overall reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools.

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

The Applicant did not provide narrative describing this criteria which would be beneficial in clarifying how the Applicant's vision would result in improved student learning and performance and increased equit as demonstrated by ambitious and achievable goals. It is not clear as to the extent to which the Applicant's vision is likely to result in improved student lerning and performance and increase equity. The Applicant's did not clearly articulate how ambitious or achievable annual goals would be equal to or exceed State ESEA targets for the LEAs.

The Applicant did provide data charts that appear to have appropriate data. The data charts did appear to contain the information required in sub criteria (a) through (d) and meet the requirements for 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	13

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant adequately described how each LEA has demonstrated evidence of a clear record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement. Examples include tracking performance of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), which provides trend data of student performance in reading and math, reflecting subgroup growth and performance in meeting the State's passing standard on the test.; the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) is a new State assessment (data currently not available); and Response to Intervention Model for student performance improvement uses performance data to track students struggling with learning objectives. The Applicant reports that for the most recent TAKS math test shows the subgroups gap has closed to 21 percent gap – a 10% improvement. Slaton ISD's initial reading achievement gap between African American and white subgroups was 20 percent (70% compared to 90%). The gap reflected by the most recent reading test is only 4 percent (87% compared to 91%) for the two subgroups.

To achieve ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools the Applicant described how they adopted a curriculum across all content areas which allows for seamless alignment of objctives k-12. The Applicant states that thisvertically aligned system consistency of learning expectations among teachers in the same grade level and across subject areas; however, the Applicant does not clearly explain how this reform affects its persistently lowest-achieveing schools.

The Applicant described the LEAs process for making student performance data available to students, educators, and parens in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction and services. The Applicant states that LEA utilizes a transparent approach to data dissemination, allowing parents of secondary students to receive a personal planning and review session in the spring and summer of each year. The Applicant states that student data is also shared with each student both privately and together with parent/guardian; however, the Applicant does not clearly describe how, when, and where this process of data sharing occurs nor how the information is used to inform and improve instruction.

The Applicant provided graphs to demonstrate both school districts performance on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

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

The Applicant did not clearly describe their high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments, including making public, by school, actual school level expenditures for instruction, support, and administration. The Applicant provided examples of general information that is available including school board minutes, annual finance compliance reports, and summary of proposed and adopted budgets.

The minimum information required for this criteria including making available the school level expenditures from State and local funds of actual personnel salaries for all school level instructional and support staff; actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff; and actual personnel salaries at the school level for teachers only. The Applicant did provide a few examples of actual non-personnel expenditures the school such as grant awards, sample of a school report card, and costs of metered amounts for electricity, water, and natural gas.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	6
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant states that the LEA complies with all district and state laws governing school operations; however, the Applicant explained that these parameters allow flexibility and autonomy to implement LEA Superintendent Select Program. One example provided was when the district identified the top ten percent of students in each class. Then, with parent permission, the district scheduled the students into 8th grade English classes where the curriculum adds content and strategies to prepare students for the PSAT and SAT college admissions tests. Over all Applicant provided inadequate details and limiting supporting evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy for personalizing students' learning environments.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	6
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant described stakeholder engagement including parents, students and alumni, neighborhood residents, school business partners, civic organizations who attended planning meetings and provided input in the development of the proposal. The Applicant described how each school district in the Consortium began this process independently, but as a result of connections made through the local Texas Tech University Teacher Education Council, each became aware of the synergies that could be achieved by working together. The Applicant provided documentation for the district meetings which appears in Appendices B, & C;

Although the Applicant provided signatures from the Mayor, and the Superintendent, there was not a signature from a union representative. Letters of support from stakeholders appear in Appendix F. Stakeholder letters of support include letters from the PTA president, civic organizations, the County Commissioners, and elected officials.

However, there were no letters of support from student representatives, institutions of higher learning, and the business community. This omission is significant because the Applicant included student participation and partnerships with institutions of higher education as important components in their reform efforts.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	2
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant did not provide a high-quality plan (i.e. key goals, timelines, persons responsible, deliverables) for an analysis of the Applicant's current status in implementing personalized learning environments. The Applicant did not adequately address the logic behind their reform proposal, including specifically identified needs and gaps that the plan will address. The Applicant described how stakeholders met and as result of these meetings, developed a list of needs and strengths, but did not clearly explain how these lists of needs and strengths connect to the requirements for this criteria.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	12

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant did not provide a high quality plan for this criteria because the Applicant did not provide key goals, supporting activities, timelines, persons responsible and deliverables. The plan presented for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning

environment focused on classroom learning environments where students engaged in personalized learning through content delivery software. The software will provide continual formative assessment and feedback on individual progress. Student learning objectives will be individualized and communicated in order for students to understand the goal for their learning.

Although the Applicant discussed college and career readiness activities and strategies such as Work Keys Assessment, and the alignment of common core standards designed for college and career readiness and college and career graduation standards; the Applicant did not adequately describe how they plan to identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college- and career-ready standards and understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals.

The Applicant did not adequately explain how students are able to be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest; and did not provide examples to support their claim that students have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning.

The Applicant provided adequate support for how they plan to help students master content; however, the Applicant did not adequately detail how they plan to help students develop skills such as Goal-Setting, Teamwork, Perseverance, Critical Thinking, Communication, Creativity, and Problem-Solving. For example, the Applicant discussed Response to intervention (RTI) but did not adequately explain how RTI would provide accommodations and high quality strategies for high need students to help ensure that they are on track toward meeting college and career ready standards.

Although the Applicant provided activities for the remaining components of this criteria and included examples, the information presented did not reflect a high quality plan (i.e. key goals, timelines, persons responsible, deliverables) for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	11
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant does not provide a high-quality plan (i.e. key goals, timelines, persons responsible, deliverables) 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 Applicant does not include key goals, timelines, persons responsible, and deliverables. The Applicant described a variety of activities rather than goals to address this criteria. Some examples include:

1. Professional learning communities as part of their ongoing teacher collaboration.
2. Online learning environment for content delivery, utilizing software which continually provides formative assessment and feedback on individual student progress
3. Rigorous and relevant instruction that includes discussion and collaborative work, project-based learning, videos, audio, manipulatives)
4. Frequent progress monitoring to measure student progress toward college and career ready standards
5. Improve teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness by using feedback provided by the LEA's teacher and principal evaluation systems, including frequent feedback on individual and teams
6. Teacher, parent, and student training to manage technology for meeting student needs and for receiving and giving feedback
7. Learning resources, including digital resources, as appropriate, that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements, and the tools to create and share new resources

Although the Applicant provides a variety of activities that are commonly found in reform research, the Applicant has not adequately connected these activities to key goals, and timelines and have not provided persons responsible. Without these components, the Applicant does not have a high quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready,

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	10
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Applicant proposes using their Consortium Covenant guidelines to enable the management and organization of grant activities to provide systems of coordination and quality assurances. The leadership structure will consist of a project coordinator in each district who would manage implementation compliance, collecting and reporting of progress measures, tracking goal attainment, overseeing contractors, and all non-financial reporting. The Project Coordinators would be supervised in each district by the Principal Investigator in Frenship ISD and Co-Principal Investigator in Slaton ISD. The Principal and Co-Principal Investigator in each district reports to the district superintendent who is under the governance of the local school board. Additional members of the leadership team would include an Administrative Coordinator who would serve as the financial resource for both districts, and would be supervised jointly by the Executive Director of Purchasing and the Director of Business Services in Frenship ISD. Both of these positions report to the Chief Financial Officer who is supervised by the Frenship ISD Superintendent. District administrators (existing positions) from both districts would be responsible for staff training and carrying out implementation steps as they relate to personalized learning and technology infrastructure. This description does not adequately describe comprehensive polities and infrastructure that provide every student, educator and level of the education system with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed.comprehensive policies and infrastructure.</p> <p>However, the Applicant does not fully describe how their stated practices, policies and rules facilitate personalized learning. The Applicant does not fully describe how school leadership teams in participating schools demonstrate that they have sufficient flexibility and authonomy with factors such as schedules and ccalendars and personnel and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators.</p> <p>The Applicant described the three policies required by the State Education Code related to mastery and academic acceleration; however, the Applicant did not clearly explain how students may progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery and not the amount of time spent on a topic. Giving students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways will be managed through content delivery, feedback and assessment utilizing technology resources. This technology platform will provide feedback</p> <p>Although the Applicant addressed some components of this criteria, the activities and examples provided did not specific timelines for implementation, which is critical component of a high quality plan.</p>		

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	4
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Applicant does not provide critical elements of a high-quality plan (i.e. key goals, timelines, persons responsible) to support project implementation. For example, the Applicant plans to provide mobile device kiosk as a part of the LEA and school technology infrastructure which will allow for efficient technology available to students. The Applicant did not adequately explain when and how this will occur or how the tech specialist will be responsible for implementing this process both district wide and within individual schools will roll out this plan.</p> <p>The Applicant states that both districts will seek access opportunities to allow every student who needs tools and resources beyond the school day to have access regardless of income, A technical specialist will ensure stakeholder, educator, and student training and technical support. However, the description for of the high quality plan for how this will occur is not clear.</p> <p>The Applicant states that the districts will be utilizing resource systems such as iStation, Think Through Math, Read 180 and iLearn. These resources will allow students to access the programs for use outside of the school setting. However, the Applicant did not adequately describe their timeline for implementing these systems, and did not adequately explain their high quality plan explaining how access to these system will occur, who will be responsible for ensuring at the district and school levels to ensure that the process is implemented. The Applicant did not adequately explain their high quality plan for ensuring student access after school hours including access to equipment and internet provider services. The Applicant states that the technology systems available for students and parents are secured with unique login and password protected access; however, the Applicant did not explain their high quality plan for ensuring that parents had the required technology resources such as internet service and computers. The Applicant stated that student performance levels and education progress continues just as it would if accessed during the school day but did not provide adequately explain how this will occur.</p> <p>The Applicant stated that data would be managed via data systems in accordance with the State public education information access and management system standards. This system requires each district to standardize data management in each area for state reporting purposes. The Applicant did not clearly describe what this means in terms of ensuring that LEAs and schools use interoperable data systems.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	11
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Applicant provides a strategy for implementing a continuous improvement process. The continuous improvement process will consist of a "focused evaluation approach" where data collection will include assessments of all performance measures from sources including state assessments; social conduct and behavior; self-efficacy; absenteeism; retention; graduation; PSAT/SAT/ACT scores; Work Keys Assessment; number of dual enrollment courses; number of AP courses and exams; college enrollment; surveys; and program records. Some surveys will be conducted with informal interviews, some with in-person questionnaires, and some will be administered to stakeholders (students, faculty, and partners) anonymously online using survey software. The Applicant provides a logic model depicting how the Utilization-Focused Evaluation model and the individual evaluation of each innovation will use a systems approach to the evaluation of learning outcomes. The Applicant's approach is adequate and the Applicant provides a table that details specific strategies for implementation.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Applicant will implement procedures for informal formative review of progress in an ongoing manner through the use of weekly staff meetings with Consortium staff and the college/university contractor for purposes of incorporating informal feedback into continuous program improvements. Improvements will focus on individual teaching strategies as well as project-wide course corrections. The Consortium will implement procedures for informal formative review of progress in an ongoing manner through the use of weekly staff meetings with Consortium staff and the college/university contractor for purposes of incorporating informal feedback into continuous program improvements. Improvements will focus on individual teaching strategies as well as project-wide course corrections. The Applicant provides a table describing the involvement of stakeholders in planning and providing feedback through a two-way process including provisions for feedback, transparency,</p>		

outcomes and responsibility.

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

5

5

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant provides ambitious yet achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup, with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures. For each applicant-proposed measure, the Applicant adequately described its rationale for selecting the measure how the measure will provide rigorous and how it will review and improve the measure over time if it is insufficient to gauge implementation progress. The Applicant has a total of approximately 12 to 14 performance measures.

The Applicant states that the existing State teacher and principal appraisal system incorporates student achievement, but does not include a calculated measure of student growth from one year to the next. The new appraisal system will be beta-piloted in some Texas districts in 2013-2014 and fully implemented in the 2014-2015 school year. The districts will review and improve the measure of effective and highly effective teachers and principals over time. Processes for review will include determining students who attained one and one-half years growth by teacher and by campus. Processes for improvement will include identifying characteristics of teachers and principals who reached highly effective status and using those characteristics and training focal points for lower performing principals and teachers. Because the system is new it is not clear whether the Applicant can accurately determine how they will be able to provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant's implementation success or areas of concern.

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

5

5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant adequately addressed this criteria as evidenced by the table the Applicant provided which clearly depicts the Applicant's plans to evaluate the effectiveness of Rtt-district funded activities by identifying the needs to be addressed, outcomes, activities and persons responsible.

## F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The Applicant's budget and the budget narrative and tables clearly identify all funds that will support the project, is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the Applicant's proposal and clearly provides a thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities. The Applicant describes all funds, including one time use investments.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: The Applicant's plan for sustainability plan is adequate and includes the project goals after the term of the grant, including support from from state and local government leaders and financial support. These descriptions are clearly itemized, detailed and well explained.		

## Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	10
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Applicant provided a clear description of the coherent and sustainable partnership that it has formed with public or private organizations including:</p> <p><b>Role Model "Flooding" and Tutoring (for High Need Students) program, Counseling Students and Families (High Need) program, Generation Texas program, High School to College Transition Program, Dual Enrollment (for All Students Including Those with High Need), and Service Learning (Slaton Community Stud.</b></p> <p>Clearly these programs suport Absolute priority 1, and meet the requirements for this criteria including performance measures, engaging parents, decision making process, and needs assessments.</p>		

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Although the Applicant provides many activities and deliverables that are typical of reform initiatives to address how it will build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college and career ready standards. Although the Applicant did not include all of the components of a high quality plan (i.e. key goals, specific timelines, supporting activities, deliverables, and persons responsible) in describing how they plan to accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student, the many activities that the Applicant provided did support their plans to increase the effectiveness of educators, expand student access to effective educators, decrease the achievement gaps across student groups and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college.

Total	210	149
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0958TX-5 for Frenship ISD

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant presents moderate evidence of a comprehensive and coherent vision that builds upon developing 21st century skills, including critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaborative work through blended learning environments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By design, approximately half of each session will be devoted to content delivery, some in technological form, with the other half given to real-world experiential applications.</li> <li>• A logic model, along with a rigorous review of related literature in Appendix A, provides the underpinnings for the current vision.</li> <li>• As the findings of the literature review suggest, such an approach is likely to accelerate student achievement and increase equity among subgroups.</li> <li>• Student learning will be deepened through the variety of learning experiences offered, as well as the applications to real-world problems.</li> <li>• Opportunities for project based learning will develop those skills critical to, as the applicant states, "Achieving the American Dream" and fulfilling one's "responsibility to community -- local, national, and global."</li> </ul> <p>Within the response to Selection Criteria A(3), the applicant discusses in more detail the components of the reform plan, including the project-based learning, College and Career Readiness standards, professional development, utilization of technology, and collaboration with a university partner, which will result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academically Equipped Graduates</li> <li>• Effective Communicators</li> <li>• Responsible Citizens</li> <li>• Passionate Learners</li> <li>• Educator who feel rewarded</li> </ul> <p>The application would benefit from a more detailed discussion of the way in which the pedagogical and instructional technology research reviewed fits into the applicant's vision of student learning.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The partner districts chose to include all schools from both districts, and lists the various schools, along with their populations and educators. Given the community's stated interest in developing the "4C" skills of all students, selecting all the districts' schools ensures the development of those critical college and career skills throughout a student's K12 career.</p> <p>The applicant states that the total number of low-income students are 40% of the LEA-wide population, but 34.5% of the participating schools. However, this does not meet the 40% requirement of all participating students being from low-income families.</p> <p>The applicant's plan to phase in implementation, with implementation beginning at the secondary school level in the first year and at the Pre-K and elementary level in the second year of the award, is a sound strategy for monitoring the effectiveness of implementation strategies.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides strong evidence of a high-quality plan describing how the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform. As the proposal includes all of the partner districts' schools, all district students will be included. This proposal instead concentrates on the overall reforms the district will undergo.

The applicant's logic model presented in response to (A)(1) and this section's response show the manner in which the applicant anticipates reaching its outcome goals.

- First, the applicant envisions equipping students with technological instruction through workstations equipped with computers and mobile devices.
- Second, real-world project-based learning and meaningful and rewarding professional development through four intensive teacher training days and ongoing technical assistance will support the significant transition to the new pedagogical model.
- Third, the applicant anticipates a culture shift to one of the "No Excuses University" model (Lopez, 2011).

Given the pedagogical and cultural changes the applicant envisions being scaled up throughout the community, the proposal's changes will have lasting and broad-reaching impact on academic and non-academic growth.

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

The applicant demonstrates moderate evidence that the applicant's vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity among student subgroups.

- The applicant envisions 95% of all students being rated proficient in Reading and Math at the K-12 levels by the first year of the post-grant period, 2016-17. This ambitious goal appears generally achievable; however, because some populations start at a lower baseline (eg., Frenship's 6th grade Math Special Education students at 39% or Slaton's 5th grade Math Special Education students at 36%), they may be less achievable.
- The goals for closing significant achievement gaps with the state's averages for white students are also ambitious and largely achievable, with projected gaps of 10 points in favor of the applicant's subgroups over state averages by 2016-17. Overcoming those gaps for some subgroups with large baseline differences, such as Slaton's 9th grade low-income students' gap of 27%, may be less achievable. The gaps between different racial subgroups are not presented, nor plans to close any possible gaps.
- Graduation rates are already generally impressive by all subgroups, and a 100% goal by 2015-16 for all groups seems ambitious and achievable.
- The applicant does not have complete college enrollment data for all subgroups, and, therefore, it is somewhat difficult to assess their goals. College enrollment rates are available for some Slaton subgroups, and overall targets are ambitious for white groups (90%) but less so for non-whites (25% for biracial students).

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 has shown moderate evidence of a clear record of success in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity.

- The applicant has improved learning outcomes and reduced achievement gaps. From 2003 to 2011, the applicant has reduced achievement gaps between African American and white subgroups in math to 21% and reading to 4% for one partner, and 12% and 6% for the other partners. Nonetheless, since 2008, African American math achievement at Slaton seems to have declined from 77% to 70% meeting state standards. Since 2008, Hispanic achievement has also declined from 83% of all Hispanic students passing Math standards to 75%.
- The partners have implemented the Response to Intervention Model to track the performance of students struggling with performance objectives and offered teacher or team support and intervention. Additionally, the partners have implemented a vertically-integrated curriculum with aligned K12 objectives.

Student performance data is available to students and parents through six-week report cards and 3-week interim reports, as well as daily grades, assignments, and teacher feedback available online. For secondary school students, parent meetings with teachers in fall and spring. Parents and students collaborate with teachers to develop personalized plans for the year. These sessions will be expanded to elementary campuses.

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

5

3

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents moderate evidence of transparency regarding making public, by school, actual school-level expenditures:

- Per Texas and local laws, the districts' websites provide aggregated payrolls, check registers, and salary schedule, and school level expenditures, including K-12 instruction and instructional support
- It does not appear that Texas requires actual personnel salaries for all school-level instructional and support staff, and therefore this information is not reported.

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

10

9

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has provided strong evidence of the necessary State statutory, legal, and regulatory support to implement personalized learning environments:

- The applicant states that the Texas Education Code, Texas Administrative Code, other state and federal laws, and school board policies allow for flexibility and autonomy to develop personalized learning, including utilizing digital content and testing.
- As an example of this flexibility, the applicant cites the Frenship Superintendent Select Program, which took a group of 8th grade students in the top 10% of their classes and, with parent permission, allowed them to receive additional, personalized instruction in preparation for the PSAT and SAT, Personal learning plans are developed for each student through the 10th grade.

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

10

10

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal shows strong evidence of including significant stakeholder engagement in the development and support of the proposal, through numerous opportunities for stakeholder input and buy-in. Such buy-in is a critical element to the success of this initiative.

Students, parents, alumni, neighborhood residents, businesses, civic organizations, universities, churches, and nonprofits began meeting in January, 2011 to discuss ways to support student achievement. The two partners were brought together by a university contact who recognized their similar visions, and the two worked together to build on synergies.

Numerous meetings and refinements of the model based on stakeholder input resulted in a proposal that emphasized condensed content and supporting technology supported by the entire community.

One hundred percent of the schools' faculties agreed to move forward with the plan.

The letters of support from local nonprofits, business partners, and institutions of higher education show a community engaged in the development of this proposal's vision.

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

5

3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has demonstrated moderate evidence of a high-quality plan to analyze the applicant's current status in implementing personalized learning environments.

- The applicant has identified the needs and gaps of the community, such as the 4Cs of successful employees and developing online opportunities as well as community strengths, including the support of the community in the proposed "flipped" classroom model.
- The applicant also refers to some implementation gaps or strengths, including the teacher/administrator evaluation

system (need), enhanced technology infrastructure (need) and internet access for low income families (need), as well as alignment of learning outcomes with college-ready standards (strengths).

- The application would benefit from more detail regarding how additional analysis will be done to identify specific gaps and needs at specific institutions.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	15
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>While the applicant offers many promising ideas for supporting college and career learning, more detail about how the various components tie together would be helpful.</p> <p>The applicant has shown moderate evidence of an approach to engage and empower all learners, as students, parents, and educators will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand why what they are learning is so critical to their goals, through a modified Socratic method learning model to stimulate thinking about their goals and how to achieve them;</li> <li>• Understand and pursue college-ready goals, through coursework aligned with the college-ready Core Standards and emphasized within the technology-assisted personalized learning curriculum;</li> <li>• Be involved in deep learning experiences, through project-based, real-world applications; through students self-selecting their areas of interest and working with other students with similar interests;</li> <li>• Be exposed to diverse cultures through their project-based work with diverse classmates offering different points of view, and through cultural collaborations with students from around the world, such as learning Spanish from teachers in Mexico;</li> <li>• Master critical content and develop 21st century skills through the project-based assignments that will encourage their development of the 4C's; unit tasks and rubrics by which students must design their own solutions; and developing time management skills</li> </ul> <p>Students will benefit from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A personalized sequence of content and instruction through digital content software which provides constant formative assessment and feedback and allows the student many opportunities to master a concept at their own pace;</li> <li>• High Quality Approaches and content through online learning, groupwork, dual enrollments at local colleges, role models and mentors to master college-ready skills and concepts;</li> <li>• Ongoing and regular feedback via learning software quizzes and formative assessments, which teachers can use with the Response to Intervention model to provide student support</li> </ul> <p>Twice-yearly learning assessments to develop college test-taking skills and to align performance with personalized learning recommendations.</p> <p>The applicant team has demonstrated that accommodations have been made for high-need students, including the Response to Intervention process, which brings together a team to help a student struggling academically and has frequent reviews of student progress. This process, with its built-in timelines, promotes accountability for student achievement. The state has developed mixed methods approaches to Reading and Math that are helpful for high-needs students. More information regarding other ways in which digital content and assessments might accommodate high-need students would benefit the application.</p> <p>Teaches will offer students will training and technological support through teacher-led group orientations, and ongoing teacher coaching and guidance.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	16

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has shown strong evidence of helping educators to improve instruction and improve their practice in developing

personalized, college-ready instruction for learners.

Specifically, teachers will be given training to support their capacity to:

- Support the effective implementation of personalized learning environments through intensive condensed content training of 50 teachers in year one, with their colleagues receiving the training in year two. They will be further supported by professional learning communities.
- Adapt content and instruction to individual needs through the content delivery software, which allows students to work at their own pace to master skills. Teachers will work as facilitators of student progress in small group and other settings.
- Frequently measure student progress and use the results to accelerate progress and improve individual and collective practices by providing students with real-time formative assessments through their content delivery software, with teachers receiving reports from formative assessments and end-of-unit quizzes based on which they can design additional content or lessons for the student.
- Improve teacher and principal practices through evaluation feedback through research-based administrator and peer reviews in the forms of observations, walk-throughs, and feedback regarding effective strategies. Self-reflections will also guide teachers.

All participating teachers will have access to, and know how to use, tools, data, and resources to further student achievement toward college and career-ready goals through:

- Actionable information to optimize educational approaches. Professional learning communities allow teachers to share best practices and discuss optimal strategies for working with individual students. Principals will provide feedback and coaching, as well as additional instruction, for any areas of instructional weakness.
- High quality learning resources. Digital and print content are evaluated by a number of criteria, including college-ready content, student engagement, ease of use, home access, PSAT/SAT/ACT course offerings, and multiple opportunities to learn a concept. Sample versions are tested before being purchased for student use.
- Processes and tools to match student needs with specific resources and approaches through professional development tailored to data-driven assessments of student needs, as well as feedback from digital software assessments of student progress;

All participating leaders will have the tools, training, policies and data to structure effective personalized learning environments by:

- Training, systems, and practices to continually improve school progress toward meeting student performance and closing achievement gaps, through a review of student performance by subgroup, identified gaps in instructional skills, common unit assessments, and district subject meetings.
- The applicant doesn't address how principals and other administrators are evaluated.

The applicant has a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective or highly-effective teachers and principals, which includes detailed and comprehensive teacher evaluations from multiple measures, including student progress, parent communications, campus climate surveys. More detail regarding how the data is acted upon to provide such teachers in hard-to-staff schools is needed.

#### D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has shown strong evidence of supportive LEA practices, policies, and rules to facilitate personalized learning by:

- Organizing the LEA office to have a Project Coordinator who works on project implementation, including spending time on campuses each week to help with implementation support and an Administrative Coordinator to support both districts
- Providing school leadership teams with the flexibility to set schedules, personnel, and budgeting. The applicant lists numerous sections of the Texas Educational code that authorize flexibility and autonomy to schools in developing personalized educational environments, including the ability for students to demonstrate mastery beyond traditional

<p>"seat time" measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offering students will have multiple opportunities to master material through content delivery assessments, projects, and presentations of findings.</li> <li>• Making available learning resources to all students, including recording-capable devices to allow English learners to replay and practice; expanding accessibility for homes and other locations; and real-time formative assessments through software for students with disabilities.</li> </ul>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	6
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has presented moderate evidence of its plan to support personalized learning through school and LEA infrastructure by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders have access to content, tools, and other resources through each student being able to check out devices at kiosks for home use; through mentorship opportunities with college students and community members, who will also have access to resources. More information regarding the timeline for this implementation, which will play a critical role in student access to the new technology, would be helpful to the application.</li> <li>• Each district hiring a technical support specialist to supplement individual school's technology teams</li> <li>• The proposal does not include information about how students can export their data.</li> <li>• Utilizing student information systems, in conformance with Texas law, that contain human resource, student, budget, and instructional improvement data. It is not clear if the data systems will be interoperable.</li> </ul>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	13
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has shown strong evidence of a strategy for continuous improvement that includes timely feedback through the assessment of student progress, professional development, and technological effectiveness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will be assessed by up to 13 different sources, including the Texas state assessments, Work Keys Assessments, Social Conduct and Behavior Assessments, measures of self-efficacy, and student and teacher observations. Such holistic assessments can provide a wealth of information to instructors and administrators.</li> <li>• While it's clear teachers will get four days of intensive training, and another day during the year, the proposal does not contain sufficient information regarding how teachers will be trained to integrate the various forms of information/student assessments into a coherent individual learning plan.</li> <li>• Ongoing challenges and improvements will be tracked by the Project Coordinator and Consortium Management Team, who will meet weekly with school staffs to review progress, provide feedback, and assist in implementation.</li> <li>• The applicant will utilize a research-based systematic approach to evaluate outcomes, which is well-detailed in an accompanying table.</li> </ul>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has shown strong evidence of ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. The team will communicate through many electronic means, as well as events designed to offer transparency to the public regarding the initiative's progress.</p> <p>Parents, nonprofit and business partners, educational organizations, and community members will receive information through meetings, the Superintendent's open-door policy, parent conferences, numerous survey opportunities, as well as websites and the local media.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant shows strong evidence of ambitious yet achievable performance measures for the districts' students.

- Although Texas evaluation systems, which are currently being revised, do not distinguish clearly between an effective and highly-effective teacher, the applicant proposes defining those measures based on student growth. Goals of 70% for all students for effective teachers, and 35% for highly-effective teachers, seem achievable, although the 35% measure seems on the modest side.
- The applicant's rationale for its own proposed measures, especially those of Social Conduct/Behavior and Self-Efficacy, are innovative and will present rich information to teachers in charting student progress and developing individualized instruction.
- Generally speaking, the proposed goals for all groups seems ambitious yet achievable, especially given some strong baselines (eg. attendance percentages).
- The 20% overall goal for 3rd grade academic growth is confusing, given the other ambitious goals for the subgroups.

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

The applicant shows strong evidence of a plan to evaluate the program's District funded activities through:

- Evaluations of teacher effectiveness through feedback, formative evaluations, and professional development;
- A dedicated Program Coordinator managing implementation, including roadblocks and potential solutions;
- Evaluations for teachers, principals, and administrators;
- A Return on Investment Evaluation that seeks to identify the most effective use of grant dollars by finding the most cost-effective way to achieve successful outcomes. The approach relies on rigorous quantitative and qualitative data and analysis and is an innovative tool to measure program effectiveness.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has shown strong evidence of a sound budget that:

- Identifies all sources of funding, including approximately \$1.5 million in outside funds, the vast majority from the state's funding for Career and Technical Education initiatives
- Seems reasonable and sufficient to support the development of a personalized learning environment utilizing college-ready content with real-time formative assessments, group workstations, and professional development to inform and inspire teachers;
- Clearly provides a thoughtful rationale for its investments in equipment, training, student instruction, and evaluation, with more than half accounting for student instruction;
- Identifies those funds used for ongoing expenses, as none appear to be one-time investments. The investments appear sound in setting the applicant up to be self-sustaining after the grant period in implementing personalized learning environments.

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

The applicant presents strong evidence of a high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant.

- The applicant recognizes that many of the infrastructure and capital costs, both physical and human, have been completed for the program to run beyond the implementation period.
- Trained teachers will train and mentor new teachers in condensed content personalized learning, and therefore not

requiring outside trainers.

- Current school technology specialists will be cross-trained to perform the work of the Districts' technology specialists.
- Additionally, the state will continue to provide funding by the state, and local districts will purchase updated equipment as needed.
- The applicant also expects continued support from the business community and other partners to provide volunteers and other resources for the schools' students.

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

#### Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has shown strong evidence of coherent and sustainable partnerships that will further the goals of the program.

- Those partnerships are forward-thinking and holistic in their approach, and rely on strong corps of volunteers from the parent, business, and college community who first came together prior to the development of this proposal.
- Guidance counselors will help assess student needs and assets and provide students and families with resources for any student or family needs.
- A decision-making process will mainly come through the guidance counselors, who will have access to state assessment data, as well as data on absences, disciplinary referrals, and parental involvement.
- The personal mentoring relationships and service opportunities offered by volunteers are an excellent way to focus many committed community members to student achievement, as well as develop the self-efficacy of students.
- The partnerships with guidance counselors, as well as organizations offering college financial and academic support to high-needs students, offer promising support to students and lend them a vision of life beyond high school and why they need to focus on college-readiness.
- The performance measures appear ambitious yet achievable and touch on students, parents, and community volunteers.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

#### Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has presented a coherent and comprehensive plan to improve student readiness for college and career through personalized instruction through digital content delivery, real-world project-based learning, group work, and thoughtful teacher facilitation and development. Teachers, students, and parents will develop personalized learning plans for students that are aligned with college and career ready standards.

- Students will engage in deeper learning experiences through digital content, diverse cultural experiences, project-based group learning, service opportunities, and mentorships.
- Educator effectiveness will be increased through intensive professional development, professional learning communities, and coaching by principals and other administrators.
- Increasing the number of effective and highly-effective teachers through feedback, support, and professional development, will decrease achievement gaps between subgroups. Additionally, student-paced learning, in which students who are shy about performing in front of class can soar at their own pace with technology, will likely reduce achievement gaps as well.

As a result, more students will graduate college and career-ready for 21st century careers.

Total	210	171
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