



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0347MN-1 for Fridley Public Schools

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applicant clearly identifies a vision that builds upon practices already in place within the 2-district consortium.</li> <li>All three proposed strategies are described in detail and ties to increasing equity, closing achievement gaps and increasing student achievement are articulated.</li> <li>Both participating districts have implemented a district-wide model focused on these goals and the applicant describes a vision that would create additional opportunities for all district students.</li> <li>Strategy #3 addresses the required personalized student learning in detail.</li> <li>This section is well-written and the applicant provides enough detail to give the reader a description of how proposed efforts will build upon an already strong foundation focused on the same types of goals that are identified in RTTD. As a result, this section warrants a high score.</li> </ul>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applicant plans to include 100% of consortium schools and consortium students. Implementation plan is brief as a result of this plan.</li> <li>Table included provides sufficient detail to address items b and c under this selection criteria.</li> <li>This section is brief, but provides adequate information to address all required elements. As a result, this section warrants a high score.</li> </ul>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In this section, the applicant describes what the reform includes and how it addresses the elements required in RTTD applications. The descriptions are comprehensive, high quality and include specific strategies for each goal. This is a strength in the section.</li> <li>The applicant does not provide a plan to scale up efforts beyond the consortium, however 100% of consortium students and schools are included, so the section does address district-wide change.</li> <li>This section provides adequate information about district-wide change but lacks information regarding the applicant's logic model or theory of change. Assumptions regarding current programs provide some information to address that element of this selection criteria.</li> <li>This proposal warrants a high score due to the level of detail included in the description of the reform efforts; the cohesive plan to address all elements of effective reform, and the inclusion of specific strategies designed to address all RTTD goals/requirements.</li> </ul>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	9
(A)(4) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applicant clearly addresses all 5 student outcome areas in the tables provided.</li> <li>Goals for subpopulations are ambitious but attainable. This is an area of strength for this applicant - if implemented effectively, the applicant anticipates significant gains (in all areas) for all subpopulations, and significant progress in</li> </ul>		

closing achievement gaps.

- The applicant has a foundation for addressing these goals and gaps that is already in place. The applicant also identifies the need for additional measures related to college and career ready and postsecondary degree attainment. The applicant includes a plan to develop these and collect baseline data.
- These goals seem realistic and well articulated. As a result, this section warrants a high rating.

**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	15
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent response to all items within B1.</li> <li>• The applicant provides detail and data that show a clear record of success as well as a commitment to providing information to all stakeholders, in native languages of parents/guardians within the two consortium districts.</li> <li>• The districts' commitment to the professional development, collaboration, continuous improvement and external evaluation required to fully implement district-wide education models with fidelity is commendable.</li> <li>• This section warrants a high score due to both the level of detail provided and the evidence that the districts have been addressing all of these elements.</li> </ul>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	4
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant provides examples of the items required for this section (in the appendices). However, actual salary information (for each employee) does not seem to be available and the attached example is district-level information rather than school-level information. This is a weakness in this section.</li> <li>• The applicant describes its state's requirements for financial reporting, audits and salary information.</li> <li>• The examples clearly show that data is available to members of the public and is easily accessible to stakeholders with internet access and/or the ability to attend required public meetings.</li> <li>• The included narrative provides a description of a high level of transparency and supporting documentation is provided as evidence - as a result, this section warrants a high rating.</li> </ul>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant provides references to state statues and regulations governing Minnesota public school districts. Based upon the information provided, the consortium provides information indicating that there is sufficient autonomy to implement the proposed RTTD plan.</li> <li>• In addition to meeting the basic requirements in this section, the applicant provides compelling evidence that the proposed plan (and the State's vision for education) are aligned with RTTD goals.</li> <li>• This section provides evidence of State context that supports the application and letters of support provide additional documentation.</li> <li>• This section also warrants a high score.</li> </ul>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	7
(B)(4) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant describes district and consortium RTTD teams that worked together to develop the proposal.</li> <li>• The applicant also describes collaboration with the collective bargaining units from both districts.</li> <li>• From the description included, the applicant indicates that students, parents and community stakeholders were also included in discussions and planning for the RTTD proposal.</li> <li>• The applicant includes evidence of support in the appendices - letters included represent local and State officials as well as business and post-secondary stakeholders.</li> </ul>		

- This section warrants a medium score - the applicant provided detail stating that stakeholders had input, however evidence of support from the districts' collective bargaining units, and from district parents and/or students is not included.

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

5

3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant addresses the consortium's current status in implementing proposed reforms by describing specific IB elements as well as referencing MAP and MCA data provided in other sections of the proposal. This provides sufficient data to support the need for reform.
- The proposal lacks a detailed, high-quality plan for analyzing existing information, however, a general approach is described.
- This section warrants a medium score as a result of the complete description of areas that the applicant believes will need to be addressed.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	10

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant clearly describes programs that are currently in place and aligned to college and career-ready standards. The description of the IB program includes information indicating that students are expected to meet rigorous academic expectations in all content areas. IB graduation requirements, and standards for earlier grade levels seem to exceed State standards and post-secondary entrance requirements.
- The proposal includes a description of personalized learning environment based upon assessment data and opportunities for the development of critical thinking skills.
- The applicant focuses more attention, in this section, on developing plans based on individual student assessment data and less on individual interest, college and career planning. This is a weakness in this section.
- Although the applicant presents a plan that will be utilized to individualize instruction for all students, high-need students are not specifically addressed. That is also a weakness in this section.
- This section adequately addresses most of the elements required for this selection criteria. The lack of specific information regarding high-need students and the lack of information regarding student academic interests; development of personal traits such as teamwork, critical thinking and goal setting; exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, etc., and exposure to high quality content (including digital learning) warrants a medium score. These items addressed indirectly, throughout the proposal, through the use of the IB model, but they are not explicitly addressed in reference to the criteria outlined in this section.

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

20

20

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant provides a concise description of the current professional development activities, performance evaluation and merit pay system within the two districts. This description indicates that the systems in place are aligned with State and federal requirements and are fairly transparent.
- The applicant describes the need for additional evaluation measures specifically aligned to proposal goals and outcomes. It is noted that these measures will be developed as part of the proposed plan.
- The consortium districts have created a four year plan, with supporting personnel, that addresses both teacher professional development related to instruction, and teacher professional development related to data analysis and individual student growth planning. This plan is extensive and reflects a comprehensive approach to implementing the consortiums RTTD plan (as well as implementing reform, in general).
- The applicant provides a very thorough, high quality plan to address all items in this section. As a result, the section warrants a high rating.

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

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	14
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applicant provides sufficient description, references and evidence that both consortium districts have organizational structures in place to support the RTTD plan. Both districts seem to have procedures and collaboration processes in place to build leadership capacity and to evaluate the effectiveness of specific programs, practices and personnel.</li> <li>Schools within these districts have some level of autonomy that allows for adjustments based upon analysis of data - however, all schools are expected to adhere to the overarching education model adopted by both districts.</li> <li>Both districts have policies in place (and evidence of the policies is included in the appendices) that allow students to progress based upon demonstrated mastery of standards.</li> <li>The applicant briefly addresses policies associated with serving students with disabilities and ELLs.</li> <li>The applicant clearly addresses all elements within this section and provides a level of detail that warrants a high score.</li> </ul>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	5
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applicant describes the current infrastructure that is in place to support current efforts. Infrastructure is adequate to address the needs of the districts at this point in time.</li> <li>The proposed plan includes specific plans to increase the capacity of the infrastructure in order to allow both districts to achieve the desired goals.</li> <li>The applicant seems to have considered a number of different challenges in this area and includes plans to provide technology to teachers, students, economically disadvantaged students, etc. The applicants also include a plan to provide low cost internet access to needy families.</li> <li>The previous bullets are all strengths in this section.</li> <li>The significant weakness in this section is the lack of technical support proposed to ensure stakeholders have access to the data and systems necessary for change/reform.</li> <li>This section includes some information regarding infrastructure. The section would be strengthened by adding a description of plans to ensure families with native languages other than English (it seems like these districts have significant ELL populations) have access to the same information as English-speaking families as well as information regarding technical assistance to all stakeholders. As a result, it warrants a medium score.</li> </ul>		

### E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This section is one of the strongest in this application. Ties to all other sections of the proposal, and all proposed plans/strategies, are included in this section.</li> <li>The applicant describes a detailed plan to continuously evaluate and improve district programs, and RTTD strategies, through the use of existing collaborative teams and evaluation processes. There is clear evidence that these processes have been in place for a number of years and have allowed both districts to make improvements leading to increased student achievement and educator effectiveness.</li> <li>This section warrants a high rating.</li> </ul>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applicant includes a plan for communication with all stakeholder groups. The plan is brief but warrants a high score due to the fact that it addresses all requirements and includes plans for engagement with both internal and external stakeholders.</li> </ul>		

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5
(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant does an excellent job of identifying specific performance measures for all grade levels and all subpopulations.</li> <li>• Performance measures are realistic and would indicate accomplishment of RTTD goals.</li> <li>• This section warrants a high rating.</li> </ul>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0
(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E4 does not appear to be included in the applicant's proposal.</li> </ul>		

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

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant's budget is reasonable and line item expenditures reflect necessary items to implement the proposed plan.</li> <li>• The applicant identifies specific FTE that will be re-directed to grant activities and the associated salary and benefit cost is identified as the consortium's contribution to the proposed plan.</li> <li>• The applicant provides detail regarding each expenditure and makes it clear which expenditures are one-time expenses and which items will be ongoing costs to the districts.</li> <li>• The applicant adequately describes all project expenses and provides a reasonable budget for the proposal and each associated project. As a result, this section warrants a high rating.</li> </ul>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant proposes reassigning current district personnel to specific tasks within the RTTD plan. This will allow the district to provide training and develop procedures and strategies that will be maintained once the grant ends.</li> <li>• The applicant makes a compelling argument that because the RTTD proposal builds on a foundation that is already in place, sustainability will be more likely.</li> <li>• The applicant also provides a description that indicates funding for sustainability is minimal and no specific plan to support the proposed RTTD elements after the grant period ends. This is a weakness in this section.</li> <li>• The description provided briefly addresses sustainability but lacks detail in how components and associated costs will be sustained. As a result, the section warrants a medium score.</li> </ul>		

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	5
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant describes existing partnerships between districts; local and State government agencies; post-secondary institutions and other community organizations. These partnerships appear to support existing reform efforts and will likely support RTTD implementation.</li> <li>• The applicant provides detailed descriptions of ambitious performance measures for all participants.</li> </ul>		

- This section does not include a description of activities designed to build capacity in existing staff members.
- The applicant adequately addresses most components of this competitive preference priority but due to the lack of explicit ties between the partnerships described and the performance measures, the section warrants a medium score.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant provides a comprehensive plan to build on the core educational assurance areas. The applicant includes specific strategies, performance measures, goals and approaches that will allow the districts to address student needs, increase achievement, close achievement gaps and improve instruction. The approach describes increased rigor and relevance at all grade levels, with an emphasis on students becoming college and career ready.</li> <li>• The applicant meets absolute priority 1.</li> </ul>		

Total	210	165
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## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

Application #0347MN-2 for Fridley Public Schools

#### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: <p>A clear, comprehensive, compelling vision of district reform was thoughtfully presented. The discussion included the 4 core educational assurances that support reform efforts in the district and 3 proposed key strategies that form the framework of the proposal and would support continuing reform efforts. The proposal builds on work that is already being done in the district to implement the IB program Pre K through grade 12.</p> <p>A reasonable explanation and rationale were provided for the establishment of Fridley Public Schools, South St. Paul Public Schools, and Technology and Information Education Services as a consortium to pursue the RTT-D funding.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: <p>Since the districts are proposing a PreK-12 IB program, the decision to include all schools and all students in the proposal is sound, and would support the integration and implementation of project components across levels and across schools and focused central office support. This reflects the consortium's stated commitment to systemic reform and a holistic articulation of programs and services. This approach is realistic and feasible, given the number of students served (6,000) and the number of school/programs involved (9). Just under 400 teachers from both school districts would be participating in the project, which is a manageable number to train, monitor, and support.</p>		

Percent of participating students from low income families meets the 40% eligibility threshold in both Fridley School District and South St. Paul Schools.

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

10

7

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

A plan, including key goals, activities/rationales, timelines, deliverables, and persons responsible was not included.

A clear rationale underlying the reform proposal was presented:

- Increased focus on college and career readiness;
- Building capacity in ongoing systems;
- Evidence-based programs, such as AVID and IB; and
- Focus on 20th century skills, using latest technological advances to personalize learning.

The inclusion of all schools and all students would support district-wide change.

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

10

7

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(a)(b) Annual goals for aggregate academic performance, subgroup performance, and the reduction of achievement gaps appear to be achievable, yet ambitious for both districts. An well thought-out methodology was provided for determining annual achievement goals and goals for the annual reduction of achievement gaps.

(c)The annual goals for graduation rates for Fridley High School do reflect ambitious targets (increasing from a baseline of 85.8% to 90% in 2016-17); however, the annual goals for South St. Paul Secondary School do not reflect ambitious targets, increasing from 88.4% (baseline) to 90% in 2016-17. That represents an increase of only 1.6 percentage points over a 4-year period. This annual goals for this outcome need to be increased.

(d) The five-year increase in aggregate annual college enrollment rates for Fridley is more ambitious than the increase for South St. Paul, at 7 percentage points and 5 percentage points, respectively. No rationale was provided for the projected annual goals, so their appropriateness, could not be determined.

(e) Ambitious and achievable post-secondary degree attainment annual goals were provided. The National Student Clearing House student tracker is a credible source of data regarding post-secondary degree attainment.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

There were mixed results in student outcomes in the consortium districts during the past 4 years:

- South St. Paul--increased in reading proficiency rates for grade levels 3-8 and grade 11 for past 5 years.
- Fridley--increased in reading proficiency rates for past 5 years in every assessed grade level except for grade 4, which posted a 5 percentage point decrease. In grade 8, there was a percentage point increase of only 2 points, and in grade 10, the proficiency rated increased by only 4 percentage points during the 5-year period.
- The graduation rate increased in South St. Paul from 2008 to 2011 by 4 percentage points, however, the graduation rate in Fridley decreased by 2.8 percentage points during the same period.
- For the ACT, there were no significant increases in composite or subject area scores in either school district over the past 4 years. However, South St. Paul's composite scores have been just under the state composite scores for the past 3 years.

Strong evidence of the availability of student performance data was presented:

- To educators, through districts' data management system;
- To parents and students, through the parent portal, newsletters; and

- To parents and community members, through district websites, annual reports mailed to every household.

Selection criteria (b) was not addressed.

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

A limited level of transparency was reported. Teacher training and salaries and fiscal expenditures posted on Minnesota Department of Education website. The district publishes personnel salaries and benefits and post expenditures by school on the website. However, there is no indication that individual salaries are reported.

In addition to web-based dissemination of information, other methods are provided for sharing personnel costs and other fiscal information, making this information widely available to stakeholders.

Transparency in district processes and practices was not addressed.

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

Evidence provided indicates that sufficient consortium autonomy exists to implement personalized learning environments:

- No aspect of the proposal is prohibited by Minnesota statutes.
- TIES is one of 6 regional information management centers that operate in the state, and is regulated by state statute.
- Applying for the RTT-D grant as a consortium is permitted by state statute.

The alignment of the proposal with the state's vision, as reflected in the Minnesota Department of Education's Seven Point Plan, is a feasible demonstration that successful conditions exist that would support implementation.

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

Evidence was provided of extensive, meaningful stakeholder engagement and support for the RTT-D proposal:

- Input sought from internal stakeholders (superintendents, principals, IB program staff, special needs supervisors, professional development staff, student groups, parent groups);
- Superintendents met periodically with teacher unions and representatives from civic organizations and local community colleges; and
- Letters of support represent proposal endorsement from a cross section of external stakeholder groups that reflected broad support for the proposal.

Although there was engagement with representatives from teacher unions during the development of the proposal, no evidence was provided of direct engagement with teachers. This is a great concern; teachers should have had a voice in the development of an instructional approach which would significantly change teaching and learning in their classrooms.

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

There is strong evidence that a thorough analysis of needs and gaps occurred during the development of this proposal and that the 3 proposed project strategies will adequately address those needs and gaps:

1. Gaps in the academic achievement of students, as demonstrated in MCAs, MAP, and graduation rate data, would be

addressed through the IB continuum and the AVID program. These programs would address these needs successfully, since the IB program introduces rigor into daily instruction and AVID supports the development of academic skills that prepare students for rigor.

2. Development of a road map for college readiness will address a systemic need to develop an in-depth understanding of what college readiness is. This road map would become an essential tool for communication of project goals (the vision) and project implementation (objectives).
3. Use of technology to support a college ready approach and personalized learning would address the need to integrate technology applications and institutionalize technology use for educational and administrative/management purposes. Project implementation would completely transform the districts' use of and approach to technology, making student achievement the single focus of all technology innovations.

A plan, including goals, activities/rationale, timelines, deliverables, and persons responsible, was not included.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	13
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The components of a high quality plan were not included.</p> <p>(a) The implementation of the IB continuum would effectively support personalized learning and develop self-directed learners, with its constructivist approach to learning which builds on personal interests and strengths. The rigor of the IB program would prepare students to be college and career ready upon graduation, focusing on learning how to learn, structured inquiry, and critical thinking. Through this program, students would develop the academic skills of persistence, teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving. Creating a map scaffold of college readiness from pre-school through grade 12 with benchmarks at each grade level will provide a powerful tool for all members of the school community.</p> <p>(b) The IB continuum would provide high quality personalized learning experiences and projects that allow for individualized sequence of content and skill mastery, to be supported by the development of a personalized learning plan and portfolio for each student. The needs of all students, including high need students, would be identified, accommodated, and addressed through the personalized plan. High quality instructional approaches include an interdisciplinary approach to content and a real world context for learning. The consortium's plan to develop a map scaffold of college readiness including benchmarks would support a process of analyzing regular feedback regarding student progress toward meeting college readiness standards and modifying instruction to meet individual student needs. This iterative process of monitoring progress to standards would ensure that all students, particularly high needs students, receive an instructional program that is responsive and customized to meet rigorous standards. Technology, including personal devices, would deliver numerous digital learning opportunities to students.</p> <p>Selection criteria (c) was not addressed.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	15
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provided a well thought-out four-year plan for teaching and leading with ongoing strategies and annual activities that would effectively stage the implementation of the project.</p> <p>(a) Extensive and comprehensive teacher training in several key areas (i.e., IB, AVID, authentic assessment, differentiated instruction, technology tools and digital resources, college-ready benchmarks and interventions) would prepare teachers to transform the learning environments in their classrooms. Professional development will be delivered in a variety of ways, providing teachers with opportunities to interact with and internalize new learning in a variety of contexts (grade level, content-based, vertical teams, professional learning communities), deepening their understanding and ability to transfer their learning into changes in practice.</p> <p>The Quality Compensation program provides a strong foundation to drive the transition to personalized learning environments through the use of feedback to principals and teachers.</p> <p>(b) Capacity in using formative data to frequently measure student progress toward meeting standards would be developed through training in the TIES developed data systems, powerful tools for managing and utilizing data, critical to monitoring progress at district, school, classroom, and student levels. Teachers would receive ongoing training in analyzing data and providing the appropriate next steps to accelerate student progress, skills that are essential to maximizing personalized</p>		

learning.

(c) The identification of trends and patterns in teacher data from the Quality Compensation program would allow school leaders and teams to develop strategies aimed at improving school culture and addressing other global issues evident within schools. This rich source of data would provide direction in school improvement efforts.

Selection criteria (d) was not addressed.

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

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strong evidence was provided of cohesive and responsive district organization that would support personalized learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff available to lead technology integration and to address implementation issues;</li> <li>• Instructional Leaders in place to provide training in Charlotte Danielson framework for revised teacher evaluation system and to provide individual teacher support; and</li> <li>• Positions to be added to support project implementation (project director, personalized learning environment position in each site).</li> </ul> <p>Information presented regarding school leadership teams indicated that they have been granted sufficient autonomy to make school-based decisions in support of personalized learning.</p> <p>Board policies in both districts provide students with opportunities to demonstrate mastery of standards in multiple ways and to earn credit based on mastery of content and skills, evidence of the districts' commitment to multiple pathways to success for students.</p> <p>Strong support systems and qualified staff are in place to make adaptations for special education students and ELL, ensuring them access to learning resources and rigorous instructional practices.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	5
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Teacher, student, and parent access to technology resources is currently severely limited due to the inadequate technology infrastructure that exists in both districts. Technology systems are currently inadequate to allow exporting data in an open format and interoperable data systems. The identification of the upgrades needed to support personalized learning was based on a thorough analysis of existing needs and gaps.</p> <p>Technical assistance would be provided to teachers by a technology support specialist that would be funded in each district to focus on hardware, software, and device management. Four personal learning environment specialists in each district would support teachers in reflecting on data and developing and implementing personalized learning environments.</p> <p>Technical support for parents and students was not addressed.</p>		

#### E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant presented an innovative, multi-level approach to continuous improvement that involves school-based, district level, and inter-district teams and the RTT-D Consortium Steering Committee. Each group would monitor data and progress, troubleshoot, and make the modifications needed, at its organizational level.</p> <p>The strategy for sharing information with the public is multi-faceted, and is likely to result in the timely distribution of information regarding interim results and status of key program components to key stakeholders.</p>		

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Several effective methods of communicating with internal and external stakeholders were presented, most of which would use structures and opportunities that are already in place within the districts. These methods would likely reach the maximum number of stakeholders.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Based on the rationales that were presented for each performance measure, they are appropriate, ambitious, and achievable, and they will provide formative, actionable data. A credible strategy for modifying measures that prove to be insufficient was included.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This section was not included in the application.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The budget is reasonable and sufficient to support project implementation. It includes district support during the grant period, builds on programs already in place, and uses existing staff to support program implementation, making it as cost-effective as possible.</p> <p>The applicant presented a sound rationale for expenditures. One-time budget expenditures address the technology upgrades and other needs that were documented in the proposal. Positions requested would provide direct services to schools and students and support the 3 key strategies outlined in the proposal. Funds allocated in the Supplies category would provide the personal devices, applications, and software that are critical to personalizing and extending student learning. Budget estimates for this category were reasonable, rational, and included all necessary components.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	7
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant asserted that sustainability will occur because the proposal integrates existing systems and because of the re-assignment of current staff to support project implementation. The AVID Coordinator position would be funded through state funds. In addition, districts that have adopted Q Comp receive additional funds to execute their Q comp plans, which focus on areas that are aligned with the proposal: data-driven decisions, team building, and district goal setting, and teacher evaluation. The applicant's approach to sustainability seems rationale, however, since estimated amounts of re-assigned funds a sustainability budget were not included, it is impossible to determine whether this approach is reasonable.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	3
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(1) The applicant presented a discussion of several existing partnerships, instead of identifying the partner that would support the plan described in Absolute Priority 1.</p>		

(2) The applicant identified desired results that were robust and well aligned with the broader RTT-D proposal. Since the IB continuum is a Pre-K -12 model, a measure that aseses kindergarten readiness in language and literacy would be a valuable tool to identify students who need immediate attention. The math and reading competency measure would provide an indication of *college track* in grades 3 and 4, that would allow for early interventions. The systems improvement measure would provide an assessment of critical systemic elements that support transformation, such as professional capacity and family and community engagement.

Scoring criteria (3), (4), and (5) were not addressed.

(6) Appropriate, ambitious, and achievable performance measures were identified.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: The applicant presented a strong vision of school reform grounded in the 4 assurance areas throughtout the application.		

Total	210	159
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## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

Application #0347MN-3 for Fridley Public Schools

#### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:  <i>This plan address the first three core assurances. It does not address turning around low performing schools. Instead all the schools in the districts will be involved. This is a convincingly comprehensive and coherent plan.</i>  <i>This project was clearly and specifically elaborated and provided evidence that the project, though ambitious, is likely to be accomplishable by this group and if they are successful they will be making a contribution that could serve their whole state because it is tied to state standards and assessments. It is only missing a detailed description of what the basis of the anytime anywhere learning would be. Without that, there is a chance that this project will be only an elaborate data display, not unlike any number of other off the shelf products (e.g., skyward, data director, ARIS) these districts could buy and deploy through their data center.</i>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	5
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:		

All schools are included. It is not clear that these are high needs districts. They seem to meet the expectations, but the data do not suggest that school by school they each have 40% or more students in low income, which is why all the schools in the district are involved.

These districts are taking an equal access approach to this work- providing the same supports to all students in all schools. It is unclear if schools with particular needs will get differentiated supports.

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

*The plan aims to include all the schools in the district. The scale up will be to take what is developed and piloted in these two districts and make it available to all 30 districts in the data center. This is a feasible scale up plan.*

*This plan builds on the foundation of a clear instructional framework from IB, state standards, formative and summative assessments, and administrative data to develop fully elaborated learning progressions for students, families, teachers and school leaders to understand and track each individual students' progress toward college ready expectations. Partnering with their data center where the administrative data is housed, and developing a highly accessible portal for students, families, teachers and school leaders will transform administrative data into a tool for personalization.*

*This project is developed with scale ability in mind and could scale to all the districts in the data center. This project could make a contribution to understanding the efficacy of a data center and two small districts developing a comprehensive tool of this sort, compared to districts that buy and implement an off the shelf data management tool.*

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

The vision in this plan clearly addresses increasing summative and growth data generation and analysis, decreasing achievement gaps, increasing graduation rates and tracking college enrollment. The targets for improvement meet but do not exceed the ESEA expectations.

The vision in this plan does seem likely to result in improved student learning and performance and by making sure all students know how they are meeting the ambitious goals of the IB program. The IB program should provide an education that leads to all of their students being college ready.

The plan could improve by adding more diagnostic, predictive, and adaptive formative assessments.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	8

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

*The proposal presents a picture of improvement based on the successful implementation of district wide IB program.*

*(a) The plan tests score projections do not look particularly ambitious- the plan aims to simply meet the federal expectation in their ESEA waiver of reducing the achievement gap by half by the year 2017. The districts seem to be starting from a high level of achievement and could be aiming higher in academic achievement, graduation and college going.*

*(b) To address low performance these districts redesigned the entire K-12 instructional program to meet the ambitious expectations of IB. How the districts personalize this is not entirely clear. It is also not clear that all students have equal access to high quality instruction. IB does not preclude tracking or other inequities.*

*(c) The districts seems to have a system in place for making student performance data available to students, parents teachers and school and district leaders. Although it should be noted that the districts do not disaggregate data for students 3-8 grade. This is a weakness that would need to change in the work they do for this grant.*

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

*These districts participate in a quality compensation system for teachers. There were district salary schedules included in the appendix but there was no mention of how this information is generally shared within the community. There seems to be no transparency when it comes to what individuals actually earn.*

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	8
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

*The districts assure the authority and discretion to make the decisions and programmatic changes in this plan. The appendix included board policy that allows for students to skip grades and for credit earned outside of the traditional classroom to be recognized. These are not far reaching policies for personalization, but there was no mention of policies that might limit personalization. This plan involved new approaches to using student data. No data sharing agreement was presented in this document. Typically districts and data centers have data sharing agreements, but none was shared in this document. A data sharing agreement would be essential to the success of this project.*

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

*(a) The description of stakeholder involvement was complete. This plan was crafted by district office insiders. The plan was presented to students, parents and community leaders. There is no evidence that these constituent groups contributed to the design. The process seemed to be primarily rubber stamping.*

*(i) There was discussion of the Q comp agreement and the teacher evaluation process as a key feature of discussion in the development of the plan. Actual agreement between the districts and their teachers' union was left as something to figure out if and when the project is funded. There is no evidence that 70% of the staff had a chance to review and support the plan.*

*(b) The appendix does include a few letters of support, mayors, a state senator, special education advisory committee chairs, Key Club leaders, Future Educators club, student council president and vice president, Rotary, Chamber or Commerce, technical college president from a small set of community leaders. Notably missing are the school board and the teachers and any advisory committee from the data center.*

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

This plan is developed on an analysis of what these districts are currently doing to raise expectations and personalize learning. The plan has a strong rational logic model. It takes into consideration the instructional framework, assessment data, administrative data, and state standards to create a comprehensive roadmap for success in each grade level, designed for students' and teachers to track their own progress and make decisions.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	13

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) (I,ii,iii, iv,v) This plan provides three primary approaches (personal computer devices that will provide access to personalized teaching and learning options, comprehensive personal data display, aligned to a comprehensive roadmap of the learning progressions for college readiness all tied to the IB curriculum framework. This should be an empowering tool for educators, students and their families to keep close track of students' progress and up coming expectations.

(b) (I,ii, iii) Yes, there is evidence of this in the plan. The IB program design and implementation provides a variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments; and high-quality content. The increase in computer devices, requested in this proposal will increase students' access to digital learning content aligned to the college readiness standards in the IB program.

(iv) A & B. This plan includes improvements in immediate feedback to students, parents and teachers about students' progress toward classroom, grade level and state standards aligned to college readiness.

(v) There is no specific plan for particular accommodations but the overall plan intends to put students in charge of tracking their progress toward graduation and college going through an improved data system that provides easy access to students, families and teachers to track individual progress on multiple measures.

(c) This plan includes the development of a data system but there is no mention of how they will train students to use it.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	13
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) (i) These districts seem to understand that reculturing instruction takes time to learn. Their transition to IB has taken six years so far. There are adequate but not generous opportunities for teachers and leaders to support the effective implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies.

(ii) How students' learning will be personalized is not fully elaborated in this this plan. Within the IB program there are opportunities to adapt content and instruction for students to engage in common and individual tasks. Increasing the number of personal computer devises is aimed at increasing these opportunities.

(iii) This is an area in the plan that needs improvement. While the rest of the country is focused on implementing the national common core, these districts have not yet fully implemented their state standards. They are not participating in either of the two federal assessment initiatives which means they are proposing to figure out all this on their own. That may be a strength, if they have the development capacity, or a weakness if they find themselves over their heads either in the content development or the software development. The detail in their plan suggests they have at least thought through what will be necessary.

This plan intends to increase the frequency in which students, parents and teachers can monitor their students' progress, but it does not increase the frequency of measuring student progress toward meeting standards. The plan focuses primarily on MAP tests, which are given in the fall and spring. This is insufficient for instructional planning and personalization. These districts do not have a history of robust formative and summative assessments. The data system they are proposing will potentially generate more data more frequently.

(iv) This is a weakness in the plan. The districts plan to implement a new principal evaluation system over the period of this grant. It is not clear how this will provide feedback for the project.

(b) (i) These districts do not have much for actionable data. This is an area for development.

(ii) The IB framework provides this.

(iii) This is the goal of the new data system.

(c) (i) The teacher evaluation system is tied to the Danielson Instructional framework and should be able to provide meaningful feedback about instructional practice.

(ii) There are PLCs in place for teachers to continuously reflect on their student's learning and plan for personalization. Whether these are highly productive is unknown. There is no PLC outcome data provided to evaluate.

(d) There is no mention of hard to staff schools or challenges finding math and science teachers.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	8
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) There is a robust reporting and accountability feedback loop in the governance structure to support this work.</p> <p>(b) No mention of school leaders' discretion and autonomy.</p> <p>(c) There is a board policy #620 that allows students to earn credit in environments other than the traditional classroom. (These policies generally apply to credit earned in juvenile detention or during a suspension or while on a sky trip in the alps.) This policy is inadequate for addressing new forms of personalized learning such as MITx or other college courses now available on the internet.</p> <p>(d) This is the focus of the plan. The plan should provide this. They currently do not have this capacity.</p> <p>(e) There is no specific support in this plan for English language learners other than the IB program expects all students to be bilingual but the plan does not mention particular instructional practices to support this.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) One strength of this plan is the proposal to not only provide computer devices to all students but to provide hot spots to families who do not otherwise have access to the internet.</p> <p>(b) This plan provides adequate support for teachers to learn to teach with one-to-one computers but a weakness in the plan is it does not specify how they will teach student and parents to use these devices.</p> <p>(c, d) The majority of the plan aims to put an easily access data display system in place for administrators, teachers, students and their families</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	8
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The plan includes multiple feedback loops between all stakeholders including: 1) teachers and instructional leaders, 2) teachers and the grant leadership team 3) superintendents and the teachers' union, 4) school board and the district's implementation team. The structures seem to be in place to support adequate, if not robust opportunities to inform the public about the grant's impact and monitor and adjust grant activity toward the goals.</p> <p>One weakness in the plan is that a large amount of the work will be carried out by TIES and there is no description of what their process will be for feedback and adjustment on their work.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

A strength in the plan is a proposed website for intra-district, inter-district and public information about the grant activities.

Another strength is regular public reports to the school boards and the local media.

Another strength is the feedback structure described above. Taken together, these practices should provide adequate opportunities for communications.

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

5

3

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

a) The rationale is to increase and align growth measures with state tests. That is a necessary first step but the plan needs to go beyond annual growth if assessment data is going to be useful to the teachers and students. The plan needs more frequent formative assessments.

(b) The plan states, "Because we don't disaggregate data in 4-8 grade bands, we are using district attendance by subgroups (4-8 has limited subgroup cell size). Subgroup student totals in subsequent years are based on the baseline year student totals." This is a weakness and will need to change in order to provide more useful data to teachers. The teachers will need desegregated data and the districts will need to disaggregate the data regardless of subgroup size in order to personalize instruction.

(b) There is an adequate plan for reviewing and adjusting their measures as they try them out.

The districts need to increase the number of measures and the effectiveness of the measures. Teachers will need diagnostic, predictive and adaptive formative assessments in at least the subjects of math, reading and science tied to their classroom instruction and aligned to standards.

This plan does not include 12-14 measures. It uses the same measure across many grade levels and across subjects, but the types of measures are too limited and primarily summative which are not useful for personalizing learning in real time.

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

5

1

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

There is little to no description of this sort of evaluation data. Outside of the teacher evaluation process, there is no mention of how they plan to evaluate the productivity of teacher PD or other changes they may be making, other than changes in student test scores. The problem with using student test scores is it is impossible to distinguish which strategy(s) resulted in a change in the test scores. This means they will be making random guesses about what to do at the classroom level.

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

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	7
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<i>The budget has adequate but not generous support for this work.</i>		
(a) The budget identifies the funds that will support the project.		
(b) The budget allocations are reasonable and may be sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal.		
(c) (I,ii) The budget provides a thoughtful rationale for its allocations and identifies funds that will be used for one-time investments, with a focus on strategies that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:		

*There is a sustainability plan that transfers funding from the federal government to back to the districts with some hopes for private funding. There is no longer term budget. While many of these costs are expected to be absorbed by the district, some of these costs are likely to be a struggle because there is no clear plan for dedicated sustaniablity funding.*

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

#### Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

1) The plan describe partnerships with a variety of non-profit organizations and for-profit business each providing discrete supports for students in the district. For example a medical organization that provides free physicals for school activities and mental health organization that provides counselors and a foundation that ran an adopt a smartboards fund raiser.

These partnerships are described as sustainable because they are doing what they would be doing anyway. For example, the health organizations would be providing physicals regardless of whether they provided them for free for students who could not pay for them. But the health organizations are not described as becoming involved in a broader support network.

(2) The plan includes detailed descriptions of targeted activities. While most of the activities are described as inputs, they also detail how they will monitor the activities and what they hope to see as outcomes.

(3) (a,b,c, d) The plan indicates summative measures related to academic subjects as measures for the partnership activities. This seems inadequate because for example, there is no way to know if there is any relationship between a sports physical and a math test score, or between snacks provided at an activity or over a weekend and a reading test score.

(4) These partnerships primarily provide supportive social services not directly tied to academic activities.

(5) (a) (b) (c) d (e ) The plan outlines on-going needs assessment based on an array of student achievement measures and information from monitoring inputs. Parents are expected to be informed through the district's student data protal. There are also intervention teams that monitor student data and determine if specific interventions are necessary.

(6) Through a system of team meetings and feedback loops the grant leadership team has a fair chance of keeping apprised of the progress of the grant and making adjustments as the proceed.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

#### Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

This plan is compreheive, coherent and if successfull will create and implement teaching and learning tools that are likely to personalize learning, equalize access to high quality learning experience, align instruction to high expectations and college ready standards, accelerate learning and support students making informaed choices about their own progress toward college ready standards and pursuing subjects and topics of their own interest. Additionally, if they are successful the tools they develop will be easily scale able to 27 other school districts in their data center and to other data centers around the state.

Total	210	133
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