



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0441UT-1 for Granite School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has put forth an adequate that would seem to be achievable. The district has adopted the "National Core Standards" as a means for organizing curricula and benchmarks. The district also is in the process of aligning other formative and summative assessments, such as Scholastic Reading Inventory and the Utah Criterion Referenced Test (CRT). GSD combines this with the Utah Comprehensive Accountability System (OCAS) to provide annual public reports for whole schools and for disaggregated data for groups (such as: ethnicity, economically disadvantaged etc.). Their CACTUS system allows the district to follow teacher certification issues, ensure that teachers are highly qualified and plan for Professional Development where and when necessary. These two systems tie individual teachers to student data. These systems allow UTDOE, and thus the district to track students who have moved and who have come back into this system. This appears to be a powerful tool for assessing student progress and teacher effectiveness. Included in this data gathering system is a Student Growth Profile (SGP) which allows districts to track teachers who are either effective or highly effective. In particular, the district's use of PLAN to track Professional Learning (PL) is to be commended. The districts use of PLEs is innovative in that it allows students to individually meet mastery of a given topic and then move to the next level. The districts vision to achieve growth for all students through PLEs and PLPs is convincing. The district is commended for the extensiveness of their vision. High points are awarded.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a)The district describes an approach that appears to be primarily based on choosing the lowest achieving schools in their district. While the districts wish to provide support to their lowest achieving schools, there is scant evidence provided that these particular schools have the resources to effect school-wide change. Some evidence is presented in section b that lends modest support that the district has capacity to effect change. However, the evidence is less conclusive at the individual school level. (b) A list of schools participating in the grant activities is provided. (c)There is a table delineating the total number of students (20,181) participating as well as percentages of students participating who are from minorities, and students from other high risk groups. The tables provided substantial evidence many minority and "high risk" populations will be served by the grant.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district provides a comprehensive and innovative plan for scaling up its proposal. The district's logic model is based on the "Implementation Science" research. The proposal presents a clearly defined plan that lists project goals, inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes. Further the outcomes are divided into short term, intermediate term, and long term outcomes. This attention to these types of outcomes should help to ensure that progress is tracked formatively. This should help to insure that progress is monitored and that adjustments are made in a timely fashion to insure that the program is fully implemented. The district is commended for the detail of the plan and its logic system.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The LEA's district wide goals for improved student outcomes appear to be achievable. However an improvement rate of 2-3%</p>		

a year does not appear to be highly ambitious, but rather moderate. This appears to be true for all goals (a,b,c,d &e). Additionally, the achievement gap among different groups does not appear to be significantly impacted. Because of this, moderate points are awarded.

### 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: (a)The district presents data that shows that it has succeeded in implementing an ambitious reform in the area of mathematics. District data show that the district out-performed the state by 10% over four years (state -3% LEA +7%). The district also presents improvement rates across Algebra I, II and Geometry that ranged 19 to 28%. Increases were shown across all Junior High Schools except for one. This is a commendable achievement as some of these schools were the district's low achieving and high minority schools. Little data is available regarding student graduation and college enrollment rates. (b)GSD presents data from one high school related to ambitious and significant reforms in its lowest achieving High School. This includes decreases in "F" grades, attendance issues, suspensions and fights, and increases in algebra I, Geometry and 10th and 11th grade language arts. This would appear to be significant progress in this lowest performing school. (c) GSD has student, parent, and teacher portals available that allow access to student data and allow appointments to be scheduled. This appears to be a feasible system for allowing stakeholders appropriate access to student data.		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: GSD provides to its constituents, through Utah's Government Records Access and Management Act (GRAMA)and Utah's RIGHTTOKNOW.COM website data that includes (a) actual personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff, (b) Actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff only; (c) Actual personnel salaries at the school level for teachers only; and (d) Actual non-personnel expenditures at the school level.		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: GSD presents ample evidence that the state has provided an environment that provides legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement PLES. This includes the LEA's ability to use competency based standards and assessments, acceptance of credits and grades awarded by accredited schools, courses offered over the internet and through distance learning, and open entry/exit classes and traditional classes.		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	5
(B)(4) Reviewer Comments: (a) The LEA describes a process that involves collaboration with many stakeholders. The project was "discussed" with PTA and GSD teacher association. While the evidence presents letters of support for the proposal from these groups, the evidence of their involvement, as well as student involvement, is ambiguous at best. There are letters of support from the GSD teachers association. (b) GSD provides letters of support from such key stakeholders as PTA, teachers association, higher education, RMC, the Latino Association and other stakeholders.		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3
(B)(5) Reviewer Comments: The school district has clearly delineated seven areas where there are gaps. In their verbiage, they clearly delineate the gaps and how it impacts their ability to move forward. There is less evidence given to the logic behind the proposal. This is implied in the verbiage and gap analysis, but still is a bit ambiguous.		

### 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>(1) (a) GSD has a plan to hire college and career counselors to help students to define their career goals. This plan seems to be appropriate for facilitating students' knowledge that what they are learning is key to accomplishing their goals. These counselors would seem to be the appropriate support for students to develop and pursue learning goals. GSD outlines clear steps for these counselors and others to help students to pursue learning and career goals in a systematic manner. GSD proposal uses a combination of technology and dynamic grouping around goals to facilitate students' abilities to meet their goals and graduation requirements. This integration of technology with classroom experiences has the potential to be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest. This combination provides unique opportunities for students to be exposed to diverse cultures, contexts and perspectives in pursuing their goals. The proposal presents credible evidence that students' PLPs allow students to exhibit their knowledge and skills in multiple formats and to earn course credits in their own timeframes.(b)The district proposes a comprehensive learning environment. This environment allows students to have access to a PLP. The district describes a process where students meet with counselors who together with parents and teachers develop a PLP that identifies the content mastery and knowledge gaps of each student. The district documents that teachers will be able to monitor progress through an ambitious technology which allows teachers to assess students' progress in real time. The district proposes a learning environment that through a variety of formats including virtual environments that enable the student to learn and succeed using different modalities. The district proposes to gather high quality content that is aligned to common core standards. GSD proposal includes the use of technology to integrate a more student centered curriculum as well as access to ongoing and regular feedback. The embedded assessments enable teachers and counselors to give "timely" formative feedback about students' progress. The district describes a comprehensive environment (combination of technology and classroom enhancements) where students have access to high quality strategies that are targeted toward the individual student's needs. The district describes a complete training and support system for training students to use the tools and systems. This training includes both initial and ongoing training. The proposal describes a comprehensive plan for facilitating students' growth through PLEs and PLPs.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	17
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) GSD presents a comprehensive Professional Development (PD) plan in Table 20. Part of the plan is putting together a sound PLE Innovation Team to create both the framework for teachers and the PD to enhance teacher ability to implement PLEs and PLPS. This plan includes initial intensive training through summer institutes, training in use of technology, coaches and feedback to ensure that initial training is carried forward. Additionally to ensure ongoing teacher expertise the PD plan includes Professional Learning Communities (PLC), PLE teaching practicums, on demand training and quarterly training for counselors. The district presents a comprehensive PD plan designed to facilitate teacher and counselor success through long term PD and PLCs. The PD is designed information on how to use formative assessments to track progress and use formative assessment to shape content and use different modalities to enhance students' growth and development. The proposal states that feedback will be provided to teachers and principals through the GSD evaluation systems. The GSD platform and PD plan supports the educators' growth and ability to analyze, interpret, and use t student data to improve student learning and modify instruction to test their strategies to enhance student learning. (b) GSD provides information of an achievable plan that integrates technology, virtual resources, and in person supports that will allow educators to identify resources that respond to PLPS. GSD describes a system that provides real time formative assessment that will enable the educator to design differentiated appropriate differentiated instruction to accelerate mastery of content. GSD has aligned it's curriculum with the Common Core. The GSD plan includes a PLE curriculum and PD resources to allow educators to execute PLPs efficiently. This comprehensive platform is based on frequent formative assessment, smart classrooms, and classroom to create a PLE. A part of this system is online pre, formative and summative assessment that is available in real time, thus allowing all stakeholders from students through administrators to effectively track progress toward goals. The PLE innovation team plays a pivotal role in aligning curricula to Common Core and facilitating a comprehensive system of instructional and assessment. (c)As noted earlier GSD has envisioned and plan to implement comprehensive policies, tools, data, and resources that enable leaders and leadership teams to improve individual and collective educator effectiveness. A part of this process includes using summative assessments. As noted earlier the PLE Innovation Team has responsibilities to provide "ongoing" PD and support. PLCs will be used to share best practices, experiences and challenges. The ambitious plan includes plans for teachers showing leadership, PLE knowledge and teaching skill to become master teachers who role is to sustain the development of PLEs. (d) GSD provides notes that the success of their project is dependent increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective/highly effective educators is dependent on five key elements: ongoing PD, PLE Innovation Team, tech support, and teacher incentives. GSD provides a comprehensive implementation plan that includes activities, activity descriptions, a timeline, target populations, deliverables and responsible parties and is organized around each project. The</p>		

detail of this ambitious plan provides convincing evidence that the plan is achievable.

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

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	13
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>GDC outlines a detailed comprehensive plan to support project implementation. The district presents several types of leadership teams that will support students, teachers and leaders in the implementation of this plan. Examples of these teams include: the PLE Innovation team, PLs, and school level administrators. The district suggests that each team will report progress but will maintain sufficient autonomy to make critical decisions. The narrative is ambiguous as to exactly this will look when implemented. GSD does provide strong evidence of giving the students opportunities to earn credit based on mastery in multiple ways and through multiple time sequences. This plan is given credence by the fact that GSD has adopted the five principles of the International Association for K-12 Online Learning Competency-Based Pathways design principles. Further evidence is provided through their plan to approach assessment as an important part of learning. This will be established through the Process of PLEs and PLPs. The combination of establishing learning goals for themselves, participation in the selection of content different modalities of learning and assessments, and access to data that allow the student to assess their own progress toward their goals will help to have the student "buy in" that is essential to success. Mastery is the indicator for credits to be earned not seat time. Additionally, GSD has designed a technology platform that has created fully integrated e-learning environment. The system is capable of allowing appropriate access in both directions to stakeholders to facilitate individual student growth.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	10
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>GSD present a plan where all stakeholders have access to content, tools, and other learning resources through a fully integrated e-learning environment through a single portal. GSD proposal takes account of the technology gap among students and other stakeholders by providing opportunities for students to check out hardware and by establishing a "Student and Family Assistance Center". The center will provide a place with technological support for those with technology challenges. The proposal describes other technology support being provided through in-class technology instruction and teacher help. GSD proposes to provide not only initial training but also follow-up training through various media. This level of support should provide the support teachers will need to support their students. Support for the crucial role of parents will be provided by Parent Assistance Center. The plans for this center include information not only on the technology but information about standards based and mastery based learning. GSD has put together a plan for an ambitious e-learning platform and data system that: measures student growth and challenges; track teachers professional growth and provide information for improvement; is user friendly; driven by real time data; instruction driven, and easy for stakeholders to use while protecting access to information. This is an comprehensive plan that should be achievable.</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><i>GDS describes an effective continuous improvement process that includes the use of an external evaluator. Though not mandated by USDOE, this addition does make it more likely that data will be collected and analyzed in an appropriate manner. The district is to be commended for using a process that includes process evaluation, treatment verification as well as outcome evaluation. This trifecta process should enhance the districts abilities to not only ensure outcomes are met but to be able to make adjustments as need through process evaluation and treatment verification. These three components of evaluation are an important piece of the Continuous Improvement Process. GSD proposes that data will be used for data driven decisions as well as other instructional decisions. GSD envisions this process to be initially led by the external evaluators who will facilitate</i></p>		

*discussions among decision makers for implementing corrections and improvement to projects. Concurrently, this modeling of data driven decision making by the external evaluators should provide sufficient training on data driven decision making so that school district personnel can take up the process. The district plans for the Connect Steering Committee, which is composed of various stakeholders, to lead the decision making process as the external evaluators lead the process, then eventually lead the process themselves. The use of the external evaluators and school district personnel lends evidence to GSD's capacity to engage in the continuous improvement process once the evaluators are gone. GSD plans on following the American Evaluation Association's Guiding Principles for Evaluators. The plan includes filing evaluator reports with the school district; making the reports available through the district's website, media outlets and school newsletters. The district has put together a comprehensive quality improvement plan from data collection through dissemination.*

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

5

3

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

In the previous section GSD has outlined a cohesive continuous plan that alludes to communication and engagement. It is noted that internal and external evaluators will work collaboratively and continuously to measure impact of projects. GSD explicates a semi-annual meeting to discuss challenges and share results with external and internal evaluators. There is to be an annual meeting to discuss with all stakeholders progress made toward meeting process goals. Less detail is available as to the exact way these meetings will be facilitated. The proposal does not make transparent how these progress reports will be disseminated to all stakeholders.

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

5

2

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

GSD provides appropriate goals for its proposal. However no rationale is provided for the choices of performance indicators, how the measure is rigorous, and how measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant's implementation success or areas of concern; and how it will review and improve the measure over time if it is insufficient to gauge implementation progress. There is insufficient detail addressing these concerns. The proposal does list adequate performance measures but more detail about the reason for these choices would have been helpful.

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

5

4

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

GSD presents a cohesive plan to evaluate the effectiveness of investments made in the RTT-D funded activities. They present a plan that provides appropriate PD, ambitious use of technology, and plans to productively use time, staff, money, and resources to improve results. The plan is clearly presented in both verbiage and table format. The use of external expert evaluators adds proof that the district is intent on using continuous improvement to effectively and efficiently use resources. However, more documentation of the reasons for choosing specific data would strengthen the proposal.

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

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	5
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>GSD provides a clear and detailed budget. It does not appear that GSD plans on using other funds to support their proposal. The budget includes information of which funds will be used for one time investments versus those that will be ongoing. While sustainability is not clearly defined in the budget sections, it is partially addressed in previous section where GSD discusses the use of Master teachers and The Innovation team to provide continuity. It is not clear from the budget or budget narrative how technical support will be funded once the grant period is over.</p>		

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

GSD plans to sustain the project through various methods. GSD plans to use state funds to support digital content and equipment to sustain the virtual nature of the PLE. It also points to its history of sustaining grants in the past. Other methods involve a natural reduction costs for PD, technical assistance, external evaluation and the salaries of the grant director and assistant director. GSD also alludes to support from their community partners, but the proposal is ambiguous about how this part will be implemented and sustained. It is not included in the budget narrative. GSD does not provide a budget for the three years after the term of the grant.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

GSD lists four sustainable partnerships. These partnerships are described as being sustained through the five Student and Family Assistance Centers with particular emphasis on Goal 13 that addresses improving student and family support through expanding community partnership. The roles of these partners are describes both in the narrative for the competitive priority and in the MOUs. GSD has identified six population desired results from the partnerships. These partnerships are included in the continuous improvement plan and evaluation so will be evaluated on an ongoing basis. This process should improve results over time. As the partnership is integral to the entire proposal the partnership will be evaluated formatively throughout the project with goals and strategies reset when necessary. GSD outlines achievable but moderate performance measures for the desired results for students. Gains of only 1-2% a year are modest but achievable.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

GSD has outlined a cohesive plan to create PLEs. This is accomplished through a ambitious integration of technology with educator and leader expertise to build environments that are user freindly content enriched environments.They have succesfully presented a plan that should increase the effectiveness of educators through sustained PD and state of the art technology. The plan has venues gor students, parents and educators to access their stregnths and challenges in order to design a PLP that meets the needs and goals of the individual student and family.

Total	210	153
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0441UT-2 for Granite School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The Granite School District provided a clear and reasonable reform vision that included specific descriptions of current efforts in all four of the core assurance areas. The applicant has proposed an approach to personalized learning that is not based on the traditional seat based credit accrual requirements. Rather, the applicant proposes to offer PLE courses that are based on demonstrated mastery at the students' own pace. Support for this approach is evidenced below.

The applicant presented the following five strategies for the intended reform vision: the Granite Innovation Center (the Alternative High School), a plan to scale the PLE courses throughout the district, a PLE innovation Team, college and career counseling and evaluation for continuous improvement.

Of positive note are the applicant's extensive student assessment opportunities and access to student level data. The universal screening (Acuity Progress) is given three times a year, along with SRI as a formative reading assessments and The Utah Criterion -Referenced Test (CRT) and provide rapid time data that can guide instructional changes. These assessments are also aligned to the common core Standards. The Utah Comprehensive Accountability System (UCAS) also provides for the desegregation of data by subgroups, again providing both the teacher and PLE innovation Team with student data that will drive instruction. The UCAS will calculate a Student Growth Percentile (SGP) for each student with at least two years contiguous test scores from 3rd through 12th grade, and will document the amount of growth a student achieved from the previous year. Both these systems are ready and available to the district.

The state CACTUS data system is a two tiered system with student academic performance and teacher credentialing information. The CACTUS ties student data to individual teachers, and as such, is another example of a support system for the proposed PLE. This individual student identifier provides the applicant the ability to track students through their P-20 school career and into the post-secondary system- which will be especially effective for ensuring that highly mobile students do not fall behind.

It is unclear how the applicant will connect the new PLE courses and subsequent PLE assessment information to the existing assessment options and state data system.

A strength of the reform vision is the applicant's addition of the Professional Learning Alignment Navigator (PLAN) to the state's data system. The GSD has already implemented PLAN, which also meets specific administrative and Professional Growth and Evaluation (PG&E) needs.

The applicant's focus on competency based student learning, independent of time and place along with formative assessment, Personalized Student Learning Plans (PSP) and the PLE courses, if implemented with fidelity have a strong likelihood of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support.

Overall, the applicant scores a high range on these criteria.

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

The applicant based the criteria to select schools on high needs, poor academic performance, low graduation rates, and feeders into low performing high schools. As demonstrated by the demographics in Tables 2-4, the applicant has met the eligibility criteria with 38% Hispanic students, (37%) ELL, 61% on free or reduced lunch and almost 25% of the students far below grade level (as defined by a 1 on the UT CRT).

The applicant proposes to serve 20,181 students in 15 Junior/Senior high schools (of which five are persistently low achieving). While ambitious, it is unclear as to how achievable the proposed project is. Transferring to a mastery based learning model is good for student learning *and* requires structural and attitudinal shifts for implementation. The applicant has not specifically and convincingly described how it would facilitate that shift for the educators in the district.

While the reform strategies (the Granite Innovation Center offering PLE courses throughout the district, the PLE innovation Team, college and career counseling and evaluation), it is still unclear how the applicant will provide instruction individualized to specific student interests, abilities, schedules, and goals.

Overall, the applicant has met this criteria on a high scoring range.

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

10

6

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes to use Implementation Science as the research base to scale up the PLE course offerings. The professional development plan is an ambitious plan that requires serious buy-in and commitment for 4 years of ongoing professional development from all junior and senior high school teachers. The professional development would require not only content, curriculum and assessment PD - but also extensive professional development in the use of all the new technology. It is unclear how the district will garner teacher buy-in and/or incentivize teachers to volunteer to offer the new PLE courses.

It is unclear how the applicant will provide a full offering of PLE courses in the first year of the grant (as noted by the applicant) when there will only be two volunteer teachers from each junior and Senior High School offering courses in Math.

It is unclear as to the reasonableness and feasibility of the scale up plan given the current timeline. Additionally, the applicant did not convincingly describe a scale up model that could be sustained after the grant period. Adding two more Innovation Team staff, in years 2-4 does not seem adequate to sustain the PLEs across 15 schools and 20,000 plus students.

While the applicant did provide yearly timelines for the goals, the timeline addressed specific activities to be accomplished and did not mention or describe student achievement growth targets. The goals and supporting performance measures were not specific or measurable.

The applicant's Logic Model was missing any mention of formative assessment results and any feedback loop for continuous improvement.

While the applicant made a note of several important assumptions regarding the necessity of high quality personnel and programs, and fidelity of implementation, there was no discussion of an accountability system that would hold the district to the high standards its has set. Additionally, it is unclear why the short-term and intermediate goals in the logic model do not include all of the 13 project goals cited. The project goal "to significantly improve academic improvement" is not the same as the as the logic model long-term goals to increase graduation rates and post-secondary enrollment. As such, the applicant's description of its high quality plan to scale up the project is ambiguous and does not provide enough coherent and convincing information that it will in fact lead to improved outcomes for all students.

While the applicant has proposed to use the grant funds to purchase new technology, hire more staff and provide teacher professional development, the proposed plan to move to a mastery based learning model, does suggest real philosophical and structural changes that are rather ambitious. The applicant did not convincingly describe how it would implement these changes and specifically what the PLE courses would look like. Most importantly, the applicant did not describe a teacher buy-in plan for ensuring instruction would be different from current practice. This is a critical component to a mastery based learning model.

Overall, the applicant scored in a moderate range for meeting the criteria.

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

10

4

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

While the applicant chose subject area course outcomes for the annual goals because they are indicators for college and career readiness, the applicant did not indicate how it determined the yearly student achievement targets.

The applicant did not provide data to support that its student achievement goals are equal to or exceed the state ESEA targets for both the district and state. It is unclear why the applicant only provided baseline data for white students and not "overall" target data. While most of the goals have a target of at least a 25% increase in student achievement over the course of the grant period, Hispanic, ELLs and students with disabilities typically have just under an 18% increase over the course of the four year grant. period. On the other hand F/R as a subgroup has close to a yearly 25% targeted increase in Algebra 2 achievement. Again, it is unclear how and by what criteria, the applicant came up with the yearly targets.

9th grade Hispanic and ELL Language Arts targets are not quite an 18% increase over four years, while other subgroup goal targets are at least 25% increase over 2-3 years. It is unclear how the applicant will mitigate the achievement gap with lower growth rates targets for its most needy subgroup.

Language Arts 11th grade F/R have an overall 25% increase as the target, though, students with disabilities do not.

The applicant proposed to increase graduation rates by a bit over 18% overall. By subgroup, the applicant proposes White graduation rates increases as just under 22%, Hispanic a bit under 20%, F/R a bit over 18%, students with disabilities at 20%, and ELL a bit under 25%. As presented, these proposed rates are not convincing evidence that the applicant will decrease the achievement gap.

The proposed college enrollment rates differ across each school, with some improvement targets being much more ambitious than other. This is evidenced by the following. The applicant notes a 10% overall growth rate over four years and then almost a 40% increase for Granite Parks, 15% for Granger, not quite 10% for Hunter, and bit over 10% for Kearns and Cyprus. It is unclear how the applicant determined target improvement rates for the college enrollment goals. Additionally, the target goals are by school - and not the subgroups used in the other tables (White, Hispanic, F/R, Disabilities, etc). Again, this makes it unclear as to how the proposed subject area goals will impact the achievement gap.

Overall, the applicant provided a limited description of how LEA goals for improved student outcomes would mitigate the achievement gap and provide for equitable PLEs. As well, there was no evidence to support how the applicant determined the various improvement targets. Overall this criteria was not strongly supported by evidence of ambitious and achievable goals.

While the applicant's rationale for the use of subject area goals (Math and Language Arts) was justified ( Math is a good college readiness indicator), students grades are subjective in and of themselves. A more reliable indicator of student learning may be student outcomes on local or state criterion referenced assessments.

The applicant scored in a low- moderate range on these criteria.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	8
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has already been implementing an aggressive math initiative across grades 7-12, and has appropriately use some student achievement data in that subject area.</p> <p>The applicant notes that Table 13 addresses the "achievement gap" between the state and district performance, though, the applicant has not provided data to demonstrate improved student learning outcomes across subject areas and/or data to support that it has closed or decreased the achievement gaps (as defined in the notice). The data in Table 13 was aggregated to a district level making it difficult to determine growth by school or, subgroup or even by course (Algebra I, II or Geometry).</p> <p>While Table 14 convincingly demonstrates significant student achievement improvement in Algebra 1, achievement improvements were only provided for 16 Junior High Schools. It is unclear why data was not provided for all junior highs (especially the schools targeted by this proposal) and for the High Schools. As well, the achievement data was only provided for Algebra I and not provided by subgroups, thus making it unclear as to the extent if any, to which the applicant has decreased the achievement gap and provided for equitable personalized learning.</p> <p>The applicant did not provide data to demonstrate how it has raised student achievement across subject areas other than Algebra I, or, raised graduation and college enrollment rates.</p> <p>While the applicant demonstrated significant growth in Algebra 1 and Geometry, at Granger HS, as currently described, many of the reform strategies at Granger do not appear to be ambitious and or especially innovative (i.e. revise student handbook and publish it on line, held back to school night, online Granger Wiki and course catalog, etc). With only this one example, the applicant has minimally demonstrated how it has achieved ambitious and significant reforms in its low-performing schools.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant has minimally demonstrated its track record for improving student learning, mitigating the achievement gap and raising graduation and college enrollment rates.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's proposal indicates that all Granite SD salaries are easily accessible by personnel name through the state's Right to Know website. As well, salary schedules for all GSD personnel are also listed on the district's website, including salaries at the school level for instruction and support, personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff, and personnel salaries at the school level for teachers. Additionally, the district website includes a link to the budget report.</p> <p>It remains unclear if the budget report provides expenditures by school, for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration.</p>		

While the applicant addressed access to budget and salary information, it did not speak to transparency in other LEA processes and practices.

The applicant has adequately responded to the criteria for transparency and scores in the moderate range.

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

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has demonstrated that it has the autonomy under state legal, statutory and regulatory requirements to provide PLE courses to 7-12 grade students as described in this proposal.

This is evidenced by (53A-13-108.5. Acceptance of credits and grades awarded by accredited schools) which states that credits may be awarded for: (b) open entry/open exit classes in which the student has the flexibility to begin or end study at any time, progress through course material at his own pace, and demonstrate competency when knowledge and skills have been mastered.

As well, the applicant has a letter of support from the Utah System of Higher Education supporting the move to mastery based learning.

The applicant has demonstrated that it has met these criteria and scores in the high range.

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

10

6

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has provided Letters of Support from the region 5 PTA, the Granite Education Association (GEA) Executive Director, four out of six mayors, the YMCA, Latinos in Action, the UT Higher Education System and Valley Mental Health.

There were no letters of support from local parents, or target school PTAs, student organizations, tribes, the local business community, or any specific institutions of higher education.

It is unclear what area the Region 5 PTA covers. If it is a large region that covers several districts - a regional letter of support does not say much regarding local parent support and participation in preparing the proposal.

The GEA president and Executive Director signed the assurances statement. The GEA letter of support (signed by the Executive Director) simply states that the GEA is participating in the development of the new state teacher evaluation system and supports the grant application. There is no mention of support for the PLE courses or other aspects of the proposal. Nor, has the applicant provided specific and compelling evidence of direct engagement, representation and support for the proposal from teachers in participating schools. Teacher professional development and engagement is a key component of this proposal and early teacher buy-in is essential to the paradigm shift regarding mastery based learning. Of positive note, there was a letter of support from the high school principals' chairman. Though, there was no indication of support from the Junior high principals.

Other than noting that it "discussed the RTTT-D project with the GSD teacher organization and PTA." the applicant did not specifically describe or indicate the extent to which the GEA, school level PTA, parents and students were involved in the planning of this proposal.

As currently written, the applicant has minimally demonstrated how students, families, teachers, and principals in participating schools were engaged in the development of the proposal and how the proposal was revised based on their engagement and feedback. The applicant has scored in the moderate range for these criteria.

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

5

3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided a graphic to depict the vision, activities and strategies for implementing its reform plan. The focus of the vision is clearly implementing technology and authentic 21st century learning opportunities. This approach is ambitious and will require as noted by the applicant, the need for a paradigm shift in teaching and the subsequent need for professional development.

While the applicant listed seven district gaps to implementing the vision, these seven gaps were not tied back to the offering of PLE courses, nor, was the logic behind the reform proposal fully explained. As an example, for Gap 3, the applicant cites low ACT scores and lack of safe and healthy environments as the rationale for the *Insufficient resources to prepare students to be college and career ready*.

Additionally, the rationale for the gaps was weak in many cases. This was evidenced in Gap 2 where the applicant noted that

the district does not have a framework for identifying effective and highly effective teachers, principals, and administrators. Though, earlier in the proposal the applicant described the robust Utah Comprehensive Accountability System (UCAS) which can aggregate student achievement data. The UCAS can calculate a Student Growth Percentile (SGP) for each student in 3rd through 12th grade. The SGP documents the amount of growth a student achieved from the previous year and could be aggregated by teacher to indicate students whose teacher achieved one year's growth or one-and-one-half year's growth. In other words, there appears to be a system in place.

As another example, in Gap 4, the applicant notes that there are "Inadequate resources for systematic data analysis and evaluation". Though, in the narrative the applicant describes the gap as the principals not having the knowledge and understanding on how to use the current database (CACTUS and UCAS). In this and the other identified gaps, the applicant's rationale is inconsistent or contradictory to earlier information.

The applicant did not provide a coherent and complete high-quality plan for an analysis of its current status in implementing personalized learning environments. While the applicant provided identified needs and gaps, there was not a plan with key goals, credible rationale for the activities, a timeline, deliverables or the appropriate responsible staff. Overall, the applicant scored at a moderate range on this criteria.

### 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's proposal to facilitate student understanding that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals is evidenced by the PLP, access to the College and Career Readiness lab (CCRL), the college and career assessment plan beginning with Explore (8th grade), Plan (10th grade), and ACT (11th and 12th grade), and individualized college and career readiness services. Additionally, the applicant proposes to hire College and Career counselors and Career Coaches. Though, even with the hiring of a Career Coach and College and Career Counselors (with a new approximate student/counselor ratio of 1:129.) for each school, it remains unclear how the applicant will meet its ambitious plan to provide Personalized Learning Plans (PLP) for each student.

Without a plan with key goals and timelines it is unclear how the applicant will know when and how students will identify learning and development goals linked to college.

While the PLP and PLE course do have the capacity to facilitate student access to learning in areas of academic interest, the applicant has not demonstrated how the student will be involved in deep learning experiences. Additionally, the applicant did not describe how it will accomplish the conduct of the comprehensive pre-tests to determine knowledge gaps, learning styles, and student interests - for all students.

The applicant proposes that students will have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning through a wide range of instructional modalities, blended learning environments, core curriculum-centered technology, and multiple virtual components. The applicant has not defined what it means by "blended learning", "a wide range of instructional modalities", etc. Thus, it is unclear, how much learning will be individualized and how these learning modalities are different from current practice. This is a hugely ambitious undertaking to personalize learning so that students in the same class will have an opportunity to access "any given subject within any given context". The plan bodes well for relevant learning opportunities for students using technology that they access on a daily basis and are familiar with. As noted earlier, this will require a paradigm shift for teachers and extensive, ongoing professional development.

The proposed blended and differentiated learning environment with various modalities and new technology platform, all require as the applicant notes a redefinition of the teacher's role in the classroom. Other than noting a summer institute schedule and the provision of professional development, the applicant has not addressed how it will specifically support teachers in this new learning environment. Even with professional development over the course of the four years, it is unclear if there is adequate time for teachers to receive PD in curriculum, assessment, and the integration of the new technology into instruction.

The timeline indicates that over the course of the grant period two teachers will volunteer to offer a PLE course per year. As well, all teachers will receive professional development on PLE courses, though not all teachers will be required to fully implement a PLE. The applicant has not described how it will incentivize teachers to offer PLE courses.

While educational publishers do provide high quality content and expanded learning opportunities, the applicant did not specifically address what that high quality content will be. With the personalization of content taking place within the software modalities, the proposal appears to have a strong leaning towards online learning (i.e., "all content will be uploaded to a technology platform"). It is unclear if the PLE

courses will provide only online learning or, use online courses to supplement teacher instruction.

The applicant proposes to offer a variety of technology based learning opportunities and extended hours for tutoring.

While the applicant has substantially extended learning opportunities via the tutoring hours, there was no specific description of potential high quality strategies or individual accommodations for students that may need them. As an example, not all students will benefit from access to online modalities. It is unclear what the PLE would look like for such students in a very technologically oriented environment. As well, there was no mention of accommodations or what the PLE looks like for students who speak a language other than English.

The applicant did not indicate that the the technology centered content was aligned with college-and career-ready standards or, college-and career-ready graduation requirements.

Overall, the applicant did not provide a plan with key goals, activities, deliverables, or a timeline for personalizing the learning environment. Rather the responses to these criteria were global and non-specific, especially with regard to implementing instructional strategies, As such this section was scored in the moderate range.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	12
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has proposed that the Innovation Team is a core asset that will create a PLE framework for teachers to adopt and adapt and be immediately available for teacher support.

Table 20 describes the professional development opportunities that will support teacher implementation of the PLE courses. These opportunities consist of summer institutes, instructional coach observation and feedback, ongoing onsite support, the PLE Innovation team, PLCs, and PLE teaching practicums. A strength of this proposal is that teachers will have immediate access to PLE Innovation Team members via email, telephone, discussion board, live chat, or video conferencing. Additionally, they will have access to on-demand training available 24/7 on various technologies.

The applicant did not describe professional development options for Language Arts teachers and other subject area teachers during year one, which focuses on Math teachers. Nor, was there a plan for professional development for new teachers, or necessary re-training.

With only 6 Tech Specialists in year one, it appears as if there could be inadequate tech staff to support the 50 teachers receiving new projectors, document cameras, white boards, computers, student response systems and students receiving new computers. This is a concern because the Tech staff will also create a professional development plan for teachers to master the technical requirements of implementing successful PLEs. Learning new technology can be a whole new learning experience, especially with this amount of new technology. It is a staff and time intensive process. It is also unclear where teachers will find the time for technology PD after PLCs, ongoing PLE, assessment and curriculum training.

The teacher PLE practicum opportunities are a strength of this proposal. The paid opportunity for teachers to gain more knowledge in curriculum design, mastery based learning, strategies for increasing mastery of Tier 2 and Tier 3 students, technology integration, and then to process and share with their PLCs is an example of ongoing, onsite, and relevant professional development.

It is unclear who will participate or, how teachers will be selected for the PLE practicum opportunities and why only 5 teachers will participate.

Another strength of this proposal is the planned quarterly training for the CCR counselors. This will facilitate their support of students completing their PLP and help with referrals to PLE courses. Though, it is unclear if the Innovation Center staff, or who will provide the professional development. While the Innovation Center staff could provide the assessment and PLE update information - there is no evidence that they have the skills and knowledge to provide career information training.

While the applicant stated that teachers will receive professional development that will improve their ability to respond to student needs and personalize learning, the applicant did not specifically address how educators would adopt content and instruction. The proposal describes the teacher as a "guide" to student learning.

The applicant proposes that teachers will be able to have quick access to student data, read student reports from summative and formative assessments and receive immediate feedback on what is and isn't working for students. While the immediacy of student data is a strength, there was no mention of teachers inputting data into the system. This may suggest that the "assessment reports" are from online programs. It is unclear if the applicant is proposing a total online PLE with no teacher instruction and teacher developed assessments or where teacher instruction fits into this plan.

Other than noting that the evaluation system would identify "educators and schools progressing toward being effective", the

applicant did not address in any specific way how they proposed to use feedback provided by the teacher and principal evaluation systems, including feedback on individual and collective effectiveness.

The proposed PLE platform provides an adaptive technology that analyzes a student's knowledge, skills, and best modes of learning based on frequent formative assessment so that the teacher can differentiate instruction according to each student's needs. In addition, teachers and students will receive reports from assessments - all of which supports student and teacher understanding of learning and learning needs.

The applicant did not address professional development for teacher made assessments, instructional strategies, and formative classroom assessments other than reports generated from assessments. It is unclear where these important instructional activities fit into the PLE courses, if at all.

While the applicant noted that there would be a "high quality curriculum", there was no description of said curriculum. It remains unclear what makes it a high quality curriculum. or, if it is indeed of high quality.

While it was noted that summative assessments will be used collectively, the applicant did not address criteria regarding the district's teacher evaluation system. It would have made for a stronger proposal if the applicant specifically addressed how the teacher evaluation system would help school leaders assess, and take steps to improve, individual and collective educator effectiveness and school culture and climate, for the purpose of continuous school improvement. As an example, it is unclear, how the district will disaggregate the data to make staffing decisions.

It is unclear if all teachers will receive ongoing professional development or, if only teachers implementing PLEs will receive PD. In this section, the applicant notes that all teachers "implementing" PLEs will receive intensive PD. Table 5 indicates that all Math teachers will receive PD in year 1, all Language Arts teachers in year 2, etc. The narrative is confusing regarding when all teachers will be in PD and offering PLE courses. As another example, it is unclear if 50 Language Arts teachers will be offering PLE courses, as noted in this section. Table 5 notes that two teacher per school will volunteer to offer a PLE.

Of positive note and a good example of sustainability, the applicant proposed to select "master teachers" to train and sustain the PLE model beyond the grant period.

The applicant has provided a plan with activities, a timeline, outcomes, and responsible staff.

While there is a plan with a fair number of activities, the applicant has not provided specific targets that indicate when a goal has been met, rendering them unmeasurable. As one example, in activity 2.1 it is unclear how many teachers will attend the summer institutes. Additionally, a few of the timelines, outcomes and responsible staff are missing (i.e. activity 4.10, 4.11).

It is a concern in performance measure 1.4 that the explanation of the vision and request for volunteers is occurring at the start of the grant. It would seem that with teacher/principal engagement in the proposal process that staff would already understand the vision and volunteers would already be committed. Starting with only two volunteers per school per year, means that there are only 120 "guaranteed" teachers offering PLE courses by the end of the grant period. As noted earlier all teachers do not have to offer a PLE course. Given the number of teachers trained by the end of the grant period (close to 200), it is unclear how the applicant will meet the goal of offering PLE courses district wide.

For activity 6.5 the applicant has defined what it means by Tier 1, 2 and 3 social and emotional level supports. More importantly, how a student or family is identified as in need of these supports. A strength of this proposal are the parent courses in activity 6.3. These courses build capacity in parents so that they are better able to support their child.

Overall, the applicant has a number of gaps and inconsistencies in responding to these criteria and in presenting its plan to improve learning and teaching. This section scores in a moderate range.

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

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

##### (D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not provide a plan to demonstrate and support project implementation through comprehensive policies and an infrastructure that would provide every student, educator and administrator with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed.

In response to the criteria for organizing the LEA central office to provide support and services to school leadership teams and all participating schools the applicant proposes a user friendly data infrastructure, technology management, support at the building level, and professional development.

Beyond noting that the PLE Innovation Team, Professional Learning Communities, and school-level administrator teams will "report progress and concerns" and "retain sufficient autonomy" the applicant has not addressed the criteria to provide participating schools with sufficient flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and noneducators, and school-level budgets.

A strength of this proposal is the applicant's focus to move away from the traditional seat based/Carnegie unit approach to a system based entirely on anytime/anywhere demonstrated mastery. If successful, this approach has a strong likelihood of personalizing learning and improving student achievement. While the applicant proposes to "embrace" the International Association for K-12 Online learning Competency Based Pathways design principles, it remains unclear what that means in terms of actual practice and policy adoption.

In response to the criteria for practices that facilitate personalized learning, the applicant has proposed the PLE course offerings, extended school days, an extended school year and increased student access to technology. Each of these e-learning strategies do open opportunities for increased student learning.

While the new e-learning environment is intended for all students, the applicant did not address how it would provide learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners.

Overall, the applicant has globally responded to these criteria and has scored in the moderate range.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	5
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has not presented a plan with goals, deliverables, a timeline or persons responsible that would describe the infrastructure to personalize learning.

The applicant proposes that students will receive in-class technology orientation, with teachers as the first responders to technology questions. In spite of the proposal to provide teachers with professional development and 24/7 tech support, they will also be learning the new technology, new curriculums, etc. It will take time for all teachers to reach proficiency.

Parents will receive technology and content support (PLEs, standards based report cards, etc.) via the Family Assistance Center staff and training.

The applicant states that it will use inter operable data systems and that the information technology systems will allow parents and students to export their information in an open data format and be able to use the data in other electronic learning systems. Though, the applicant did not completely address *how* that would happen. Merely stating that it will meet the criteria does not provide convincing evidence as to how (strategies, activities, goals, etc.) it will ensure success. Additionally, given the high number of English Language learners noted in Table 3, it is unclear how the applicant will ensure that these students and their parents will receive the necessary accommodations to access the technology and trainings.

Understanding that the system is not yet developed, the applicant proposes to include the following data system features. If included in the final product there is a strong likelihood of these features positively impacting improved student learning outcomes.

- Will measure student growth and success as well as challenges and problem areas
- Will track teachers' professional growth and provide information to guide teachers in improving instruction.
- Will provide user-friendly and time-efficient input and output tools, provide quick snapshots of students' progress and challenges
- Will provide real-time data for daily instructional decisions
- Will be centered on the instructional goals of each teacher and the district as a whole
- Will provide easy access to information

Overall, the applicant has scored in the moderate range.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	7

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes that project improvement will be conducted by an external evaluator. This external evaluation will be centered around the following three areas.

- Process evaluation (resource and student data collected during the development of the project - against the fidelity of the project)
- Treatment verification (a formative process that checks the degree of dosage or treatment being received by participants)
- Outcome evaluation (both a formative and summative process of determining the degree with which project goals, objectives, and performance measures are being met)

Of positive note, the applicant proposes to monitor continuous assessment, improvement, and accountability of all aspects of the project through a Continuous Improvement Cycle based on the U.S. DOE's Continuous Improvement Management (CIM) model. Specifically, the external evaluators will apply Utilization-Focused Evaluation (U-FE) methodologies to each of the three evaluation areas list above.

Additionally, a Connect Steering Committee will be the lead decision-making team and meet quarterly to review data and plan. While the applicant notes that this Committee will include district administrators, the project directors, principals, teachers, and other key stakeholders (e.g. Connect partners), the applicant did not address how committee members (including the partners) would be selected and their roles and responsibilities.

Based on the narrative, the Steering Committee will be relying heavily on the external evaluators for the professional development, progress monitoring decision-making, accountability, and reporting. This is evidenced by the applicant's proposal that data-driven decision-making professional development will be provided, facilitated, and modeled by external evaluators so that such methodologies can be replicated by district personnel. Other than noting that the evaluators will be "highly qualified, PhD level", the external evaluators have not been identified. Nor, is there a plan with goals, deliverables, a timeline and staff responsible for the external evaluator's plan for continuous improvement of the proposed project or capacity building in the Steering Committee and district staff.

While the applicant notes that the external evaluators will present annual findings and timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals, there were no specifics as to when and how that would happen. More importantly, there was no specific process or timeline for when the Steering Committee and/or district staff would take over the role of continuous improvement, or how the applicant will allocate sufficient time and support for the committee to sustain these continuous improvement processes after the grant period.

The applicant proposes to publicly share information on the quality of its RTTT– District project via Annual Performance Reports and Evaluator Reports posted on the district website.

While the applicant did provide an Evaluation Plan, it did not specifically address goals for project continuous improvement indicators.

Overall, the applicant has scored in a moderate range for these criteria.

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

The applicant did not describe in the narrative or the evaluation plan, strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders.

As well, there was a good deal of ambiguity in the applicant's response to communication and engagement. As an example, the applicant spoke to "external stakeholders" and the "appropriate group of stakeholders", though these stakeholders were never identified. Additionally, while it was noted that the internal and external evaluators would work on an "ongoing basis" and meet "semi- annually", the internal evaluators were never identified and semi-annually is not ongoing.

The applicant has insufficiently addressed this criterion and has scored in a low-moderate range.

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

A number of the performance measures in the "Evaluation Plan" lack clarity, clear targets and measurement methods. As an example, Performance Measure 12.e in the evaluation plan indicates that "all key documents contain reference to the utility of the continuous improvement management process". It is unclear as to what constitutes "key documents" and to what extent they must "reference" the improvement process. Beyond PM 12.e stating that the external evaluator will continuously monitor all project processes, treatments and outcomes and provide clear expectations and training on all data collection measures, the applicant did not describe specific goals, outcomes or how this would be accomplished.

As another example of the ambiguity in the performance measures, PM 12.f reads "Cost to benefit ratio will decrease". It is unclear what cost to benefit ratio the applicant is referring to and by what amount it is expected to decrease.

Many of the PM targets are low and do not indicate any measurable increase in performance. As an example, the 1% increase in effective or highly effective teachers would appear to be limited growth. Even a 4% increase over the course of the grant period is relatively low. Equally important, the methodology and criteria used to determine the targets is unclear. In other cases, the feasibility of achieving the targeted increases is unclear. As an example, in Table 25, the targets to increase the number and percent of grade 7 students on track to college and career readiness are very ambitious moving from 4% of the students with disabilities on track in the baseline year to 29% at the end of the grant - an increase of 25%. The ELL and F/R sub groups go from 25%-49%, and the Hispanics from 22% to 47% a 100% increase.

The applicant has presented ambitious performance measures, for all students, overall, by subgroup, and with annual targets for both the required measures and applicant-proposed performance measures. Though the target for the applicant -proposed measures were by school, not by subgroup.

Not all measures have rigorous, timely, and formative leading targets tailored to the proposed plan. The effective and highly effective teacher targets seem low at only a 1% increase per year and an overall increase of 4% over the course of the grant. This is of concern as the plan proposes to ramp-up the PLE course offerings at a significant rate each year. If the expectation is for relatively few teachers to meet effective or highly effective status, the goal to offer PLEs across all subject areas will not be met.

While the applicant noted that it will monitor outcomes on an ongoing basis it did not describe how it will review and improve the measures over time if they are insufficient to gauge implementation progress.

The applicant has scored in the moderate range.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

While the applicant makes reference to an Evaluation Plan, other than the performance measures for student achievement outcomes, said plan minimally addresses the extent to which the applicant will have quality data that informs the district and/or its stakeholders as to the effectiveness of the significant investments in technology and professional development. As an example, measuring the percent of teachers who indicate they have the autonomy and flexibility to implement the project does not necessarily describe how effective the project has been.

Additionally, the target increases for many of the performance measure in the evaluation plan were low. It is unclear how the applicant determined these targets and why they would be so low after four years of substantial human and financial investments, As an example, as a result of this project there is only a 1% yearly target increase in the number and percent of students enrolling in post-secondary education in the first semester after high school. This seems low.

All the performance measures did not have clear targets and measurable outcomes. As an example, PM 11a reads, "percent change in organizational chart consistent with organizational structure of districts already implementing the project at the school". The target for "percent change" is unclear as is the outcome being measured or how the applicant will know when it is met.

Overall, the applicant as scored in the moderate range.

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

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has presented a clear and complete budget, which includes tables and a justifiable rationale for its investments in the narrative. An overall budget was provided along with six project budgets. The applicant did not identify any funds other than RTTT that will support the project.

The proposed overall budget is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal which requires a substantial investment in professional development (over half the budget) and technology.

The bulk of the RTTT funds that will be used for one-time investments (whiteboards, projectors, laptops, copies, etc) are found

in Projects 3, 4 and 6.

The majority of the other costs are ongoing personnel cost such as Project 1 - staffing the Innovation Team, Project 2 - Ongoing Professional development for approximately 90 teachers per year, Project 3 Anytime/Anywhere staffing for tutoring (14 ), Project 4 College and Career Readiness - 5 staff, Project 5 - data Infrastructure - 1 programmer, Project 6 Family Assistance Center Directors and social workers (8).

While the applicant's rationale for the large increase in staff is reasonable, the applicant did not address strategies that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the necessary increase in staff to personalized learning environments.

The applicant proposes that 2% of each project budget would be allocated to data collection tracking and management. It is unclear how the applicant determined that 2% would be adequate. The same holds true for the project evaluations. It is unclear how the applicant came up with 10% of the total project budget as the cost total for project evaluations.

Overall, the applicant has scored in the high range for these criteria.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	4
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant noted Gear -up and Grants to Reduce Alcohol Abuse as examples of its ability to sustain project work after grant funding ends. Past grant sustainability does not in and of itself demonstrate specifically how the applicant would sustain this proposal. Additionally, while the community partners for the Family Assistance Centers may continue to provide services, as noted by the applicant, there was no specific plan for covering the 5 Center Director or 3 social worker salaries.

The applicant did not provide a plan with key goals, activities, a timeline or persons responsible for sustainability of the project's activities after the grant period

The proposed grant funded purchase of digital curriculum would cover the substantial costs of transitioning from print-digital curriculum. The district would use local or state funds to sustain digital curriculum.

The applicant's rational for sustainability is nested in the concept that the grant period will allow them to put structures and systems in place to maintain the PLE after the grant period. This is a reasonable assumption in that the technology and digital curriculum will have been purchased and teachers will have been trained to offer PLE courses, thus, minimizing continued professional development costs. Though, it is a rational based on assumptions that may not necessarily be in place. Thus, the aplicant has not provided a convincing plan as to the feasibility of sustaining the grant activities and fund most of the grant hired personnel through the district's general fund after the grant.

Without a plan that includes additional financial support from State and local entities, and/or other grant or private foundation sources, the applicant has not convincingly described a sustainability plan for after the grant period.

Overall, the applicant scores in the low-moderate range.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has support from four community partners to implement services at the proposed Family Assistance Centers in each of the high schools. This is evidenced by letters of support and MOUs which describe the activities that each partner has committed to provide. This proposed competitive preference priority project is actually Goal 13 of the applicant's RTTT proposal. As such, it is unclear how and in what ways this competitive preference proposal is different from what was proposed in the broader proposal. Additionally, beyond the family and community supports results, there are no educational results and /or outcomes.

The applicant has identified 6 population-level result sand 6 performances measures for students and families in the consortium partnership.

Though, 4 out of 6 results and all of the performance measures are the same as those written into the RTTT-District application. These outcomes more than align with and support the applicant's broader proposal - they *are* the proposal. Other than, two generic results (improve the school climate and improve the social -emotional well-being of students and parents) there are no new or additional results.

The applicant refers back to the RTTT proposal for data collection and evaluation processes and procedures to track the selected indicators. The applicant specifically notes that "evaluating progress towards full implementation of the Family Support centers is part of

the larger project evaluation." Again, it is unclear how this CP proposal is any different from the RTTT proposal.

The applicant will use student and family satisfaction survey results to determine how effectively the Family Assistance Centers are meeting student and family needs. Though, there was no specific description as to how the applicant would engage parents, families and students in both decision-making about solutions to improve results over time and in addressing student, family, and school needs. Additionally, the applicant has not tied the Family Assistance Center outcomes to improved educational outcomes.

The applicant proposes providing Family Assistance Center services to high need elementary schools as the next step strategy to scale the model beyond the participating students (Junior and High Schools). While the applicant's rationale for this plan is that the model and infrastructure to extend to elementary schools will be in place, the applicant did not describe *how* and with what fund sources it would implement this scale up plan.

The applicant did not describe how (e.g. tools, supports, professional development) the partnership and consortium would build the capacity of staff in participating schools, rather the criteria were just reiterated.

The applicant referred back to the RTTT performance measures and yearly targets as the method to assess the needs and assets of participating students. The school climate and social-emotional well being of students would be measured with a Student Engagement Survey. Without a description of the survey it is unclear how it will provide a reading of the school climate, or, student needs and assets.

Beyond the RTTT District evaluation efforts, the applicant did not address a process for routinely assessing the applicant's progress in implementing its plan to maximize impact and resolve challenges and problems. Nor, did the applicant sufficiently describe a decision-making process and infrastructure to select, implement, and evaluate supports that address the individual needs of participating students and support improved results.

Overall, given the lack of clarity as to how the proposed competitive preference priority is any different from the RTTT proposal, the applicant has scored in the moderate range.

## Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

### Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has addressed how it will build on all four core educational assurance areas. The proposed plan addresses standards and assessments, data systems, and the recruitment, reward and retention of effective teachers, and turning around its lowest performing schools (Granger High School).

The plan to move to an entirely online mastery demonstrated credit accrual process demonstrates how the applicant will create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators.

The plan has the capacity to accelerate student achievement for those students with the capacity and motivation to move at an accelerated pace. As well, mastery based learning has the capacity and potential to meet the learning needs of each student; increase the effectiveness of educators, decrease the achievement gaps across student groups; and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.

Total	210	122
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0441UT-3 for Granite School District



A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	4
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Overview</p> <p>The applicant's vision of PLE's revolves around an innovation center, a PLE innovation team, and college and career counseling. The application expresses an adequate understanding of the four core educational assurance areas - adopting standards and assessments, building data systems to support learning, effective teachers and principals, and turning around low achieving schools.</p> <p>The applicant's reform vision of accelerating student achievement and deepening learning is limited. The strategies described are not woven into clear relationships to yield a credible approach to the reform effort.</p> <p>The applicant decries 'seat time' and emphasizes student mastery but gives sparse descriptions of how the student is to obtain mastery. The term PLE is front and center in the text, but their conception of a PLE is not defined. Blended and online courses are mentioned. The innovation center and team are to develop these courses and field test them for other schools, teachers and students.</p> <p>The link to equity is unclear and nonspecific in the plan.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>a) The school district consists of 87 schools. Although the 15 schools to participate are described as low performing and 5 of them as "Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools", it is unclear why these and not any of the other 72 schools. The specific process and criteria are not described.</p> <p>b) The participating schools are clearly listed. The status of the Granite Innovation Center as a school is not entirely clear. Granite Peak High School (an alternative school) is being transformed into the innovation center and is anticipated to have 550 students, but there is no mention of hiring a school principal or the status of the existing staff.</p> <p>c) The table of participating schools with numbers of participating, high need, and low income students unclear. The design given the applicant leads the numbers to suggest that all of the LEA's low income students are participating in the grant. It is unclear what percentage of the district's low income students are to be served. The tables show 3,400 more students in the junior high feeder schools than there are in the participating high schools. The applicant does not clarify if these students will go elsewhere to high school, are expected to drop out of high school, or if the number of high school student is expected to grow substantially over the next four years.</p> <p>This response belongs in the high area but is downgraded because of not specifying the school selection process as requested.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	2
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant is asked to describe how the grant reforms will be scaled up to the rest of the district – beyond the participating schools. This is simply not addressed. Primarily, what is addressed is the plan for how the reforms will unfold among the participating schools. There is some reference to PLE courses throughout the district after they have been field tested in the Innovation Center.</p> <p>The applicant does not present a high-quality plan for the reform proposal. There are no timelines, nor any deliverables.</p>		

The table describing the scaling up of the project begins with overly optimistic assertions. The earliest an awardee would receive funding would be January, 2013. Yet, the applicant asserts that the innovation center will provide a full offering of PLE courses for grades 7-12 during the 2012-13 school year. One of the activities of the grant is for the center to develop those courses, thus it is unclear how they can possibly be developed and offered within this time frame.

The discussion lacks an explicit response to the question and is in the low range of points.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	3
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The growth goals for summative assessments are very modest. The growth goal of 3 percent per year of increased proficiency is only 15% over the four years of the grant. In a later section, the applicant describes previous growth of 25% for most schools in only three years.

(b) During the grant, the applicant describes achievement growth goals for all subgroups. However, the expected growth results in the same gaps at the end of the grant as existed during the baseline year. Algebra I proficiency for example, is 38% for White students and 23% for Hispanic students in the baseline year – a difference of 15%. The predicted post grant proficiencies are 48% and 33% – the same 15% difference. However the applicant gets some credit for addressing the need for reducing these gaps.

(c) The table of graduation rates shows moderate growth expected under the grant. Again, the growth is the same for all subgroups such that gaps remain the same. However, the table is unclear. It shows the Overall graduation rate as higher than any of the subgroups – a mathematical anomaly at best. The White and Hispanic students are 86% of the total according to earlier tables. Their graduation rates are so far below the overall rates shown that the total cannot be understood as written.

(d) College enrollment rates are shown to grow by 1% per year. This is far from ambitious.

(e) Postsecondary degree attainment is estimated to increase 3% in five years. It is unclear how students who have already graduated from the district will be influenced by PLE's created after they are no longer in the school.

The growth goals are not ambitious. The goals in one instance were lower than historical achievement. The goals did not show a narrowing of the achievement gap. Although as goals the gaps may appear the same, the applicant is addressing the gaps and some narrowing might be expected though the level would be difficult to predict. The graduation rate tables in addition to suggesting only modest growth were poorly constructed and may contain incorrect information. For these reasons, this response is in the lowest range.

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	3

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The applicant presents longitudinal proficiency rates on summative Math assessments which is appropriate because this is a key subject area focus of the grant. Although there was a 7% increase over the four years, this is less than the 10% increase that occurred in the first year. Thus, these results are inconclusive in showing a clear track record of growth. The proficiency rates among junior highs show positive results but are mixed in their degrees of success. None of these data are related to the achievement gaps among subgroups. These results are attributed to the district's math initiative but this was not a reform as related to the four core educational assurance areas. The track record for graduation rates is not presented.

(b) Using a \$2 million grant, the district initiated reforms at Granger High School with some positive results. Reform at one high school does not represent a clear track record. Although some of the reforms at Granger may have been ambitious, several of those listed were very weak (e.g. Retreat with the Center for the School of the Future, Held back to school night and provided a tour of the new Granger HS to community members, and revised student handbook and published it online). There is no evidence the district has applied these low cost reform lessons to other schools.

(c) The applicant describes the sound approach they have taken to sharing confidential student performance data with parents and students through a web portal.

The lack of a clear track record of success and reform places this response in the low end of the scale. The LEA providing student performance data online is a strong point.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) (b) and (c) As required by Utah laws, personnel salaries are published and available through the Salt Lake Tribute's website.</p> <p>(d) Non-personnel expenditures at the school level are not published.</p> <p>The lack of transparency of expenditures at the school level moves the score down to the middle level.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant quotes state law permitting schools to grant credit for mastery rather than seat time. They do not discuss any provisions, limitations, or special authority needed for after school tutors, extra counselors, or closing a school and recreating it as an innovation center. These are standard types of activities and are presumably permitted under state law.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	6
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) Initial planning for and development of the proposal was done by school and district representatives. The applicant does not provide specifics regarding who the representatives were nor how they were selected. Following the initial phases of project planning – after key components of the project were formed, the district discussed the plan with teacher and parent organizations. This is a minimal level of engagement of significant stakeholders. The membership of the Proposal Committee is unclear. The only members mentioned were district office leaders.</p> <p>(b) The applicant secured many letters of support from the appropriate stakeholder groups.</p> <p>The applicant does mention students participating in any way. Parent and teacher groups were given a plan with the major components already decided. Thus, there is no evidence of their engagement in the development of the proposal. These factors move this response out of the high category into the middle range of points.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	2
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The grant invitation requests a high-quality plan for an analysis of the LEA's current status in implementing PLE's. The applicant does not present a plan with goals, timelines, and deliverables. The applicant does present thorough evidence of low performance. However, the presentation is particularly weak in making the link between the poor performance and the lack of resources to prepare the students.</p> <p>The applicant does create a clear link between the low levels of computer availability as well as the lack of technology infrastructure and the inability to support personalized learning via blended and online courses. These courses appear to be the heart of the applicant's definition of PLE's.</p> <p>Without this latter point, the response would be in the lowest range.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	9
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a)(i) The applicant has shown a strong focus on helping students connect what they are learning to college and careers. The addition of counselors as career coaches at each high school and a ½ FTE at each junior high school is a sound process. As student needs and skill levels are assessed they will be placed into one of three tiers for coaching assistance.</p> <p>(a)(ii) Working with their counselor coaches students will develop Personalized Learning Plans each year that are tied to their</p>		

academic and career assessments.

(a)(iii) The ways in which the proposed project will deepen learning experiences are primarily limited to technologically based modalities. References to using “real-life settings” are tied to delivery through the technology platform. It is unclear how a technology platform will provide a real-life setting in this context. There is a presumption that the student’s needs can be translated into online representations that allow problem solving and other higher order skills. It may be possible to translate all or most of these needs into online representations, but it is unclear that those aspects of a PLE course will be available when a new need is identified.

(a)(iv) The applicant transposes the request for students to have access and exposure to diverse cultures into students taking advantage of the ‘natural diversity and experiences of their peers’. This is a very limited approach to providing access and exposure to diverse cultures. Without some guidance and support from parents and educators cultural exposure may or may not happen. Without any elaboration regarding processes or emphasis, the possibility of creating this exposure through peer collaboration and through online means is mentioned.

(a)(v) The applicant emphasizes the acquisition of core content academic knowledge through mastery practices. In the heading for this section, the applicant omits any reference to developing skills such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem solving. Although 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning is part of the application title, but the applicant does not address how students will learn those skills.

(b)(i) The use of frequent formative assessments will feed the development of the students Personalized Learning Plan. This documents a focused method to setting educational goals. The implementation and methods for keeping a student on track rely primarily on annual meetings with the counselor/career coach. This is inadequate support structure for students who may have intense needs to stay focused.

(b)(ii) The applicant mentions only math subject area classrooms when discussing the variety of instructional approaches. The PLE process is discussed in reference to other subject areas but is not well developed in the application. The focus of the PLEs on technology and online courses runs counter to the variety of instructional approaches requested in the grant invitation.

(b)(iii) There are provisions for high quality digital content purchased from educational publishers. This will be augmented by content developed to the district’s specifications. The timeframe, process, and linkages of this content to standards and/or student need are unclear.

(b)(iv)(A) The applicant provides clear evidence regarding the use of formative assessments to measure the student’s progress and to assist in planning. The student will have access to this feedback through the technology learning platform and data systems. The power of this feedback may be limited because the technology platform is not scheduled to be completed until the third year of the project. It is unclear how much of the assessment tracking system will be completed early enough in the project to provide the feedback needed.

(b)(iv)(B) It is unclear how the personalized learning recommendations will be developed and delivered. The Assessment Review Center will transfer results to teachers and teachers will have “the ability” to make those results available to students. This multi-step process potentially limits the feedback available to students.

(b)(v) The ability to provide learning accommodations is not strongly addressed. There is a presumption that all accommodations can be met through technology. Although there is a partnership with Latinos in Action, how that partnership might work to meet the needs of English language learners is not addressed. Subject area after school tutors may or may not be versed in the specialized learning accommodations needed by special education or English language learners.

(c) Training and support for the technology learning platforms will be delivered through an in-class training model. Subsequent support will come primarily through teachers. This will require a high level of support training (non-content area) and platform experience by the teachers. The proposal has provisions for assessing and monitoring student usage and mastery of the systems, but assessment of teacher usage and mastery of the systems is undocumented.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	8
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a)(i) Summer institutes focused on PLE best teaching processes will provide a strong basis for teachers' learning the strategies needed to inform teaching and promote mastery based instruction. The timing of this PD is contradictory to the need to develop PLE's prior to summer so that PLE courses can be offered during 2012-13 as indicated on the schedule in the “Scaling Up” section. The professional development for the PLE Innovation team is undocumented.

(a)(ii) It is unclear which professional development activity will address adapting content and instruction. The summer PLE institute is five days which is inadequate to transform educational practices developed over many years. The ongoing PD

during the year will give some support to overcome this shortcoming. There is no evidence of PD for developing alternate instructional modalities.

(a)(iii) Professional development to improve the interpretation and use of data is planned. The in-depth goal of learning to develop and test hypotheses is laudable but may be overly ambitious for the time available when other goals are also active.

(a)(iv) The proposal focuses on highlighting effective teachers and principals through promotion and modeling. This does not directly address using the evaluation system to improve the practice of underperforming teachers or principals.

(b)(i) The PD provided focuses on interpreting assessments in terms of student needs. This is a first step. The proposal does not describe professional development to help teachers identify optimal learning approaches that respond to those individual needs.

(b)(ii) The proposal response is limited to descriptions of the equipment and digital resources to be provided. It is unclear if the professional development provided will help teachers use those tools.

(b)(iii) It is unclear which aspects of professional development will provide the processes and tools the teacher will use to match resources and approaches to the individual student's needs.

(c)(i) The proposal does not address professional development related to school leaders using the teacher evaluation system for improving educator effectiveness or school climate.

(c)(ii) Training will be provided on using PLE approaches to instruction and on improving those practices as problems develop. The proposal does not describe reflective activities usually associated with continuous improvement.

(d) The proposal describes holding and enhancing effective and highly effective teachers through professional development. The diffusion model they plan is based on other teachers being attracted to this method based on peers modeling best practices. The district will also formally recognize exemplary teachers and schools. This has some potential for expanding the number of teachers using PLE's. It does not address the other side of the equation in which students choose which courses to take.

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

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	3
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>(a) The applicant adds an FTE to the district office to support the proposal. It is unclear what level position will be added or what authority the position will have to effect policy or help the project navigate existing policies. The budget does identify this position.</p> <p>(b) The applicant provides assurances that the project teams will have flexibility, but does not address whether school leadership teams have autonomy over schedules, personnel decisions, roles and responsibilities, and school budgets. The applicant's response was not fully on target.</p> <p>(c) The ability of students to progress through credits based on mastery is very clear and strongly stated throughout the proposal.</p> <p>(d) The proposal does not address how students will be given multiple attempts to demonstrate mastery nor what multiple methods might be used. The use of online courses is the only mastery path specifically discussed.</p> <p>(e) The applicant does not address the accessibility or adaptability of the PLE's to students with disabilities nor English language learners. There is a presumption that online content is automatically adaptable and accessible to these students.</p> <p>The limitations and shortcomings described above place this response in the low range.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	5
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>(a) Within the proposal design there is limited acknowledgment of the digital divide. Students would be able to check out laptops but without internet at home this equipment would have limited utility. Internet access and computers would also be available at the Student and Family Assistance Centers. The PLE's are driven by technology making access crucial to</p>		

success. The methods of providing access to low income families are inadequate.

(b) Following the in-class technology orientation, teachers are expected to be the first line of tech support. The proposal does not provide adequate professional development for teachers to play this role in a meaningful way. Parents will have training opportunities at the Assistance Centers. The provision of a support hotline will round out the technology support to make it adequate.

(c) (d) The applicant provides assurance that the systems purchased or developed will allow students and parents to export their data as needed and that they will be built to provide interoperable data exchange transparent to the user.

The because technology access is so critical to the applicant's vision of PLE's, the inadequate provisions for addressing the digital divide lower the score in this area to the middle range.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	12
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal covers the theory and practice of evaluation and continuous improvement. These are directly related to the project's goals. The applicant is vague regarding the external evaluator and the proposal lacks details regarding the makeup of the project's Steering Committee. The role of compliance is emphasized more than the value of transparency.</p> <p>This section is relatively solid overall and deserves a score in the high range.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The internal and external evaluators will work together on an ongoing basis. This communication is strong, but focused internally. It is unclear how broadly the communication will be shared with internal stakeholders such as teachers and students. The external stakeholders will be informed of progress in annual meetings. This does not address the need for <u>ongoing</u> communication. This will elicit only limited engagement of stakeholders in the community.</p> <p>The lack of ongoing communication, the limited engagement of outside stakeholders, and lack of clarity regarding dissemination to internal stakeholders puts this response in the low range.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	0
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Overall The goals in the performance measures are not ambitious. Gains of 1% or 3% per year are not enough to qualify as ambitious. Some of the applicant's proposed measures are activities and not performance measures at all. For example, PM.10.b. "Provide the school board and district administrators with useful data and facilitate their understanding of the data for utilization in institutional and instructional decision making" is an activity, not a measure.</p> <p>(a) The rationale for the applicant proposed measures are not discussed.</p> <p>(b) The tables describing required performance measures do not include required baselines or targets for subgroups. Some measures are confusing such as an annual 10% change in organizational chart consistent with organizational structure of districts already implementing PLEs.</p> <p>(c) There is no discussion of how the measures will be reviewed over time to improve how implementation programs are gauged.</p> <p>The limitations and shortcomings described above place are extreme and place this response at the bottom of the lowest range.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant did not provide any discussion relevant to this area. The discussion surrounding continuous improvement lacks</p>		

any analysis or consideration of the investments being made. They are limited to answering the question “Is student performance improving” and what can be done to enhance those improvements. The effectiveness of investments discussion would have included cost/benefit analyses.

No points are awarded for this section.

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

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	7
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Overall There are a number of issues within the budget. There is a mathematical error in calculating the budget for Math tutors. The budget requested for Math tutors is \$30,000 more than the number of hours, days, years, staff and hourly rate given. On the other side, the budget for student mobile devices is \$2,600,000 whereas the calculated amount based on the factors given would be an additional \$120,000. Project 6 includes \$240,000 in contracts with local partners but the application does not specify any specific activities local partners would perform.</p> <p>(a) All funds are clearly identified as coming from the Race to the Top – District grant.</p> <p>(b) The budget for repair and replacement of equipment is insufficient. There is a small budget in Project 3 for such items, but it would only be enough to cover one inexpensive laptop per school per year. That would be 60 devices repaired or replaced in 4 years when there will be over 7,000 devices in the project – many in the hands of students. The Project 5 budget for a programmer to support and develop the PLE platform is insufficient.</p> <p>(c)(i) All funds are clearly identified as coming from the Race to the Top – District grant. The rationale is based in the project descriptions. No additional rationale is provided here.</p> <p>(c)(ii) The applicant does not explicitly separate ongoing from one-time investments.</p> <p>The strengths described above are limited by shortcomings where there are indications of insufficiency and some accuracy oversights in preparation of the budget. The response is in the upper portion of the middle range.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	1
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant substantially overstates the sustainability of the project. The applicant does not provide an in-depth analysis of how the project would be sustained. Of the project’s \$29 M budget, \$19 M is in additional staff. A minimal number of positions would not be needed after the project period (Director, Assistant Director, and Secretary). Other positions would need to continue. Much of the equipment purchased during the grant would be near its end of life and would need to be replaced. No attention or discussion of a replacement cycle for computers, projectors or response devices. The applicant states these expenses can be absorbed into the district’s budget.</p> <p>The proposal’s response is in the very low range.</p>		

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	4
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(1) The applicant has partnered with four agencies and has had relationships with them for some time.</p> <p>(2) The same performance measures are tied to the competitive preference priority as there are for the rest of the grant. The measures do not clearly relate to the partners or the partnerships.</p> <p>(3)(a) Data tracking is not specific to agency contact. The data tracked are limited to the student’s educational needs, processes, and outcomes.</p>		

(3)(b) The Latinos in Action partnership is consistent with their current relationship. It is not new or ambitious. The role of this and other organizations within the grant is very limited, being described as connected to the Student and Parent Assistance Centers. For example, the applicant does not make any connection between Latinos in Action and English language learners.

(3)(c) There is a vague reference to working with a high need elementary school as a "natural next step". The strategy for scaling up the partnerships is largely undocumented.

(3)(d) There are only general references to the project evaluation that suggest any evaluation of results over time.

(4) The Student and Family Assistance Centers will provide the linkages to the project partners. The exact nature of the linkage is not clear regarding organizational structure, meetings, space, or activities.

(5) The processes are unclear. Social workers may refer students to agencies however there isn't a clear method for identifying and inventorying student needs. The partners will participate in the project Steering Committee, but the specifics of governance are undocumented. A satisfaction survey will be used to assess parental, student, and family engagement. Their role and input into decision making about improving results was not addressed.

(6) The performance measures were basically the same as the overall project and as previously stated these were not ambitious.

The limitations and shortcomings described above place this response in the middle range.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

#### Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The application is neither comprehensive nor coherent. Although, many strategies are woven together, there is a pervasive implication that technology, online, blended instruction will resolve the needs of all students. The application advances a wide variety of ideas but without pulling them into coherent relationships. After considerable review of the application the nature and content of the applicant's PLE is still unclear except that it is heavily technologically based.

The performance measures are far from ambitious. The application seriously neglects the importance of subgroup populations and achievement gaps. The reform aspects of the proposal are minimal.

Absolute priority 1 is not met.

Total	210	90
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