



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0731KY-1 for Green River Regional Educational Cooperative

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has submitted a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that builds on the the four core educational assurance areas:</p> <p>I. Core Assurance Area 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment categories included focus areas in college readiness, graduation rate, proficiency in core content areas, closure of achievement gaps with subgroup populations and student growth. In addition, a provision was indicated that will provide parents with annual growth information relating to individual student learning as compared to students throughout the state. <p>II. Core Assurance Area 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building data systems that measure student growth and success to be utilized in efforts to improve instruction. The use of the new data system (CIITS) will provide for the monitoring of data to determine student growth and achievement. The establishment of Data Teams and Data Retreats have been created to support the implementation of these related efforts. <p>III. Core Assurance Area 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals. The alignment of Standards for Professional Learning, common core standards, college/career readiness standards and the support of cooperative teaching and student engagement were initiatives referenced that are intended to contribute to this area. The established partnerships with two State universities provides faculty support and staff development programs. <p>IV. Core Assurance Area 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turning around low achieving schools. The applicant provided supportive data that clearly identified the need to accelerate, deepen and personalize learning for all students. A focus upon helping students assume more responsibility for understanding their purpose at school was identified as a goal. A shift to competency-based instructional practices will assist students in mastering standards and linking personal goals through technology were identified. 		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant complied with this criteria section as the proposal has indicated a need, approach and supportive measures to implement a high-quality program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant referenced the needed positions and other personnel information (i. e., project director, regional project managers, project staff partners, etc.) that will be used to lead, guide and manage the project. The applicant identified the 112 schools within 22 represented participating districts and number of students served; indicators of low-income families, rural impoverished areas, low-academic performance, and other high-needs factors, as designed by the U.S. Department of Education, were provided. 		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has complied in developing a high quality district wide reform plan. The plan intends to be implemented through a professional learning framework, applied coaching, and through the creation of coaching and data teams. The proposal referenced elements that specifically included; culture, local and cohort learning, embedded learning, cognitive coaching, demonstration classrooms and data teams.

- Culture; this will be addressed initially through a School Culture Assessment at each school.
- Local/Cohort Learning; this entails an ongoing three year professional learning commitment.
- Embedded Learning; a highly qualified array of presenters will work with educators at each school building in a small group format with a focus upon the development of data-focused teams.
- Cognitive Coaching; a cadre of Cognitive Coaches from the State will provide instructional support for teachers.
- Demonstration Classrooms; this concept will include at least two classrooms within each school to model effective pedagogy.
- Data Teams; this will become the language or standard of our traditional Professional Learning Community structures.

The applicant developed an informative chart identifying these seven areas relevant to their completion that included these areas:

- Timeline; the timeframe extends from January-February 2013 to the post grant period 2016-2017
- Deliverables; this component includes such areas as assessments, professional learning, materials, resources, personalized learning strategies, integrated technology, data analysis, training and support, and demonstration classrooms
- Responsible; these individuals will include the project director, project staff, teachers, college and career readiness counselors, principals, district level administrators, participants and consultants
- Credibility; this will include such areas as experience of GRREC/OVEC

The applicant anticipates that this project will expand to other districts in the GRREC and OVEC regions; as those respective boards of directors include 28 additional LEA's, they will be communicating with them on a frequent basis on the impact of the project. In addition, there will be at least annual presentations presented by the Implementation Team regarding their ongoing findings to the boards of directors.

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

The applicant identified five comprehensive goals that apply to improving student outcomes. Also, each goal includes objective indicators related to ongoing improvements in achievement and apply to each subgroups in participating schools; therefore, the plan relevant to this area of establishing LEA wide goals and improved student outcomes is ambitious and achievable:

1. Increase the number of students who have access to highly effective teachers and leaders
2. Increase the number of students who have access to effective teachers and leaders
3. Improve the academic and non-cognitive outcomes for students in Pre K-3
4. All student on track to be college and career ready
5. All students prepared for postsecondary careers, college and/or technical school

The inclusion of charts in the following categories provided supportive information and data that related to these focus areas:

- Performance on Summative Assessments; this will include an ESEA assessment or end-of course test that focuses upon proficiency and achievement growth
- Graduation Rates; the projected overall growth rate goal within the grant period will reflect an increase from 78.8 to 95 percent
- College Enrollment; the projected overall growth rate goal within the grant period will reflect an increase from 50.2 to 75 percent

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	15
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant indicated and identified success in student achievement, educational equity, closing achievement gaps, improving the graduation and college enrollment rates, reforming low performance schools, and making data more accessible to all related stakeholders. Data and information was provided in this area that addressed these successes. The applicant highlighted demonstrations of success that referenced these focus areas within the past several years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education; recent outcomes reflect the state's second lowest dropout rate for students with an Individual Learning Plan • High School Science; a focus in the middle schools with science teachers and classes resulted in an increase by .4 points in ACT test scores compared to state results • Thinking Strategies; these participants have seen an average increase of 9 percent or more in content state assessment scores • Leadership; the establishment of a Superintendents Professional Learning network with a regional participation rate of 35 percent • Smaller Learning Communities; the benefits from the grant initiative has impacted a continuous pattern of improvement in math and reading on behalf of nine large high schools • Math (K-8); a focus in teaching that utilizes technology, mathematical conversations, and enjoyment of teaching math to improve elementary and middle school math skills <p>The state of Kentucky has identified ten potential achievement gaps that include the following categories: all students, males, females, Caucasians, African American, Hispanic, Asians, those qualifying for free and reduced lunch subsidies, ELL, and students with disabilities. The participating LEA's have made progress on closing gaps; specifically with 81 indicators that were improved project wide within the 2010-2011 school year.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has provided support for their participants to increase their fiscal and operational transparency. In addition to the financial information that is accessible through the State's open record's law, a publication across each participating district publishes, on an annual basis, plus a salary and wage survey report.</p> <p>The applicant's goal intends to increase the participating LEA's transparency by developing and implementing an online expenditure database. This information will provide parents and community members with available information that will contribute to their participation in shared school based decision making councils and in advocacy efforts.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant indicated that the CIITS will serve to be the key data management system for this plan. Areas of consideration that will provided for the success of this endeavor includes ongoing teacher, parent and student training or support. A significant component or outcome of this system includes the ability for students to monitor their own levels of mastery.</p> <p>The State's Professional Growth and Effectiveness Systems (PGES) is a field tested new evaluation system that has been developed to access teachers and principals. The applicant will also continue to work with the State's superintendent association in areas to improve and impact governance issues.</p> <p>The Kentucky's Districts of Innovation statute (HB37) referenced provides the State's Board of Education to allow for exemption from certain administrative regulations and statutory provisions in an effort to impact student achievement should contribute to the success of the plan.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has documented significant information that relates to the compliance and support of stakeholders. In regards to</p>		

developing support for the plan, meetings have already taken place that have included the following groups:

- Student focus groups
- Principals and SBDM (Site Based Decision Making) Councils
- Teachers/Kentucky Education Association
- Boards of Education
- Parents

Supportive evidence from collective bargaining and LEA's without collective bargaining have indicated support.

The letters of support included by the applicant was most significant and referenced myriad stakeholders who conveyed their support of the plan.

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

The applicant focused upon four specific barriers that impact students' success:

1. Families in poverty
2. Lack of college interest and completers
3. Inadequate preparation for college
4. Limited time and resources focused on student career paths

A reference was made to identify a Chief Council of Fidelity to focus upon personalized learning. An analysis of the current status in implementing personalized learning environments reflect the following needs:

- Inventory of technology available and teacher observable application
- Tracking of college information at each high school
- Staff development initiatives and plans to implement
- Assess each school's use of classroom and school level data
- Types of learning communities in each school
- Examine partnerships with colleges and universities; off-campus work experiences, and online learning experiences
- Culture audit
- Other indicators (i.e., dropout rate, noncognitive data, employment trends, parent education, teacher and leader qualifications)
- Tenure and retention
- Kindergarten readiness
- Area preschools and daycares

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant applied research based references throughout this area that provided support toward their purpose in addressing the content of this section. The plan will provide for additional resources applied to community based Family Resource/Youth Services Centers (FRYSC) who will work with College/Career Readiness Counselors (CCR). The establishment of a Career Center was identified as an integral component of this plan. Also, a focus on poverty issues for teachers will create a better understanding of the impact on academic and social development. Training for teachers, students and parents will be developed to learn and benefit from the CIITS data system. The mastery of CCR standards is a critical element of aligning the plan to the state's expectations for students. In this area, the role of educators is to help students determine critical factors that relate to goals (e.g., college, career, etc.) and working toward achievement in fulfilling their aspirations. A student self-assessment will be utilized to identify interests and skills that align with one's interests. A personal portfolio will be established to assist students as they proceed in areas of college and career interest. Flexible student resources will contribute to content that will specifically align to each student's career path. In high school, students will be provided to work through a project centered curriculum in their chosen career area. Students will align their academic

work with their career aspirations utilizing a program aligned with the state's core content standards in English Language Arts and Math that connect to the state's college and career readiness standards.

The shift to competency based learning, providing student choice options were another significant components of this outcome; an example would be the support rendered to honor students as they master content standards. The establishment of a Personalized Learning Team will contribute to more opportunities for students in meeting success. As referenced by the applicant, personalized learning structures and strategies provide students with an opportunity to connect content with other cultures through videos and online resources while providing student feedback. It was also stated that the replacement of lectures or student-centered activities will be replaced with a facilitated learning approach; this could impact rural areas and contribute to online learning approaches and course offerings. A significant approach or process will address Students as Leaders, which will be intended to create whole-building transformations; based upon Stephen Covey's **7 Habits of Highly Successful People**. the student outcomes associated with this process will include the following:

- Increased student attendance through an improved cultural engagement
- Making learning relevant to students
- Provide for additional leadership opportunities in the school
- Improved career skills and college and career readiness

The plan identifies two major areas of importance that will be given a priority: Reading and Math. The development of school wide data teams (Assessment) and the focus of students as leaders were addressed as key features in their high-quality plan. A shift to establishing explicit and measurable objectives is a feature of this students as leaders concept. As an outcome, teachers can focus on supporting students individually through multiple types of strategies that meet their needs.

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

The applicant has developed a high-quality plan for improving learning that emphasizes several key elements:

- Students as Leaders; this area supports the development of essential skills and traits that impact students' achievement of college and career readiness.
- Competency-Based Instruction; supported by instructional strategies that include Thinking Strategies, Visible Learning, Reading to Learn/Learn to Read, and student centered math.
- Personalized Learning; supports college and career components through training; increase AP and duel credit courses.
- Leaders Developing Leadership; a three year training program that will address areas of instructional, reflective and coaching approaches.
- Professional Learning Communities/Data Teams; teams will utilize quantitative data, ongoing formative assessments, and qualitative data to improve instructional practices.

A training approach has been developed that will provide teachers with skills and information to successfully implement in their teaching methods; therefore, to increase student learning and achievement. The utilization of Cognitive Coaches and by their colleagues in Data Teams will render support at the school site for educators. In addition, instructional technology will be embedded throughout all staff development. The project's Instructional Technology Director will provide full-time support to help build capacity with Coaches, Counselors and teachers at every opportunity.

The Leaders Developing Leadership will enable school leaders and team members to receive training to guide school policies, implement new-tools, analyze and use data, and manage school resources. The four flow charts indicating the direction of each year of the plan were well developed and duly noted. The system includes a process for translating educator evaluation data into recommendations for professional growth. School wide tools include the student responsibility program and the personalized learning plan. Data sources that will also be utilized includes ACT aligned measurements (e.g., PLAN, EXPLORE, and ACT), end of the course assessment data, state testing data, computer adaptive tests, and classroom formative assessments.

In addressing a high quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals, including hard-to-staff schools, subjects, and specialty areas the applicant indicated that an aggressive, coach supported and embedded approach to change the way teachers teach and leaders lead. Teachers will utilize technologies and strategies that will focus upon collaboration and cooperative learning skills. In regards to hard-to-staff positions, including language, physics, and advanced placement, the applicant intends to apply blended models that utilize technology to implement. In addition, the applicant referenced school leaders will be provided support to shift the culture of each school building to ensure ongoing sustainability.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	14
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This learning project will be directed through an Implementation Team that includes representation from each cooperative entity. A SBDM council will be established and responsible for addressing issues regarding such features as practices, policies, and rules that may need to be revised. Several issues have already been identified that will need initially addressed: • Age change of the drop-out rate • Applying for District of Innovation status • Transportation accommodations • Transition to competency based credits for graduation purposes • Grading policy • Kid-friendly technology policy <p>The utilization of School Based Decision Making will provide additional flexibility and autonomy for the applicant's schools. The inclusion of parents, teachers and an administrator in this process will promote shared decision making.</p> <p>The reference to working with the State's Department of Education in moving toward personalized and competency based learning was noteworthy.</p> <p>The reference toward supporting the English learner only referenced the provision of access to multi-lingual materials on a case-by-case basis.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	10
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provided focus in addressing this area as they identified needs associated with technology due to socioeconomic and geographic factors. The goal is to work with schools in expanding to a 1:1 and take-home initiatives to therefore benefit all students.</p> <p>Supports to ensure students, parents, and educators will be able to implement successfully a personalized learning concept has been established. The CCR Counselors will provide ongoing weekly sessions to support parents relating to the CIITS data system.</p> <p>Professional development sessions will be used to maximize the skills of teachers and administrators to meet success in the plan.</p> <p>The applicant identified the Infinite Campus, an online portal, that will provide educational data to stakeholders. The plan will utilize three data systems to ensure implementation of the CIITS, Infinite Campus, and MUNIS.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has identified an ongoing evaluation process and strategy that will be applied to monitor the plan's outcomes in both a formative and summative process. A separate implementation evaluation to determine the fidelity of the plan that is needed to achieve noted gains will also be applied to this process.</p> <p>The applicant will appoint a national evaluator to provide a formative process of collecting data associated with the plan's goals. The Chief Council of Fidelity will continue to support areas that address personalized learning, competency based instruction, leadership and college/career readiness.</p> <p>Student growth will be monitored along the state and national norms that align with Kentucky's assessment system. An array of interim assessments in elementary, including the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing; content testing in</p>		

elementary and middle school, end of the course assessments and the EPAS battery for grades 8, 10, and 11 have been planned.

Implementation aspects were identified with the implementation of the Instructional Rounds process. Also as indicated various types of data will be monitored and analysis will help to determine comparative information. Quantitative data will be secured from tests, surveys, existing achievement data and observations will also prove helpful. The applicant addressed aspects of maintaining compliance and ethical elements, reporting information and communicating public sharing findings. A list of various data and methods to collect information was identified on a Quantitative and Qualitative information sheet.

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

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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant identified various internal and external stakeholders to engage in ongoing communication of the plan:

- Communication Marketing Specialist
- College Career Readiness Counselor
- FRYSC Directors
- Kentucky Department of Education
- University personnel in their teacher prep programs

The applicant has established and maintained supportive relationships with these referenced stakeholders; therefore, they have indicated a commitment to maintaining communications and engagement with these stakeholders in all future endeavors that relate to the goals of their project.

As referenced, the applicant will employ a Communication/Marketing Specialist to ensure that engagement both internal and external to school and community stakeholders is ongoing. The Communication/Marketing Specialist will also attend joint and regional meetings of PL teams, expand the website, and work with the media to help maintain communication with all stakeholders. The CCR Counselors and each district's FRYSC director and staff will also be key participants in providing for ongoing communication and engagement. As an external group, the Kentucky Department of Education was referenced by the applicant as an educational partner. The applicant has indicated a supportive strategy and well developed plan to support its communication efforts.

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

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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The rationale identified by the applicant centered upon the fact that learning reforms cannot be fully implemented without first supporting students as the leaders of their own purpose-driven learning; leaders must have the tools and techniques to work effectively with teachers to change instructional practices and to promote student achievement.

The applicant has aligned their 12 performance measures . As indicated, baseline data will be available in August 2014 as the state implements the new **Professional Growth Evaluation System** for teachers and principals.

Goals were developed in a manner that identified objectives and indicators of performance, various measurements, aligned activities, data, and regional areas of concern.

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

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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Data will be collected and evaluated within the state and federal projects. The applicant will judge the merit or success of each this plan on the development of classroom strategies that can be viewed. The Personalized Learning Teams, in each school, will determine the uses and tracking impact of the overall project evaluation. In addition, the applicant intends to examine the proposal's operational expenses by the number of students served and the potential economic gains for improvements in their long-term outcomes. In areas of poverty, the applicant will include ongoing staff support to impact a culture that promotes college and career readiness, as well as efforts to eliminate barriers to learning at K-12.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The budget was organized around the four major components and supported by the management and evaluation plan. The plan did identify specific capacity-building measures that intend to support its development: Data Teams; Cognitive Coaching for Teachers; Teams of Coaches; Demonstration Sites; Certified Student Leadership Cultural Teams; and the Supplementing of Technology.</p> <p>The plan only included the program costs; therefore, anticipating funding will supplement its costs. These areas of funding that have been identified included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners; identified as vendors and consultants • University support; identified teacher and principal preparation programs at two state universities • Schools and districts; referenced schools regionally and locally with sessions held at the GRREC or OVEC training facilities • Cooperatives; Kentucky Association of School Superintendents, the Kentucky Association of School Administrators, the Kentucky Department of Education and the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education <p>The five projects that were served by the proposal included separate budgets that identified Cost Description and Cost Assumption, and features that related to these categories:</p> <p>Personnel; Fringe Benefits; Travel; Equipment; Supplies; Operating Material; Contractual; Training Stipends; Other, Total Direct Costs; Total Indirect Costs; Total Grant Funds Requested; Funds from other sources used to support the project; and the Total Budget.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	8
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant addressed this area by emphasizing that the project is constructed in a manner that will provide for the gradual release of responsibility from project staff to districts and schools. The major focus of resources has been on training and implementation support. The anticipation of state funding in future years will offset the personnel costs of sustaining the CCR Counselors by the end of the grant.</p> <p>The material purchase acquired during the grant will primarily center upon supplemental technologies that will be used to enable personalized learning.</p> <p>The projected sustainability of the proposal failed to provide specific information or references to support the narrative.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	10
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant emphasized several specific performance measures relating to target groups that included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased kindergarten readiness • Student mastery in reading by the end of 3rd grade • Kindergarten readiness with a focus on social and emotional development • Students transitioning at each major level (e.g., elementary, middle school, to high school) with a clear purpose • Decrease incidence of bullying and other discipline issues • Student increase in math and reading • Self-regulate one's learning K-12 • Student access to high quality teachers and leaders • Support for at risk students <p>The applicant identified resources (i.e., Family Resource and Youth Services Centers (FRYSC) and CCR Centers) and referenced limited partnerships (Preschool Pals) in their response.</p>		

A verified listing of targeted groups were clearly identified by the applicant to be served by the plan.

The explanation of utilizing a formative and summative evaluation to ensure continuous improvement were referenced and described.

The Personalized Learning Team and Project Managers will be used to analyze data to target resources.

A strategy to scale the model beyond the participating schools and students was stated by the applicant and identified through the mention of the Kentucky Department of Education and the two colleges referenced in the proposal. A strategy did address the support that will be warranted and developed by the next level of learning, while supporting those students where they are now being served in the continuum.

As all FRYSC centers have agreed to support the plan, the data that they acquire will be utilized and shared with school staff members. The expanse of new college and career ready activities are an anticipated outcome of this relationship. The partnership with preschool, daycare, and family-care centers will have a direct bearing on a child's readiness to enter kindergarten. In addition, the expanded role of the FRYSC in the district will add value to the success of the project.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided a comprehensive, well developed and a high-quality plan that was designed to create learning environments that would contribute to improved instruction through personalized strategies that encompassed a supportive structure to warrant its success. A clear outcome of the project addressed college and career standards that would increase college applicants; while improving upon each student's readiness to succeed in either their career path or college pursuit.

The project also focused upon accelerating student achievement and by meeting the needs of all student. The significance of developing effective staff development training for teachers and administrators was also featured in the applicant's plan.

Total	210	207
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	8

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

- Supplemental Budget #1 request identifies the need to support and to provide training for daycare, preschools and home-care programs through the establishment of a cohort of itinerant Preschool Pals. The requested funds would help to support curriculum, books and materials for each center and for those families attending Preschool Pal trainings. The coordination of the program would be implemented by existing project staff.

A budget worksheet that supports these expenditures was provided that indicated each of the expense categories and needs of each separate supplemental request. This optional budget did not fully address those components of a high quality plan that included: timelines, deliverables and responsible parties.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	7
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Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

· Supplemental Budget #2 request was designed to project funds for the enhancement of community technology areas. These funds would be allocated to expose students to technology access on their school buses and in designated community locations.

A budget worksheet that supports these expenditures was provided that indicated each of the expense categories and needs of each separate supplemental request. This optional budget did not fully address those components of a high quality plan that included: timelines, deliverables and responsible parties.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	10
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Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Supplemental Budget #3 was designed to further enhance technology within the schools within the applicant's plan. As the region varies in computer access and available technology resources, this supplement would be used to provide classrooms with needed resources to improve the availability and application of technology in each school.

A budget worksheet that supports these expenditures was provided that indicated each of the expense categories and needs of each separate supplemental request. This optional budget did not fully address those components of a high quality plan that included: timelines, deliverables and responsible parties.



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0731KY-2 for Green River Regional Educational Cooperative

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The application is consortia of school divisions in Kentucky coupled with agencies with considerable expertise and experience in improving educational outcomes. The proposal presents a clear roadmap as to the goals, processes, strategies and outcomes that will result from the comprehensive implementation of a competency based model of education. The proposal is proactive and forward thinking in its approach, taking into account the needs of the local divisions, the experiences of the partners, and what is needed to change the culture and climate of schools in Kentucky.

The logic model provides a visual description of the 4 major areas with goals, products, strategies and outcomes described in a general sense of an overview. Within the narrative section the goals are clearly stated with performance assessment outcomes for students provided as well. For example, the applicant articulates a clear plan that the major areas of focus (students as leaders, leaders developing leadership, personalized learning competency based learning) and how these broad areas frame the subsequent activities and outcomes centered around the core competencies of RTTT-D. The core assurances describes the vision and goals. For example, in Core Assurance 1, the applicant outlines that students will be prepared for the workforce and postsecondary education through improved graduation rates, closing achievement gaps, and obtaining proficiency in content areas. Professional development of teachers in data management and use further refines the description.

The application makes a compelling case that while the divisions and populations are diverse with respect to population, economic status, and resources, the systemic issues such as graduation rates, college preparation, workforce ready skills, achievement are common themes that traverse all of the districts. The innovative approach is focused on students and student outcomes that prepare students for the 21st century using a mastery approach rather than the traditional one size fits all in education.

The proposal model has overarching themes that align with the RTTT-D goals (e.g. personalized learning) with supporting research that indicates a knowledge of best practices. Within each aspect of the model, the applicant provides additional information on current initiatives that support the proposed grant; this is an important point to note- the proposal is building upon prior work rather than starting anew. This indicates a thoughtful and strategic approach to changing the educational system and authentically making a personalized environment for learning. The application outlines challenges but with a plan to build upon the effective academic programs and processes that are in place. The core educational assurances outlined in RTTT-D are clearly specified and build upon previous initiatives and resources. The application presents a well-defined and sharply focused approach that is cogent and articulated.

The plan is a high quality plan in that aligns with the four core assurance areas including college preparation and workforce readiness, improving the graduation rates, closing of achievement gaps specifically with subgroups, and proficiency in core content areas. The plan has established ambitious goals, measurable targets, a timeline, and deliverables. The plan considers the development of a personalized learning approach using mastery learning experiences for students, a data driven system to inform educators of student progress and to gage where assistance is needed, a focus on college and workforce readiness through the development of supports and partnerships in the community, and recruiting and retaining a high quality cadre of educators.

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

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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a process that encouraged all school divisions in Kentucky to participate as a consortia member in the grant application. The initial process combined resources and skills of the partner agencies with representative committee members including parents, teachers, and school leaders for input and comment.

Numerous meetings, forums, and community sessions were held to explain and provide information about RTTT-D and the plan for a consortia of schools to be a part of the project. The applicant provided a summary of the various meetings where the role, responsibilities and outcomes were reviewed. The project will have a full-time director along with two regional project directors to guide the grant management plan and the school partners in achieving the goals and outcomes. GRREC and OVEC conducted a two phase process where all districts were solicited for participation (50 LEA's). Schools that are part of the consortia volunteered to participate and were part of the planning process for the grant along with other stakeholders (22 out of 50 LEA's volunteered to be a consortia member).

Schools that volunteered to be a part of the consortia and the RTTT-D project demonstrate a commitment that includes a wide range of stakeholders and demonstrates an investment into the community at large. This willingness to have broad based input will forge a stronger alliance within the partner agencies. A list of schools with accompanying data and charts was included and provides evidence that addresses RTTT-D criteria. The plan outlines in detail the process used to form the consortia.

The process of implementation is a phased approach with multiple forms of communication and input. By taking the time to form a strong buy-in at the onset the applicant has a greater assurance of investment by those who participate as well a thoroughly vetted plan. The application indicates that 22 out of 50 LEA's will participate and serve 112 schools with over 59,000 students of which 61% are considered low income and rural. The applicant provides data that supports the need for the project and meets the RTTT-D requirements. This large scale initiative demonstrates promise with addressing systemic issues for high poverty students in almost 50% of the school divisions in Kentucky.

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

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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has demonstrated success based upon outlined experiences with other education reform efforts of the partners listed in the proposal. The plan has developed around a progression of steps and activities that are logical and build upon one another in a systematic manner. The plan is comprehensive in that it uses a vertical approach to consider the needs at the school level to the district and the district to the larger consortia of districts who will participate in this project.

The applicant makes a strong argument for understanding the culture of each school that will participate. This point is an excellent way to understand the values and mores of the individual schools and community while working towards a comprehensive plan for the consortia schools. The effective use of resources to deliver the project training will be maximized by understanding the needs and values of the community. The reform efforts are guided by distinct strategies that support change in student achievement and success. The plan to use regional and local cohort meetings is an efficient and effective strategy to reach many teachers through the use of coaches and train the trainer models. The training plan is consistent and focused upon fidelity to assure that validity and reliability is achieved.

A strength of the plan is the spiral approach to delivery while maintaining attention on monitoring and evaluation. The plan concentrates on changing the culture of teaching and learning for the long term rather than a short term intervention. The plan cites appropriate research that grounds the conceptual model into goals that realistic and ambitious for learner success that extends beyond the boundaries of poverty. This attention to changing the culture of teaching and learning is action oriented on the future needs and skills that students need for success in a global setting and is strength of the application.

The plan is a high quality plan through the use of a visual logic model with inputs and outputs that include a timeline, deliverables, activities, and overarching goals. The scale up plan includes all participating districts and schools in the consortia and thus, include all students as part of the plan. .

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

The application outlines goals and provides data that supports the need for the grant. Goal 2 as outlined in the proposal is focused only upon outcomes for PreK-3 and yet subsequent data on state assessments clearly shows that 10th grade reading and mathematics proficiency is lacking. The proposal does not make clear as to why K-12 achievement is not a goal rather than a singular focus on assessment data for PreK-3. The goals related to graduation and college enrollment find a substantial need to address this achievement gap. The data is not disaggregated by subgroups for all of the indicators. Providing this information would have added depth to the proposal.

The proposal provides information on how growth is determined during the grant period. The use of proficiency based upon yearly assessments is not a true growth model. The application is centered around personalized learning and as such, articulation of how individual growth in performance would be utilized would have added depth and clarity. Charts and information on summative assessments, graduation rates, and college enrollment are useful information; however, there is a lack of alignment in the goals and assessments as to how this information will be used to improve future student performance.

Goals set, for example, in 11 grade math proficiency are still low compared to the goals set for graduation and college attendance. There is a relationship between these variables that is not clearly addressed in such a manner that is makes evident how one can influence the other and thus, impact college attendance. Preparation and success in college is strongly linked to the quality and preparation received in K12. If math proficiency is not obtained in high school courses students are enrolled in college remediation plans and this often influences their ability to pay and stay in a college track. Greater explanation of how these variables influence in combination student outcomes is not clear.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	13

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant outlines successes within districts (e.g. Adair County Schools, Henry County Schools) of strong academic gains and provide specific examples of individual school success over the past four years. For example, all of the participating LEA's showed increased numbers of students graduating from high school (80% compared to the state average of 76%). Schools have focused upon critical gap areas identified by the Kentucky Department of Education and made progress on 81 indicators. The districts are committed to improving student performance and each individual school has specific indicators and improvements listed in the appendix that demonstrate success.

As well, the applicant, serving as the lead in this initiative, has served rural and high poverty schools in Kentucky with sustained professional development services and plans to these school over several decades . Prior success in programs associated with this grant application such a Thinking Strategies and Professional Learning Communities demonstrate success and the ability and capacity to deliver the services outlined in the grant proposal.

Progress seems to be more isolated events for some contents and some subgroup performance rather than comprehensive. This in and of itself is not a limitation of the proposal but rather indicates that success and change are difficult considering the myriad factors that influence and correlate to student achievement. Long-term effort that is sustained with a coherent plan of action will be the catalyst that is needed; the applicant acknowledges the challenges that will faced as well as provides a plan of action. It appears that success is somewhat limited; however, considering the root issues that face these school districts there is still evidence of success although inconsistent. There is limited evidence provided on how performance is made available to parents, students, and educators.

The consortia of schools provide data that all schools in the consortia are rural with 61.37% from low income families. The applicant provides a summary chart for each participating schools of data and progress made over the past 4 years. The schools in this consortia have address specific achievement gaps with subgroups and those that are in poverty. This application did not specifically addresses those in schools that are persistently low achieving; however, the schools that make up the consortia are those districts with students with the highest level of poverty and the greatest need with respect to subgroup performance.

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

5

5

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Kentucky has processes in place that provide salary for instructional as well as support staff. This information is public information and available online as well as in other sources such as division report cards and local newspapers. The applicant provides a plan to increase transparency with regard to RTTT-D funds including online availability of how funds are used and expended as well as personnel costs. The open and shared system of information will allow the community and others to view expenditures. The applicant has provided numerous examples of how this information is available to the public. Being transparent builds community support and trust for the initiatives as well as open dialog on the efficiency and effective use of funds.

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

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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Kentucky has processes and procedures in place that support innovation and new programs that focus upon student learning and achievement. The applicant provides information on how school districts have been able to receive waivers or exemptions to implement programs that focus on the student (e.g., Districts of Innovation). This allowance supports the grant application to invest and implement programs that are geared towards mastery learning and personalized contexts.

This applicant goes on to affirm the state investment in a teacher/administrator evaluation system (PGES) that is part of this grant application as well. Kentucky appears to support as well as provide sufficient oversight and guidance on the implementation of innovative programs with a promise of improving student achievement and success.

The application provides some examples of districts that have implemented similar components outlined in the grant proposal with support from the state while allowing flexibility for creative an novel approaches to changing how educational is delivered and evaluated. The use of a statewide data system, CIITS, will allow for continuous monitoring and evaluation of data and the plan outlines how students, parents and teachers will be able to use the system. Allowing students the ability to track their performance and mastery of learning supports personalized learning and builds student reasonability for learning.

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

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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a summary of how stakeholders were involved and their voice heard and acknowledged(e.g., focus groups, surveys, meetings). It should be noted that all districts had the opportunity for involvement and that despite the rural nature of many of the districts, a deliberate and concerted effort was made to include all districts in the initial proposal design. A diverse and wide range of participation were sought from local community stakeholders to provide insight into the needs of the individual districts and community. The applicant provides evidence of support from both those districts with and those without collective bargaining and/or teacher associations.

This investment at the front end is an excellent strategy and opportunity to build deep relationships with the community and alleviate misperceptions that occur. The applicant collaborated with the appropriate Kentucky teacher advocacy groups to receive their support as well as to have 86% approval rating from supportive educators in the consortia districts; thus achieving a threshold greater than 70% established by RTTT-D criteria. The applicant includes a wide range of letters of support that indicate broad based support for the grant and its objectives.

The letters of support included one from a parent group at each each school that will participate. The applicant provides a plan that clearly considered how vital is was to include and receive the support for this grant from local constitutes; this is a strength of the proposal in that in demonstrates the planning and effort that went into the development while considering the needs of each district.

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

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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant identifies the common barriers to student achievement (e.g., boredom, missing class, kindergarten readiness, poverty) and common approaches to success in the rural LEA's that will participate in the grant (e.g. credit recovery options, mastery learning, technology and digital resources). A collective and shared set of strategies that transcend all of the schools will allow for greater consistency of evaluation towards goals, as well as have an efficient model of reform.

It is important to note that the grant activities includes strategies such as culture surveys that address the unique characteristics of each school/district while seeking common solutions to common problems. Through a needs assessment additional information on non-cognitive variables and trends, such as local employment and parent education, will be collected on other areas and indicators.

The applicant provided information earlier in the application that was focused on early years of education while the needs assessment in this section appears to be focused on later outcomes such as college application or FAFSA completion; there are measures that address readiness for school (e.g., participation in early learning services) and solutions such as the use of Pre-Schools specialists to support teachers and caregivers in early literacy and numeracy skills. It appears that the approach is to be multi-level using a trend analysis to capture individual school/district attributes, strengths and limitations. The plan is a high quality plan that provides goals, activities, a timeline, deliverables, and credibility.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	20
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a strong rationale and research base for strategies that support student learning and achievement such as mastery learning and a personalized environment. The rationale is within the context of the demographic parameters of the local districts such as high poverty and generational poverty. The culture of generational poverty in depressed economies is a pervasive context that can be difficult to overcome. The application does an excellent overview of how these issues can be addressed through support mechanisms, student engagement in learning, active participation coupled with soft skill development such as resiliency, efficacy, and persistence. The heart of the plan resides with the use of a variety of resources to support student success for the workforce and postsecondary education.</p> <p>The proposal integrates community resources, school supports, and other models of learning to support the student for success. The plan has developed activities for students centered around choice, diverse opportunities to learn, varied settings, setting of individual goals, use of technology, student interest -- all strategies to foster the individual student through a personalized approach to their learning. The narrative provides in-depth examples that will utilize multiple strategies to engage the student in the learning (e.g., online learning, self-paced learning, opportunities to retest, choice and interest). As well, students will have access to digital forms of learning, adaptive technologies, and other online resources that allow for individual goal setting, selection and choice, and the opportunity to explore in greater depth, areas of interest.</p> <p>The use of a technology rich platform will also foster the opportunity to collaborate with diverse cultures that extend the boundary of learning beyond the classroom and community. The training of parents, students, and educators to the use the state wide data system (CIITS) will increase involvement in the learning and the outcomes as well as allow for continual monitoring of mastery. This tool allows for students to be directly involved in their learning and supports the personalized learning concept outlined in the proposal.</p> <p>The approach is a K12 approach that takes into account all students in all contents using Cognitive Coaching, for example. The use of a demonstration classroom where educators can learning from peer teachers is a non-threatening approach to modeling. Students will have explicit and measurable goals of success and no longer be confined to a classroom or content based upon time; the use of mastery learning opportunities to accelerate learning is an excellent strategy to involve students in their learning and develop responsibly for their learning as well.</p> <p>The applicant provides an excellent narrative of the learning context for this grant and has a well-thought out plan that is comprehensive and of a high quality. High quality aspects of the plan include goals, activities, timeline, deliverables, and credibility. The plan incorporates the Family Resource and Youth Service Centers found in the communities to support students and their families. The Career Center will focus upon college and career planning to work with students for postsecondary enrollment and success. The plan is high quality in that it describes specific goals, specific activities, a timeframe and deliverables.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	18

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has developed a plan that is clearly focused upon the student and how the student will perform and achieve as a result of grant activities. The application has clear cognitive outcomes as well as non-cognitive outcomes that will provide the student with dispositions related to responsibility and perseverance. The professional development plan outlined for educators provides a scaffold approach to the redesign of instruction that will assist in the development of student skill and student performance. The focus upon the role of culture in the teaching and learning process is an excellent approach to begin the type of systemic change that is needed in high poverty areas with limited access to the latest innovative tools and strategies.

The approach is centered around student leaders, competency based instruction, personalized learning, and leaders developing leadership. The accompanying narrative for each section provides literature and research that supports the framework in the redesigned approach to teaching and learning. The professional development will assist teachers to change how teaching is structured to focus upon alternate methods of content completion and mastery. Mastery learning allows student to learn at their own pace, set their own goals for learning, and be responsible for what is learned in an environment that allows for the individual rather than a school calendar to guide the process.

A comprehensive plan is outlined that provides ongoing training with opportunities for feedback and assistance through the grant period. The charts included in the application provide a visual of the goals, activities, timelines associated with the major areas of emphasis (e.g., students as leaders, competency based instruction, personalized learning, leaders developing leadership, and the use of data to inform and guide the processes and plan).

The plan builds in time throughout the grant for data training and the development of data teams to use assessment information aligned to outcomes to monitor progress. As well, the teacher evaluation process will be linked to multiple indicators of success with recommendations for ongoing professional growth of the educator; this is a strength. The applicant addressed hard to staff positions with a blended learning approach; this did not provide enough information to explain specifically how hard to staff positions would be filled and how all students would have access to high quality teachers and administrators in a definitive manner.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant has provided a succinct and clear overview of the initial groundwork that involved all stakeholders invested in the project. By seeking stakeholder input at the onset the plan now has a foundation from which to build the ensuing activities. A plan such as this that seeks to overhaul the educational system must have support from the top of the administrative rank to the every individual in every school and district. The shared vision and mission along with shared governance plans that are in place will be able to support this initiative with respect to school policy and infrastructure. The School Based Decisions Making councils and local school boards operate with sufficient autonomy to guide the outlined proposal.</p> <p>On overview of this section finds reform efforts such as raising the drop out age from 16 to 18 will be a local issue but will receive support from the Implementation Team. The applicant will support divisions to find solutions for problems and issues that are grounded in the local context; each district is unique but many of the same problem are found across the area such as graduation rate. The local division maintains control and autonomy while receiving the support of the applicant.</p> <p>The applicant provides evidence of the level of support (e.g., local boards of education, School Based Decision Making Council), how it was achieved, and how it will be utilized to guide the changes that are proposed. The plan has consistently outlined the focus on student mastery through a competency based approach and reiterates that students will be guided by multiple opportunities and ways to demonstrate mastery.</p> <p>The plan provides for all students success through ample and diverse resources (e.g., Cognitive Coaches, Implementation Teams that are local residents and thus, familiar the region and schools) and specifically addresses students with disabilities and those whose primary language is not English. For students in rural and high poverty areas to have access to the all the supports that one would find in wealthy urban school division is a strength of the application.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	4

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The application addresses the challenges of technology in rural areas with some innovative strategies (e.g., school buses with WiFi and encouraging student to bring their own devices to use). In high poverty areas students may not be in the position of having a device of any kind. The plan does not address this section in a thoughtful manner. An investment in technology support is one issue; however, having the tools to use are another. The applicant outlines a plan of a 1:4 as a preliminary goal for computing devices (1 device to every 4 students); and, sets a goal of 1:1 for the future- an ambitious goal for a rural and high poverty area.

Technical support is not addressed in a manner that seems to adequately acknowledge how this will be done. Teacher professional development as a strategy was not clear as a means of providing technical support to parent and students. An online system that allows parents to interface is an excellent strategy if the parents actually have the tools available. Details were lacking in this to support the technology infusion and use/support by parents and students.

The CCR will provide training and support to parents on the use of the data system (CIITS). However, the applicant does not address how access to the data can be used to assist students academically or in career and post secondary planning.

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 application provides a plan that includes a substantial evaluation team. The team includes a national evaluator as well as other experts to assess both qualitative and quantitative progress towards goals.</p> <p>The narrative includes a description of methodology and research design which is appropriate and indicates a quality approach to the validity of the research for this project. Evaluation questions are included as well as a team of experts (e.g., Council of Fidelity) to guide the evaluation plan on specific aspects such as college preparation, personalized learning and mastery learning, for example. The plan outlines specific measures and assessments such as the Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership, national measures of student achievement, and graduation rates, for example. This description is somewhat general in description and while some student outcome indicators are listed, the application does not clearly connect how the activities will drive the instruction, how the instructional process will be guided by outcomes, and how student achievement will be assessed in a continuous manner that considers summative analysis.</p> <p>Greater detail or some examples showing a direct link to the continuous improvement cycle or a timeline would have added depth to the application. The application has plans to share and disseminate the information; however, no definitive time frame or incremental review is articulated. The plan has high quality aspects such as how information will be shared, for example, but in total is somewhat general in description.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application has a clear plan of communication that utilizes multiple formats and multiple venues that takes into account the many schools and divisions that are involved. For example, the applicant plans to use a marketing specialist working with the College and Career Counselors as well as with the Family Resource and Youth Service Centers in each district to communicate weekly and monthly. The specialist will also attend and participate in joint local, regional meetings of school based teams to gain an understanding of each school's specific needs.</p> <p>The applicant plans to use print, media and web resources to communicate updates and regularly planned meetings at the district and local level; as well, plans quarterly meetings are planned with state and educational partners for regular updates. A wide range of communication strategies were considered in the plan of action and utilized diverse resource to keep stakeholders engaged and current.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a thoroughly developed plan for each grade band that provides goals, objectives, activities and measures. For example, each grade band has specific indicators of performance towards meeting the goals outlined in the application and measurable benchmarks for success (e.g., the number of students who complete the FAFSA and Student</p>		

Leader Surveys). The use of qualitative and quantitative measures will allow the applicant to use data that are empirical as well as to establish themes.

Benchmarks are set for each goal that are ambitious (e.g., 100 % success for example on Goal 3 Improve Academic and Non-Cognitive Measures for PreK-3 and 10% annual increase in students taking Advanced Placement or other college level type coursework). Measures are standardized assessments such as the Kentucky Prep and Explore as well as other assessments such as discipline data. The use of data from the current state assessment that used a student growth model is an excellent strategy to use in conjunction with personalized learning environments and state assessments. Growth models show progress at the individual level rather at a grade or school level. Individual progress can be monitored and evaluated in concert with the individual student strengths and weaknesses. Specific measures for assessment are included; some extend across the K12 spectrum such as Kentucky state assessment and others are appropriate measure for other variables such as the Kentucky Common Kindergarten Entry Screener. Data is analyzed and evaluated based upon the specific measure (e.g., annual, semester) in an ongoing and regular manner. Progress towards goals at the student, school, district and consortia level of analysis will be evaluated such that adjustments can be made as needed. Each goal is clearly articulated with strategies, outcomes, and specific target measures of achievement outlined for each goal.

The plan did articulate that the emphasis upon early literacy and math should take care of some of the future concerns related to reading and math. While this may be accurate for those entering school this year it will not address those who are in the current system and not achieving; additional explanation and clarification would have made this point more evident in terms of strategies that address current gaps and lack of achievement. The application provides a well outlined summary although subgroups performance is not overtly addressed. However, the goals are focused upon rural and high poverty districts as a whole rather than by subgroups.

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

The proposal has an approach that has many high quality aspects and overall evaluates the impact of the large scale project in a systematic and thorough manner. The plan does address some of the value added components that come about by default as a result of change and reform. For example, creating environments where student success is at the heart and center of the educational plan changes long held values and perceptions of the educational system. Graduation and college attendance impacts the overall economic status of the community and is seen as the primary solution to reducing poverty. By expanding the services and quality of education, students have opportunities for access and success in K12 and postsecondary learning. Education impacts the local economic status and in high poverty areas this is vital for local and community stability and thus, improves the quality of life at levels for community members.

The plan focuses upon changing the culture of poverty though education is an investment in the long term sustainability of the community. This plan does not articulate very well how working with the community or how technology improves rural communication in a very clear manner. There is a strong evaluation component for some aspects; however, this evaluation does not seem to consider these additional facets that come about by changed educational environment that have an impact upon teaching and learning in an overt or clear approach. The plan does not articulate a return on investment or cost analysis that considers how time, money, internal and external resources, and human resources will be considered in concert with cost and expenses.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The budget is heavy with personnel costs, travel, and training personnel to support the initiatives. The lack of internal and external resources available to the districts demonstrate how much is needed for this initiative. The applicant provides detailed charts with expenses for each year by each goal. A description is included that further delineates each area over the

grant period. The budget provides a clear picture of both the plans and the associated expenses. While heavy costs are associated with personnel, the applicant has outlined throughout the grant the need for supporting resources and personnel to ensure that goals are successfully achieved. The budget outlines one time and capacity building expenses over four budgets centered around the major goals of the proposal.

The emphasis upon training and professional development supports the plan in that a major goal is to change the culture of teaching and learning at the onset while using specific strategies such as the use of technology and personalized learning to change the classroom practice. The budget does not appear to be heavy in resources that filter down to the school level, teacher level or student level. However, the districts have committed to supporting the grant through district investments such as technology infrastructure. The training, implementation and ongoing involvement occurs at the school level with support from experts and consultants who will led the efforts of change.

The project budget is delineated by the broad goals outlined earlier (e.g., students are leaders, developing leaders, personalize learning, competency based instruction). This provides an alignment of the funds and expenditures to each goal. The budget did not clearly explain how funding will occur to support the initiatives beyond the grant period and where specifically additional funding and support (15 to 20% as outlined in the budget) will come from as well.

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

10

8

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The plan indicates this is an implementation and training model that is intended to build the capacity of the individual, school, and district to be self-sufficient and self-reliant once the grant is over. For example, Cognitive Coaches will be supported after the grant ends and the Career and College Ready Counselors will have state funding until 2016. The approach is to use a train the trainer format whereby all teachers, staff, and administrators understand how personalized learning is embedded into all aspects of the teaching and learning process. The use of onsite demonstration schools allow for theory to become of the daily practice with opportunities to model. The intensive professional development that is planned for schools demonstrates that the school, staff and administration has to quickly become knowledgeable of the content and with support move to the level of implementation. Each step is supported with coaches or other experts so that the practice becomes part of the daily routine and that school assume reasonability for making this happen. The goal is clear-- change the culture of teaching and learning with a plan that focuses on student development and success rather than focus upon teacher or content centered approach. The support is provided through out the grant period and will continue as needed once the grant is completed. The grant activities and training represents in initial investment in changing practice, ultimately how the district and schools select to fully integrate this approach and sustain the approach will be up to them. Success will improve the efficacy of longterm support for the plan.

There appears that support from the applicant will continue after the grant is over to the schools and districts; precisely what this means is not clearly articulated. The applicant notes this project will change the culture of teaching and learning through the propose goals and notes that the emphasis is not upon the purchase of materials but rather changing culture. Attitudes are more resistant to change as it forms from values and experiences. While changing the culture is indeed a worthy goal without the appropriate infrastructure to support the programs particularly in high poverty areas the project may not be able to sustain the momentum. The sustainability plan is not well developed or articulated; it seems more hopeful that change will occur rather than articulating a deliberate strategy to ensure that all is not lost after several years.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has outlined partnership development within the community and or at the state level that will be expanded upon for the grant activities. The use of the Family Resource and Youth Service Center found in the local communities of all 22 school districts will support the RTTT-D initiative through family and social support mechanisms. . Additional partnerships are outlined such as Preschool Pals as well as other college partnerships. Nine indicators for the select population are identified including outcomes listed earlier in the proposal; although some are listed here for the first time and are new indicators to consider. The plan has deliberate strategies to engage the parents and communities in the efforts to improve the educational outcomes for children.

The focus is on addressing early school performance and getting student at a level of success that will be maintained over time provides a K12 plan to address student success across a continuum of education. The use of a system to track data and

student performance is an excellent strategy that aligns with the goals of the proposal. Plans to continuously monitor and evaluate progress towards the goals of the proposal are clear and continuous. The plan outlines in this proposal is a high quality plan- the goals are clearly specified, the activities clearly describes, a timeline of implementation and evaluation is provided, measurable outcomes and deliverables are described and responsible parties are identified and thoroughly explained. The goals for the population of students in the consortia are ambitious yet reasonable and takes into account the unique challenges faced by the consortia of schools.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has outlined a well developed and cogent plan for systemic change in high poverty low achieving schools in Kentucky. The application has a focus upon all of the participating district K12 students in poverty with a specific focus upon early learning opportunities so that students entering school have a solid foundation for learning. The plan has well articulated goals, strategies and outcomes all focused upon the student and student achievement. The goals align to the RTTT-D guidelines and use personalized learning as the catalyst for change. Each goal has outlined specific measures and outcomes as well as strategies that support the successful outcomes. The proposal has maintained a consistent approach an consistent focus on the goals related to college and career readiness, mastery learning, personalized learning and improve learning outcomes for rural students in poverty. The charts provided outline each goal in a specific manner, strategies, supports, outcomes and measures.

Personalized learning is embedded in each of the goals outline by the applicant. The goals focus upon student achievement through personalized learning, career,college and workforce readiness, opportunities for mastery learning will allow for acceleration and multiple ways of achievement. Building leadership attributes within the student population encourages student reasonability for their learning through goal setting, perseverance and skill development. These skills and attributes are what colleges and employers seek in those they select and hire. As well, it will improve the overall economic status by having students and graduates who are employable. The outcomes are precise and clearly measure progress towards individual goals. A strength of the proposal is outcomes that are both cognitive as well as other indicators of success; these indicators span the K12 system and include measures such as well being and health care.

The plan to directly involve the local Family Resource and Youth Service Center throughout the grant as a support is an excellent strategy to support efforts to improve the conditions for children and family in poverty. By using this agency the grant can leverage programs and supports systems in place to compliment the grant activities and goals.

The applicant outlines a plan whereby coaches and those who will direct the grant at the district and school level are members of the community. This is a strength since it will connect efforts in a direct and meaningful way to those charges with implementation and removes a layer of bureaucracy that will streamline efforts. The applicant clearly articulates that changing the culture of high poverty rural schools will require more than just materials and things but rather a change in the efficacy of the student, parent and community of what can be accomplished. The focus on mastery learning, personalized learning and leaders and leadership provides a conceptual model for change. the plan clearly articulates a plan that is detailed in scope and considers every aspect that is needed from professional development to career coaches. The plan is high quality overall and presents an innovative and ambitious approach to changing the landscape of education.

Total	210	188
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	15

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

The supplemental budget spans three individual requests with three individual budgets associated with (1)PreK (2) enhanced

technology in the community, and (3) enhanced technology in the schools.

The first request was funds to support training and materials to daycare, preschools. and home care through a cadre of Preschool Pals. This first request is to support the early childcare centers with materials that encourage reading and take aways for parents to be involved in the education of their children. This request will focus early efforts toward kindergarten readiness and will provide material for all the centers in the consortium for the grant period. This is a straight forward request that aligns with grant goals of kindergarten readiness and supports high poverty communities with access to enriched activities to prepare children for school success.

The individual budget for this request is reasonable and supports the larger RTTT-D proposal. The request align to the goals of the proposal and would be implemented in the consortia schools and community.

A Priority Rank of the Optional Budgets would have Supplemental Budget #1: Resources for preschool centers, daycares and families as the first priority.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	13
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Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

The second request is for the expansion of WIFI for the rural areas served by this grant proposal. This request is part of the infrastructure to develop greater access to technology for students and supported by each division as part of their commitment to the proposal. The request will enhance the proposal to provide additional resources to the communities and schools. The request aligns with the proposal and is reasonable.

The individual budget for this request is reasonable and supports the larger RTTT-D proposal. The request align to the goals of the proposal and would be implemented in the consortia schools and community. However, the request is not as clear as to the the first request to address early childhood.

A Priority Rank of the Optional Budgets would rank this as second: **Supplemental Budget #3: Technology resources for students**

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	12
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Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

The third request will provide additional support to schools through the use of additional funds for technology equipment and materials. The request will support students and classroom teaches to provide the resources needed for technology. The request aligns with the proposal and is reasonable.

The individual budget for this request is reasonable and supports the larger RTTT-D proposal. The request align to the goals of the proposal and would be implemented in the consortia schools and community.

A Priority Rank of the Optional Budgets would rank this request as third: **Supplemental Budget #2: Support for community technology.** The request supports RTTT-D but there is evidence that this request is included in the larger proposal. .

Race to the Top - District



Technical Review Form

Application #0731KY-3 for Green River Regional Educational Cooperative

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The bold and innovative vision that is articulated clearly and coherently in the application addresses all four core educational assurance areas and target goals. A strong (high-quality) implementation plan emphasizes four integrated project components: students as leaders; leaders developing leadership; competency-based teaching; and personalized learning for all students.</p> <p>The highest score is awarded for this section because it effectively addresses all related criteria.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant clearly and succinctly describes the process used to select participating districts in a manner that served as a springboard for interested stakeholder engagement in the reform project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two cooperating agencies (the Green River Regional Educational Cooperative, GRREC, and the Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative, OVEC), which combined serve as educational support agencies to 50 LEAs in Kentucky, developed the initial project framework with a working group representing school leaders, parents, and school partners throughout the state. • Additional feedback on the initial project design was provided by member districts, principals, and teachers in all 50 districts served by the two cooperatives, along with a focus group of middle school and high school students from the region. • To determine the extent of interest to participate in the further development of the initial project design, individual LEAs elicited and received feedback from teachers, students, and parents. • Teachers in the districts potentially participating in the project more formally expressed their support of the project by voting in a confidential survey, the results of which were shared with district and school leaders. • As a final selection step, districts finalized their commitment to the project by signing the memorandum of understanding that is included in the application. • Of the 50 potential participating districts, 22 opted to join the project. <p>The 22 participating districts include 112 schools, 3,912 educators, and 59,311 students.</p> <p>Among the students, 61% are from low-income families, 56% attend a school that qualifies as a Rural Low-Income School (RLIS), and 78% are defined as high-need.</p> <p>The highest score is awarded for this section because all related criteria are addressed effectively.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant clearly describes in a well-constructed, high-quality plan the activities, timelines, deliverables, parties responsible, and indicators of credibility for 5 project goals: (1) increase the number of students who have access to "highly effective" teachers and leaders; (2) increase the number of students who have access to "effective teachers" and leaders; (3) improve academic and non-cognitive outcomes for PreK-3 students; (4) ensure all students are on track to be college- and career-ready; and (5) ensure all students are capable and prepared for postsecondary careers and/or college.</p>		

Strong examples of LEA-wide reform focus on:

- Changes in school culture
- Local and regional cohort learning
- Embedded professional learning
- Cognitive coaching
- Demonstrator classrooms
- Data teams replacing traditional PLCs in schools
- Training in data systems to enable personalized learning
- Building on local capacity and activities

Applicant presents a clear and useful visual for the “logic model” (or change theory) that shows groupings of project inputs, design elements, project outputs, and goals-objectives-outcomes. Evaluation questions (in continuous improvement section) indicate expected relationships among these factors.

All of the schools and students in the participating districts are included in the reform project, so scaling up is not an issue.

The highest score is awarded for this section because it effectively addresses all related criteria.

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

As evidence of improved learning and performance and increased equity, applicant clearly identifies significant increases in ambitious yet achievable goals over 5 years for summative assessments of proficiency and decreasing achievement gaps (by overall and rural), improving graduate rates (by overall, sex, and ethnicity), and improving college enrollment (overall only).

While these two shortcomings do not impact the overall vision for the reform project, they are concerns for specific criteria in this section:

- Applicant problematically defines growth as “comparing the percentage of students obtaining proficiency to data from the prior school year” rather than “the change in student achievement for an individual student between two or more points in time” (definition in RTT-D application materials).
- Proficiency, growth, or achievement gaps are not included for some subgroups (race/ethnicity, limited English proficient, or special education)

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	14

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Supported by an accompanying narrative in the application, the 22 participating LEAs in the reform project have clear evidence of a record of success over the past 4 years in (a) closing achievement gaps, (b) improving student achievement, graduation rates, and college enrollment, and (c) reforming low-achieving schools.

Applicant effectively responds to all related criteria with the exception of making student performance data available to students, educators, or parents.

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

Applicant presents strong evidence of making available actual personnel salaries and other expenditures at the district and school levels. Examples of a high level of transparency include but are not limited to:

- Wage and salary survey report made public on cooperative agency websites and containing salary information for both instructional staff (administrators and teachers) and support staff (e.g., instructional assistants, custodial staff, and school nutrition staff).
- Annual school report printed in area newspapers and available online and containing school/district per pupil expenditures, salaries (lowest, median, highest), salary schedules, and number of positions funded.

To further increase transparency, participating districts in the reform project are currently in the process of implementing an online expenditures database for access and support to review school and district expenditures.

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

10

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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant discusses strong evidence that State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements provide successful conditions and sufficient autonomy to implement personalized learning environments in the proposed reform project, including but not limited to:

- Arrangements with the State of Kentucky (awardee in the 3rd phase of RTT state competition) for using CIITS, a statewide data management system for continuous improvement, and the preparation of teachers, students, and parents to use it.
- The capacity to link student data (demographic and performance) with teacher and principal performance data through PGES, a new state-level evaluation system for teachers and principals.
- Waivers of certain state administrative regulations and statutory provisions in order for districts to improve student learning through initiatives such as personalized learning and competency-based instruction, as supported by a state statute, "Districts of Innovation."

Because the applicant effectively addresses all criteria related to this section, the highest score is awarded.

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

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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant provides clear and convincing evidence of stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal, including but not limited to:

- project information shared with and input received from students, parents, teachers, principals, and councils of school representatives;
- focus groups with middle and high school students;
- meetings with parents;
- teacher surveys (86% of the respondents in a confidential teacher survey support the proposed project); and
- project MOU signed by representatives of the primary advocacy group for educators (KEA) and school superintendents.

Clear evidence of stakeholder commitment to the project is provided in letters of support from:

- Kentucky's US Senate and House delegations;
- a dean at Western Kentucky University;
- at least one parent rep from each participating school's Site Based Decision Making Council;
- family resource and youth services centers (who will be community partners in the project), and
- various PTOs in participating school districts.

The highest score for this section is awarded because all of the criteria are effectively addressed.

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

5

5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

To implement personalized learning environments, the application clearly addresses critical components of a high-quality plan (goals, activities, timeline, deliverables, parties responsible, and credibility), and the roles of those who will implement the plan (the project director and managers, experts council, national evaluator, and district and school personnel).

Applicant provides a strong and coherent approach for analyzing the current status, needs, and gaps linked to project goals for implementing personalized learning environments. Particular attention is drawn to the following barriers to success: (1) families in poverty, including generational poverty, (2) the lack of a college-going, college-completing culture, (3) inadequate preparation for college-level coursework, and (4) limited time/resources focused on student career paths.

Comments on the logic behind the reform proposal are found in (A)(3)--LEA-wide reform and change.

The highest score is awarded for this section because the criteria are effectively addressed.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	20
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant clearly and comprehensively addresses how the proposed project will engage and empower all learners. The following selected examples provide supporting evidence in the application linked to project goals for creating personalized learning environments and preparing students to be college- and career ready:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping all students, particularly those in high-poverty rural schools, from dropping out and understanding why they are learning in- and out-of-school through strategies such as-- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ helping students to identify and pursue goals related to career exploration and assessment; ◦ student choices for authentic investigations and work experiences (e.g., using career exploration software and systems aligned with employment outlook and content standards); ◦ using videos, online resources, and enhanced language instruction and cultural content to increase access to diverse cultures and perspectives (KY cited as 90% white/Caucasian); ◦ individual literacy plans for students not reading at grade level; and ◦ thinking and comprehension strategies instruction to further develop the student's mastery of academic content, problem-solving abilities, and creativity. • Competency-based instruction and mastery learning linked to Common Core Standards, formative assessments, and age-appropriate instruction such as strategies for kindergarten readiness and helping students master mathematics. • Personalized learning teams and plans for each participating school that help students achieve individual learning goals, that ensure on time graduation and preparing for college and career and that emphasize practices such as: students advance upon mastery, not seat time; learning objectives are explicit and measurable; and assessment is meaningfully tied to student learning experiences. • Informative and ongoing feedback that helps students answer questions such as: Where am I going? (goals and intentions); How am I going there? (progress); and Where to next? (closing gaps and focusing on next steps toward accomplishing objectives) • Accommodations and support for high-need students to help assure that they progress toward college and career readiness through approaches that include assistive technologies, classroom management strategies, co-teaching, and least restrictive environment supports. • Technology-enhanced teaching and learning (e.g., 1:1 computing), and training and access for students (as well as for educators and parents) to use the state data management system (CIITS) for monitoring and managing learning progress. <p>The highest score is awarded for this section because all of the criteria are addressed effectively.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	18
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>In support of the student learning component for personalized learning environments, the applicant provides a coherent and comprehensive plan for professional learning for each of the four project years and fall-spring-summer periods, with the evidence including type and intensity of training, the kind and number of participants, when and where it will be offered, who the trainers will be, and how many training sessions will be offered.</p> <p>To help provide actionable information, high-quality learning resources, and processes and tools to meet student needs, the applicant justifiably proposes to move beyond PLCs in using data teams and cognitive coaches who will focus on the use of data to analyze and create individualized plans for student mastery of content and skills.</p> <p>The impressive plan for professional learning is captured in a series of visuals that: (a) map professional learning activities over the 4-year period and align these activities with project goals; (b) link specific teacher and leader learning to working with students and in classroom activities with strategies that promote college- and career-readiness; and (c) demonstrate how professional learning build capacity to accomplish project goals through the implementation of personalized learning environments for all students.</p> <p>The overall plan convincingly addresses strategies for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals, focused primarily on professional learning for teachers and principals in hard-to-staff schools, subjects, and specialty areas.</p> <p>A high score is awarded for this section because it responds effectively to all related criteria with the exception that more detail would help to explain how training and support will address the district's teacher or principal evaluation system for continuous improvement.</p>		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application clearly specifies that the executive directors of the two cooperatives (GRREC and OVEC) will be responsible for selecting a project director and two project managers, who in turn will manage project staff positions that include 10 cognitive coaches who will provide mentoring and professional learning services for educators in the 112 participating schools.</p> <p>Applicant clearly describes the proposed organizational structure for the project, led by a 17-member implementation team who will support the implementation of personalized learning environments through the range of functions at the consortium, LEA and school levels. Among its responsibilities, the implementation team strategically will develop and propose policies for review, acceptance, and implementation by participating LEAs and schools.</p> <p>As described in the proposal, school boards and School Based Decision Making (SBDM) councils of participating LEAs will operate with sufficient flexibility and autonomy to implement policies and practices that focus on student mastery not seat time in earning credit toward high school graduation, using multiple times and ways to demonstrate mastery, and employing resources that are adaptable/accessible for all students, particularly special education and English language learners, that include assistive technologies, classroom management strategies, least restrictive environment cultures, and co-teaching.</p> <p>All of the criteria for this section are effectively addressed.</p>		

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	9
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<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant clearly specifies a range of key areas for technical support of students, parents, and educators toward accomplishing project goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be helped to monitor their learning, access digital learning resources, and track college and career interests and opportunities. • Parents in small groups and one-to-one formats will have weekly opportunities to access/use the CIITS data system for helping their students progress along college and career pathways. • Educators will participate in weekly professional development as described and critiqued in (C)(2)--Teaching and Leading. <p>Applicant clearly describes and justifies the following for helping to ensure student access to essential learning resources: a general standard of 1:4 computing (one device for four students) initially and then moving toward a 1:1 educational technology ratio considering available funds; a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) option to accommodate individual student preferences while attending to concerns about equitable resources for students and families; and school buses equipped with Wi-Fi capability to enhance technology access and use.</p> <p>Stakeholders will have access to three information technology systems that are interoperable: Infinite Campus for students and their families to access student demographic and student performance information; CIITS for educators to access and use data on student competency; and MUNIS for LEAs and schools to access and use data on human resources.</p> <p>A high score is awarded for this section because the criteria are effectively addressed with the exception that additional detail would have helped explain stakeholder access to and use of budget data.</p>		
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E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant demonstrates a clear, high-quality approach to continuously improving its plan as evidenced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive three-level evaluation strategy: formative for feedback on project implementation and intended outcomes; summative for impact on student outcomes; and implementation for assessing actual and needed fidelity to achieve target gains. • Evaluation questions that are soundly linked to the project's "logic model" [described in (A)(3)--LEA-Wide Reform & Change] and that guide the collection and use of data to assess progress and areas in need of improvement. • A Council on Fidelity (experts in personalized learning, competency-based instruction, leadership, and college/career readiness), along with a project advisor, to monitor and provide feedback on goal-oriented project activities for continuous improvement. 		
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- A national evaluator to assure that evaluation plans and activities are strong and focused, and to review and advise on the overall project evaluation and the project's investments in professional learning, technology, staff, and other support.

A strong set of complementary components to monitor, measure, and share information on the quality of its investments that are proposed by the applicant as a beginning portfolio of evaluation strategies include but are not limited to: Instructional Rounds; the Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership in Education instrument; the Oakley Model of Continuous Improvement; nationally-normed measures of student achievement as well as college and career readiness; graduation rates from the Kentucky state assessment system; matched comparison groups (quasi-experimental design) for the summative evaluation along with types of data to be collected and analyses to be performed; compliance with ethical standards for evaluation; and commitment to publicly reporting and sharing data [previously described and critiqued in (B)(2)--Increasing Transparency in LEA Process, Practices, and Investments].

The highest score is awarded in this section because the applicant responded effectively to the related criteria.

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

Applicant appropriately and cogently explains that a communication/marketing specialist will be hired to interact with both internal and external stakeholders (parents, teachers, students, community members, and other stakeholders) regarding project goals, activities, accomplishments, and invite feedback for ongoing evaluation and improvement of the project and its impact. Among the specific audiences clearly identified for external communication are the Kentucky Department of Education, other state agencies and groups, local communities and organizations, and representatives of the University of Western Kentucky and University of Louisville.

The highest score is awarded for this section because the applicant effectively responded to the related criteria.

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

Applicant clearly provides comprehensive evidence for assessing student outcomes as shown in charts and discussion regarding 12 performance measures--by grade level for students overall and for the rural subgroup. The measures are organized by project goals and indicators of performance as discussed in (A)(3)--LEA-Wide Reform & Change. A strong rationale is provided for each measure along with its expected rigor, formative value, and review and improvement over time. Both quantitative and qualitative measures are used across the project goals and grade spans.

A high score is awarded for this section because it effectively addresses the related criteria with the exception that it would have been useful to link the use of particular measures back to the needs and gaps discussed in (B)(5).

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

Applicant provides evidence that school-based personalized learning teams will be involved in overall project evaluation, including but not limited to:

1. **Professional learning** events are evaluated individually and as new strategies are implemented, then sustained through the development of demonstration classrooms where strategies can be viewed by other teachers in project schools.
2. **Technologies** purchased will be limited to supplemental devices to boost the existing devices available in each school; each school-based Personalized Learning Team will determine the uses and track the full impact as part of the overall project evaluation.
3. Evaluation of **support for families in poverty** will include assessments of ongoing staff support to impact the college-going culture as well as efforts to eliminate barriers to learning in K-12.
4. **Expenses** will be evaluated by the number of students served and the potential economic gains for improvements in their long-term outcomes.

A high score is awarded for this section because it effectively addresses most all of the criteria but does not specifically include the more productive use of resources (e.g., time, personnel, funds, etc.)

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

Applicant provides rationale for “capacity-building,” one-time, and ongoing project costs organized by project goal within the project budgets.

The project budget is reasonable and sufficient for project development and implementation. However, the budget narrative and tables do not breakdown costs by source, other than the proposed RTT-D grant.

An explicit assumption is that 15%-20% of additional support (approx. \$6M) would come from contributed time and effort by GRREC and OVEC administrators and staff, vendors and contractors, university personnel, participating districts, and Family Resources and Youth Services Centers.

A high score is awarded for this section because it effectively addresses the related criteria with the exception of specific resources required to sustain the personalized learning environments beyond the grant period.

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

10

7

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant’s argument for sustainability of project goals after the RTT-D grant rests partially on the assumptions that participating districts will continue to buy-in because of the successes that are achieved and that the large bulk of project expenditures (beyond the 22 counselors, for which there may be future state funding) would build capacity that can be carried forward without a significant increase in new, additional funding. While a general rationale for this post-grant budget assumption is provided, specifics for such a plan are not included in the application.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's clearly specified partnership is with local Family Resource and Youth Services Centers (FRYSC) located in the participating 22 school districts.

Nine specific indicators, also found in the project’s proposed performance measures, apply to the FRYSC partnership.

Indicator data will be collected and tracked as part of the work with a national evaluator to be contracted. Personalized Learning Teams at the school level will use the data to help construct and evaluate a personalized learning implementation plan. Over the four years, the partnership will serve students in all 112 schools in the participating districts. By reaching students during early childhood (preschool years), it is anticipated that both the school readiness gap and the school achievement gap will be reduced.

Because all the schools and students in the 22 participating districts are included in the project, it is already at scale.

Focusing particularly on students in low-income families, FRYSC resources will help meet physical, emotional, and social needs that complement the school’s efforts toward meeting educational needs.

FRYSC personnel will work with school-based college and career (CCR) counselors to assess student needs and resources/services to meet those needs. Preschool Pals will work with schools and home-care centers to provide resources and supports. Partners will have choice as to their level of involvement. Parents and families will be engaged through home visits as well as through programs held in community locations such as churches, libraries, and shopping centers. Each FRYSC has agreed to provide project data related to services. A new measure of kindergarten readiness (using indicators such as health and physical well-being, language and communication development, social and emotional development, cognitive and general knowledge) will be used to assess improvements.

Ambitious yet achievable performance measures are provided for both kindergarten readiness and college-career readiness.

The highest score is awarded for the Competitive Preference Priority because all of the related criteria are effectively addressed.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Applicant provides sufficient evidence that Absolute Priority 1 is met. It will create learning environments which:

- are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators;
- are aligned with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements;
- accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student;
- increase the effectiveness of educators;
- expand student access to the most effective educators;
- decrease achievement gaps across student groups; and
- increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.

Total	210	196
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	12

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Supplemental Budget Request #1: Resources for preschool centers, daycares, and families

Purpose: To support expansion of the curriculum, books, and other materials for each Family and Resource Services Center and for families attending Preschool Pal training events.

- This supplemental budget request would clearly enhance the efforts of the overall reform project proposed by the applicant.
- The specific areas and populations to be served are addressed.
- Regarding a high-quality plan, this supplemental budget request includes the purpose (goals), activities, and timeline, but not the deliverables, parties responsible, or credibility.
- The proposed budget is adequate and reasonable for the purpose and scope.

Rank Order of 3 Supplemental Budget Requests: #1

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	12
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Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Supplemental Budget Request #2—Support for community technology

Purpose: To support expansion of community Wi-Fi systems through signal boosters and infrastructure supports

- This supplemental budget request would clearly enhance the efforts of the overall reform project proposed by the applicant.
- The specific areas and populations to be served are addressed.
- Regarding a high-quality plan, this supplemental budget request includes the purpose (goals), activities, and timeline, but not the deliverables, parties responsible, or credibility.
- The proposed budget is adequate and reasonable for the purpose and scope.

Rank Order of 3 Supplemental Budget Requests: #2

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	12
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Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Supplemental Budget Request #3—Technology supplements for participating schools

Purpose: To supplement each participating district's to provide the appropriate technologies for students

- This supplemental budget request would clearly enhance the efforts of the overall reform project proposed by the applicant.
- The specific areas and populations to be served are addressed.
- Regarding a high-quality plan, this supplemental budget request includes the purpose (goals), activities, and timeline, but not the deliverables, parties responsible, or credibility.
- The proposed budget is adequate and reasonable for the purpose and scope.

Rank Order of 3 Supplemental Budget Requests: #3