



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0390SC-1 for Hampton District One

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	7

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- Applicant's reform vision builds appropriately on a decade of its work — in partnership with other public and private entities — in (1) improving its students' college- and career-readiness; (2) adopting data systems and using data to improve instruction and its results; (3) engaging in intensive and extensive professional development for its teachers and principals; and (4) creating a network of supports to improve student academic performance and raise high school graduation rates. These aspects are strengths because they are responsive to the 4 core assurance areas and support the applicant's plan for Absolute Priority 1.
- Applicant's reform vision, and its numerous clear and credible approaches to realizing it, focus on broadening and deepening classroom-level, school-level, and district-level capacity to provide research-based and personalized student supports across cognitive, affective, behavioral, and social domains. These aspects are strengths because they are responsive to the 4 core assurance areas and support the applicant's plan for Absolute Priority 1.

Weaknesses:

- Applicant's reform vision far more strongly emphasizes augmenting resources and improving services for its high-need students who are lower-performing and at risk of academic failure and school dropout than it does accelerating learning for all of its students, including its higher performers. This aspect is a weakness because it represents incomplete evidence of commitments to accelerating the achievement of all students and to delivering learning enhancements for those students who are already meeting or exceeding State and local performance standards as well as those students who are struggling to meet them.
- Applicant's reform vision directs far more resources toward enabling more students to reach or exceed the State's academic standards than it directs toward providing common and individual tasks that are based on each individual student's academic interests and needs. This aspect is a weakness because inclusion of student-centered curricula and deepened learning for all students present in the schools, and integration of students' interests across the curriculum for all students, are both parts of the selection criterion.

While there is strong evidence of commitment to comprehensive school reform, the applicant's vision and approach are not entirely coherent in that they incompletely represent a plan to integrate the needs and interests of higher performing students or input from all students in determining curricular content or methods of instruction. Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the higher end of the mid-range for this criterion.

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

Strengths:

- Applicant describes how and why it decided to implement its reforms at all 7 schools in the school district and it describes how it expects its project to support high-quality implementation at the school and district levels. These aspects are strengths because they are responsive to the selection criteria.
- Applicant plans to serve all 2,503 students and all 206 educators (including 176 teachers) at all 7 sites in all grades (PreK-12) in all academic subjects. This aspect is a strength because it reflects the applicant's commitment to accomplishing comprehensive and systemic reform throughout the LEA.
- Applicant presents all required data on its participating students and participating educators. This aspect is a strength because it is responsive to selection criteria.

Weaknesses:

- Applicant does not describe the roles or extent of involvement of its different groups of stakeholders (e.g., teachers, administrators, parents, students) in reaching its decision to serve all sites in all core subjects from the start. This aspect is a weakness because the engagement from the start of all stakeholders in deciding which schools to serve and how best to serve them would contribute to the overall quality of the applicant's plan and to the likelihood of the project's successful implementation.

While it provides all required data, it does not adequately describe the processes it used for deciding which schools would participate in its project. Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the lower end of the high range for this criterion.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	7
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- Applicant's plan lists a total of 23 outcome goals, which are distributed among 9 focus areas. This aspect is a strength because goals are a required element of a high-quality plan.
- Applicant presents and discusses its logic model at (E)(4). This aspect is a strength because the model contributes evidence of the quality of the applicant's plan for Absolute Priority 1.
- Applicant identifies who will do what work associated with attaining each outcome goal, and its intended deliverables (as outputs, although in general terms), in a table at (E)(3), in its logic model graphic at (E)(4), and elsewhere in its proposal narrative. These aspects are strengths because responsible parties and deliverables are required elements of a high-quality plan.

Weaknesses:

- Applicant does not discuss scale-up as such — nor does it discuss how or why it has determined that it is ready to implement its overall project at full-scale from its start. This aspect is a weakness because the issue of scaling up is part of the selection criterion.
- Applicant will not fill its full-time Project Director position — which its narrative indicates is critical for ensuring the success of its project — until well towards the end of its Project Year 1. This aspect is a weakness because the project's ambitious and comprehensive scope requires leadership from its start in order to implement and advance LEA-wide change and accomplish the project's 23 outcome goals.
- Applicant indicates that its Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) model, used for teacher evaluations, is already adopted and in place in only 3 schools — rather than in all 7 schools. This aspect is a weakness because it means that the model will not be in place at all sites to support LEA-wide changes impacting teacher effectiveness from the start of the project period.
- Applicant provides no outcome goal or focus area to address actual college enrollment — only college acceptances are mentioned as part of a performance measure — or subsequent postsecondary degree attainment. These aspects are weaknesses because changes in enrollment rates, not in acceptance rates, are among the program's required performance measures and because such goals are part of a high-quality plan focused on increasing college- and career-readiness.
- Applicant does not adequately describe a time-delimited and sequenced series of activities or steps it plans to take to accomplish each of its 23 outcome goals over the 4-year project period. This aspect is a weakness because activities are a required element of a high-quality plan.

Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the higher end of the mid-range for this criterion, and they render its overall plan for LEA-Wide Reform and Change as one of moderate, but not high, quality.

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

Strengths:

- Applicant's selected annual increments of improvement in its annual goals appear both ambitious and achievable in most of the areas for which it plans to measure performance; as evidence — they appear ambitious in that they forecast 3% and 4% per year gains for lower-performing subgroups, and they appear achievable because they forecast only 2% per year gains for higher performing subgroups. These aspects are strengths because the forecasted increments for change in annual goals are high enough to be ambitious while low enough to be achievable and because they are realistically smaller for groups already performing at higher levels than for those performing at lower levels.

Weaknesses:

- As benchmarks for comparison, applicant does not present the State's targets for the LEA overall or for its various student subgroups. This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining the extent or degree of the ambitiousness of the applicant's

annual goals as compared to those which the State has set for it.

- Annual goals for reducing achievement gaps among disaggregated subgroups in English (grades 4-8) and in Mathematics (grades 4-8) are not consistent with annual goals for aggregated performance on the State's summative assessments (PASS); a data table identifies each subgroup but not its comparison group. These aspects are weaknesses because the benchmark or basis for comparison is missing and its absence impedes determining the ambitiousness and achievability of the applicant's annual goals for reducing achievement gaps.
- Applicant presents no data on student performance on the state's assessments in English, Mathematics, or other core academic subjects taught and tested in grades 9-12. This aspect is a weakness because the absence of this information impedes determining the ambitiousness and achievability of the applicant's annual goals for these subjects in its plans for Absolute Priority 1.
- Applicant presents no annual goals for graduation rates for the 4-year project period or for the first year post-grant. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to the selection criterion.

The applicant's annual goals appear ambitious yet achievable — particularly given the description of the district's geographic, socioeconomic, and academic context. In evidence of their achievability – its annual goals show 3% change yearly for grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 in both English language arts and mathematics, with 4% change yearly for the lower-performing subgroups, 2% change yearly for the higher-performing subgroups, and 3% change yearly for all students in the aggregate; and its annual goals show 3% change yearly for the college enrollment rate in the aggregate. In evidence of their ambitiousness – its annual goals for grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 in English language arts show all subgroups at 91.5% meeting or exceeding State standards; and its annual goals for grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 in mathematics show all subgroups at 90.3% meeting or exceeding State standards. However, the applicant has not aligned its district-level, grade-level, and subgroup-level annual goals with those the State has set for the district overall or for its various student subgroups. Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the higher end of the mid-range for this criterion.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- Applicant has worked with its Regional Educational Laboratory and several institutions of higher education in developing its initial LEA-wide reform plans, starting in school year 2009-10. This aspect is a strength because it is evidence of the applicant's commitment to comprehensive reform and its record of success in reform, and thus responsive to selection criteria.
- For 3 school years, applicant has engaged all (100%) of its Mathematics and Science teachers in all grades and at all sites in extensive professional development in both subjects. This aspect is a strength because it is evidence of the applicant's commitment to comprehensive reform and its record of success in reform, and thus responsive to selection criteria.
- Post-initiative results show significant gains in ratios of students meeting state standards in both Mathematics and Science: 5 of 7 assessed grades realized gains in Science; 5 of 8 grades realized gains in Mathematics. This aspect is a strength because it is evidence of the applicant's record of success in reform, and thus responsive to selection criteria.
- Applicant describes its track record in improving on-time graduation rates at (B)(5); it has made significant gains since initiating its reforms in school year 2009-10. This aspect is a strength because it is evidence of the applicant's record of success in reform, and thus responsive to selection criteria.
- Applicant's state-recognized extended-day (community learning center) programs have functioned as in-state technical assistance demonstration sites. This aspect is a strength because it is evidence of the applicant's success in pursuing and implementing initiatives designed to benefit its high-need students, and thus responsive to selection criteria.
- The state has recognized 6 of 7 district schools for high overall performance, or for high rates of growth, or for achievement gap reduction (at its high school only). This aspect is a strength because it is evidence of the applicant's success in pursuing and implementing initiatives designed to benefit its high-need students, and thus responsive to selection criteria.
- Applicant uses Power School for its much of its student data — all teachers must use it, and parents can access it though a parent portal. This aspect is a strength because it enables the applicant to make performance data available to audiences identified in the selection criterion.

Weaknesses:

- Applicant presents fewer than 4 school years of track record data or other evidence of its success in reform. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to a selection criterion that requires evidence of success in the past 4 years.
- Applicant does not identify which achievement gaps the State recognized it for reducing at its high school. This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining the extent to which the applicant has achieved ambitious and significant reforms to the

extent required in its plan for Absolute Priority 1.

- Although applicant has expanded its reform efforts to other core content areas beyond Mathematics and Science, it does not provide data about its track record of success in reforming them. This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining the extent to which the applicant has achieved ambitious and significant reforms in other content areas.
- Applicant does not describe its track record in increasing college enrollment rates. This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining the extent to which the applicant has achieved ambitious and significant reforms to the extent required in its plan for Absolute Priority 1.
- Applicant does not discuss its track record in improving parents' levels of participation or positive changes in parents' perceptions of the nature and quality of home-school communication about students' performance data or students' progress in learning. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to the selection criterion.

While the applicant's abilities to earn State-level recognition for improving student learning outcomes, closing achievement gaps, and operating exemplary extended-day programs are well-evidenced, its abilities to raise student achievement across its 4 target core content areas, to improve high school graduation rates, to increase college enrollment rates, and to share information with parents (and other stakeholders) and engage them as active partners in its reform efforts are less well-evidenced. Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the lower end of the high range for this criterion.

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

Strengths:

- In its narrative and attachments of webpage screenshots, applicant provides some (indirect and inferential) evidence of the overall transparency of the district's processes, practices, and investments, and of its making public, by school, its actual school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration. This aspect is a strength because it is responsive to the selection criterion.

Weaknesses:

- Applicant's narrative and related attachments provide incomplete evidence of a high level of financially transparent processes, practices, or investments:
 1. A first attachment of a district website screen-shot shows a link for financial transparency reporting – but this screenshot does not disclose any detail of what is in fact reported.
 2. A second attachment of a district website screenshot shows a link to a 2012-13 salary chart — but it does not present the actual salary chart itself.
 3. The State does have a fiscal transparency initiative, and applicant's third attachment of a State website screenshot presents the state's fiscal transparency portal — but, although the page does show a link to a local government spending transparency site, the screenshot itself shows neither what kinds of fiscal data the State requires and collects nor what kinds of data the school district reports by using it.
 4. A fourth attachment presents an online news outlet's article about area educators' salaries – but as captured and presented it furnishes no data about the applicant's specific personnel salaries.

The 4 screenshots present indirect and incomplete evidence of transparency for: (1) actual personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff, based on the F-33 survey; (2) actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff only; (3) actual personnel salaries at the school level for teachers only; and (4) actual non-personnel expenditures at the school level (if available). Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the higher end of the mid-range for this criterion.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	9
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- The State has enacted and adopted several statewide teacher evaluation initiatives, and the applicant has implemented State-mandated teacher evaluation practices and procedures. This aspect is a strength because evaluation of teachers, principals, and the superintendent are program-required elements of the applicant's project.
- The State has adopted the Common Core State Standards, and the applicant has developed and is now pursuing its LEA-wide plan to implement them fully; the State is also a consortium leader in efforts to develop new nation-wide assessments related to college- and career-readiness. These aspects are strengths because aligning instruction to State standards and assessing students' college- and career-readiness are parts of the applicant's plan for Absolute Priority 1.

- A State-facilitated cradle-to-college student longitudinal assessment data system is in place; it features teacher identifiers and teacher-student matching. These aspects are strengths because they are responsive to the selection criterion.
- The State supports tracking of student and teacher/administrator technology assessment results via an e-Portfolio for grades K-12. These aspects are strengths because they are responsive to the selection criterion.
- Applicant is implementing a teacher and principal evaluation system (TAP) in 4 of 7 district schools, and it plans to expand its system to all schools and to add a superintendent evaluation component to it. This aspect is a strength because the program requires teacher and principal evaluation systems to be in place no later than the 2014-15 school year.
- Applicant requires creation of individualized graduation plans for all students in grade 8 and annual reviews of student progress in advancing and executing their plans in grades 9-12. These aspects are strengths because improving graduation rates is part of applicant's plan for Absolute Priority 1.

Weaknesses:

- Applicant does not cite any specific enabling State statutes or regulations to provide evidence of the degree of autonomy and flexibility (e.g., in pedagogy, curriculum, governance, and finance) that the State delegates to its public school districts in their pursuit of comprehensive educational reform. This aspect is a weakness because it limits determining the nature and extent of autonomy and flexibility to implement personalized learning environments to address Absolute Priority 1.

The State's legal, statutory, and regulatory frameworks — as described — appear compatible with the applicant's plans to implement personalized learning environments. Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the middle of the high range for this criterion.

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

10

7

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- Applicant has at least a decade-long history of engaging its varied stakeholders in assessing needs and planning for initiatives such as its extended-day programs, reform efforts in Science and Mathematics, adoption of research-based 'promising practices', creation of a new LEA-wide strategic plan, and piloting and adoption of teacher evaluations. These aspects are strengths because they are evidence of local precedents for substantive stakeholder engagement in the LEA's reform initiatives.
- Applicant indicates that 87% of teachers signed individual letters of support (the State has no collective bargaining). This aspect is a strength because it exceeds the program-required 70% threshold for teacher engagement and support.
- All 7 schools and all 7 of their school improvement councils furnished signed letters of support. This aspect is a strength because the letters document substantive stakeholder support at the school level.
- Partners and all other key stakeholders identified in narrative signed letters of support and/or memoranda of agreement (as appropriate to their roles). This aspect is a strength because the letters document substantive stakeholder support at the community level.

Weaknesses:

- Applicant does not adequately describe how it engaged students, families, teachers, and principals in its 7 schools in developing this specific proposal submitted at this specific time to this specific grant program — rather than in earlier reform initiatives leading up to its present proposal. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to the selection criterion.
- Applicant does not discuss whether or how or to what extent it revised its present proposal based on engagement of its stakeholders and feedback from them. This aspect is a weakness because such description is required in the selection criterion and its absence represents an incomplete response to the selection criterion.
- Applicant lists by types the participants on its school improvement councils – but only in general terms; it alludes to the key role of vertical teams in planning – but does not detail their composition; and it alludes to community members analyzing data – but does not detail the types of stakeholders represented among them. These aspects are weaknesses because they represent incomplete evidence of the extent and substantiveness of stakeholder engagement.
- Although 3 of 4 local mayors accepted the opportunity to comment on the proposal, none submitted any comments, and thus none are attached as Appendices. This aspect is a weakness because it represents incomplete evidence of the extent and meaningfulness of their engagement as stakeholders.

Applicant presents limited evidence that its stakeholders were directly engaged in developing the present proposal, rather than in its antecedents, but it provides ample documentation of support from virtually all of its key stakeholders (with the exceptions of mayors, students, and parents). Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the higher end of the mid-range for this criterion.

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

5

2

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- Applicant presents abundant data to substantiate poverty and to establish the presence of multiple socio-emotional and behavioral trends and challenges (risk factors) among students in its schools. This aspect is a strength because it contributes to the applicant's analysis of needs and gaps and is responsive to the selection criterion.
- Applicant presents data on its dropout rates and on its on-time graduation rates. This aspect is a strength because it contributes to the applicant's analysis of needs and gaps and is responsive to the selection criterion.

Weaknesses:

- Applicant's demographic data are often for the entire county, not restricted to the 4 communities (based on the proposal's inclusion of 4 attachments from 4 mayors) that the district actually serves. This aspect is a weakness because the school district may or may not have the same needs and gaps as the entire county, and it represents an incomplete response to the selection criterion.
- Applicant does not present a plan for the ongoing current analysis of its needs and gaps throughout its 4-year project – it limits its discussion to existing poverty indicators and graduation rates, and to its available technologies. This aspect is a weakness because its absence represents an incomplete response to the selection criterion.

Data documenting needs and gaps are often not presented at an appropriate level of geographic specificity (e.g., 7 schools, one LEA, 4 communities). In addition, applicant's plan specifically for the analysis of the current status of needs and gaps is of low quality – it does not describe a goal, activities, timelines, deliverables, or responsible parties and thus lacks the elements required of a high-quality plan. Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the lower end of the mid-range for this criterion.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	14

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- Applicant describes its plans: (1) to enhance a middle school college- and career-readiness program; (2) to expand its extended-day programs, operate a revamped freshman academy; (3) to establish a school-within-a-school; (4) to create student academic and support teams; (5) conduct a strategic mentoring program; (6) to provide content area interventionists for core subjects; (7) to provide research-based behavioral interventions; (8) to provide research-based support for high-need students and families; and (9) to use technology to personalize learning for all students. These aspects are strengths because they will: (1) advance program and project-specific goals through accelerated and personalized learning; (2) reduce high-need students' risk factors for academic failure; (3) involve students in enhanced and accelerated learning experiences; (4) contribute to students' mastery of critical academic content; and/or (5) develop students' skills and traits such as goal-setting, critical thinking, and problem-solving — all facets that respond to the selection criterion and address Absolute Priority 1.
- Applicant describes its plans (1) to develop students' skills and traits related to college- and career-readiness, (2) to personalize the sequence of instructional content and skill development, (3) to use varied high-quality (research-based) instructional approaches and supportive learning environments, and (4) to ensure students' access to personalized learning recommendations based on their current levels of mastery. These aspects are strengths because each area of focus is responsive to one or more program selection criteria and also addresses Absolute Priority 1.

Weaknesses:

- Applicant does not discuss and/or detail its plans for: (1) involving students in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest, (2) providing or enhancing students' access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives, (3) integrating high-quality content, including digital learning content, in personalized instruction, (4) ensuring that each student has access to frequently updated individual student data to self-monitor progress toward mastery of State college- and career-ready standards, and (5) providing age-appropriate training and help to K-12 students so that they understand how to use the tools and resources provided to them and can track and manage their learning. These aspects are significant weaknesses since they represent incomplete responses to several specific program selection criteria.

Considered as a whole, applicant's plan for Learning is of moderate to high quality. As strengths — it describes its core activities with responsible parties at (C)(1); it again identifies responsible parties for each outcome goal at (E)(3); it identifies its intended deliverables (as outputs, although in general terms) in a table at (E)(3), in its logic model graphic at (E)(4), and elsewhere in the narrative; and, it states its outcome goals at (A)(3) and again at (E)(3). As weaknesses — it is often indefinite or imprecise about the specifics of its timelines for each outcome goal. In evidence of its imprecision – for its timelines for its specific activities, the table at (E)(3) uses the term 'ongoing' for

activities related to 22 of its 23 outcome goals; it uses the term 'annual' for activities related to 14 of its 23 outcome goals; it assigns a month and year only in Year 1 and only for activities related to 8 of its 23 outcome goals. Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the higher end of the mid-range for this criterion.

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

20

14

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- Applicant describes its plans to: (1) personalize learning for teachers and staff via: (a) professional learning communities at all 7 schools, (b) expanding its existing cadre of master teachers to coach and support English and Social Studies as well as Mathematics and Science, (c) conducting professional development in the 4 content areas and in varied pedagogical methods, (d) creating annual personal action plans for all teachers, (e) expanding its Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), or a similar teacher evaluation model, across all 7 schools; (2) measuring student progress through data-driven instruction, robust data systems, and related professional development for staff, and (3) acquiring and deploying high-quality learning resources. These aspects are strengths because they are responsive to selection criteria.
- Applicant's existing data system includes: (1) use of PowerSchool for student demographics and student grades — student and parent portals make data available to students and parents; (2) a State standards-aligned formative assessment service – Measures of Academic Progress – that helps teachers in creating plans for personalized instruction; and (3) use of TestView for data management. These aspects are strengths because they are responsive to selection criteria and they indicate that the applicant is ready to use data to support educators in implementing its plans for Absolute Priority 1.

Weaknesses:

- Applicant does not detail its plans for evaluating the effectiveness of principals or of the superintendent – and does not explain what steps it will need to take to develop and implement such evaluations. This aspect is a weakness because the program requires such evaluations to be in place no later than the 2014-15 school year.
- Applicant's approach does not ensure that all participating educators will have access to, and know how to use, tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress toward college- and career-readiness — in contrast to its outcome goals 6 and 12, its outcome goals 17 and 18, stated at (A)(4), aspire to impacting fewer than all (or 100%) of participating educators. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to selection criteria.
- Applicant's plans for its participating school leaders and school leadership teams lack inadequate detail about how all of them (at all 7 schools and the central offices) will have the training, policies, tools, data, and resources necessary to structure effective learning environments or other assets necessary to advance program goals. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to selection criteria.
- Applicant does not adequately discuss or describe a high quality plan specifically for increasing the numbers of effective and highly effective teachers and principals in its hard-to-staff schools or hard-to-staff subjects or hard-to-staff specialty areas. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to the selection criteria.
- Applicant does not discuss how it would:
 1. Adapt content and instruction and provide opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks in response to their academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches
 2. Improve teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness by using feedback provided by the its teacher and principal evaluation systems
 3. Employ processes and tools to match student needs with specific resources and approaches to provide continuously improving feedback about the effectiveness of those resources in meeting student needs.

These aspects are weaknesses because they represent incomplete responses to the selection criteria.

Considered as a whole, applicant's plan for Teaching and Leading is of moderate to high quality. Applicant identifies its responsible parties and the key activities for its three strategies (or projects) related to Teaching and Leading; it states its outcome goals elsewhere at (A)(3) — but it offers few specifics about its timeline and does not specify its deliverables (e.g., in its plans for training teachers in data-driven instruction) for its goals related to Teaching and Leading. Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the higher end of the mid-range for this criterion.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	11
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant has in place or plans to implement such local practices as: (1) professional learning teams, (2) professional learning communities, (3) expanded after school services, (4) professional development based on best practices, and (5) school leadership teams. These aspects are strengths because they are practices that support increasing the numbers and ratios of effective and highly effective teachers and principals, creation of personalized learning environments, and/or improvements in all students' college- and career-readiness, all of which address Absolute Priority 1. • Applicant plans to hire a full-time Project Director. This aspect is a strength because it is a practice that contributes to effective implementation and achievement of the project's 23 outcome goals, all of which address Absolute Priority 1. • Applicant plans to use formative assessments extensively to allow teachers to slow or accelerate instruction at the pace at which each individual student demonstrates mastery of content or evidences struggle with it. This aspect is a strength because it is a practice that contributes to creation of personalized learning environments and acceleration of learning, both of which address Absolute Priority 1. • Applicant indicates that its school leadership teams will have flexibility and autonomy over school schedules and calendars and over school personnel decisions and staffing models, and school-level budgets. These aspects are strengths because such practices facilitate implementation of the project's strategies for achieving project-specific goals which address Absolute Priority 1. • Applicant plans to use extensive professional development to build its teachers' capacity to assess students' mastery of content in multiple comparable ways at multiple times over a school year. This aspect is a strength because it is a practice that contributes to implementation of personalized learning environments, acceleration of learning, and design of instruction based on individual students' levels of mastery, all of which address Absolute Priority 1. <p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required Project Director background and qualifications are unstated (applicant attaches no position descriptions). This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining the applicant's capacity to manage its project so that it achieves its 23 outcome goals. • Applicant does not cite any specific LEA-wide policies that ensure site-level flexibility and autonomy. This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining the comprehensiveness of LEA-level policies and the extent to which they facilitate personalized learning in ways that address Absolute Priority 1. • Applicant does not discuss the roles of its central office in supporting its schools or the extent of its school leadership teams' flexibility and autonomy over roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators. These aspects are weaknesses because they represent an incomplete response to the selection criterion. <p>Considered as a whole, applicant's plan is of moderate to high quality. It provides a timeline, specifies core activities, and identifies responsible parties by position title, and it presents its pertinent outcome goals at (A)(3) and again at (E)(3) — but it does not discuss specific deliverables related to its LEA Practices, Policies, and Rules. Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the higher end of the mid-range for this criterion.</p>		

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
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<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant plans to use its regular school-day and extended-day programs, expanded school library hours, and school-based technology assets to support access by students, parents, educators, and others to the content, tools, and other learning resources necessary to attain its outcome goals. These aspects are strengths because they are responsive to selection criteria and support applicant's plans for Absolute Priority 1. • Applicant plans to provide appropriate levels of technical support to students, parents, educators, and others via a district-level support team, district-level library media and technology support personnel, school-level leadership teams, school-level library media specialists and technology coaches, a district-level designated home-school liaison, district-level and school-level student academic advocates, and its external professional development partners. These aspects are strengths because they are responsive to selection criteria and support applicant's plans for Absolute Priority 1. • Applicant's primary data system, PowerSchool, supports student information data (e.g., demographics, discipline records, schedules, grades, transcripts) and allows parents and students to export and use their data in other electronic learning systems; its TestView data system also manages student data. These aspects are strengths because they are responsive to selection criteria and support applicant's plans for Absolute Priority 1. • Applicant's MAP data system supports instructional improvement by measuring and tracking students' formative growth and 		
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facilitating teachers' planning for personalized instruction and interventions. These aspects are strengths because they are responsive to selection criteria and support applicant's plans for Absolute Priority 1.

Weaknesses:

- Applicant does not discuss the extent of interoperability of its three data systems in terms of their inclusion of human resources data or budget data. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to the selection criterion.

Considered as a whole, applicant's plan is of moderate to high quality. Applicant describes its responsible parties, activities, and timelines. It presents its pertinent outcome goals elsewhere at (A)(3) and again at (E)(3). Applicant does not discuss its deliverables as such (e.g., when it will select from among available information technology systems or when it will have deployed and installed such systems in its facilities). Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the lower end of the high range for this criterion.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	8

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- Applicant's district-level leadership team will use a continuous cycle of planning, monitoring, evaluating, reflecting on progress, and revising plans and strategies; this team will meet monthly or more often. These aspects are strengths because they facilitate timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals, represent opportunities to make mid-course and post-grant corrections, and provide means to verify continuous improvement.

Weaknesses:

- Applicant does not describe the rigor of its continuous improvement process or detail how it will make ongoing corrections and improvements during and after project implementation. This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining the degree of rigor of the continuous improvement process and ascertaining its potential usefulness in making mid-course and post-grant corrections and improvements.
- Applicant inadequately describes mechanisms for publicly sharing information on the quality or impacts of its grant-funded investments. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to the selection criterion.

Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the middle of the mid-range for this criterion.

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

Strengths:

- Applicant plans to hold monthly school improvement council meetings and quarterly superintendent's advisory council meetings, to provide public access at any time to district and school websites, and to send email as often as daily to all stakeholders. These aspects are strengths because they represent varied strategies for ensuring ongoing communication with internal and external stakeholders and are responsive to the selection criterion.

Weaknesses:

- Applicant does not discuss presence and roles of external stakeholders (parents and others) on school-level and district-level councils. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to the selection criterion.
- In a high-poverty and rural school district, applicant's strategies do not ensure active or sustained or substantive external stakeholder (e.g., parental and community) engagement:

1. External stakeholders (parents and others) must be able to get to meetings at schools or district sites.
2. External stakeholders (parents and others) must have access to computers and the Internet.

These aspects are weaknesses because they represent unaddressed barriers to effective participation of, and communication with, parents and other external stakeholders as participants in the applicant's approach to continuously improving its plan.

Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the higher end of the mid-range for this criterion.

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

5

3

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- Applicant proposes an appropriate total number of performance measures. This aspect is a strength because it is responsive to the selection criterion.
- Performance targets for performance measures indicate applicant's intention to close achievement gaps between male/female, African American/White, and low-income/not low-income populations. This aspect is a strength because closing or reducing achievement gaps is part of Absolute Priority 1.
- Baseline years are consistently stated for tables of performance measures and targets for grades 9-12. This aspect is a strength because it facilitates determining the ambitiousness of annual performance targets overall and by subgroup for these grade levels.

Weaknesses:

- The district leadership team's role in reviewing and improving the project's selected performance measures over time — and how it will relate to or coordinate with a proposed external evaluator's roles — is not explicitly stated in presenting its measures. This aspect is a weakness because potential lack of coordination imperils successful implementation of the project's evaluation plan and its capacity to address Absolute Priority 1.
- Applicant does not justify its selections of applicant-proposed performance measures with a rationale, and it does not identify rigorous, timely, and formative information sources; and does not present a theory of action specific to its selected performance measures. These aspects are weaknesses because they represent incomplete responses to the selection criterion.
- Baseline years are not always stated for tables of performance measures and targets for grades PreK-8. This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining the ambitiousness of annual performance targets overall and by subgroup for these grade levels.

While the applicant provides appropriate required and applicant-proposed performance measures, it does not state its rationales for its selected measures, does not discuss the rigorousness and timeliness of its information sources, and does not present a theory of action specific to its selected performance measures. In addition, its tables of performance measures often omit baseline years which and contain internal inconsistencies which impede determining the ambitiousness of annual performance targets overall and by subgroup, particularly for grades PreK-8. Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the middle of the mid-range for this criterion.

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

5

3

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- Applicant mentions that it plans to retain an objective third-party evaluator at (E)(1) as well as in its project-level budget narrative for its Project 14 (where the same role is termed an outside evaluator) where it indicates that the evaluator will provide summative performance reports. This aspect is a strength because retaining an evaluator will facilitate evaluation of the effectiveness of investments in response to the selection criterion.

Weaknesses:

- Applicant does not otherwise discuss this sub-criterion in its proposal. It describes no plan to evaluate its project's effectiveness in terms of the effects of its uses of professional development, its deployment of technology, its productive use of assets, or its implementation of strategies specific to its overall project. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to the selection criterion.
- Applicant's performance targets are likely achievable, but their ambitiousness is more problematic for these reasons:
 1. Of all the applicant's performance targets, its most problematic and least ambitious ones — due to their impacts on student learning and college- and career-readiness — are for having effective or highly effective teachers and principals in its schools.
 2. Applicant presents data on highly effective teachers/principals and on effective teachers/principals for only 3 of the 7 schools (and for only 789 of the 2,503 students) it proposes to serve during its project.
 3. By the end of one school year after the 4-year project period, 34% of all participating students at the 3 schools are projected to have a highly effective teacher, and 89% are projected to have a highly effective principal. By the same point in time, 51% of all participating students at the 3 schools are projected to have an effective teacher, and 41% are projected to have an effective principal.

4. Performance targets for core subjects of mathematics and reading are problematic; in grade 3, the indicators are tracked as ratios (percentages), but in grades 4-8, they are tracked as numbers, not ratios. On the State assessment for grade 3 in mathematics, data are not sorted for subgroups, but for grade 3 in reading, as well as for grades 4-8 in both reading and mathematics, data are sorted by subgroup.
5. The ambitiousness of the high school FAFSA-related performance targets for the low-income students subgroup is problematic (only 59% in the school year after the project ends) – particularly given that such students could most benefit from improved access to financial aid if they are to enroll in and complete postsecondary degree-granting programs.
6. A more accurately formulated measure for absenteeism in grades 4-8 is likely to be the number of unexcused student absences rather than the number of students with unexcused absences.
7. The subgroup of ‘Other’ — as presented on the high school HSAP State Exit Exam performance measure — requires further amplification in the table or elsewhere in the proposal narrative.
8. Unless each high school student takes only one End of Course (EOC) exam each year — in Algebra I/Math for Tech 2, English I, Biology, or US History — the performance targets for ‘all participating students’ are problematic; as presented, they reflect the simple sum of exam-takers in the four courses tested during the baseline school year. As presented, the same data do not permit analysis or tracking of gap reductions by gender, race, or income level.
9. Subgroups presented for the high school SAT mean composite score performance measure do not permit analysis or tracking of gap reductions by gender, race, or income level.
10. For performance measures required of all applicants in grades PreK-3 — and provided for reading, mathematics, and general science — the baseline year is unstated and the scale (or scales) within which their baseline and target performance measures fall is (or are) not provided.
11. For performance measures required for applicants planning to serve grades PreK-3 – and provided for mathematics, behavior incidents, and reading – the baseline year is unstated.
12. For performance measures required for applicants planning to serve grades 4-8 – and provided for being on-track for college- and career-readiness – the baseline year is unstated; yet, it is stated for mathematics, unexcused absences, and reading performance measures.
13. Subgroup performance targets for mathematics (grades 4-8) remain flat year-to-year; they do not parallel those for reading (grades 4-8) which show year-to-year growth in the ‘all participating students’ subgroup.
14. Between SY 2015-16 and SY 2016-17, subgroup performance targets for FAFSA completion indicate an abrupt year-to-year gain of 23% for African American students and an abrupt year-to-year drop of 20% for White students; why this is so is not evident in the accompanying data or associated narrative.

Considered as a whole, applicant presents a plan of moderate quality. It does reiterate its 23 outcome goals, and further indicates timelines (often with indefinite and unbounded terms such as annual and ongoing, rather than more specific time delimitations), identifies core activities (for monitoring, but not evaluation), and specifies responsible parties. It does not discuss deliverables (e.g., project-developed pre/post surveys, teacher surveys, student surveys, switchover to improved data systems). Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the higher end of the mid-range for this criterion.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	6

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- Applicant identifies several other sources of funds (Title VI, District, State, 21stCCLC) that will support its 4-year project. This aspect is a strength because it responds to the selection criterion.
- Applicant’s budget appears sufficient to support its proposal. Among the reasons for this determination: Its plan requires deployment of new infrastructure and technologies; these are budgeted in the amount of \$3,461,781.04 for the total cost of its Project 10 (Personalized Learning Through Instructional Technology) alone during Years 1-4. Its plan also requires large numbers of personnel to implement its sub-projects; these are budgeted in the total amount of \$5,395,750.52 for personnel and fringe benefits during Years 1-4.

- Applicant’s state-established indirect cost rate (2.64%) is specified. This aspect is a strength because it contributes to determining the reasonableness and sufficiency of the proposed budget.
- Applicant’s salary and wage schedules and fringe benefit rates reflect local policy. This aspect is a strength because it contributes to determining the reasonableness and sufficiency of the proposed budget.
- Applicant presents detailed rationales for investing in each of its project-level budgets. This aspect is a strength because it responds to the selection criterion.
- Applicant indicates total revenue from its various sources in its Overall Budget Summary Project List. This aspect is a strength because it responds to the selection criterion.
- In its Project Level Itemized Costs tables, applicant consistently differentiates between its one-time investments and its ongoing operational costs. This aspect is a strength because it responds to the selection criterion.

Weaknesses:

- Applicant’s proposed budget is of limited reasonableness for these reasons and in these respects:
 1. Applicant identifies its other non-ARRA sources of funding only in the most general of terms. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete description of all funds to be used to support the project.
 2. Use of grant funds to support a Social Studies position in Project 3 is not reasonable. This aspect is a weakness because the applicant does not propose performance targets specific to high school Social Studies as such (as opposed to those it identifies related to the State’s high school US History EOC).
 3. Applicant’s Project-Level Itemized Costs for Project 5 contains discrepancies between its stated cost assumptions and its calculations of totals for individual years in supplies (Line 5). This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining the budget’s reasonableness and sufficiency.
 4. Applicant’s Project-Level Itemized Costs for Project 5 omits adding indirect costs in calculating for Year 4 of total grant funds requested (Line 11). This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining the budget’s reasonableness and sufficiency.
 5. Applicant’s Project-Level Itemized Costs for Project 10 does not state its per-unit cost assumptions for the ‘iPad and Case’ element of its 1:1 device initiative in supplies (Line 5) – this is significant because evidence in its budget detail suggests this single item represents a \$1,500,000 share of its total grant request. This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining the budget’s reasonableness and sufficiency.
 6. Applicant’s Project-Level Itemized Costs for Project 10 contain a discrepancy between its stated total for individual years and its stated total for grant period in total direct costs (Line 9). This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining the budget’s reasonableness and sufficiency.
 7. Applicant’s Project-Level Budget Summary Table for Project 11 includes a \$454,740 Equipment category item under Total, but does not assign it to one or more specific project years. This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining the budget’s reasonableness and sufficiency.
 8. In applicant’s Project-Level Budget Summary Table for Project 11, the presentation of costs within each category (columns a, b, c, d) are inconsistent with its calculations of totals by category (column e). This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining the budget’s reasonableness and sufficiency.
 9. Applicant presents a blank Project-Level Budget Summary Table for its Project 12, but does provide its completed Project-Level Itemized Costs form. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to the selection criterion.
 10. Applicant requests a total of \$140,000 for a project outside evaluator, but does not describe the expected or required roles and responsibilities of the contractual position in any detail. This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining the budget’s reasonableness and sufficiency.

Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the higher end of the mid-range for this criterion.

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

Strengths:

- Applicant presents a plan to continue to support professional development for teachers through its professional development partnerships, professional learning communities, master teacher program, and in-school professional learning teams. These

aspects are strengths because they advance the applicant's plans to address Absolute Priority 1 by increasing its ranks of effective and highly effective teachers and principals.

- Applicant plans to contribute a total of \$2,721,563 in funds from other sources to support its 4-year project. This commitment is a strength because it implies at least the possible availability of significant non-grant resources for ensuring post-grant sustainability.
- Applicant presents a plan to shed many of its grant-funded positions after the grant period — but to continue 4 behavior interventionists, 7 student academic advocates, a JAG Coordinator, 2 Freshman Academy teachers, 2 alternative education teachers, its 21st CCLC support positions, its part-time master teachers, its technical support, a data clerk, and a media specialist. These aspects are strengths because such personnel are likely to continue to contribute to advancing the applicant's plans to address Absolute Priority 1 after the grant ends.
- Applicant proposes a 3-year post-grant sustaining budget, which presents cost categories and an itemized budget. This budget is a strength because it responds to the selection criterion, and indicates a commitment to sustaining key strategies well after the grant ends.

Weaknesses:

- Applicant does not indicate where it proposes to obtain the funding for its 3-year post-grant sustaining budget. This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining resources available to sustain the project in the post-grant period.
- The 3-year post-grant sustaining budget does not provide the basis for calculating fringe benefits or explain their nature and extent. This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining the reasonableness and sufficiency of resources for sustaining the project in the post-grant period.
- Applicant does not explain what specific supplies are needed, or why they are needed to meet program goals. This aspect is a weakness because it impedes determining the reasonableness and sufficiency of resources for sustaining the project in the post-grant period.
- Applicant does not present evidence of financial or other support from State and local government leaders. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to the selection criterion.
- Applicant does not cite some sources of funding (e.g., IDEA Part B, NCLBA Title IA, NCLBA Title IIA, NCLBA Title III, and others), which can readily be coordinated with, and used to leverage, the requested ARRA grant funds. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to the selection criterion.
- Applicant expresses concern about sustainability of its strategies, but does not present a detailed and compelling set of budgetary strategies for ensuring that sustainability. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to the selection criterion.

Considered as a whole, applicant's plan is of moderate quality. While the applicant does present a 3-year Post-grant Sustaining Budget, it does not provide specifics about its potential sources of post-grant funding; it also provides no plans to commit existing funding resources (e.g., NCLBA Titles IA and IIA) ordinarily available to high-poverty rural school districts to sustaining its strategies after grant funding. Furthermore, in its discussion of Sustainability is unresponsive to the selection criterion in that it does not describe a high-quality plan for Sustainability with related goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, or responsible parties. Overall, these considerations place the applicant toward the lower end of the mid-range for this criterion.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- Applicant proposes to partner with 7 identified public and private entities to build on and expand existing partnerships, augment its schools' resources, enhance extended-day services, supplement its student and family supports, and address social, emotional, and behavioral needs of 95 more high-needs students at 4 extended-day program sites. These aspects are strengths because they respond to Competitive Priority selection criteria and they support the plan described in Absolute Priority 1.
- Applicant identifies 6 population-level desired results for its students: two focus on educational results, three focus on educational outcomes related to attendance and behavior, and one focuses on family literacy results. This aspect is a strength because it responds to Competitive Priority selection criteria and it supports the plan described in Absolute Priority 1.
- Applicant describes, to a degree, the complementarity of its expanded extended-day programs with regular day services at their 4 host school sites and the needs of their participating students/families. This aspect is a strength because it responds to Competitive Priority selection criteria and it supports the plan described in Absolute Priority 1.

Weaknesses:

- For extended-day students in grades PreK-3, grades 4-8, and grades 9-12, applicant proposes the same performance measures as in its plans for Absolute Priority 1. This aspect is a weakness because it preserves precisely the same limitations as noted for Absolute Priority 1 in terms of the overall quality of the plan and of proposing ambitious yet achievable performance targets.
- Applicant does not otherwise describe how its partnership will track its 6 extended-day program indicators for participating students or match them against an aggregate of all students in the LEA. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to the Competitive Priority selection criteria.
- It does not describe how its partnership will use the performance data to target its resources in its 4-site expansion of its existing extended-day programs — although applicant does clearly plan to focus its resources on high-needs students. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to the Competitive Priority selection criteria.
- Applicant does not describe any plans or strategies to scale up its model beyond its proposal to add 95 more high-needs students to the 314 it already serves at its 4 existing extended-day programs. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to the Competitive Priority selection criteria.
- Applicant does not describe its plans or strategies for improving results at its 4 extended-day program sites over time. This aspect is a weakness because it represents an incomplete response to the Competitive Priority selection criteria.
- Applicant does not describe how the LEA and its partners will:
 1. Build staff capacity at the 4 sites to assess students' needs and assets
 2. Identify and inventory school and community needs and assets
 3. Create the means to select, implement, and evaluate appropriate supports for participating students
 4. Engage parents/families in decision-making and addressing student, family, and school needs
 5. Assess applicant's progress in implementing its plan

These aspects are weaknesses because they represent incomplete responses to the selection criteria.

Applicant's plan for the Competitive Priority is of moderate quality. While the partnership's activities, as proposed, will support the plans described in Absolute Priority 1, the applicant does not respond explicitly to selection criteria concerning: (1) staff capacity to assess students' needs and assets, (2) inventorying school and community needs and assets, (3) selecting and using appropriate supports for students, (4) stakeholder engagement, and (5) assessing its progress in implementing its plan. It also does not address scaling up its proposed partnership activities, using performance data to target its resources, or tracking its 6 performance indicators over time. In addition, several of its performance measures repeat the same limitations as in its plans described in addressing Absolute Priority 1.

While the plan for the Competitive Priority articulates a goal, specifies 6 program indicators, discusses a timeline (e.g., hours and weeks of operation), describes core activities, and identifies responsible parties, it does not discuss deliverables as such (e.g., how and by when it will have recruited and placed 95 more participating students in its 4 extended-day programs). Overall, these considerations place the applicant at the higher end of the mid-range for this criterion.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- Applicant's overall plan is comprehensive in terms of its scope – as evidenced by its 23 outcome goals and its 9 focus areas, as well as by its targeting all grades, all schools, all students, all educators, and all core subjects in the district.
- Applicant's overall plan is also comprehensive – as evidenced by proposing outcome goals and strategies that address all of the 4 core assurance areas (standards and assessments, data systems, effective teachers and principals, turning around lowest-achieving schools).
- Considered as a whole, applicant's plan generally is also coherent and responsive to Absolute Priority 1 in that its goals and strategies as well as its requested funding all will focus on — creating personalized learning environments; personalizing strategies for both teaching and learning; significantly improving learning outcomes overall and for identified subgroups; aligning instruction, curricula, assessment, and professional development with college- and career-ready standards; accelerating student achievement and providing extensive supports and interventions for high-need students who are not demonstrating mastery of content and skills; increasing the effectiveness of educators through extensive and intensive professional development as well as data-driven assessment, monitoring, and evaluation of its classroom- and student-level impacts; expanding the numbers and ratios of students in all schools with access to effective and highly effective teachers and principals; increasing graduation rates as well as

postsecondary enrollments; and improving students' college- and career-readiness.

Weaknesses:

- The coherence of the applicant's plan is incomplete in that applicant has elected to serve all core subjects rather than to focus more narrowly on mathematics and science, or on fewer schools and students, and/or on shorter grade spans, where it can demonstrate a much clearer record of progress and success in reform and a history of building and implementing partnerships for reform.
- The applicant's plans partially but incompletely address Absolute Priority 1 in terms of their proposed strategies and/or goals for deepening student learning, and in terms of their performance targets and annual goals for decreasing achievement gaps across all student groups (particularly in grades PreK-8).

Overall, in light of the foregoing considerations, the applicant has met Absolute Priority 1.

Total	210	142
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0390SC-2 for Hampton District One

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	7
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant proposes a comprehensive reform vision that addresses all the four core educational assurance areas. In the detailed plan, however, the application shows some weaknesses. For example, Project 10 focuses on Common Core State Standards, but college and career standards are not addressed. Their projected data system includes multiple measures to monitor student growth and success. To secure effective teachers, Outcome Goal 7 states that 100% of the schools "use" a teacher and administrator evaluation system, but does not indicate what percent of teachers or administrators will be effective professionals. The fourth assurance area (i.e., turning around lowest-achieving schools) is addressed in terms of school attendance, students' behavior, and their "attitudes". Although the application covers all the four core educational assurance areas, it does not articulate a "clear and credible" approach. For example, the applicant explains neither specific methods to identify "pedagogical best practices" nor any methods to "personalize" students' learning by meeting their diverse needs. The term "pedagogical best practices" is a loosely defined term and, therefore, may refer to any effective or ineffective practices. The applicant also does not specify how to identify and incorporate students' needs and their academic interests to "personalize" their learning. Because of this lack of clarity and credibility, this application is placed at high medium (7 points).		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: In the earlier section, the application describes the socioeconomic conditions of the schools in the school district and stated that all the schools in the district were selected for the project. It does not specifically describe how the participating schools meet the eligibility requirements. All students (100%) in all the seven participating schools will participate in the implementation. The numbers and percentages for the required subgroups are specified and tabulated.		

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant attempts to demonstrate the comprehensive reform plan in the STEPS diagram. However, clearer descriptions of details are needed in the following areas: (a) how to determine individual students' needs and "interests" to "personalize" the instruction, (b) what the Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) will do, and (c) how to provide training and ongoing feedback for teachers in order to achieve "instructional reform". Based on the information that the application provides, the soundness and credibility of the plan are difficult to determine. Therefore, the quality of the plan is estimated at the "middle" level.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Regarding students' academic achievements, the baseline is established by the SY 2011-2012 data on summative assessments of academic achievement and goals for subsequent years are projected. However, the goals consistently include 2-4% improvement per year, is not ambitious because with effective practices, even bigger growth rates can be (and should be) achieved. Also, the graduation goals are missing. For college enrollment, no baseline data are provided. Thus, the projected goals are not based on the baseline data. No data and goals are provided for postsecondary degree attainment.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	8
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant exerted reform efforts such as using a data system (i.e., PowerSchool) that was available to students, teachers, and parents, communicating with parents regarding students' progress, and assigning an advisor to each student to examine the progress. As a result, the applicant achieved some improved results in math and science at some grade levels. However, the percentages of students who did not meet state standards on the math achievement measures increased for Grades 7, 8, and 9. The percentages on science achievement measures also increased for Grades 3 and 7. Although their "best practices" do not appear to be most "effective," no modified instructional reform is proposed, and the unsuccessful "inquiry-based instruction" and "project-based instruction" are still proposed. Therefore, due to this lack of data-based decision making, the application is placed the middle level (8 points).</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	4
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant ensures the transparency of expenditures in five different ways. The annual financial audit with the state fiscal accounting system is a robust method to ensure financial transparency. Based on these reports, the applicant's transparency of expenditures is evident. The applicant's description does not include itemized reports according to the above criteria (a)-(d).</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	6
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has a preestablished teacher and principal evaluation system and assessment systems on students' achievement and graduation, which are favorable conditions for school reform. However, the evidence of autonomy in implementing personalized learning environments is weak: Instructional practices appear to be prescriptive (e.g., project-based instruction) rather than allowing teachers to use diverse methods tailored to students' needs. The Professional Learning Teams' roles on adjusting instructional practices need to be maximized to "personalize" students' learning environments.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	6
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

The applicant presents evidence of collaboration through STEPS that led to the proposal. Letters of support from diverse stakeholders are included. However, the description does not present clear evidence of the stakeholders' direct engagement in the preparation, review, or revision in the process of the development of the proposal.

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

5

3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The increase of graduation rates through Individual Graduation Plans (IGPs) is impressive and warrants continued use. The applicant determined the needs of the community including poverty and parental education conditions, which is necessary for improvement. The applicant also identified the technology needs of schools. However, the connection between personalized learning environments and technology may be necessary, but not sufficient for better personalized learning environments: Simply addressing technology is not sufficient for enhanced personalized learning environments. Determining students' needs and developing instructional reform plans is a "gap" in the applicant's analysis. This instructional reform should include more than using currently popular practices such as differentiated instruction and research-based strategies. Thus, the proposed plan should include a detailed roadmap regarding how to identify evidence-based practices and how to adjust instructional practices to students' needs.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	14
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant plans to use 10 projects targeting school completion, academic success through after school programs, decreasing dropout rates and increasing graduation rates, providing mentoring, providing behavioral and academic intervention, parental involvement, and personalized learning through technology. The applicant attempts to achieve the goals through Student Academic Advocates (SAA), Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), and afterschool programs. The primary instructional delivery mode seems to be mentoring. The application includes a plan to use these organizations and many other resources such as the Freshman Academy, credit recovery, content recovery, etc. Not all these resources are explained and organized in a systematic way. More specifically, the relationship between the SAA and master Teachers is not clearly explained. The application does not include any analysis of the sequence of students' learning contents and any systematic use of instructional practices based on the analyses of students' needs and learning progress. It also does not include any descriptions of providing systematic instruction and accommodations for high-need students. The discussion of how students' achievement and performance data will be used to guide instruction is not included. In addition, the emphasis of the application appears to be primarily on secondary schools. However, the elementary education needs more proactive and preventive plans to establish firm (academic and behavioral) foundations for secondary schools. Thus, the applicant's approach emphasizes intervention and less prevention, and therefore, it is more reactive rather than proactive. In the area of behavior management, the applicant's plan is highly proactive. Thus, the applicant's plan meets at least four of the high quality criteria. However, the overall credibility of the plan is weak.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	15
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Using Master teachers is an innovative approach to provide coaching support for teachers in participating schools. In the applicant's plan, ultimately, the quality of Master teachers will lead to success or failure of the instructional reform. Therefore, selecting and training Master teachers need to be seriously addressed. Unfortunately, however, the applicant's plan only includes "who" will train the Master teachers, but it does not explain HOW they will be trained. The application repeatedly emphasizes the use of "best practices" rather than "evidence-based practices" that are identified with rigorous research. The STEPS data system includes tools that provide formative and summative data such as MAP and PowerSchool. Thus, the applicant discusses "data-driven instruction". However, the application does not explain how to use the data to adapt instruction and resources and who will determine individual students' needs based on the data. Considering the strengths and weaknesses, the application is placed at the low high-level.</p>		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	11
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The organizational structure (e.g., Master teachers, interventionists, media specialists, etc.) of STEPS provides opportunities for support and services to all participating schools. The diagram for this section shows the component organizations and their functions. The organization will likely enhance and sustain personalized learning environments if such environments are established by intensive instructional arrangements. Higher education institutions and S²TEM Center provide support for Master teachers although the training of Master teachers is not clearly delineated. On the other hand, the applicant's exclusive emphasis on application-based instructional approaches such as inquiry-based or project-based practices will exclude students' learning opportunities for basic academic skills, especially for students with special needs. The applicant predicts that those practices will facilitate students to apply their knowledge and skills, but acquiring the knowledge and skills should precede the students' application. This exclusion of practices will hinder creating personalized learning environments.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	9
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The STEPS' data system and its availability to educators, students, and parents will facilitate decision making and instructional adjustment. The infrastructure that the applicant proposes has organized groups of educators who can provide support for teachers and students. In the application, the availability of technology resources to parents is questionable as many of them may not know how to use technology devices and programs. Training opportunities for them will be necessary.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	11
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's plan to use a third party evaluator will enhance the objectivity and credibility of the progress evaluation. This evaluation is likely to provide unbiased basis for adjustments and revisions during the implementation of the grant project. To guide the evaluation, outcomes goals are specifically provided. The application must explain how the third party evaluator will collaborate with the rest of the project personnel. The roles of the Project Director, Master Teachers, the Student Academic Advocates should be clarified in terms of evaluation and decision making for improvement.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has multiple means for communication among stakeholders. The applicant's STEPS includes organized groups of individuals such as the Project Director, Student Academic Advocates, Master Teachers, interventionists, etc. In addition, it has diverse periodical meetings. It also has diverse information-sharing routes such as web sites and public media channels. Engagement of parents in educational processes is not explained.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant proposes some measures and methods of assessment. Outcome Goal 6 is about teachers using the data and making decisions. The measure does not seem to have sufficient validity for monitoring and recording the teachers' use of data and decision making. Outcome Goal 7 should specify "who" will use the data instead of "schools." The assessment system also does not have sufficient validity. Outcome Goal 9 should specify "whose" use of technology. This goal needs the criterion to show what "have increased" means. Goal 11 has the same problem. In Goal 12, "decrease by 10%" does not indicate the definite level of the outcome. Goal 15 has the same problem. In Goals 19, 20, and 21, the projected 3% increase is achievable, but not ambitious. The insufficient technical adequacy</p>		

and unambitious goals place this application at high medium (3 points).

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

5

4

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's plan to evaluate the "progress" of the project activities is explained in (E)(3). In this section, the applicant needs to explain its summative evaluation regarding the effectiveness of the investments. Nevertheless, the use of a third party evaluator will enhance the credibility of the evaluation. The applicant needs to explain how to find and use the third party evaluator.

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 seems to be sufficient to accomplish the project. however, the costs need to be itemized by projects to show specifically how they will be used. The itemized costs do not have any indications regarding whether each cost is one-time investment or ongoing cost.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	3
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant's plan for sustainability of the project is not convincing for some reasons. The applicant states that "A reduction in funding after the grant period will not eliminate the professional learning that will occur during the grant period". One method that the applicant presents is to sustain Master Teachers and technology Coaches "by flexible scheduling rather than full-time positions". However, it is uncertain whether those individuals can provide services with high fidelity within the reduced functions as the role of the Master Teachers as montors is critical in the project (the classroom teachers are not provided with intensive training). The applicant seems to predict that by the time the grant term expires, classroom teachers (mentored by the Master Teachers) will be experts. However, the applicant's statement "It is believed that the professional learning provided by the grant will transform teachers into classroom interventionists" seems to be a prediction without empirical evidence. Another method that the applicant presents is the applicant's plan to search for ongoing funding "sources that support district practices and initiatives". This plan is reasonable although it is uncertain. The prediction that the partnerships built during the grant period will continue to assist the sustainability is convincing, but using the contribution by the partnerships (through the learning community) is an indirect method and, therefore, is not a strong method for the sustainability of the project. To be a high-quality plan, the applicant's plan must specify the responsible parties for the sustainability. The timeline for those remedial plans is also highly unclear. Therefore, this sustainability plan should be placed in the lower middle level (3 points).		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	9
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: The applicant's assessment and determination on the community needs is a strength of the application. To highlight the importance of partnerships, the applicant expresses the dire needs of the local community such as adult literacy, health conditions of children, underage pregnancy, issues regarding "latch-key" children, and so forth. The applicant also describes the efforts to establish partnerships with community agencies to combat these needs. The applicant predominantly emphasizes the effort for after-school programs by contending that it is a method to narrow achievement gaps among student groups, which is reasonable in the local community. The applicant presents desired outcomes and performance measures with goals. As in performance goals in earlier sections, the goals look achievable but not ambitious (not really impressive results as in "2% for higher performing subgroups and 4% increase for lower performing subgroups").		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The current reviewer has reached the conclusion that the applicant's proposal does not meet the Absolute Priority 1 criteria for the following reasons:

1. The applicant used (and intends to use) some research-based, successful practices such as High Schools that Work, Positive Behavior Support and Intervention, and Reading Recovery. However, under the name of "best practices," schools also used partly unsuccessful practices such as project-based practices and inquiry-based practices. Their students' performance data indicate that at some grade levels, students' percentages of not meeting state standards "increased" (not even stayed the same) in mathematics and science. However, the applicant still proposes continued use of the instructional method. The reviewer does not discourage using those practices, but, instead, encourages the adaptation of instructional strategies to students' learning needs and status rather than limiting the practices to those "best practices". For the adaptation, the applicant will need to use a wider range of effective practices. When envisioning personalized learning environments, the applicant never discussed "evidence-based practices". Because of the improper use of the assessment results to adapt instructional practices, the application does not meet the first core educational assurance area.

2. The applicant's vision for personalized learning environments mostly emphasizes secondary schools. Although the selection criteria discuss "college- and career-ready standards" repeatedly, it does not mean that the proposed reform plan should only focus on secondary schools. Rather, the education for those standards must start far earlier in the elementary schools or even earlier to be proactive. This proactive plan is weak in the proposal. Without preparing students to be competent earlier, it will be difficult to turn around lowest achieving schools.

3. The applicant projected most of the goals at the range of 2-4% annual increases (predominantly 3%). In some areas, this range may be reasonable. However, considering the significance of educational conditions that the applicant is facing, the goals fall significantly below challenging or ambitious levels. The applicant must use more significant reform to change the students' learning and quality of life rapidly.

Total	210	146
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0390SC-3 for Hampton District One

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 vision of instruction reform and improvement for accelerating student achievement, interactions between educators and students, and systemic changes in classrooms through personalized learning is clearly articulated through the narrative. The

HD1 plan will introduce and implement creative and proved strategies based on the aligned program goals, objectives and the needs of the district and targeted student population. This plan is described in detail and fully supported through research and data. There is a planned for creating an infrastructure for implementation of: the common core state standards which prepare students to succeed in college and the work place; a data system providing data for measured student growth and supporting improved instruction; an effective evaluation system designed for recruiting and retaining effective teachers and administrators along with promoting professional growth; increased student achievement for all students.

The goals of STEP are appropriately connected to focus areas, risk factors and expected outcome goals. These goals, which outline comprehensive instructional improvements for school leaders and teachers, accelerated designed instructions for student achievements, supportive technologies to reform content presentation, and overall increased student achievement by closing instructional gaps.

There is also the opportunity for site based decision making and modifications to elements in STEP, to allow for providing a personalized learning experience for all HD1 learners and supporting teacher needs. These elements will help to increase autonomy and leadership development during the early stages of implementation. While increasing autonomy, there is also a clear plan in place for support from community and state organizations partnering with HD1.

The graphic/visual provided strengthens this narrative by demonstrating alignment to for instructional support services, improved classroom instructional practices, and decisions based on student data, which will provide a structure to support personalized learning and will result in improved student outcomes.

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

10

10

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's approach to implementing its reform proposal, supporting high quality is LEA-level and school-level implementation includes beginning in the educational foundation of their students in the five elementary schools, and will progress through the middle and high school. The plan is enhanced with the proposal team's examination of various risk factors (academic performance; achievement gaps; graduation rates; college enrollment; postsecondary degree attainment) within the school, district and local community. These risk-factors and problem behaviors impacts the selection of the list of participating schools and ensures the eligibility of the 2,503 students in its five primary/elementary schools, one middle school and one high school listed in HD1 to be served.

The total number of participating students demonstrates high need and are targeted because of their diversity, and are members of impoverished families living in a geographically isolated area. Other risk factors ensuring their eligibility is: only 66.9% of the population over 25 is a high school graduate and 11.4% had less than a 9th grade education; 21.6% had between a 9th and 12th grade education. The percentage of the population living below poverty is 21.2%; 1 in 12 families with children under age 6 receive temporary assistance for Needy Families; 8.1% of all children living in poverty; and 25.8% of the children born are to teenage mothers.

Implementing programs, professional development for teachers, Jobs for America's Graduates program and other strategies designed to create a personalized learning environment are extensions for impacting the advancement outcomes and will support a high quality plan for increased student academic performance and implementation of the plan.

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

10

8

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

It is evident that the LEA has made substantial progress in developing a high-quality plan for ensuring multiple levels of success for improved student learning outcomes. The applicant has identified an infrastructure for the proposal to include: the common core state standards which prepares the student to succeed in college and the work place; building capacity for a data system to measure student growth and support improved instruction; an effective evaluation system to promote professional growth; and to increase student achievement for all students. The plan includes the availability of best practices, lessons for training purposes, as well as, the opportunity for observations and for teachers to score themselves to ensure quality and consistency in teaching.

The applicant's model consist of comprehensive and extensive program outcome goals focused on: professional development to support the implementation of the Common Core Standards; building capacity for a data system; an evaluation system to support teacher growth and increased effectiveness; use of educational technology; absenteeism and truancy; student behavior; student attitudes; personalized learning; high school graduation and college/career readiness.

The proposals is based on these focus areas that convincingly identifies the greatest needs to ensure accelerated student achievement, improve student learning and to meet the academic needs of each participating student. Including instructional support services, improved classroom instructional practices, and decisions based on student data will provide a structure for personalized learning, will ultimately result in high-quality results that can be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform. The plan anticipates improved student outcomes and to provide reforms for support, however, it is not clear how the proposal will result in district-wide changes beyond the participating schools.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	6
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The charts included in the narrative demonstrates specific methodologies to support achievement gaps of subpopulations performing below state averages. These methodologies are appropriate for dictating strong support for the successful implementation of personalized learning designs. The program design presents outcome goals that are based on focus areas with benchmarks that are ambitious yet achievable. For example: 100% teachers will complete professional development to support core standards by 2014; 85% of teachers will develop a personal professional growth plan by June of each year; 100% of teachers will use the data system as a tool by August of each year; at least 75% of students will demonstrate improved academic performance; to increase potential for graduation by June of each year, 100% of 8th-12th graders will have an IGP; at least a 3% increase in the graduation rate by June of each year, when compared to the previous year. These goals are likely to result is improved student learning and performance and In order for the project to achieve these goals and ensure increasing teacher's content knowledge and effect instructional reform, HD1 schools partnered with two Institutes of Higher Education. Having more specific timelines, other than annually and ongoing, and by June of each year, can further validate assurances for expected project outcomes.

The applicant has put forth goals and benchmarks with high expectations for student growth and in turn is requiring that all key participants (superintendent, federal coordinator, school administrators, curriculum facilitator, and selected teachers) will analyze district and school data available through summative assessments, will identify individual student needs, and develop short and long term goals to ensure the increased student achievement and HD1's graduation rates. Additional information relative to baselines expectations are provided in the high-quality plan and can ensure expected attainment on current high school graduation rates with projective being more accurate, which in turn, allows for increased postsecondary degree attainment.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant clearly describes a value added, district reform model, that has been utilized and supports advancing student learning and achievement along with increased equity in learning and teaching. This indication is demonstrated through the SERVE center (an Educational manages Laboratory), for nearly two decades, guiding educators though assessments, development of intermediate and long term goals, development of a strategic plan, and focus on building capacity and reforms in the classroom. The plan demonstrates strong in-text citations and references for the last three years, even though the criterion suggest last four years records for success.

However, the plan demonstrates a clear track record of success that includes support for best practices in developing student learning objectives, guidance through its needs assessments and development of goals to made progress to close achievement gaps, raise student academic progress, increase high school graduation and improve college enrollment. The strategic plan developed by the district leadership team includes TEAMS to specifically raise student achievement in math and science by creating a paradigm shift of thoughts, habits, and embedded research-based best practice instructions in the classroom. The schools partnership with two institutes of higher education has provided ongoing professional development for 100% of HD1 math and science teachers and promotes conceptual learning and authentic problem solving in the classroom. The employing of Master Teachers has ensured observations, developed action plans, provided feedback, and supports, as teacher implemented newly acquired instructions strategies are used to close achievement gaps of the targeted population. The proposal lacks detailed implementation steps, which can further validate the districts personalized learning environment plan to support academic achievement for all HD1 students.

Strong demonstrations of student data performance availability through the TAP model implemented, provides for classroom

instructional support in content areas. TAP provides teacher support through data analysis, individual growth plans, weekly professional development and evaluations to identify areas of reinforcement and refinement. The applicant employs several strategies to make student performance data available and to increase parental involvement in students' academic development. The student data base program, PowerSchool, is a proven successful electronic grade book tool used by teachers to input required data and is available for parents to view their children's academic performance. There is evidence in the high-quality plan that parents are also provided with individualized assessment results, and a developed IGP, which is visited annually to monitor progress towards graduation. The schools providing one-on-one relationships with a student advisor is evidence that someone is available to review and keep up with students overall gains and drives instructional decisions through performance data reporting and supports improved instruction of services of the classroom teacher.

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

The HD1 plan includes the availability of its processes, practices and investments in school expenditures, instructional support, pupil support and key personnel salaries. The operational expenditures, purchases, and fiscal accounting procedures are included on provided websites and attached appendix for a high level of transparency of all LEA activities. The range of human capital decisions is fully considered in the narrative. The opportunities for all participants from teachers through principals to receive bonuses and additional opportunities for leadership based on performance and evaluation are clearly articulated in the proposal.

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

The narrative specifically addresses components of implemented initiatives (HOUSSE; ADEPT; SAFE-T; TAP; ePortfolio; national-based assessments; AMO; IGP) for focusing key personnel on student growth, establishing a collaborative school culture, and specific support for implementing the personalized learning environment. The collaborative efforts among educators to create a school plan that drives decision making is purposeful and strengthens commitment to the intended goals. The decision to provide continuous monitoring of educators with their coaches and to share areas of reinforcement or refinement will establish a school culture of excellence. The implementation of a robust data systems and assessments will ensure accessing student growth in a timely manner and enable educators to track student success throughout their educational track. It is questionable how only three personalized technology learning assignments that will be uploaded to the ePortfolio in grades 4-10 will actually provide substantial tracking for needed 21st century technology skills.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	7
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicants have demonstrated a thoughtful process for implementation of the strategies described with key stakeholders listed, as well as, the timing of initial conversations and meetings. The meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal and meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal, includes participation from Faith Based and Community Organization, businesses, educational institutions and government entities to deliver services within both the classroom and community. There is ongoing key stakeholder participation demonstrated throughout the plan to include parents, community representatives, teachers, staff members and administrators. These partners created a comprehensive district level strategic plan that shows evidence that it was aligned to the district plan and demonstrates ongoing efforts to help sustain and expand services offered to all district students since 2009.

It is indicative that the success of this project is largely dependent on collaboration of teachers with principals along with the buy-in from community partnerships, parental support, and the input of all stakeholders. There is strong evidence that educators support the elements proposed with the inclusion of letters of support, afterschool advisory board, quarterly meetings, SIC and the varied needs assessments, surveys, trainings, studies, and planning teams, including partnerships impacted by this project.

The proposal was revised based on the engagement and feedback of key stakeholders, by including an added teacher evaluation program. The plan's inclusion of the TAP program developed by NIET, requires a majority buy in from teachers into the teacher evaluation plan. This evaluation plan is expected to measure student growth and assess determined student

growth. If a school chooses not to implement TAP, and are allowed to research an alternative system, submit a proposal identifying their choices and justifying the reasons behind their selection, can obscure the intended outcomes of this plan for ensured academic improvement for the targeted population.

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

5

5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant clearly describes the high-quality plan that put forth high expectations for student growth that includes national performance measures that indicate a quality program: (a) achievement, (b) behavior and attendance, (c) core educational services, (d) enrichment and support activities, and (d) community involvement. The development of this proposal supports the risk factors and problems that identify needs and gaps that the plan will address of the targeted population which includes: Hampton County's 20,821 residents are diverse - 53.8% African American, 44.1% white, and 2.1% other nationalities - with many impoverished families (US Census). Only 66.9% of the population over 25 is a high school graduate. In a census sample of 13,668 residents over 25, 11.4% had less than a 9th grade education and 21.6% had between a 9th and 12th grade education with no diploma. The percentage of the population living below poverty is 21.2%. Those children under age 6 who receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families are 1 in 12, with 8.1% of all children living in poverty (SC First Steps). The number of children born to teenage mothers is 1 in 9. In 2009, 25.8% of births were to mothers without a high school diploma. (SC Kids Count). The percentage of Hampton County students enrolled in 8th grade in 2006 and not enrolled in 12th grade in 2008 was 34.2% (SC Kids Count). The needs and gaps its high-quality plan will address includes serving 2,503 students in its schools (5 primary/elementary, 1 middle, and 1 high school).

The plan also includes contributions for the implemented personalized learning environments and the logic of STEPS activities focused on: differentiated learning methods; expansion of proven strategies; introduced new research-based methods; support; and resources that impede academic progress. Analysis of needs and gaps of the applicants' current status will also be addressed through STEPS: programs that is expected to close academic gaps to maximize and sustain other efforts; opening new doors to academic success through increased access to technology; expanded individualized learning opportunities; and broaden instructional support in all classrooms. The needs and gaps are supported with teachers receiving professional development to integrate technology, implement best practices, expand on strategies, and incorporate differentiated instructions in the classroom.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	17

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has demonstrated a thoughtful process for implementation of a high-quality plan committed to providing a variety of intervention strategies to ensure students' likelihood for success. These strategies includes a comprehensive plan for academic and individualized support for families, students, and educators. Examples of these strategic project plans includes: JAG; Afterschool programs; Freshman Academy; Student Academic Advocates and Support Teams; Creating a Personalized learning Environment through Mentoring; and School Interventionist, which all are specified to identify students at-risk of becoming high school dropouts and expand graduation possibilities and college/career readiness. The premise behind this program is to provide a personalized approach for students involvement in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest. Additional learning keys to be accomplished by the high-quality plan included projects, could be further described to further clarify the implementation of focused services designed to increase parental involvement, such as FAST; behavior management interventions through PBIS; and personalized learning through educational instructional and digital learning technology.

The selected activities demonstrates a variety of interventions and instructions from elementary to middle to high schools that are proven effective in reducing potential dropouts and continuing to graduation, college/career readiness and postsecondary education. The applicant propose using 10 projects, which could be further detailed, for proving the implementation, specific goals, innovative activities, skill development, and essential components for personalizing instruction to each child's specific instructional needs. Through these projects, STEPS intends to support educators (School within a School; SAA; Reading and Math Interventionist; Instructional Technology); parents (PBIS; SAA; FAST); and all students (JAG; CCLC; Freshman Academy; Student Academic Advocates; Support Teams; Mentors; PBIS).

The measurable project objectives are included in the plan with goals such as: 1:1 initiative implemented to provide teachers and students with devices to support personalized learning, goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creating, and problem-solving. The application intends to ensure through each project's high-quality instructional approaches, that students receive the support needed for personalized learning and the use of non-traditional educational tools. The plan justifies that the research proven methods for the collected instructional tools, are validated as means of accelerating student achievement and deepening student learning, and are appropriate and aligned to ensure academic success for high-need students..

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

20

16

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Strong demonstration of these criterion are evidenced and described in section ©(2) of the narrative. The applicant has put forth detail approaches to teaching and learning that helps the educators with professional development for improved instructional strategies, project based and inquiry based learning, increase content knowledge and in providing differentiated instruction for HD1 students. Projects 11 - 12 supports via TEAMS: personalized learning for teachers and staff; focus areas including Professional Learning Communities; master teachers for support; strategic professional development across all grade levels; teacher action plans for delivery guidance and standards; and educator evaluation tools. Additional explanations on the implementation of these projects can provide further proof of support for the differentiated instructions for HD1 students.

HD1 has a finalized evaluation program model (TAP), which includes 4 indicators, satisfying this component. The chart strengthens the narrative and indicates generated teacher rating clearly with specified outcomes. STEPS will expand TAP or a TAP like evaluation with embedded professional development, strategic support and personalized learning for teachers, throughout all district schools. The processes for evaluation are described as cyclical and provides for immediate transfer of new knowledge, which could be further explained for clarity. The proposal states that teacher leaders will provide one-to-one coaching, lead collaborative teams, and serve on the school wide Leadership Team. The plan also states that teachers in these school-level professional learning communities will make data driven instructional decisions and develop strategic plans to close achievement gaps and increase all students' success. This level of support from teachers is stated, but additional details could further explain this strong commitment to the program. The chart/visual provided is valuable, but lacks clarity for reader understanding and to discern the entire process.

Strong demonstration of these criteria are evidenced and described in Projects 12-13 for ensuring that all participating educators have access to, and know how to use tools, data and resources. The applicant has put forth high expectations for using a data system to measure student growth and support improved instructions. The district currently uses three data systems and the project goal is to implement comprehensive methods for teachers to access needed data in an effective manner for classroom support, decision making, ongoing feedback, and to accelerate the progress of the HD1 students.

The purchase of high quality learning resources and tools (videos; manipulative; graphic organizers; books; software) are expected to support the needs of individual students and support teachers for creating personalized learning environments. The process of using disaggregated data, summative and formative assessments (MAP) during regularly intervals is documented. The data from these tools will provide rich data to inform both the acceleration of student progress and the improvement of the individual and collective practice of educators.

By providing teachers with professional development targeted to improve instruction strategies, project based and inquiry-based learning, increase content knowledge and assist teacher in providing differentiated instruction for all students, the applicant is executing a high-quality plan provided to teachers with professional development needed to teach special subjects, and specialty areas for 2503 district students.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	13

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a high-quality plan to support project implementation through demonstrated policies and infrastructure that

provide every student, educator, and system with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed. The plans success is partially based on the weight given to the responsibilities of a full time Project Director, which will play a significant part of the project and will ensure program effectiveness. The applicant took into consideration the need for support to all key positions, administrators, and teachers throughout the implement process and to ensure the plan is carried out with strong leadership. The Director will work closing with all key participants, District leadership teams and will monitor and evaluate the STEPS framework to ensure improved inputs and outcomes.

The plan demonstrates a convincing logic model based on its needs assessment to include aligned needs, goals and objectives with specific activities to address personalized learning goals, teachers professional and student's academic needs. Specific activities includes: individualized mastery instruction; providing professional development for teachers; exploring academic standards conceptually; making data-driven instructional decisions; providing formative feedback through the use of data collection; use of electronic learning systems; building professional learning teams; using technology to support academic achievement; and implementing personalized learning environment. The plan could further detail the implementation methods of these activities to ensure the intended outcomes. This model is expected to allow for leadership at the school level and autonomy to make school level decisions. The School Leadership Team is expected to provide innovative guidance for schools decision making and supports a learning environment to maximize student achievement.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant took into consideration ways to ensure equal access to all services for families and to make the public aware of family support services to support student achievement. This project is expected to reform the classroom to increase student engagement; change teacher's professional beliefs; bring true educational reform to all students; and engage parents, community supporters and partners to extend support services for academic success. These reforms are demonstrated by: hiring key personnel to provide support and services to all participating schools; updating schools with needed equipment and other resources; providing professional development to transform teachers to better understand academic standards content and expectations. The districts use of the development of Master Teachers' coaching skills and teaching methods is expected to maximize a high-quality plan for improved instruction and to accelerate student learning for all participating students.

The opportunities for all participants from teachers, principals, students through parents to receive access to technology will serve as an equalizer and provider of unlimited virtual resources and information in school and out of school. HD1 uses three data systems and through this project will examine other available systems with sufficient technical support to empower teachers with ongoing feedback and services to impact and accelerate the progress of all HD1 students. These systems are expected to allow parents and students to export their information in usable formats and to use the data in other learning systems and as an additional learning support.

The weekly and quarterly meetings with key participants will ensure continued work on school level plans for personalized learning environments that supports the STEPS initiative for school reform and for meeting goals and intended outcomes. All activities of STEP are stated to comply with the provisions of the General Education Provision Act and HD1 will ensure STEP is not denied to any student population.

The narrative supplies a flowchart, which is suppose to documents, but it does not clearly show, that all schools are using the interoperable data systems which is a supported product for equitable services focusing on instructional improvement and a flexible infrastructure at each level (district, school, classroom, teacher, and student).

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	12

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The narrative specifically addresses goal components that ensures a high quality plan that represents a system of monitoring, evaluation, reflections, and revision throughout the change process. The plan provides for continued progress toward creating professional learning communities; embedded professional development; and support for completing high school ready for college and careers through personal learning.improvements. The regular feedback on progress toward the goals, with timelines, rational, plans of action and targeted outcomes is appropriate to ensure continuous improvements and structural

changes as needed. Examples of referenced project goals are: at least 75% of HD1 teachers will engage in an average of 35 hours of job embedded professional development by June of each year; at least 85% of teachers will demonstrated improved use of instructional best practices, data driven instruction , personalized learning , and instructional technology tools in their delivery of content; the number of students meeting college and career readiness requirement will increase by 3% annually as measured by increased college entrance and exist exams scores, FAFSA applications, and college acceptances. The plan could be based on clearer timelines that defines projection of the project goals, rather than just stating "by June of each year".

It is the intend of the district Leadership Team and the project director to publically share with all stakeholders through the process, with information related to progress toward project goals, the quality and effectiveness of such investments as related to professional development, technology, and program staff. The use of a third party evaluator is convincing that HD1 is receptive to oversight of the project and expects the evaluation processes will result in rich data to inform future decision making, revision, and strategic planning.

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

The application has strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders and expects to establish a school culture of excellence. The strategies includes: each school having monthly school improvement council meeting; quarterly superintendent's advisory council meetings; information shared with teachers, students, and the community through the district and school websites; a minimum of once per month meeting for the district leadership team; Mater Teachers weekly meetings within their schools and with the district curriculum coordinator. The plan dictates that to ensure the progress of the project, that there will be created schedules to report progress, a system for email and file sharing, and a Logic Model for change as needed during the grant period. There is evidence in the narrative that dictates timely and regular feedback on progress toward the project goals, provided supports need for students to successfully complete high school ready for college or career, high-quality approaches to learning designed to accelerate student achievement, and a structure for input that is solicited for ensured district reform.

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

The HD1 has created ambitious yet achievable performance measures, including its rational for selection and is outcomes for improved instruction and improved student academic achievement. For example: By June of each year, grade level achievement on state testing will improve by at least 3% compared to the 2011 - 2012 baseline data to narrow the gap between HD1 and the state average; by the end of 2013 - 2014, the percentage of students passing End Of Course exams will increase by at least 3% as compared to the 2011 - 2012 baseline data. The rational for this goal is the annual and ongoing need for academic improvement. Results provided through the robust data system will provide teachers with timely formative feedback. Another example: By June of each year, there will be at least a 3% increase in the number of students who are working on grade level and an increase in grade point averages in core area subjects compared to the 2011 - 2012 baseline data as evidenced by grade point averages and grade retention. The rational is the need for academic improvement and results will also provide teachers with timely formative feedback based on rigorous CCSS. This example: The number of students meeting college and career readiness requirements will increase by 3% annually as measured by increased college entrance and exits exams scores, FAFSA applications, and college acceptances is executed by the need for academic improvement as evidenced by college and career readiness and will provide teacher with timely formative feedback.

The narrative includes proficient and measurable outcome goals that focuses on: common core standards; data driven instruction; professional learning community; creating effective teachers and administrators; educational technology; risk factors and high school graduation and college/career readiness. The plans performance measure for increasing just 2% - 3% yearly growth does seem to be ambitious for this plan. These measures includes rational for each focus and how the measure is expected to gage implementation progress and success, areas of concern and how they are reviewed for improvement and documentation. Additional steps for implementation progress and success could be further detailed in the plan. The targeted HD1 students are expected to meet college and career readiness requirements and continue on to postsecondary education.

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(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Plans to evaluate the effectiveness of district funded activities are demonstrated throughout the narrative and performance measures are evaluated for success. Examples of funded activities to be measured are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup, whose teacher of record and principal are a highly effective teacher and a highly effective principal. • Scores for MAP test results for HD1 schools and grade levels tested. • The Math Mean RIT score which demonstrate growth over time. • The Science Concepts and Procedures Mean RIT score which demonstrate growth over time. • The number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup, who are on track to college- and career-readiness based on the applicant's on-track indicator. For the purpose of this indicator HD1 will monitor absences as shown in the chart c, MAP formative assessments as shown in chart E 3 C, Summative PASS data as seen in charts b and d below, and failure rates. <p>The plan includes a chart depicting district wide improvement needs (too many students fail to graduate and not prepared for college/career ready); inputs (Common Core State Standards; Educators; Support Staff; Data System; Professional Development; High quality resources; support services and interventions; Outputs (highly effective educators, system of personalized learning, rich data system, high quality resources, system of personalized learning for students); and outcomes (student achievement). All persons of leadership involved in the grant application and who are expected to provide oversight and review the project plan for improvement is included and defined. The application proposes to utilize the services of a third-party professional evaluator throughout the duration of the grant intends to provide information related to progress toward project goals, the quality and effectiveness of such investments as resources, funding, professional development, technology, and staff.. Project key personnel will have regular weekly and quarterly meetings to provide resources, sufficient technology support, ongoing feedback, evaluations and services to impact and accelerate the academic progress of all HD1 students. Additional information could further validate effective evaluations of the project investments, collection of data from all stakeholders, the evaluation processes for supplying qualitative and quantitative data based on state assessments, educator evaluations, on-site observations, surveys, focus groups, and various other artifacts.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A detail plan for financial sustainability of this project beyond the five year grant period is discussed in the narrative. The inclusion of data results and needs of the district indicates a desire to implement changes and provides evidence of the commitment to improvements before, during and after the grant period ends. The LEA has the support of key district and community stakeholders, along with higher education institutions. They have worked with the LEA to provide an innovative way to reduce cost, such as continued professional development through partners, using flexible scheduling for teacher training and using teachers for shared lesson learned; supplied resources from established partners; sustain reforms through district collaboration and a cadre of experts; provided ongoing professional development opportunities provided higher education institutions; and continuing to search for additional funds to support the educational practices so that at the end of the five-year plan, the project will be sustainable. Identifying break-down cost and funds that will be used for one time investments versus funds to be used for ongoing operational cost during and after the grant period, would further ensure the long-term sustainability of the projects personalized learning environment.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has a high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. The plan concludes that by year five, HD1 will solidify program sustainability by establishing professional learning communities in HD1, learning circles through Internet resources, continued professional development through partners, and formative feedback by Master Teachers. Hampton 1 has long-term plans to continue the Master Teacher coaching strategy after grant funds are expended by using flexible scheduling for these teachers to visit classroom teachers implementing new practices and to continue</p>		

providing formative feedback. The plan also includes: teacher opportunities to increase knowledge in content areas; implemented professional learning through TAP; implemented curriculum, instruction and assessment using a five-step process; and its embedded train-the-trainer processes. There is a district level strategic planning and implementation team continuously collaborating and searching for funding sources that supports district practices and initiatives. The applicant includes a budget for the three years after the term of the grant that includes budget assumption, potential sources, and uses of funds. There will be an ongoing search to continue throughout the grant period and beyond for additional funds to support the educational practices that will occur with the implementation of the proposal.

In addition, HD1 concludes that the implementation of effective classroom practices will continue beyond the grant period, along with continued use of data to monitor instructional effectiveness and improve student achievement; professional development opportunities; presentation of best practices; the professional learning communities; and analysis of student achievement and analysis of teacher, principal, and superintendent evaluations.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	7

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicants states that to further support HD1's efforts to improve its student achievement and graduation rates, the district will provide before and after school services, and evening and weekend programs to support students and their families in the rural South Carolina lowcountry. HD1 and its community-based and faith-based partnerships will develop and sustain a network of educational supports for HD1 students and families beyond the school day, complement classroom efforts and maximize learning outcomes. The partnerships intends to be intentional, consistent, and continuous interventions to enable struggling learners to overcome barriers impeding their success at all grade levels and help them keep pace with their peers.

The plan identifies 10 population-level desired results for students in the LEA that aligns with and supports the District's proposal for example: HD1's three programs, SEEK (Safe Educational Environment for Kids) N Grow for grades 3-4, KEYS (Keep Every Youth Safe) for grades 5-8, and RAAISE (Raise Academic Achievement In a Safe Environment) The Bar for grades 9-12 provide learners who are identified with learning and/or behavioral challenges with needed interventions before school, after school, and during the summer months to prevent long-term negative learning and behavioral outcomes. The plan narrative outlines and describes details and meets the requested criterion for this additional support programs for the targeted population.

There is an extensive and specific district's strategic plan which includes increasing small group and one-to-one intervention services, improving access to academic content through updated technology, providing before and after school academic support for an increased number of students, and providing more social support to make elementary-to-middle-to-high school transitions seamless. The afterschool programs provide these types of services and support. The interventions provided are critical to close achievement gaps and bridge social adjustments. Many of HD1 families do not have the resources to pay for afterschool care providers, private tutoring, and other needed supports, and this proposal provides the needed services.

The proposal has thorough and innovative goals and objectives for expected improved results for participating students and their families. The project goals are expected to provide academic and enrichment services for disadvantaged HD1 students and their families to increase empirical, civic, and cultural knowledge and improve academic achievement. The strategies for implementing these goals could be further discussed to ensure the intended outcomes.

There is a supported and strong collaboration between the district and Community members who analyzed data from 1) surveys; 2) school/ community meetings; 3) school report cards and 4) *SC Kids Count, Youth Risk and Behavior Survey, US Census, the Center of Disease Control and Prevention, and Community Profile* statistics to identify needs. The project design includes national performance measures that indicate a quality program: (a) achievement, (b) behavior and attendance, (c) core educational services, (d) enrichment and support activities, and (d) community involvement, along with certified teachers offering quality instruction in ELA, math, science, social studies, and STEM enrichment. The collaborating partners have been essential to providing services to the program participants and families. The varied activities meet students' needs and support

increased academic achievement and social development. All activities are SC Standards-based and will transition to the Common Core State Standards for ELA, math, and science. The performance measures could be further discussed to validate that based on the tools and support of this plan, that i is ambitious yet has achievable performance measure for the proposed population-level and desired results for the students are attainable.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant addresses how the proposal will build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards and 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	173
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