



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0402CO-1 for Harrison School District Two

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The vision for the organization clearly shows positive focus in the following areas:</p> <p>Staff evaluations, merit pay district curriculum alignment, classroom asesment system, professional development and coaching support.</p> <p>The approach to accelerate student achievement, deepening student learning and increasing equity is represented by student, staff feedback and investigation, with the idea of creating a culture of instructional feedback is evident.</p> <p>It is noteworthy to understand the direction of the District has traveled the last six years in the reform effort in evaluation, merit pay, using data to drive instruction.</p> <p>It would be beneficial to understand how the District has used that information to identify key factors in articulating a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerated students achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>To include the 20 schools to participate in the Race to the Top is ambitious. It allows for a collaborative comprehensive approach across the District linking both District goals and School goals.</p> <p>Description of the selection process of the schools in the implementation of a renewed vision would have been beneficial. The list of the schools and the data reflects participating staff and students is reflected.</p> <p>Timeline for closing the achievement gap is evident.</p> <p>Growth targets for closing the achievement gap and grade level performance assessment increases over the five year period are minimal at 1% annual growth and is hard to substantiate as a ambitious.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The focus on professional development, feedback by evaluation, investigation into the refinement of data by both groups and individuals are commendable, and reflect the examples of a high-quality plan.</p> <p>How each of these areas applies to a meaningful reform to support district-wide change is evident, by increasing professional development opportunities, providing more rigor in evaluation feedback and focusing on data to assist in personal learning plans. The selecion of next steps are not evident and present more of an exploratory approach rather than next steps in the focus areas.</p>		

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Evidence of summative assessments is both shared and growth targets are established. Decreasing achievement gaps are noted in both poverty and minority comparisons. Graduation rates are reported with growth targets. College enrollment rates are provided with growth targets.</p> <p>The stated elements meet the minimum criteria. It is expected that growth targets that are set would be ambitious and exceed the minimum criteria.</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	11
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The poverty and minority gap reduction over the last four years is positive and noteworthy.</p> <p>High School Graduation rate is on a positive trend with stellar growth this past year at 5.4%.</p> <p>Ambitious growth targets for college readiness is evident by 2% - 3% increment growth targets annually in college enrollment, although data showing any progress or gain in the past 4 years is not available.</p> <p>Student achievement chart (pg 63) Appendix 5 is missing showing a clear record of success in the past 4 years.</p> <p>A reference to a data system for grades and attendance available to parents was made. It would have been helpful to have identified key points that would inform and improve participation, instruction and services.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	4
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Personnel salaries at the school level are provided for instructional aides and teachers and non personnel expenditures. A high level of transparency is made in expenditures and allocations which are consistent with teachers, instructional staff and non-personnel expenditures.</p> <p>No evidence of school administration salaries.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Some of the most recognized ambitious education reforms are:</p> <p>performance pay, evaluations based 1/2 on performance 1/2 on student assessments. Aggressive targets in grades 3, 5 and 8 for students who are 2 or more grade levels behind in core academics.</p> <p>Other areas of key focus are preschool readiness, student individual career academic plans. Strong RTI model and advanced learning plan for gifted students.</p> <p>A strong relationship between state and regulatory requirements help the District create a record of success and allows for the conditions for reform.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	8

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Parent Volunteer Support Group - Very Involved Persons guided by a full time position is commendable and shows a significant investment in parent collaboration and communication.

Formal Community Partnerships with 10 organizations is a strong example of community support and stakeholder engagement.

Superintendent Advisory committee of the 10 organizations and several special community support groups provide regular feedback.

Letters of support from parents, civic, community partners, business community, higher education and government representatives show evidence that the community supports a Race to the Top application.

Community input and adjustments to the application are not recorded other than support for a more rigorous program.

No collective bargaining representation is noted. No evidence that 70% of teachers from participating schools support the proposal.

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

There is discussion on identifying areas that prevent implementing personalized learning environments. A formal survey is proposed to teachers to discover their understanding of personalized learning environments as well as a curriculum review will be conducted to determine alignment.

Reference is made to five groups in identifying needs and gaps, Principals, Instructional Coaches, Technology Department and Curriculum and Assessment. There is a lack of a plan to address these needs as the focus is on exploratory in the plan, not the identification of focus points.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	15

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

In detailing how the District is preparing students for college and careers it is notable that one of the key focus points is to use students to assess their own learning in creating and developing their own personal learning plan. Creating student buy in, by using critical thinking skills in their own assessments is a strong indicator for preparing students for college and careers.

An emphasis is placed on one to one ratio of mobile technology device to student. A key component identified in each personalized learning plan.

6th grade students began a Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) to help them prepare for college and careers. key component in making every student college and career ready.

The District uses a Professional Educator's evaluation rubric that is focused on "all students" success as well as key components in preparing students for college and careers.

It is recognized that the District is recommending hiring a Director of Personal Learning who will assist Instructional Coordinators to support building plans for personalized learning environments.

Other key component is the use of school action plans to be used for disparity of knowledge, and making sure each student has access to personal device technology.

Although several key areas are identified in assisting the college and career readiness, it would have been beneficial to have more discussion on the pathways used by the areas to assist in college and career readiness.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	16
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

A strong three week initial training for staff is commendable.

A focused professional development plan provided by the Assistant Superintendent, 2 Directors and Three instructional coordinators assigned to each school reflects a strong focus on professional development.

The plan includes an increased focus of additional Directors and Instructional Coordinators. Discussing the plan for implementing the additional Directors and Instructional Coordinators would have helped provide evidence of a continued plan of enhanced staff development.

The District has evidence of a strong evaluation system that provides feedback on effectiveness of delivery. Strong observation support and feedback with a peer coaching structure are presented as evidence of increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	11
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: Site based leadership is strong and provides a strong structure of support. A description of the role the Central Office plays in supporting the site based leadership model would have helped solidify the partnership between the Site and the Central Office. Demonstrated mastery and the ability to give students opportunities to demonstrate mastery multiple times and multiple comparable ways was not evident. Students with disabilities and ELL were referenced to personal technology devices but lacked discussion on learning resources and instructional practices. A description of the strategies that would be used to help these students develop mastery of personal learning plans was not presented and would have been helpful for providing learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to special needs students.		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	10
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: Strong focus on putting personal learning devices in the hands of all students as well as providing internet service to those students who do not have access. Increased technical support, appropriate infrastructure to sustain personal devices is provided in detail and the structure is relevant to the task at hand. District has a data program accessible by students and parents and the District has evidence of using data to drive instruction.		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: Strong evidence to provide continuous improvement is provided: Soliciting teacher questionnaires/surveys is evidence of internal communication to continually monitor and make adjustments to		

the plan.

Superintendent's Advisory Panel will solicit and provide feedback through business, community two way communication.

A random 3rd party community survey will solicited for feedback.

Parent newsletter sent out to the community will advise and publicly share information on the Race to the Top.

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

5

5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Strong evidence of ongoing communication and engagement is provided primarily provided through Superintendent's advisory panel, principal meetings, teacher surveys and community newsletter sent out quarterly to more than 30,000 people.

Random 3rd party administrated surveys will be completed in the community targeting parents.

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

5

3

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Ambitious yet achievable performance objectives are provided through District created assessments. College Career Readiness standards are implemented for 4th grade and up. Individual Career Academic Plans are created for students. A mechanism is in place to provide increased staffing to provide more adult support for student assessed career academic plans.

The rationale for continuing these assessment measures and using these assessment measures regarding success and areas of concern is not provided.

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

5

4

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Strong evidence is supported for professional development, technology infrastructure and support. The evaluation process is commendable due to its rigor and continuous spot checks. Compensation reform based 50% on student achievement and 50% on performance is substantial and is a model reform.

Modification of school schedules and structures is an area that is not addressed, but Central Office Support, School Leadership teams and service delivery plans are evident.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	7
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>This project is primarily funded by Race to the Top without internal or external foundation support. The proposal is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal which is to primarily to provide mobile technology devices to all students, with an extensive support system to implement personal learning plans for all students.</p> <p>A phase out plan is evident to reduce ongoing personnel costs after initial implementation phase. Sustainability in providing technology support will be reduced after initial purchase of technology hardware.</p> <p>A detailed description of all proposed costs are provided and are reasonable.</p> <p>No discussion is evident on purchasing applications for mobile technology and software subscriptions.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The following areas of reduction are provided for sustainability.</p> <p>Phase out of building level instructional coaches.</p>		

Eliminate grant manager position.

Mobile devices to cut down on printing costs as well as use as digital textbooks.

General fund to cover technology increases for increased use of mobile technology.

Information provided for sustainability that includes budget assumptions, potential sources and use of funds is provided.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: Not applicable.		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: The application has provided sufficient evidence to meet absolute priority 1: The personal technology devices are a key component to assist each student with their personal learning plan. A strong network of support personnel are provided to ensure students and educators are aligned with college and career ready standards. A strong evaluation system is in place that will provide regular and ongoing support to both teachers and students. A strong plan is in place to address the achievement gap with target goals and data readily available to assist the student parent and teacher in redefining goals after regular formative assessment measures. Graduation rate and College and Career readiness goals have been established and methods of support are in place to reach those goals.		

Total	210	158
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	0
Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments: Not applicable.		

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form



Application #0402CO-2 for Harrison School District Two

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>There is a commitment to the core educational assurances as evidenced by the signature of the superintendent, references to teacher and principal evaluation, intent to prepare students for college and careers, references to standards, references to measurement of student progress. However, the applicant's vision of reform is not coherent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant does not link early enough the district reform goals and the focus of the RTTD program (development of personalized instructional experiences for students). Instead, there is a lengthy discussion about teacher evaluation and the role of the evaluation system (rubric) as a driver of school reform. There is no discussion of the elements of the "intensive reform plan" that presumably include the other levers of a comprehensive school reform approach. • The applicant states that evaluation system includes both teachers and principals, but only the teacher evaluation rubric is included in the appendix • There is reference to the common core standards and state standards, but applicant does not explain the relationship between the CCS and college and career readiness. The evidence provided is a copy of a section of the CCS that make no reference to college and career goals. • There is no clear approach presented for accelerating student achievement other than implementing the goals outlined in previously developed plan. • There is insufficient reference to personalized student supports. 		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not present an approach to implementation. Instead, it summarizes the teacher reform work done in the past, the intent to add career and college readiness, rigorous curriculum, and personalized environment; intent to involve key stakeholders. However, it is not an approach that delineates clearly what the district wants to do, by when, and how it will accomplish its intended goals.</p> <p>The applicant presents a list of participating schools all of which meet the poverty threshold (above 40%). However, there is no text describing process for selection of participating schools.</p> <p>The applicant is in compliance with A (2) (c). The tables provided included data elements listed.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not address the issue of scaling up in this section, nor does it present a theory of change statement. However, the appendix contains a district wide plan developed prior to the RTTD competition that speaks to the goal of improving learning outcomes for all students.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Given the lack of coherence in the vision presented, it is not possible to judge the likelihood that the vision will lead to</p>		

improved learning and performance. While the applicant lays out the initiatives to be funded with RTTD funds, its arguments are not persuasive in the relationship of each goal to improved student learning.

Data provided by the applicant shows a pattern of improvement in achievement, in some schools, for particular grades. There are assertions in the narrative about scoring above state levels, but the state scores for particular grades are not included. Thus, there is no point of comparison.

Data tables provided in the appendix show improvements for grades 3-10 relative to the statewide performance, but the differential does not appear to be significant across the grades (differences of 2-3 %). Moreover, the change in the narrowing of the gap is small (less than 3 points). Finally, the data presented does not cover all groups. For example, there are no scores presented for SWD students. In addition, the applicants only presents graduation rates for Hispanic and Black students. Consequently, the reviewer does not have a full understanding of the significance of the improved results for all students.

Most importantly, the performance goals outlined by the applicant are low. Increases are one to two percent per year (2012 to 2016). There are no performance goals for 5th grade math by subgroups.

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	7
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) Data provided by the applicant shows a pattern of improvement in achievement, in some schools, for particular grades. There are assertions in the narrative about scoring above state levels, but the state levels (scores) for particular grades are not included. Thus, there is no point of comparison.</p> <p>Data tables provided in the appendix show that the improvements for grades 3-10 relative to the statewide performance, but the differential does not appear to be significant across the grades (differences of 2-3 %). Moreover, the change in the narrowing of the gap is small (less than 3 points). Finally, the data presented does not cover all groups. For example, there is no scores presented for SWD students. In addition, the applicants only presents graduation rates for Hispanic and Black students. Consequently, the reader can't judge the significance district wide of the increases cited. Most importantly the performance goals outlined by the applicant are low. Increases are one to two percent per year (2012 to 2016). There are no performance goals for 5th grade math by subgroups.</p> <p>(b) The applicant doe not provide a table or list of pattern of achievement in lowest performing schools. Instead, the applicant asserts that the schools cited in the section about achievement gains are the highest need schools. The applicant does no explain the practices that kept those schools out of the low performing category.</p> <p>(c) Applicants notes that there is a data base that addresses this requirement, but there is no evidence provided in the narrative or appendix.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides the data elements listed in (B)(2) in a table, but provides no evidence that the information is available to the school community or the public.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant demonstrated that it has the autonomy to implement the activities it plans to undertake with program funds. There is evidence of state initiatives that are consistent with the goals of the RTTD program, and district initiatives that have been proposed or implemented with state support.</p>		

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	7
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>There is no evidence of a significant number of teacher support in this application. There is evidence of support from other stakeholders in the community (politicians, community partners, business, parent). There is no evidence of a broad based process undertaken to elicit input and support from the broader community. However, applicant notes that the superintendent has an Advisory Panel that was informed of the competition and supported the submission of the application. It is not clear that the advisory panel was involved in development and final review of the proposal .</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	4
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not demonstrate evidence of a plan that reflects analysis of the current status in personalizing learning environments. However, the applicants states it plans to undertake such study internally.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	10
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The response to this criterion did not adequately address elements outlined in this section. The applicant did not show a high quality plan (goals, activities, timelines, delivery, responsible party) for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environments.</p> <p>The applicant presents a lengthy narrative regarding the commitment of the district to personalization, the skills that students need to acquire to be college and career ready, and the key role of the teacher's evaluation system in achieving the goals of personalization. The applicant describes current activities that supports the overall goal. However, the initiatives and reforms proposed are not presented in a manner that the reviewer can understand how they fit together.</p> <p>The applicant's delivery mechanism is the existing school-based improvement plans with the district responsible for training component. However, the narrative does not specify how the personalization will take place at the school level, what curricula will be added or modified, how the teachers might approach personalization, and how they will accommodate special needs students. The proposed strategies for addressing special populations does not appear to be different from strategies used with all students.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	10
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not address sufficiently the elements contained in the criterion, or omits a number of the sub-elements (i-iii under a-d). Consequently, the applicant does not adequately fulfill the requirements of this criterion.</p> <p>The applicant presents a clear statement regarding the use of PLCs as a method of delivering professional development content to teachers (implementing strategies), but does not present examples of the topics that PLCs might discuss that relate to personalization or college and career readiness.</p> <p>The applicant does not address how it would increase student access to high quality teachers and principals.</p> <p>There is a table summarizing the plan to implement a personalized learning environment. A review of the contents of the table show that the strategy for personalizing is to provide personalized learning devises (tools) for students and teachers with central office support in the form of training. The section lacks detail regarding how teachers and principals would advance the goal of career readiness.</p>		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	10
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district does not adequately address this criterion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district has in place some elements that will enable it to support implementation of a plan. Specifically there is a district wide professional delivery mechanism and the district operates in a state in which schools have a high level of authority. However, the applicant does not effectively present an argument that supports its desire to use RTTD program funds to purchase individual devices for teachers and students. The discussion regarding the need for district level improvements in technology is not grounded in its educational mission. Instead, there is a lengthy and highly technical (off topic) discussion focusing on the hardware the district might purchase and on the merits of the various options. • The vision regarding how SWD will benefit from adaptive technology is limited because it places emphasis exclusively on the access to the tool rather than use of the tool for the delivery of content. • There is no mention of EL students in this section. • There is no reference to assessing mastery of content in using multiple approaches 		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has policies and processes in place that allow school level flexibility in the implementation of the proposed initiatives. The applicant also shows how it plans to provide a variety of learning opportunities to students in school and out of school. However, the out of school option seems to be directed only at SWD. In another section, there is a lengthy discussion about technology at the district level that verifies the district's intent to augment it's technology infrastructure.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	5
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides language in another section that addresses this criterion. However, it is not a high quality plan. It is a statement recognizing the importance of continuous improvement and intent to put in place a process that will enable the district to make appropriate programmatic adjustments.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's strategy for on-going communication includes several key components, but lack specificity. Nonetheless, the applicant affirms the district's intent to maintain communication with various stakeholders internal and external during specific periods of time of the year and identifies types of communication vehicles it might use with different audiences. The narrative does not include information about the type of messages might be directed to the various audiences.</p>		

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a list of performance measures that are achievable, but not ambitious (less than 8% points over 5 years) . In some cases the tables had missing data and consequently could not be judged.</p> <p>The applicant provides a lengthy explanation of the types of measures to be collected at various grade levels but no rationale for the measures selected. The one exception is a brief statement pointing to the importance of collecting information on school safety and bullying prevention. The applicant does not address (b) or (c), but those provide a list of 12 performance measures that contain non-cognitive measures.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not plan to conduct an evaluation of program efforts. Instead, intends to conduct internal assessments of program implementation. There is language regarding data collection, sharing and reporting, but it does not communicate an credible attempt to evaluate effectiveness of program investments. It lack details and the intent to use implementing staff (instructional coaches) to collect data raises a concern about the objectivity of the process.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant addresses the elements of this section adequately. The budget sheets are presented in the manner requested and there is a justification for each line item of the budget.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	6
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not provide a high quality plan but does address the topic of sustainability. The table provided includes source of support and project staffing (component) that might will be absorbed or eliminated subsequent to grant completion.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Not addressed by the applicant.</p>		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p>		

The applicant submitted a very weak proposal that lacked coherence and did not fully address criteria of this competition. It lacked specific set of goals, clear statement at the front end regarding the activities to be supported with the funding. The performance expectations were low, and subgroups of students were not included in the goals. Finally, the strategy for promoting a personalized learning environment by providing each student with a device without a strong pedagogical rationale is not convincing.

Total	210	123
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	0

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:
Not addressed by the applicant.



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0402CO-3 for Harrison School District Two

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

- Decentralized district has been internally reforming since 2006 by developing and implementing a strategic framework which included a focus on developing educator and leadership skills, which is a sound practice.
- Student data within the district demonstrates strong evidence for overall student achievement within the district, as compared to state increases;
- Strategic plan (2006) already includes language/opportunity for developing PLEs;
- Educator evaluation rubric includes teacher evaluation criteria that includes performance expectations for facilitating PLEs;
- Educator effectiveness rubric includes performance-based rubric that includes: a) developing self-regulating students; b) the systematic and ongoing use of student data; c) active student learning; d) assessing student knowledge of content, process, and performance data; e) student opportunities to use data to regulate learning; and f) use of multiple assessment tools;
- District assessments include state and district-level data at all grade levels;
- District is moving towards analyzing data not only at the proficiency level, but also at the sub-group and individual levels;
- Teacher interviews include performance task (e.g. teaching);
- Pool of permanent substitute teachers also receive ongoing professional development;
- Teacher training model views "student teaching" as an apprenticeship process, which is an innovative approach;
- Decentralization of district management allows for individual schools to develop targeted and school-specific approaches to student learning and teacher training;

Destination 2016 contains not only theoretical outcomes for career and college readiness, but more specifically, operational steps to guide in the implementation of college or career readiness;

- Decentralization of the school district's schools gives schools and administrators the opportunity to change strategies or processes that are not successful, more quickly;
- Past reform efforts (2006) have given the district the opportunity to assess and describe what a culture of instructional feedback and accountability;
- Lessons learned from the 2006 reform effort are driving the next proposed phase of career and college readiness and PLEs.

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

- It appears that all schools (K-12) will be participating in the proposed intervention;
- Participating schools that are listed in this section, also includes a breakdown of high need and low-income families.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	0
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Could not find where this section was addressed in proposal.

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

Weaknesses

- The methodology for determining how the summative assessments, statuses, and growth are not clear;
- The proposed goals for summative assessment growth appears to be very conservative (e.g 1-2% per year);
- Subgroup summative data for ELL groups appear to be very low (e.g. 35% ELL, 58% Overall). However, the proposed goals for change over time for this group is also very low, which may make it extremely difficult to close the achievement gap.
- Given the achievement gap between ELL and non-ELL students, it is unclear why there is not more emphasis or focus on this particular subgroup on all summative assessments;
- College enrollment data demonstrates that there are significant differences (e.g. 20% NA vs 61% white). among the subgroup members (e.g. Native American and Hispanic). However, there do not appear to be specific or targeted interventions designed to address the subgroup participation or college readiness of these subgroups.

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	7

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

Since the implementation of the original reform intervention (2006), the district appears to be making significant gains on their overall summative assessments

Weaknesses

Not sure how with the new state assessment data (2012) how gains were demonstrated (2011-2012). Unclear as to how the different (or changed) assessment can be aligned to show gains;

Not clear as to why the growth projections are so conservative when the district experienced so many significant gains between 2009 and 2011;

Unsure of the status of the parent/student district data system. For example, is it up and available, what kind of data is available, and whether parents/students receive training on how to use data system and data analysis;

Although according to the data, the ELL and Native American subgroups were experiencing significantly low achievement. However, within included in the overall student achievement data, the subgroup differences disappear.

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

5

4

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

State requires disaggregated data and information for public consumption;

District has a web-based financial link that is available on the district website;

Budgets available on the district website include monthly, adopted, and revised budgets;

Weaknesses

Unclear about why instructional staff salaries are significantly lower than teacher salaries;

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

10

8

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

State gives LEAs complete control over instruction, curriculum, and assessment plans;

Individual learning plans (ILPs) are a part of the District's current Action Plan;

State House and Senate Bills mandate that Districts implement plans that promote student literacy, individual career and academic plans, educator effectiveness, and to align pre-school readiness through postsecondary preparedness;

State legislation links educator performance to individual student achievement and performance;

District implements an advanced learning plan (ALP) to help students' academic strengths (e.g. gifted and talented), as well as students' social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes;

Weaknesses

ELL student achievement reform strategies do not appear to utilize any of the literature and research on culturally relevant pedagogy and parental engagement;

There does not appear to be any proposed interventions for Native American or other subgroup academic, social, emotional, etc. needs;

Weaknesses

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

10

5

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

District began developing the strategic plan (Destination 2016) two years ago in order to enhance student achievement and educator effectiveness;

Wrap around services are being provided through the school district that are aimed at providing neighborhood access to medical and social services;

Weaknesses

Strategic plan does not appear to include culturally relevant engagement strategies for students and families;

Definition of "engagement" is limited to volunteer opportunities within the school, rather than the more holistic and innovative strategies that are research-based, particularly when it comes to under-represented or sub-group populations;

Family and community engagement appears to be school-directed, rather than collaborative, innovative, and inclusive;

Unclear as to how family and community members were involved in the decision-making or ongoing implementation plans for the proposed reform;

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

Strengths

District's five tier implementation plan involves coordination and cooperation among instructional and building-level leaders, technology staff, curriculum staff, and teachers;

Weaknesses

District's 5 tier proposed implementation plan does not include students, families, or community member involvement;

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	15

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

Educator evaluation rubrics require that teachers engage students in active learning which is an important part of creating PLEs;

District is already engaging in implementing Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAP) for all students in grades 6-12;

District's reform plan current calls for instructional strategies that involve educators active involve creating cognitive complex learning environments, which are outcomes related to PLEs;

District's focus in enhancing student learning is cross-disciplinary and comprehensive, rather than general and hegemonic;

New staff institute is the first example of how educators will be trained to work with under-performing students.

District instructional staff will work with educators to implement intervention;

District plans to implement Professional Learning Community teams to organize student-level implementation of PLEs;

District summative data is collected four times per year to give teachers regular and systemic access to student data that can be used to improve instruction, which is an effective research-based strategy.

Mastery of content is gauged from outcome measures determined by the monthly district curriculum and assessments that are implemented 4 times per year;

Weaknesses

Not clear on the research base used to determine that technology devices will enhance the implementation of PLEs;

Unclear what specific strategies or techniques will be used to enhance or accelerate the achievement levels of subgroups or close the significant achievement gaps of ELL and other subgroups;

Not sure how long or who would be involved in the RFP process for identifying PLE technology system or how training (e.g. teacher, students, families, community members, etc.);

It is not clear how the proposed technology-based data systems will work with the district's current student achievement data collection systems;

The complexity and interaction between the proposed intervention (e.g. algorithms) plus the device(s) and the curriculum is unknown;

Not clear on how the proposed devices and software will translate into developing metacognitive strategies and PLEs;

Not sure if it is feasible to assume that educators and students (families) will know how to efficiently and effectively collaborate;

New staff institute does not address how veteran teachers could benefit from learning how to work with culturally diverse students and families using culturally relevant pedagogy;

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

20

14

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

- District's Action Plan, 2016 Plan, and student learning plans are designed to focus on student achievement and college and career readiness;
- Proposal to institute professional learning communities with teachers, administrators, and instructional leaders includes initial district- and building-level training, ongoing prof. development, and evaluation systems;
- Strategies for building the professional learning communities is supported by success of similar implementation of previous reform strategy implementation;
- District uses both formal and informal evaluations to monitor educator delivery of reform implementation;
- Building leadership is responsible for school-level and individual student achievement;
- District is planning to develop structured, common planning periods for teachers and instructional staff in order to collaborate, enhance, and execute student PLEs;

Weaknesses

- Training in the PLE appears to be centered on educator enhancement and training. There does not seem to be as much detail for how, when, and how often students will receive support and training in monitoring their educational outcomes;
- There does not appear to be training available to help students develop metacognitive, self-directed, and active learning necessary for the success of a PLE setting;

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	11

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

District organizational structure is set up based upon building-level leadership and control;

District and school action plans provide infrastructure and organizational description of the autonomous relationships between schools and district;

Weaknesses

There is no description of the differences in student capacity for implementing PLEs at the elementary, middle, and high school levels;

It is unclear as to how PLEs will target underrepresented or underperforming groups utilizing PLEs to enhance student achievement;

Not clear about which handheld devices will be appropriate for which students (e.g. grade level, content, disability, ELL, etc.);

Citation for what specific research on the positive effects of technology use, learning goalsetting, motivation, and engagement of student learners;

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	4
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

Weaknesses

Online support is focused on district- and school-level needs;

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	10

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

District and school-level data sharing are frequent and transparent;

District will be evaluating technology implementation as well as teacher/student perceptions;

ICAP appears to be a sound measure for college and career readiness;

Weaknesses

Not clear on how internal and external stakeholders will work together to implement proposed reform;

There doesn't appear to be a great deal of substantive community or family input into proposed model;

The annual administration and application of the State growth index may not be helpful to measuring student success;

Unclear as to how physical adeptness is tied to non-cognitive outcome or student achievement measures;

Pre- and post-assessment of grades 4-8 assessment for career readiness is unclear;
 Anti-bullying curriculum is not considered to be a sound measure for social-emotional development;

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:
 Data and assessments for assessing the implementation of the proposed PLEs are not consistent with research-based measures for cognitive, emotional, or social development.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:
 Not enough research-based data to determine student achievement progress outcomes;

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:
 Not enough information on how families and community members will be utilized to increase resources, improve implementation, service delivery, or training

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:
Strengths
 District will use general funds to maintain the PLE-related interventions;
 District is also using Title I, Title II, and E-Rate funds to supplement implementation of the district- and school-level reform strategies;
 Plan for maintaining the technology needs associated with the reform include reduction of paper- or textbook-related resources;
 E-rate program provides district with a framework to ensure that technology costs are student-, school-, and district-friendly;
 Tiered system of professional development and building-level training is geared to providing the infrastructure to eventually eliminate the Director of Personal Learning position;
 Technology investment will be maintained through an increase of electronic-related resources;

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:
Strengths
 Local, state, and federal resources (e.g. Title I, Title II, general funds, & E-Rate) will be leveraged to maintain the continuance of the PLE intervention;
 The use of instructional leaders and coordinators will continue under current local funds;
 Technology hardware will be maintained under current general and e-rate funds;
 Technology personnel will continue under the current general district funds;

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

District did not adequately describe who or how partners would work with to help implement the proposed PLE framework;

The evidence or research that supports how the use of technology or technology devices to improve student achievement (particularly among low-performing groups) was not clearly articulated;

District vision for improving student achievement is sound and achievable. However, how these interventions will target the specific needs of ELL and other sub-groups was not evident;

Socio-emotional, behavioral, and acculturation measures noted in the intervention were not tied to culturally relevant or appropriate or research-based data;

Goals for maintaining or scaling up intervention or PLE implementation, specifically for high-need students and communities were not clearly articulated;

Educator and administrator training and professional development for PLE and professional learning communities were clearly articulated and research-based;

Assessments for PLE intervention strategy at the student, community, and family levels did not appear to be as heavily routed in the research as the teacher and instructional leader assessment instruments;

District capacity-building for educators and leaders appears to be multi-directional, ongoing, and consistent with evidence-based practices;

Engagement of families and families appears to be outdated and not aligned with culturally-appropriate practices;

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

District met the criteria for Absolute Priority. However, the potential identified assessments could be better aligned with current research-, culturally appropriate- and evidence-based practices.

Total	210	135
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