



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0280KY-1 for Henderson County School District

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>The vision of the proposal is focused in that it includes several sound strategies for building on previous success through identifying specific programs to target student needs for increased graduation rates and individual support through data analysis with individual learning plans described. The approach includes an ambitious target of focusing on identifying specific students for the proposed programs while also serving all students in the district in the model. The use of multiple sources of data to be reviewed by teams to identify programs to meet student needs specific to grade levels is a thorough and justified strategy. The proposal includes a clear identification of the 4 core assurance areas in which it will focus.</p> <p>The proposal provides evidence that the district is implementing Common Core Curriculum Standards and reports a high degree of success in the process. A state assessment program, reported as fully in place, will support the analysis of state mandated assessments. Additionally, the proposal presents evidence that the data management system is in place to support the vision of continued monitoring of student assessments and progress and provides support to the proposal's objectives of data review to personalize learning. Gains in achievement in turn around schools is sufficient evidence of the history of the district to implement improvement efforts.</p> <p>Strategies and programs to recruit effective teachers and principals are not described with specific examples of practices and efforts which affects the credibility that the personalized instruction to students will be in place. Highly skilled principals and teachers are essential in continued focus toward school / district improvement.</p> <p>It is not clear how the learning process will be accelerated through the proposed activities. It is difficult to visualize how the day in the life of a student will deepen learning. This limits the extent of a coherent vision for comprehensive reform and for this reason there is a question of credibility of the proposed plan.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal is ambitious in its goal to serve all schools in the district from Pre-K to 12th grade students as described. Sufficient data is provided for identifying high needs students included are those with disabilities, 'gap' students, and other high need groups which indicates the proposal's ability to focus on targeted needs of students.</p> <p>The proposal presents numbers of educators to be supported through staff development although the evidence does not include many options for leadership training in order to support the work of the classroom teachers in delivery of personalized instruction. (p. 12 timeline). The approach to implementation is limited in providing adequate leadership training to ensure high quality reform.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The plan describes extended and personalized opportunities to create further instructional support time as a justifiable target. The plan is limited in describing an annual review of individualized plans. More timely feedback and adjustments to instruction for students is needed to accelerate the achievement of student learning outcomes to ensure meaningful reform.</p> <p>Additional technology support is included as the means to affect student growth. The proposal is limited in its explanation of how specific programs will enhance and extend student learning potential and potential choices.</p>		

Expanding current district efforts is effectively described through the exploration of progress noted in the elementary programs that will be extended toward a focus on high need secondary students and low college enrollment data. The process described in the timeline for implementation of individual plans focusing on one grade level each year is evidence that the project will be scaled up over the funding term.

The enhancement of the current technological opportunities is not described as a specific program. The structure of services as personalized is not defined. (page 14-15). A specific program is not delineated although multiple programs are identified for technology projects.

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

The district presents strong evidence of its efforts to identify and target student learning needs overall and by subgroup in presenting current data and connecting each area of need to specific strategies for support.

The district demonstrates its growth in data and describes a process for benchmarking and on-going review of assessments for each child. Providing middle school mentors to do weekly check-ins with targeted students to provide them feedback strengthens the extent of the proposal to achieve the goals for students.

Graduation rates are targeted through programs that extend to elementary school by providing on site visits through middle school and high school to a local college. The program will extend the potential for all students to attend an institute of higher learning. Counselors, mentors, and the ongoing collaboration with the local college are a strong support.

It is a strength to support the plan that college enrollment rates, including employment data, is collected by the state. This data can assist in personalizing the individual plans for students. Current information is not available on numbers of students who graduate from a 2 or 4-year program but the proposal intends to develop a process for tracking these students.

Increased equity is addressed by the addition of a third intervention program in order to strengthen student support across the district.

The targeted graduation rates are not ambitious as they are similar to current data.

Developing students' interest in college is not as developed as the plan to increase vocational and technical school enrollment, limiting the options and supports for students.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Charts and graphs of data are provided that the district is moving in a positive direction toward raising academic levels. Data from the NCLB report demonstrates growth in sub group achievement on the summative assessment with a slight decline in African American reading scores and in math for students with disabilities over the course of four years. Information demonstrates that low performing schools have been transforming into successful environments for improvement. A low performing school was recognized nationally. The strength in building upon prior success is convincing.

It is concerning that data is for targeting student/subgroup outcomes is set by school rather than student population.

Data presenting college enrollment rates is limited in that only one year of data is available to be used as a baseline. Graduation rates are similarly presented with baseline data rather than indications of prior success.

Data regarding sub group assessments to target achievement gaps is difficult to identify in that the proposal reports on the district as a whole in NCLB data and in appendix D MAP data.

Comprehensive data is provided to parents at conferences and through the support of local school councils. The district also offers newsletters, a web site, and employees a public information officer to provide print information. In addition a strategy currently in place is an initiated home visit program developed into a 'home blitz' with district wide contacts between families and schools with the involvement

of community support. The opportunity to provide parents and other stakeholders with options other than the internet and web site for being kept informed strengthens the viability of using their data to inform the project's objectives.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:
 The expenditures for personnel as described in the proposal appear to be reasonable and are provided with detailed descriptions of duties and timelines required. The district provides the community with access to the budget through regularly held school board meetings and in print. Additional efforts to describe the transparency of district expenditures are further developed by the involvement of parents in the school councils responsible for budget oversight.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	8
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:
 The proposal describes the state support for the core assurance areas by indicating that state requirements and federal requirements are closely linked through an assessment process. The district has clearly implemented programs for assessment monitoring as regulated by the state and NCLB in their current effort to personalize services to students. The data is presented in the proposal. Evidence is provided to indicate increases in achievement on summative assessments.
 The use of school decision making councils strengthens the autonomy of the district in implementing programs that are reviewed by parents and staff.
 The proposal lacks details to fully describe the current role of the councils and how information reviewed by council members is shared with all parents and stakeholders.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	7
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:
 Evidence of support from community leaders and associated programs, Rotary, Henderson College and other local civic groups and foundations are included. The proposal states 88% of teaching staff support the project. A sound strategy of holding a meeting of 'key communicators' regularly as well as parent advisory round table meetings is described. Evidence is provided that a district committee worked together to develop a visionary process for the program. The proposal states that school councils will be involved in review of implementation and impact of programs.
 The specifics of the planning meetings to review the proposal, receive input from the stakeholders, and address classified staff involvement in the input is not provided. It would be helpful to include agendas and process description of how this input was obtained and integrated into the proposal.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:
 The district provides substantial data to analyze the current status of their program's implementation. Personalized learning programs in place and planned for are described in general, however detail is lacking regarding the day to day implementation of programs and the impact on student growth. The personalized learning program is based upon ILPs for each student to be reviewed on a regular basis. The twice yearly review of the project director may not be sufficient time to revise a student plan and implement changes.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

A wide variety of effective supports are described to specifically impact the numbers of students engaged in school and ready for college. Mentors, college visits, tuition and test fee waivers, counselors, and support teachers are described as multiple strategies that will support increased college enrollment of graduates.

Elementary students and middle school students are described as included in services. The extended day and extended learning opportunities provide students with access to culture, art, and technology.

An appropriate strategy to involve students in their own data review is presented. To further involve students, the proposal indicates that beginning at the upper elementary level students will be leading their parent conferences.

Opportunities for involvement in a leadership academy are offered as a reasonable support.

Technology staff and teacher training for use of personalized technology and classroom instructional technology is described but it remains difficult to visualize the impact of the training on the student's schedule and daily instruction. It weakens the quality of the plan to be unable to visualize a student's direct services that include an enhanced classroom environment. For example, accommodations for ELL students are not clearly described. A support from current funding is referred to however the specific program for these students is not described.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	15
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The training for teachers is described to include technology, peer coaching, curricular areas and program specific training. The application of the training is not described in detail to demonstrate how student-teacher relationships and classroom settings will be developed.

The training for administrators/leadership appears to be focused on the evaluation tool for teachers. The data indicates a low percentage of students currently work with highly effective teachers and principals. The professional development for principals is not described to involve them in the leadership of instructional areas.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	12

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

A strong governance model for the proposal is presented. Current staff at the district level will be assuming some of the grant responsibilities as a justifiable method of implementation of a new project. Evidence is presented that the principal will be determining the activities of the instructional coaches. High school students will have the opportunity to earn dual credit. Focused ILP reviews will provide ongoing data driven decision making for each student.

ELL students receive support that is not described from the Title III program. Adaptability of program services to students with disabilities is not described. The opportunity for students to master a subject or topic or skill is not described in a manner that allows them accelerated learning opportunities. These examples limit the quality of the plan to provide resources where they are needed for students.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	7
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Comprehensive efforts include providing training to parents from pre-school through college entrance assistance. In addition, an ambitious goal of the proposal is to provide all students with digital devices and technical support. A parent portal to data and information is described. Systems are in place to analyze data district wide in a variety of sub groups and categories.

Two district technology teachers may be insufficient support for staff, students, parents, and schools as a whole community involved in technology projects as described. Without comprehensive support for the multiple technology options described for parents, teachers, and students, the quality of the plan is affected to a degree.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	10
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A reasonable strategy is described in increasing the number of teacher evaluations to three times a year for more frequent feedback and therefore supports the quality of the plan to monitor, adjust, and improve. Further support is included in that teacher and principal evaluations include a self-review tool. Student ILPs will be reviewed by teachers and teams, which allows for ongoing modifications. Appropriately, students will have training in accessing their own data and articulating their achievements to their parents in student-led conferences. The leadership role and involvement of students in articulating their progress is a high quality element to support sharing of information.</p> <p>It is not clear what the role of the principal will be in assisting in the learning community in terms of modifying student plans as needed and/or frequency of review. The role of the principal in creating and monitoring professional learning communities as described is insufficient to ensure the comprehensive impact on the classroom environment.</p> <p>Although the proposal describes classroom observations, the twice yearly review of the plans by the project director is infrequent and inadequate for monitoring and making timely revisions to the services of the plan.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A system of internal communication takes place through the school councils although the actual activities of the councils are not described. Access to the web site may not be available for all parents. The council at each school includes two parents. The input of the rest of the parent population is not described nor is their access to the program information.</p> <p>A collaborative strength is described in the community relationships established with civic groups and the local college.</p> <p>The ongoing communication is presented in a graphic of the leadership of the district and the grant personnel.</p> <p>The 'key communicator' meetings are once a month as an appropriate strategy for engaging stakeholders.</p> <p>Overall, the quality of the plan is affected by the lack of details of parent input opportunities that may lead to continuously improving the plan. The general attempts to collect the data is stated but not clarified.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Performance measures are clearly articulated and appropriate. Measures include engagement observation survey. Data is presented to support the need for the measures and the information provides reasonable goals for each group and the population to be served. Data is also included for FAFSA. Data is presented to indicate a need for more highly qualified teachers and principals with reasonable goals for increasing their skills. The proposal includes a variety of measures that are academic, social, and college ready indicators. The proposal describes an extensive data collection and review process.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Timely and formative data is described as a process for revising student plans and program services which will increase the ability to monitor and improve services to students in the classrooms. Professional development is focused on implementing core standards based curriculum. The review</p>		

of the implementation of professional development to inform program modifications is supported through the identified use of individual learning plans for teachers.

Professional development on use of technology and in the area of student engagement strategies is not well defined making it difficult to assess the strategies and efforts to monitor use and implementation.

Many groups, sub groups, committees, and leadership roles are described in the project. The effective management of the funds to support the number of meetings required for professional development and time for involvement of teachers and other instructional staff in providing feedback to program services is unclear which affects the proposal's description for appropriately and productively using time available.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	7
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The budget is reasonable for the efforts described of the proposal in that project level budgets are included to address specific goals. The itemized project level budget describes the logic for budget requests. The technology support necessary to carry out the proposed activities is acknowledged in the amount of support allocated for specialists, training, equipment, and materials.</p> <p>The budget narrative does not include year one personnel costs from other sources however, the proposal states that current district staff will be assuming grant duties and responsibilities. It is not clear why the half time early childhood specialist will begin in year two with an extensive challenge to provide services as described to families . There is a discrepancy between the figure given for salary of the early childhood specialist from \$91,029 and \$56,448 .</p> <p>The connection between the training stipend and the 'paid day' described in the narrative does not provide evidence that the stipend is an incentive for teachers to participate and it is not reasonable to assume that all 525 staff will have the same training needs or that six hours of technology training is sufficient to support the goals of integrating the amount of technology described.</p> <p>The budget includes specific information on one time only investment categories. The budget directs substantial funds toward the efforts to increase college enrollment and opportunities to increase the college enrollment for their graduating students through allocating personnel costs for counselors, mentors, and home visits. An ample transportation budget is included that will support the project's goals of creating flexible opportunities and environments for learning.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district's described plan indicates the Title I program will be sustaining efforts of the grant. A sub committee will be formed to address sustainability of the services. A current plan is not further described. The plan lacks a clear description of the timeline for the sub committee's responsibilities.</p> <p>Sources of funding are to be identified that may assume after school program costs (21st Century) but it is not clear if current after school funding is available to all of the district's schools from any other programs. The proposal is assuming that the project goals will be successful and therefore needs will be decreased but this does not address how the project will be sustained and implemented for new students, changing needs, and continued intervention, and training for new teachers and principals.</p> <p>District staff will be assuming realigned grant duties.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The collaboration between Henderson College and the district is well described in that the college will continue to provide credits to high school students tuition free and support the goal to expand college enrollment of graduating students.

The annual goals are achievable measures and are very clear in their intention to provide meaningful measures to modify student services and target needs.

The process presented in this proposal calls for many leaders who would each have several meetings, committees, sub-committees, and other communication plans. The management of these various groups meeting and communicating in an effort to improve student opportunities may not be a manageable use of time as described to assess the project's implementation and modify as needed. The project director has a wide range of communication responsibilities described with the various groups that limits the availability of the director to complete on site reviews and determine the clear impact on the student-learning environment. The wide variety of meetings (sub committees, communicators, principals, PLC, district, college, and community) may be better aligned to promote success for this model.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The district has adopted core Curriculum Standards. The district began reviewing benchmark measures in 2006 and proposes to build upon that structure through developing teachers' skills to analyze data and modify approaches through collaboration. The district is building upon the work of highly skilled educators to which it attributes increased achievement. One high poverty elementary school has improved its services to students to become nationally recognized.

The supports for the group of students to be served for college readiness is well described through providing mentors, career counselors, and tuition free opportunities for high school students.

The specific strategies to accelerate learning and provide student paced individualized activities are vague. It is difficult to envision what a child's day / schedule might look like that includes time for building upon the classroom environment and the application of the increase in teachers' skills for providing individualization in a non-digital format.

Total	210	140
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0280KY-2 for Henderson County School District

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>In its application, Henderson County Schools persuasively documents its attention to the four core educational assurance areas. It has adopted rigorous standards and implemented related assessments, and invested in data systems to help educators make use of the results through its MAP system. The district asserts that it has made progress on providing professional supports to new teachers, and holds up South Heights elementary as an example of its capacity to turn around its lowest-achieving school.</p> <p>The district reports that its school board has five 5-year goals. These goals certainly include acceleration of student achievement, which has been an area of strength for the district.</p> <p>On their face, however, the district’s top-level goals do not directly include personalization of learning and teaching, deepening student learning, or increasing equity. The application does explain that personalization could support their goals. In terms of vision, personalization of learning is expressed within the text of the application as the district’s “goal one,” but the application describes this as subsidiary to a goal that the district regards as larger: reach 100% college and career readiness (though it is really working toward a target of only 90% graduation). The application does not appear to express a comprehensive vision for making each student’s individual academic interests central to the way that it operates.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district, which consists of one high school, an alternative education center and the associated P-8 feeder schools, proposes to include all of its schools, teachers and students in its proposal. This is a reasonable scope.</p> <p>The centerpiece of the district’s approach is to make state-mandated “Individual Learning Plans” (ILPs) a key part of the way they operate. Currently only used perfunctorily and for grades 8 and up, the district proposes to expand ILPs downward to grade 3 and create a system for a new “digital-based student data notebook” for each student. The applicant proposes to expand the scope of the content of the ILP to make it more comprehensive (renaming it CILP). Students, parents, and teachers would revise each CILP on an annual or bi-annual basis.</p> <p>The district’s recent history of success in raising high school student achievement (and to a lesser extent middle school achievement) suggests that this is not an organization that tends to waste time. However, the application does not present a persuasive case that investing in CILPs will be more transformative than ILPs (or, for that matter, report cards) have been. Teachers have long had the capacity to review past scores and report cards in their work with students and conversations with parents. This proposal appears to make those resources digital without identifying a clear way to make them more valuable. The rollout plan calls for very rapid completion of the digital notebook infrastructure by November 2013, but for a slow rollout of the system.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district’s stated intention is to implement changes throughout all of its schools, rather than a subset of schools or grades. The number of teachers involved is relatively small – a number that would easily fit into meeting spaces for classroom-style training. The plan calls for a very staged rollout, however – for example, digital data notebooks, critical to transparency and usefulness of the CILP, will not reach grades 6/7/8 until year 3. The application does not appear to provide a strong rationale for this staging strategy, and the absence of such a rationale will make it difficult to make necessary adjustments along the way.</p> <p>The action plan described in Appendix B provides a rough timetable of action and assigns rough responsibility for areas of work.</p>		

This area of the proposal scores in the medium range.

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

10

5

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- a) The plan sets its goals at the minimum level recommended by a state formula. This satisfies the letter of the guidance for this application element. It does not reveal any connection between the planned implementation of program elements and an expectation of results. Straight-line improvement in performance seems unlikely as investments will take time to pay off in measurable student learning.
- b) The district’s goals for decreasing achievement gaps appear to be based strictly on state guidance. Again, this satisfies the requirements. For a district that has regularly led the state in improving student achievement, this may be a safe target, but it shows no connection with the plan.
- c) The district’s target of a 90% graduation rate is reasonable, and high relative to other districts. It is also, however, rather close to what it claims as the status quo. Rhetorically, the district appears to set a higher-level aspiration of 100% college and career readiness, but this appears to be more of a theoretical aim than a number that the district manages toward.
- d) The plan calls for virtually all growth in post-high school enrollment to be in vocational and technical schools. The district does not appear to have aspirations to materially increase college-going rates.
- e) (optional) Although a data source appears to exist for postsecondary enrollment (the P-20 Data Collaborative), the district’s plan does not set goals for obtaining access to the data.

Points are awarded in the medium range for this adequate response.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- a) The applicant shows clear evidence of improved achievement in its middle schools but more particularly in its high school, where test scores have risen dramatically. In the period of review for this competition the overall improvement in scores for lower grades were less notable, but there is evidence of meaningful improvement in sub-scores. For example, in 1998 only 43% of students classified as low income made AYP in math; by 2010 64% made AYP. The application states that prior to the period in consideration for this review, the district grappled with turnarounds in elementary schools, and that this experience led to the more recent improvements in the high school.
- b) The district has made notable efforts to give students exposure to their community and the community exposure to its students. The Home Blitz program brings teachers and school leaders into the communities and homes of students, an expansion of a home visit program that the applicant describes as “eye opening experience for most staff.” This is a distinctive practice, though it is not directly responsive as an “ambitious and significant reform” targeting its lowest performing schools.
- c) The district describes many media through which its public information officer works to publicize the work and achievements of the district. Schools appear to use paper and web media to communicate with parents. The district complies with a state required school

report card for dissemination of school data. This list of one-to-many communication activity seems typical of what any school does, and it is not clear from the application how this activity rises to the level of informing and improving participation, instruction and services. There appears to be no indication in the application that the communication of student performance data is personalized for individual students, educators and parents.

Medium points awarded

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

The application's appendix H includes two pages of a photocopied spreadsheet with all four of the required elements: total actual salary totals at the school level, for instructional staff only, for teachers only, and for non-personnel expenditures. This suggests that the district is capable of producing the requested information when it must, and that it could make comparisons of actual expenditures if required.

The application does not, however, provide persuasive evidence of transparency with regard to this information, which is not included in the Kentucky School Report Card.

Points are awarded in the medium range for this criterion.

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

The applicant is not proposing to do anything that stretches the boundaries of state law.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	3
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The district has a history of significant investment in public engagement, particularly in the development of its Comprehensive District Improvement Plan, which is extensively referenced in this application for Race to the Top. The district highlights its Equity Resource Council, the five community meetings associated with its development of a Vision Statement, and the superintendent's monthly meetings with community leaders as examples of dialogue.

The district benefited from this history of dialogue and engagement, but does not appear to have brought a similar level of focus and energy to stakeholder engagement on the question of how to personalize learning and teaching in response to this application. The application does not seem to claim any revisions in its plan as a result of this engagement.

Crucially, the application appears to lack evidence of widespread teacher support, a requirement of this competition. For example, Appendix I includes no letter of support from teacher leadership. Absent any corroborating evidence, the application's claim of 88% support from teachers seems unconvincing.

(b) Letters from several key stakeholders are included in the application, but in the main they appear to be more oriented toward support for the district in general than for the race to the top plan in particular. The letter from Scott Davis (CEO of the Ohio Valley Financial Group) provides some evidence that the goal of personalizing instruction was part of the conversation between the district and leaders in the business community. The letter from Kris Williams (CEO of Henderson Community College) underscores the planned investment in the Covey Leader in Me program.

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

This criterion asks for a plan that leads to personalized learning environments for students. The district responds, in part, by describing its current practices for identifying students that require intervention to get on track. The district proposes to invest RTT funds partly in expanded tutoring services and software-based learning to help groups of students catch up. This is a partial response; it gives a sense of what a plan might look like for the LEA to implement solutions to identified groups; it does not, however, constitute a high-quality plan for an analysis of the current status and the logic behind this proposal.

The district’s investment in Covey’s The Leader In Me seems to be helping to build a positive school culture, though it does not seem to connect directly to the criterion of advancing personalized learning environments.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	7

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a)(i) The heart of the Henderson County Schools’ Race to the Top proposal is the Comprehensive Individual Learning Plan (CILP), which the applicant summarizes as a “comprehensive planning tool to guide every student’s educational experience across their years of school attendance.” The district proposes to invest in College Career Coaches (CCC) that will train and support teachers to help them develop CILPs and prepare for a parent-student-teacher conference each semester that makes use of them. The application does not make clear in what way this will be so different from past parent-teacher conferences, or how it will lead to a powerfully different understanding of the connection between school and the student’s future.

(a)(ii) The plan seems to provide clearer ideas about personalization of student experiences and opportunities outside of the school day than within it. Students in elementary grades will “set targets for the coming school year” in consultation with teachers, but it is not clear how this will connect to changes in the use of school time in order to make a difference in student learning. At the secondary level, the plan envisions intervention services in the form of an enforced study skills class for students at risk, as well as the use of college/career coaches (CCC) to drive activities and work with some students. Regular student visits to local colleges are a part of the plan that would support development of college aspirations and expectations. Although planned activities include new investments in college counseling, the district does not plan for any significant increase in college-going rates.

(a)(iii) The plan calls for investment in personalization of learning and “deep experiences” – but mainly outside of school time rather than as a fundamental change in the way that school time is used. The plan does not appear to address the sustainability of a solution that relies heavily on after-school programs, and there are important equity issues in relying on out-of-school time for fundamental learning opportunities.

(a)(iv) The plan seems to envision exposure to cultural and language opportunities through experiences offered outside of the school day, such as through the Learning Plus academies. Given the small budget provided to this activity, this is a weak response to the criterion.

(a)(v) The application suggests that students will learn goal-setting, teamwork, critical thinking and problem solving through classroom-based instruction using Steven Covey’s Leader in Me program, and will put these ideas into practice in the way that they pursue their individual learning goals. But the proposal does not spell out how the schools will change their way of working in order to make this practical, other than through after-school programs. The application mentions blended learning, but does not offer a plan for how this strategy would be used.

(b)(i) The proposal makes use of Kentucky’s state definition of fourteen career pathways, which can be a useful launching point for discussion of the connection between course choices and career opportunities.

(b)(ii) The plan calls for investment in professional development, acquisition of resources and the addition of tools that could support high quality instruction. The plan for the roll-out of these tools and approaches is highly methodical, and in some cases will take several years to accomplish. From the rollout plan described in Appendix B it appears that the focus will be on the high school for the first several years, shifting attention to grades 6,7,8 only in 2016. Given the slow progress in learning in these grades relative to high school, the plan seems to be putting its first dollars in the place where they are least needed.

(b)(iii) In order to provide students and teachers with high quality educational content, Henderson County states that it is committed to digital learning, but it has not presented a persuasive plan for success. For example, the district envisions a heterogeneous “bring your own” technology platform of devices for students, supported by a “help desk” staffed by students. The application offers no benchmarks for success or reasons to believe that this approach will be effective. The most bold element of the proposal is to create one blended learning class in one elementary school and one in a secondary school... but it might be after school. The plan does not provide a clear indication of how it will accommodate personalized learning for students who are ahead of pace or behind pace through such an approach.

(b)(iv) a) The district’s MAP assessments provide frequently-updated individual student achievement data aligned with standards. b) Documentation and communication through the CILP could be very powerful in providing personalized insights, if the implementation allows for those insights to pass quickly and with little effort from one teacher to another and one year to the next. This is a positive element of the proposal.

(b)(v) The district states that it intends to invest in intervention services for students scoring in the bottom 35% on MAP assessments (vs. 20% currently). The plan does not mention an intention to invest in students who are in high-need categories regardless of academic results. The CILP may provide a vehicle for accommodating the learning needs of high-need students.

(c) The training requirements for students to make effective use of the CILP will be important. The plan calls for students “in small groups” to participate in workshops on effective use of the CILP. Sustainability of this investment is a concern. The tool will probably evolve over time as the process is developed and improved, but there is no ongoing budget committed to it.

This response is scored in the medium range

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

20

11

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a)(i) Echoing the vision for student comprehensive individual learning plans, the proposal calls for teachers and school leaders to develop their own Individual Learning Plans. The district’s plan asserts that professional development will be differentiated to meet teachers’ individual learning needs. New Instructional Coaches will be hired to provide support to instructional staff and catalyze supportive Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). It is not directly made clear in the proposal how this will necessarily support the development of personalized learning environments for students, but it could. This is a response of medium quality.

(a)(ii) The district proposes to identify excellent teachers and employ them as instructional coaches (ICs) in order to improve instruction. The district also proposes to develop a home-grown collection of videos of its master teachers delivering exemplary lessons. This is a significant investment in an idea that has been pursued in many places; the application does not present compelling evidence of this approach having been effective elsewhere.

(a)(iii) The district’s plan will equip educators with information about individual student achievement at regular and timely intervals. The data from assessments can be a useful spur to meaningful conversations among educators and students.

(a)(iv) The district’s plan will provide it a mechanism to collect useful information in an orderly structure that could support meaningful professional reflection, feedback and growth for teachers and leaders. This will provide useful content to make the PGES system pay off for teachers and students.

(b)(i) The district proposes to make knowledge and implementation of personalization strategies into an element of their annual professional evaluation. This seems like a strong incentive for teachers to work with their instructional coaches on this area.

(b)(ii) The district plan calls for a very organic approach to learning resources on an undefined technology platform: Bring Your Own devices. It is possible that this may be the right strategy in the context of a technical landscape that is evolving rapidly, but it does raise some concerns. Can a “bring your own” solution behave reliably enough to serve all students? The application does not appear to address this. It also seems likely that savings associated with hardware would be offset by the higher costs of dealing with a heterogeneous environment.

(b)(iii) The plan implicitly calls for teachers to spend significant time evaluating and writing feedback about the effectiveness of the resources that they experiment with in order to populate the district’s web resources. The annual summer mini-conference could be an effective way of collecting feedback, but it seems inefficient for the district to invent its own solutions.

(c)(i) The district’s proposal to use its planned PGES system to evaluate school leaders is consistent with its plan for teachers.

(c)(ii) The plan is consistent with the stated aims.

(d) The application includes many ideas that could help teachers improve their practice, including the development of Individual Learning Plans for teachers. However, this application’s persuasiveness is somewhat blunted on this point by the fact that it does not appear to have been developed with extensive input from teachers.

The district's proposal is responsive to the criteria, but raises many issues of effectiveness. It is scored in the medium range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	10

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The plan calls for hiring four central staff members (RTTT Project Director and three assistant project directors) using RTTT-D funds. It does not appear that this structure can be sustained beyond the funding period.

(b) The application states that Henderson County schools are governed by Decision Making councils with the authority necessary to determine school schedules, staff assignments and other elements critical to implementation of the plan.

(c) The district does not appear generally to give students the opportunity to advance and earn credit on the basis of mastery of a subject, and this does not seem to be a priority for the district. The schools are generally organized in a way that students advance together through subject matter rather than allowing for learning at a personalized pace. It does, however, offer some ways for motivated high school students to earn college credit through AP courses, and it also permits self-paced credit recovery through online solutions.

(d) The district administers MAP assessments three times per year and has invested in additional testing solutions to help identify challenges at the level of student and subject. This can support development of insights about the learning needs of individual students.

(e) The district appears to offer supports for students with identified disabilities or limited English mastery, or if their MAP scores fall below the 20th percentile. This is responsive to the requirements of RTT-D.

High medium points awarded

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

(a) The proposal calls for new investment in parent engagement in the schools, building on the work of the Commonwealth Institute of Parent Leadership. This is a high-quality approach to expanding the assets that support each student's personalized learning capacity.

(b) The plan for technical support of the necessary infrastructure is weak, depending on not-yet-developed “websites, youtube, twitter, cable TV and print media.” The plan for student devices is also incomplete, as the “Bring Your Own” strategy is likely to be, in the end, a staff-intensive approach. Two IT resources across this many sites will have their hands more than full, and teachers will be unlikely to feel that they can rely on digital systems for key learning objectives.

(c) The portal as described does not appear to support export of personalized learning data for use in other electronic data systems. Given the proposal’s strong reliance on partnerships for after school, weekend and summer programs for additional learning supports, this is a key weakness of the infrastructure plan for this proposal.

(d) The district says that it plans to work with Tyler Pulse, a contract partner, to implement new data systems. The application does not appear to make any commitments with regard to whether these systems will make use of open, non-proprietary data formats as required. It also appears that these systems are designed to provide new reporting capabilities rather than full system interoperability.

Medium points awarded

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	12
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The plan invests significantly to lay groundwork for improvement. For example, the district plans to direct some of the funding from this grant to hire an external evaluator that will help to define data points for collection and reporting (on both a quarterly basis for internal use and an annual basis for reporting to stakeholder groups.) The reflection process implicit in the PGES system and CILPs can also contribute to a culture of continuous improvement based on data. However, the plan does not appear to include a plan for continuous improvement among after school, summer and weekend programs that are critical to the effectiveness of the plan.</p> <p>High Points awarded</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district appears to have a strong history for engaging internal and external stakeholders in dialogue, and the SW/WC service cooperative is a particularly powerful partnership. The plan for ongoing communication seems likely to be effective, as it includes specific plans for contact with organizations such as SW/WC and others.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>It could be argued that the district's targets related to college (FAFSA, ACT, etc.) are less than aggressive. For example, in the case of Grades 9-12, elements that relate to college readiness seem very achievable: (a), FAFSA completion, the district's ending target (77.4% of graduating seniors) seems less than ambitious when starting from 52% at the outset of its efforts. These modest targets are consistent with an implicit message of the application -- the high school is not necessarily looking to reinvent its culture to personalize instruction and revolutionize achievement and college intentions, but rather to steadily chip away at improvement over time. It seems clear, however, that the district spent considerable time in discussion to select these targets. While achieving them would leave room yet to improve, these sober steps would be nevertheless worth taking.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district proposes to conduct walkthrough observations of schools in order to score them from a create a checklist of observable, measurable examples of personalization in teaching and learning. This is a sound approach, with an important problem: the elements of such a checklist do not yet exist. The district proposes to develop them in the first year of the grant period. This lack of urgency will impede the quality of the work; if the district cannot describe in concrete terms what personalization will look like, it will be some time before it will know what it wants, develop the capacity to describe it to others, put it into practice, and measure it through walkthrough observations.</p> <p>This element scores in the medium range.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	3
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) The applicant’s budget clearly identifies the funds that will support the project. It calls for \$19.9 million in requested grant funds over the four years of the project, with 7,546 students participating for an average of more than \$650 per student per year. Only a small fraction of non-grant funds (\$715k over 3 years, or \$32 per student-year) are budgeted toward the projects associated with this effort.</p> <p>(b) The budget is not well-matched with the proposal or sufficient to achieve the implementation. For example, after school, intercession, evening and Saturday programs are central to the elements of the district’s plan that would permit personalization of learning, but it appears the total funding allocated to for these activities amounts to about 5% of the budget. If there are other sources of funding for these activities that would make them achievable, they are not called out.</p> <p>(c i,ii) The budget includes only minimal funds from non RTT-D sources. The plan does not appear to clearly and consistently delineate which expenses will continue beyond the grant term and which will end. Item 12 in Table 4-1 presents a list of continuing costs by district for certain elements such as staff development, staff time for PLCs, and technology spending. It does not appear that there is a summary of these continuing costs, and there is no indication that the list is exhaustive.</p> <p>This response scores in the low range.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	3
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Because 95% of the budget for the plan is built on RTT-D grant funds, it is difficult to imagine that the project could be continued without this funding. The district suggests ways that some parts of the project might be supported by foundations after the end of the grant, but there is no indication that these are more than speculative. Technology costs associated with the project, already underestimated, seem unlikely to be sustainable.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	5
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant proposes forming partnerships with local businesses and organizations to bring mentors into the schools, and to invest in creating a database of community assets.</p> <p>The heart of the applicant's proposal, however, is to invest in increasing the number of students that pursue college credit while in high school. It aims to support this "Early College" plan by providing individualized support, including social-emotional and other elements. Early College participants will receive augmented investment in their education through this partnership in the form of tuition free access to college courses and through tutoring and other programs that connect them with students at the community college.</p> <p>This proposal does not address the county's lowest performing students, who might not identify themselves as college-bound.</p> <p>The proposal scores in the medium range.</p>		

Absolute Priority 1

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	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant’s proposal falls short of being a plan for personalized learning.</p> <p>At the end of the project investment, students will still substantially be taught in classes grouped by age, instructed in batches, and advancing in tandem. The plan calls for differentiated, personalized learning opportunities, but substantially by sending students to out-of-school programs rather than through changes to the way that the schools organize to use the time they already have. In the end, the district’s cautious expectation is that at the end of the grant period its students will advance to college at roughly the same rate they do today.</p> <p>The request does not meet the absolute priority.</p>		
Total	210	120



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0280KY-3 for Henderson County School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant hasn't articulated a plan that is sufficient to ensure that 100% of graduates are ready for college. • The goals of student achievement have risen from 54th out of 169 to 12th out of 169. • The goal of deepening student understanding by adopting standards and assessments. • The goal of Increasing equity through personalized student support and based on student interest by building data systems that measure student growth and success. • In addition, the applicant describes five year planing goals to substantiate the vision. • Goal 1-100% of graduates being ready for college • Goal 2-Parental and community involvement • Goal 3-Technology • Goal 4-Multiple opportunities for s's to become active and productive citizens and • Goal 5-Fiscal responsibiity in the allocation of resources • Overall, the applicant hasn't articulated a plan that is sufficient to ensure that 100% of graduates are ready for college. 		
(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant describes a process to create comprehensive Individual learning plans and digital notebooks. Based on evidence from the plan, the project will be effective because:
- It will be reviewed and revised annually and will involve input from a 40 member committee composed of the district, school, parents and community
- A wide range of students from elementary to high school will be included in this plan and that makes it a high level plan.
- The following students will be represented: participating students, students from low income families who meet free meal guidelines, students with disabilities, and "gap" students who score significantly below the district average on state achievement testing.
- Therefore, based on the aforementioned evidence, the applicant provides a high quality approach to implementing its reform proposal.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant somewhat describes a plan describing how the reform will be scaled up translated into meaningful reform to support district wide change.
- The plan includes a process to customize schedules, technology, material, experiential and emotional support.
- The plan will help s's reach their learning goals by increasing their motivation, reducing barriers to s's success, ensuring challenge and rigor, and create opportunities of exposure of career pathways.
- The strategies could be stronger and much more detailed here. They do not appear to be sufficient enough to carry out the plan.

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

- The applicant's vision isn't likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by goals that are equal to or exceed state targets.
- The identified benchmarks being are matched to the Five Year Plan using MAP assessment data, setting new targets for decreasing achievement gaps, increasing graduation rates, and increasing college enrollment rates.
- The district will set goals equal to or exceeding state targets.
- The district has will establish data to track and report s's who complete a two year or four year degree.
- Overall, the vision isn't sufficient to ensure that the graduates are ready for college.

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 has demonstrated evidence to support a record of success.
- Some of the elementary schools do not show a consistent increase of scores using the KPREP assessment model.
- The applicant does not necessarily name a reform model in its lowest achieving school.
- However, a transparent relationship is evident making data available to students, educators, parents and stakeholders through use of website, cable chanel, monthly school meetings, financial statements published in newspaper.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has demonstrated evidence in the plan to support a high level of transparency in processes, practices, and investments. • The district displays personnel salaries at the school level for all school level instructional and support staff and is totaled for each elementary, middle, high and learning center. • The district displays personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff only and is totaled for each elementary, middle, high and learning center. • The district displays personnel salaries at the school level for teachers only is totaled for each elementary, middle, high and learning center. • The district displays non personnel expenditures at the school level is totaled from registration fees to instructional equipment for each elementary, middle, high and learning center. 		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has demonstrated evidence to support successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under state legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement personalized learning environments. • The four project goals of developing personalized learning environments from grades preschool through high school, access to expanded and flexible learning environments, access to expanded digital learning experiences, and improved teacher efficacy achieved from expanded teacher learning opportunities all focus on the increased personalization of learning through activities proposed with the ultimate goal of s's being college or career ready upon graduation. • The state is permissive in allowing districts to exceed mandated levels of implementation, which include assessments and evaluation. • The summative assessments for grades 3-8 will be in the areas of reading, math, science, ss and writing and college/career benchmarks through EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT and MAP exams. • The new "Next Generation Learners" assessment model will provide teacher effectiveness data as scores will be linked back to individual teachers, the Student Growth Percentiles will focus on Performance= Achievement + Growth. The data will identify strengths and weaknesses in student performance beyond traditional achievement data and will assist in targeting s's for assistance; will assist in program evaluations, and drive constant improvement as s's move up the scale. • A new evaluation model will be piloted which will focus on the multiple measures of Teacher Effectiveness Framework including: professional growth, self reflection, student and parent voice, student growth, and observations. 		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	7
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has demonstrated evidence to support stakeholder engagement and support. • The district meets with the Equity Resource Council to discuss identified achievement gaps among student populations, help determine ways to address student needs, help with recruitment of minority teachers for district, and provide support activities for college bound s's through assistance in completing federal loan applications and college applications. • The district held several meetings with stakeholders in the community to get input on the vision statement. • The superintendent hosts monthly key communicator meetings to bring community leaders to discuss district initiatives, concerns and solicit input from the members. • The Career and Technical unit at the high school offers mentoring for s's, job shadowing opportunities, cooperative learning experiences, donations of supplies and conveying to local employers the quality of programs available through CTE courses. 		

- It engaged the pre nursing advisory board in developing the curriculum needed to allow high school s's to graduate with a LPN certification which helps bridge those s's into the nursing program at the community college, and has developed a partnership with the health science dept to give the pre nursing s's an opportunity to teach automated charting.
- The district includes letters of support from a county judge, the chamber of commerce, a financial group, the rotary club and a community college; these letters offer support of the district's goals, objectives and activities to promote college and career readiness for s's in the district.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has demonstrated a somewhat quality plan for an analysis of the current status in implementing personalized learning environments. • School staff dedicate one professional development day to data analysis following the release of state assessment reports in October. Staff disaggregate assessment scores by content, grade level and sub populations to identify trends in learning and areas of concern. • Following the data analysis sessions, staff use data to identify s's in need of RTI Tier II or Tier III interventions. • The school staff and school based decision making councils review the data in the comprehensive improvement plan to determine if the gap strategies identified within the plan are having the expected impact or if they need to be modified or new activitie selected. • Another gap identified is that of student readiness gap to meet the essential life skills and characteristics needed in order to be successful in the 21st century. The district will build on the success of the Covey Foundation's program, The Leader in Me which benefits schools and s's in the following ways: develops s's who have the skills and self confidence to succeed as learners, decrease discipline referrals, teach and develop character and leadership throughh existing core curriculum, improve academic achievement and raise levels of accountability and engagement among both parents and staff. • Overall, there is no mention as to what the principal will be doing thoroughout the analysis of needs and gaps. 		

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has demonstrated evidence to somewhat support an approach to learning that engages and empowers all s's. • The district will have a CILP from elementary through high school that will include info regarding s's interests, learning preferences, learning styles and learning goals. Additionally, a digital data notebook will be created to compile assessment data. • At the elementary level, learning goals will focus on the development of individual skill areas. S's will use their data notebook files to review their previous progress and set targets for the coming school year, at the secondary level, the focus changes toward the development of goals linked to college and career ready standards or graduation requirements. S's will identify the career pathway they wish to pursue at the high school but will also learn about resources and strategies to help them structure their learning to achieve their goals and identify methods to use to measure their progress toward their goals. • Expanded learning opportunities will occur through flexible Learning Plus Academies to provide a wealth of enrichment and supplemental learning to s's and families during after school, evening, weekend, and summer hours. The Academies will offer foreign language classes, Thai cooking classes, and origami classes, community projects, service learning projects, real life experiential learning with student run "clinics" to be established at the high school that will offer free consulting services in areas of law, justice, health services and technology. 		

- S's will have multiple opportunities to learn and practice skills such as goal setting, teamwork, perservice through study skills sessions, real world experiential learning, service learning projects, Odyssey of the Mind, blended learning/digital based instruction and STEM classes and labs.
- S's will have a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development through a CILP with the development of individual student achievement goals annually and with digital files, will serve as a vehicle for monitoring student progress toward those goals.
- Instruction that will be enhanced in multiple ways including a comprehensive and tiered program of PD to raise rigor and relevance, instructional coaches to coach, model and assist in developing high quality and engaging lessons, expansion of learning opportunities to accelerate and deepen student learning during school, before and after school, evening, weekend and summer hours. S's will visit college/technical schools prior to high school graduation. High school s's will be able to accelerate learning through taking classes early, AP/dual credit courses, earn an IB or attend up to two years of community college classes through an early college program.
- High quality content is aligned by adopting the Common Core Curriculum Standards, the district will complete implementation of the digital plan include interactive boards, document camera and PD annually on how to effectively use the instructional technology in classrooms.
- There will be ongoing and regular feedback by frequently updating individual student data through the digital data file will be reviewed annually or bi-annually by the student, parents, and teacher for the purpose of revising the s's CILP for the next year; and by personalizing learning recommendations will be formalized through the CILP process. The CILP will detail s's individual academic progress, current knowledge and skills, interests, participation in school/ community activities and future aspirations. College and Career Coaches will facilitate the CILP process
- Expansion of current RTI services to s's scoring at the 35th percentile or lower on MAP reading and math assessments; summer freshman jump start program to review and practice basic skills needed for high school academic success; Central Academy alternative school for s's to switch to a computer based learning plan where they accrue credits at their own individual pace.
- Orientation sessions will be provided by College and Career Coaches at elem level for s's, as well as training in how to interpret standardized test scores and how to use student progress data for program planning. CCC's will work with juniors and seniors to ensure that s's are using the tools and resources available to work toward meeting their goals and reaching their goal of high school graduation within four years
- Overall, there is no reference to the budget. Not sure how the budget will sustain the learning portion of the plan.

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

20

18

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant has a high quality plan for improving teaching and learning by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all s's the support to graduate college and career ready.
- The district has embraced the mission for growing highly effective teachers, expanding teacher professional development opportunities to further goal of helping s's master the CCCS and achieve college and career ready benchmarks through professional development including math, reading, and science.
- The IC's will facilitate discussions, based on evidence based practices, regarding strategies to adapt content and instruction to foster personalization; IC's will train homeroom teachers and advisory teachers how to be effective mentors. Master teachers will be videotaped while teaching exemplary lessons and will share through a website. Teachers will learn specific methods for integrating optimal learning approaches such as discussion and collaborative work, project based learning, videos, audio, manipulatives into lesson plans.
- The IC's will assist teachers how to analyze student progress data for class wide trends and for gaps in learning; these analyses will lead to recommendations to change and improve instruction, which will allow each school's leader to determine strategies to effectively address weak areas to target for improvement.
- The district will improve instructional practices through implementation of new teacher and principal evaluation system; the measures will include supervisor observations, peer observations, professional growth self reflection, student voice, and student growth; principals and coaches will provide recommendations, supports, and interventions to teachers to assist them in developing needed skills and in raising existing skills to higher levels of excellence.

- Staff will participate in informational trainings to orient them with project's vision, goals and activities. Booklets and a webpage will be designed to disseminate info which will raise teachers' awareness of their access to new and existing tools, data and resources they can utilize to accelerate student progress toward meeting college and career ready goals.
- High quality resources include instructional coaches and college coaches, installation of interactive white boards, document cameras videotaping master teachers for collegial training and video based teaching to provide lessons to absent s's.
- Training to use expanded ILP process to match tools and resources to student needs and to evaluate effectiveness of strategies in accelerating student learning.
- Leaders and lead teams will have training, policies, tools, data and resources that will enable them to structure an effective learning environment that meets individual student needs and accelerates progress through common and individual tasks toward meeting college and career ready standards.
- Each school's School Based Decision Making Council will closely review and guide the CSIP process. The goals and benchmarks will be monitored quarterly and the districts high quality plan addresses increasing the number of effective teachers to highly effective teachers using PD, individual learning plans for teachers, teacher evaluation system and instructional coaches. The plan also includes retaining effective and highly effective teachers by reducing barriers to innovative instruction, and having the HR director utilize rubrics under KY Framework for Teaching as a guide in developing "talking points" for principals to use during interviews and when contacting candidates' references.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	13
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has a quality plan to support practices, policies and rules. • Grant staff at the district level to include 7 office administrators who will work in tandem with district staff in ensuring all goals, objectives and activities are implemented with fidelity and will help monitor data to determine program impact. • School councils will be comprised of parents, staff and an administrator into decision making process of determining school staff assignments, staffing models, school allocation budgets, curriculum and instructional strategies and school schedules. • S's will be offered AP classes and dual credit classes, and tuition support. • S's will be given multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery in state assessments such as ASVAB and KOSSA. • The district will provide a wide range of learning resources to all students, including those with disabilities and English learners such as differentiation of instruction, reding in content areas, rigor and relevance in instructional practices, COMPASS Learning, Head Sprouts, college visits, after school and summer learning academies, social skills program, ILP's for college and career pathway planning and technology integration for blended learning opportunities. 		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has a quality plan to support the school infrastructure. • The plan will ensure all s's, parents, educators and other stakeholders have access to content, tools and other resources - training parents from pre school to high school, supporting s's with ILP's, supporting teachers with a professional development library, and the Collaborative Partners which brings all service agencies together • The plan will ensure s's, parent, educators, and other stakeholders have levels of support - providing technical support to parents, students, educators, and other stakeholders in reaching target goals of 100% of high school 		

graduates meeting College and Career Readiness benchmarks. The student support will be through after school, evening, Saturday and summer tutoring and enrichment activities. Parents will have support provided through involvement in parent workshops. Teachers will have support needed to implement activities defined by the grant Logic Model through extensive PD and teacher Individual Learning Plans; increased technology support through digital learning devices and equitable classroom technology across all district classrooms. Stakeholders will continue to be an integral part of district initiatives through active participation on committees, volunteerism in schools, fundraising efforts, job shadowing and co-op learning.

- The plan will use info technology systems that will allow parents and students to export their info in an open data format - the school offers a parent portal where parents can electronically access s's information and access to school and district web pages to access info regarding activities, programs and calendar of events.
- The plan will ensure the use of interoperable data systems - the school imports district information regarding assessment data, financial data, human resource data and student info data.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	13

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant has a quality approach to continuously improve its plan.
- During the past five years, the district has been transformed from a "system of schools," characterized by separation, competition, isolation, and lack of common focus to a "school system," characterized by increased collaboration, development of a shared vision, commitment to common goals, and colaboration around the shared commitment to continuous improvement. This culture shift has been dramatic and has yielded dramatic results.
- To insure the readiness of each student for success in post secondary learning experiences and or chosen career path, the district has committed to the following 7 stategies:
- (1) making the student achievement and college/career readiness the primary focus of all programming decisions
- (2) committing time and resources to support school leaders and staff as they explore ways in which the transformation from a focus on the act of teaching to the act of causing learning can increase staff and student ownership of the results of engaging learning experiences
- (3) committing substantial time and resources to providing extensive, structured, intentional responses to needs for intervention and to do so in ways that are immediate and flexible
- (4) investing heavily in process of developing leadership skills of its school leaders and to increase the opportunities for the empowerment of potential leaders in each of the district's schools
- (5) committing to continue its practices of transparent dissemination of school, staff, and student performance data as it seeks to expand its commitment to personalized learning and further gains in student achievement
- (6) committing to the continuation of these best practices and seeking the support of the grant to enhance its capacity to refine and accelerate this process
- (7) enhancing its ability to accomplish this transparent and detailed dissemination of data pertaining to the district's goals and the expansion of these in the context of the grant
- To insure the timely and accurate collection, analysis and dissemination of data pertaining to district improvement efforts related to the grant, the district has identified the importance of utilizing an external evaluator to assess and evaluate the impact/effectiveness of the investment in resources associated with the grant. Evaluator activities include: assisting in the definition of data points for collection and reporting, review quarterly and annually the data as it pertains to program effectiveness and progress towards stated goals, share with program director and district leaders the progress of initiatives targeting personalized learning and student achievement, assist the district in the analysis of data and the, development of appropriate responses, program modifications, review data quarterly pertaining to each of the grant's performance measures, review data quarterly pertaining to the measures associated with the program activities, facilitate regularly scheduled meetings to present progress, and program status to the community and its stakeholder groups, and lastly, prepare and present an annual report to stakeholder groups.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has a high quality plan that includes strategies for ongoing communication and engagement. • The plan will implement a grant project director and assistant project coordinators who will establish sub-advisory committees for critical areas such as (1) examining Highly Effective Teacher criteria which will guide teachers in developing their Individual Learning Plans for professional growth; (2) establishing and overseeing the expanded learning opportunities through Learning Plus academies and (3) establishing plans for sustainability for the grant initiatives. • The plan will engage parents through (1) encouraging more volunteerism in the schools, (2) participation in activities and (3) in the implementation of school based STEM activities identified by parents attending the workshops. • The plan will include community leaders who will be engaged in providing opportunities for s's to have experiential learning through job shadowing, coop learning, job mentoring and active participating on district advisory committees. 		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has a high quality plan that demonstrates ambitious and achievable performance measures. i • Performance Measures a-b: were selected by the RFP and will be established after the state releases this info for district and school reports. Performance Measures c-d: were selected to determine the level of engagement and relationships between s's and staff from both perspectives. Performance Measures PK-3: were selected as this data has been mandated to be identified through the Dial 4 assessment to determine Kdg readiness through the pres/post screenings. Performance Measures 4-8: were selected because the s's take the EXPLORE exam as part of the state assessment program. Performance Measures 9-12 a: were selected but the baseline data is limited because data will be collected by during the 2012-13 school year. Performance Measures 9-12 b: were selected because all juniors take ACT exam as part of the state KPREP assessment model. Performance Measures 9-12 c: were selected because s's take the KY Occupational Skills and Standards Assessment exam to determine career readiness. • The plan identifies measures that will provide rigor, timely and formative data to determine the effectiveness of the proposed strategies. Internal assessment data such as MAP will provide longitudinal data on each student in grades K-8 and the three administrations of the EXPLORE and PLAN yearly will provide longitudinal data for s's in grades 9 and 10. Some baseline data will be established upon release of the KY state assessment reports which will not be available until Oct. 31, 2012. • The plan selected indicators that will be used to begin the evaluation process and collect relevant data for documentation of improvements. The external evaluator will work with project staff and district admin in determining the effectiveness of the measures and if changes need to be made. The identified data sets will be supported through other data collection points not identified in the following charts such as reading and math for all s's across the district, college and career readiness across all contents - not just reading and math. All initiatives included in the grant proposal will be monitored for qualitative and quantitative measures of success beyond the scope of the charts in the grant proposal. 		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has a plan to somewhat support evaluating the effectiveness of investments. • The district will use an external evaluator, in consultation and collaboration with the district leaders, and will develop a process for the assessment and evaluation of grant activities that focus on the verifiable attainment of desired outcomes. The district will use the following assessment/evaluation activities: 		

- (1) create learning environments that improve teaching and learning through personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for s's and educators that align college and career ready standards - using mandated observation checklist that define growth areas.
- (2) accelerate student achievement and deepen understanding by meeting needs of each student - making random checks of student ILP folders, developing analysis protocols, and developing a data notebook for s's.
- (3) increase educator effectiveness - developing a rubric for teachers which includes multiple indicators, teachers will develop ILP's addressing steps needed to move them to the highest effectiveness rating.
- (4) expand student access to highly effective educators - recruit educators with records of high effectiveness and more intentional PD.
- (5) decrease achievement gaps across student groups - identify gap needs, incorporate personalization strategies and coaching conversations.
- (6) increase rate at which student's graduate from high school prepared for college and careers - using performance measures at all grade levels as mandated by the state.
- The applicant hasn't articulated how it will productively use time, money or other resources to carry out the plan.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	6
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has a moderate plan to support the budget for the project. • The budget identifies most categories for project years 1, 2 ,3 ,4 direct costs, indirect costs, funds from other sources to support the project and gives a total budget. • The budget supports the development and implementation of the applicant's 4 goals and activities associated with the high quality plan; each goal lists an activity and the total grant funds requested. • The plan provides a rationale for investments and priorities for the overall budget summary for years 1-4 totals \$20,628,877.32, Goal 1 totals \$3,624,784, Goal 2 totals \$7,240,858.66, Goal 3 totals \$3,779,615.00, Goal 4 totals \$4,063,505.00, Project Staff totals \$1,701,335.00; Personalized Learning Environments for Goal 1 totals \$3,709,241, Expanded and Flexible Learning Environments for Goal 2 totals \$7,240,858.66, Access to Expanded Digital Learning Experiences totals \$3,779,615, Improved Teacher Efficacy through Expanded Teacher Learning Opportunities for Goal 4 total \$4,158,184 and RTTT-D Project Staff totals \$1,740,976. • The district will contract with a local mental health counseling provider for mental/emotional counseling for targeted s's who are overwhelmed with peronal situations that often lead to dropping out of school. The district will secure funding from general fund, other grants and community partnership to continue this program. The Covey Foundation will provide trainers, consultation and the materials used for the implementaiaon of the program - this is a one time investment @ \$895,606. Contractual services will be established for mental/emotional counseling for high school s's - this effort will be sustained through district and or other grant funds @ \$48,600. • Overall, not sure when the project will be carried out. No mention whether or not the project will be carried out in summer school. If project will be carried out in summer school, there is no mention of how much it will cost to pay teachers and in summer. I 		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	6
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant hasn't articulated a plan that is sufficient enough for sustainability of the project goals after the grant term. • The district and grant staff will create a sub committee to work on the sustainability of the major initiatives found in the application. The primary programs of CILP's will be sustained, at no additional cost, through the blending of College and Career Counselors into current counseling positions and the funding needs will be decreased through 		

the successful interventions provided with grant funds. Title 1 funds will replace RTTT-D funds in this effort. After school and extended learning time will be studied for continuing effectiveness and grants will be developed, as well as community partnerships to maintain these programs. The Early College will benefit from Henderson Community College partnership for tuition reduction and the district will work with KY Educational Excellence Scholarships and the Colonels 2 College program to release funds for this program and offset the tuition costs.

- Many initiatives including technology, PD, materials, supplies and transportation comprise over eight million dollars of the budget and project staff another one million, of this, seven hundred thousand will not be reoccurring. Project staff duties will be blended with current administrators as the district moves to reorganize around the goals of the project.
- There is no mention of when or where the project will continue to be carried out. More detail should be supplied here to show how the plan will be carried out after the grant term.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant articulates an average plan that proposes a partnership to integrate public or private resources to augment schools' resources. The district will partner with Henderson Community College (HCC) to implement the Early College program.
- With the Early College program, both partners will make significant contributions to ensure the success of the program. The district will identify and recruit targeted s's, conduct orientation for s's and parents, hire and supervise administrative and clerical staff for the program, and provide bus transportation for s's to and from the college. Both partners will ensure that s's receive dual credit for their classes and that they have access to all programs and services available at both the high school and community college.
- The district has identified population level desired results for the targeted s's who attend Early College program. These results include educational results and other education outcomes, as well as results in the areas of family and community supports.
- The district will track the selected indicators that measure each result at the aggregate level for all high school s's and at the student level for participating s's. The first year of the program 2014-15 will target 40 s's. That number will double to 80 the second year and will remain capped at 80 s's per year. Since the selected indicators will be outcome measures collected at the end of high school graduation, student level data collection will thus be conducted for 40 s's in May 2016 and for 80 s's in May 2017.
- Student level data will be compiled and reviewed to determine if the Early College program is successful in meeting its student focused goals. Aggregate level and student level data will be compared to help determine participating student success of the Early College program in comparison to non participating s's. Desired results are based on two years participation in the EC program. At the end of each semester, the EC program director will compile student level data to determine if s's overall are on track for meeting the desired results. If a student is not projected to meet targeted goals, the program director will interview the student to determine the barriers that exist to that s's success. Then, the program director will work with the student and family to develop strategies to address and overcome those barriers.
- The EC program will become a model for the region and the state. The EC program will develop a relationship with the organization called Jobs for the Future (JFF). JFF is a research and policy organization that promotes innovation in education and workforce development and is the lead coordinator, manager, and policy advocate for the Early College High School Initiative. JFF plays an integral role in the implementation and coordination of the initiative by collaborating with the partners and funders to create a guiding vision, mission, and overall strategy for the initiative across the nation.
- The EC program will strive for continuous improvement. Student level data collected to measure program effectiveness will enable the EC program director and program partners to determine strategies for improving results and for growing the program over time.

- The EC program will integrate education and family/community engagement services for s's. The EC program director and college/career coach will be responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating the family/community engagement services. The types of services to be provided will include: guidance/counseling, college advising, social services in reducing barriers to success, student and family training, mentoring and case management services.
- The EC program director and college/career coach will conduct interviews with targeted s's to identify assets, needs, interests, higher educational goals, and career aspirations. The staff members will also be involved in parent conferences to revise s's CILP's to reflect participation in the EC program and will ensure that strategies are included to address those identified barriers.
- An important component of the EC program will be a "Transition to Adulthood" strand that will include training for s's in study skills, self advocacy, interviewing skills and the importance of a strong work ethic; educational workshops, vocational/technical, and career opportunities for s's beyond graduation; assistance with completing applications for colleges, financial aid, and scholarships; and student assistance with career exploration through completion of interest inventories, of various depts, and job shadowing of community professionals.
- The CILP will serve as the decision making process and infrastructure for the EC program in selecting, implementing, and evaluating the family/community engagement services. The CILP committee will determine the s's class selection, their educational support services, and their family/community engagement services. Each s's CILP will be individualized to reflect their particular interests, needs, and assets.
- (d) parents will be involved in the CILP process of revising the ILP's to reflect goals, classes, and support services available through the EC program. Parents will be involved in all situations requiring determining solutions to student problems.
- The EC program director will meet with reps from the district at the close of each semester to review student progress and effectiveness of the EC program in meeting its goals and desired results. The program director will share process and summative data, to describe the educational and family/community engagement services provided to s's the previous semester.
- The EC program will strive to meet ambitious performance measures for targeted, high need s's. End of junior year benchmarks for first year include: 85% will pass all classes, 80% will maintain a 3.0 GPA or higher, 95% will remain in school, 85% will be on schedule to obtain an associates degree or two years college credit at the end of first year, 90% of s's will express the desire to pursue post secondary education upon graduation, 95% of parents will report satisfaction with the program, based on mid course parent surveys, 85% of s's are reported by HCC instructors to demonstrate positive work habits and study skills, and 90% will meet the Colonels 2 College standards.
- The applicant doesn't detail how the partnership will improve over time. Nor, does the applicant discuss how the student level data will be used to measure effectiveness. More details should be implemented here.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant has provided information that will support Absolute Priority 1 through the use of four goals.
- Goal 1: Personalized Learning Environment will be built through ILP's, mentors, counseling services, college and career coaches, college visits and "Leader in Me"program
- Goal 2: Expanded and Flexible Learning Environment will be built through family support and child development, RTI, Early College Program and IB, STEM Academy and PLTW courses, "Laying the Foundation" training, and Learning Plus Academies
- Goal 3: Access to Digital Learning Experience will be built through wireless learning environment, integrated technology PD, technology infused instruction, personal digital services, and technology hardware

- Goal 4: Improved Efficacy Through Teacher Learning Opportunities will be built through evaluation training, instructional coaches, teacher resource library, PLC PD, teacher individual learning plans

Total	210	166
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