



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0851MO-1 for Joplin Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Joplin School District has presented a comprehensive and coherent reform vision and presents a clear and credible path towards the goals of accelerating and deepening learning and increasing equity through individual and common tasks.</p> <p>Joplin School District serves 7604 Missouri students, of whom approximately 60% are eligible for free and reduced price lunch. In May 2011, Joplin suffered a devastating tornado which killed 161 people, destroyed about 1/3 of the community, and destroyed or damaged more than half the classrooms across the district, including both the high school and technical school.</p> <p>Prior to the tornado, Joplin had determined that their middle school achievement dip and high drop out rates required a secondary school improvement plan consisting of: technology-enriched instruction; professional development and revised curriculum to prepare students for Common Core standards; and career pathways linked to better integration of high school and tech school courses of study. The district was making admittedly slow progress when the tornado hit.</p> <p>The district found the “silver lining” in the disaster by taking the opportunity to literally start fresh with new facilities, technology, instructional configurations and learning materials that would enable the district to meet its goal that “all secondary students successfully complete a personalized career-oriented learning pathway that allows successful transition from high school to further post-secondary education and/or successful, suitable employment leading to meaningful and profitable careers (e.g. occupational credentials).”</p> <p>The district has a comprehensive approach to meeting this goal, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development and support for educators and administrators • Career pathways that ensure development of 21st century skills • Articulated set of standards and learning outcomes that predict post-secondary success • Instructional strategies, including use of technology, to allow teachers to determine and meet individual student needs • Integrated data management system to support informed decision-making and lead to improved outcomes • Interactive scheduling and instructional management system that uses data and schedules student activities (e.g. courses, study groups, internships, reteach sessions) and maps next steps • Policies and practices that allow students to progress based on demonstrated mastery • Comprehensive learning supports to address barriers to learning • Infrastructure, including leadership, that facilitates building of will, consensus and urgency around implementation <p>The district makes the case that adversity has helped it test out aspects of this strategy. When books were destroyed, instead of spending \$1 million to replace texts, they invested in 1:1 computing. When high school students had to meet in a shopping center, they created space for student project teams to meet.</p> <p>One missing element of the compelling vision Joplin sets forth is an explanation of how its vision builds on its work in the four core assurance areas. While some understanding of its work on college and career readiness can be extracted from the application, its work on the other assurances is not evident.</p> <p>Considered in its totality, this response is rated in the high range.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

Joplin plans to target all secondary students, which includes 2125 high school students in one high school (grades 9-12) and 1692 middle school students in three schools (grades 6-8). The percentage of students from low income families is 46% in high school and 46%, 57% and 65% at the three middle schools. The schools serve predominantly white students; a fairly high percent of students are identified as students with disabilities (13.7% of high school students and 16% of middle school students).

Joplin successfully makes the case that poor middle school performance and high drop out rates, coupled with their strategic emphasis on career pathways makes a focus on secondary schools appropriate. Moreover, the application makes a credible case for how its approach to implementing its reforms will support high quality implementation, although in that area more detail would have strengthened its proposal.

Considered in its totality, a high rating is warranted.

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

Joplin describes several strategies for scaling the reform proposal and supporting district-wide change to meet its district-wide outcome goals. These include:

- Their commitment to continuous improvement will allow them to analyze data and generate lessons learned for elementary school implementation while also generating hypotheses for secondary improvements
- Investments in professional development that will benefit coaches working with elementary schools as well as secondary schools
- Effective, efficient, accessible data that will be available to all teachers
- Building an infrastructure for technology implementation will enhance implementation at the elementary grades.

The district's plan later in the application includes some activities that would boost capacity for elementary school implementation. However, the proposal would be strengthened by a more specific, high quality plan to ensure the scaling of these reforms to elementary school that links goals, strategies and activities with timelines, deliverables and responsible parties.

The proposal would also be strengthened by a logic model or more explicit theory of change that shows how its proposed reforms would lead to improved outcomes. While the general outlines of a theory of change are apparent from the proposal, nowhere does the applicant draw the direct through-line showing how reforms are to lead to outcomes.

Considered globally, a rating at the high end of the mid-range is appropriate.

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

In the area of performance on summative assessments, Joplin has set targets of meeting State targets annually in math and communication arts district-wide scores and "super subgroup" scores. It also sets targets for meeting state expectations for end of course exam scores. However, because Joplin has not provided underlying data about its current performance or state performance, it is difficult to evaluate whether these targets are "ambitious yet achievable."

The district does not include a district-wide goal for closing achievement gaps between the district and the state average.

It sets a target of increasing graduation rates 5% a year for all students. Because the district does not provide underlying data or set targets for subgroups, it is difficult to determine whether this is "ambitious yet achievable" or whether there is an underlying focus on equity.

The district has proposed a robust and powerful set of college readiness and enrollment goals and targets. However, again it has failed to provide baseline data or (in most cases) annual targets, making it difficult to evaluate whether goals are "ambitious yet achievable." The goals proposed include:

- 100% of high school students take Compass, AT or ASVAB
- On district "Employability Report Card" now under development 75% of students will graduate ready for employment
- Average composite score on approved college and career readiness measure (e.g. ACT, Compass)
- Percent of graduates with qualifying score on AP, IB, technical skills assessments, and/or receiving college credit

- % who attend post secondary education/training/military meet state requirement
- % of graduates who complete approved career education programs and are placed in related occupations meet state requirement

Finally, in the area of teacher and leader effectiveness (which is not asked for under this selection criteria but is relevant to the application considered holistically), the district does not have baseline data but proposes very thoughtful goals and targets. They are:

- By end of grant, there are no principals who are not rated highly effective or effective for more than two years.
- By end of grant, quarterly data will show progress on key educator evaluation system implementation indicators.

The proposal lays out a credible and fairly detailed explanation of how its vision and district activities will lead to attainment of the goals. In chart form it shows a plan for meeting its outcome goals that aligns to each goal specific activities, timelines, deliverables and responsible parties. The activities include on-going district strategies (e.g. Rtl, School Wide Intervention Focus Teams) as well as new the new activities proposed in the grant (e.g. all freshman will identify a career path and develop a personal plan of study).

Overall, this response has significant strengths (thoughtful and robust measures for teacher and leader effectiveness and college and career readiness and enrollment; thoughtful demonstration of how its vision is likely to lead to the outcomes it seeks) and some weakness (lack of complete data and annual targets makes it difficult to evaluate several of the performance measures). Taken in toto, this response warrants a rating at the high end of the medium range.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	4
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Joplin demonstrates areas of strength: graduation rates have been increasing (although now are only around 80%); ACT scores are above the state average, attendance rates of 95% exceed the state average, suspension rates are lower than the state average and placement rates for CTE students exceed the state average. However, Joplin provides little longitudinal or disaggregated achievement data or college enrollment data making it difficult to more fully evaluate achievement trends and improvements in equity over time.</p> <p>Joplin does not address its evidence of success in making student performance data available in its response to this selection criteria. However, in its response to (D)(2), it outlines what it has done in this area. It has a set of different diagnostic and benchmark assessments, but data is in separate systems and not interactive. It has a student information system that provides some student data and includes a behavior tracking system and early warning indicator. Interestingly, it is creating a texting system with mental health collaborators to better support students with social-emotional issues. And, it has a parent portal that displays some student information. Joplin appears to recognize that it is at a fairly early stage level in making data accessible in ways that improve instruction, participation and services.</p> <p>Moreover, Joplin does not address any reforms that have taken place in low performing schools, as called for in the application.</p> <p>Given that Joplin has not demonstrated a significant record of success regarding achievement or data use and has not provided any evidence regarding low performing schools, this response receives a rating in the low end of the mid-range.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	0
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Joplin does not make available any of the school-level expenditure data called for in the application. Moreover, it does not disaggregate district financial data to the school level and share with school staff or the public. Because Joplin has not demonstrated a record of transparency regarding financial data or other LEA processes and practices, this response receives a low rating.</p>		

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Joplin recognizes that implementing its plan will require that the state provide waivers and allow them to pilot in new ways. Specifically, state funding is awarded based on seat time and the proposed switch to a competency based model will require adjustments. The district believes that awarding of credit based on mastery, however, will not require state waivers since when credit is awarded may be determined by each district. The application states that “in meetings with our State Supervisor and the Commissioner of Education, we have been encouraged to continue to develop the vision and assured that they support our efforts.” Moreover, SEA staff have been participating regularly in the district’s “Dream Meetings” to help plan their vision of reform.</p> <p>The application would be strengthened by a formal letter from the state identifying the needed waivers and either granting them or committing to a process for granting them. Given the lack of firm state commitment to needed waivers, a rating at the low end of the high-range is appropriate.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	8
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Joplin appears to have undertaken a broad-based and inclusive process for developing a vision for transforming its schools after the 2011 tornado and that process fed directly into the development of this proposal. Also, it provides impressive letters of support. However, it has failed to fully document teacher support as required by the selection criteria.</p> <p>Post-tornado, the district established “Dream Meetings” to chart a course for the future of secondary education. These meetings included students, teachers, parents, administrators and business leaders as well as education experts (e.g. McCREL, State Department of Education). Teams of business representatives, teachers, board members and administrators visited innovative schools around the nation. These visits and conversations led to an agreed upon vision for reform and significant community wide support for the vision. This support was manifested by the passing of a \$62 million bond to build a 21st century high school that would embody the new vision, including consolidating the high school and technical school in one building as well as other collaborative efforts with the community (e.g. employability report card, development of career pathways). These same stakeholders, as well as additional teachers and leaders, provided input into the RTT-D proposal. While, as this summary makes clear, teachers were involved in the development of the vision and the proposal, Joplin does not provide any evidence of wide-spread teacher support such as survey results, votes, or other data.</p> <p>The district provides letters of support from local government, the chamber of commerce and a half dozen local businesses, the faith community, the local hospital, social service providers, and others. It should be noted that the letters focus almost exclusively on the career pathways aspect of the proposal, suggesting that knowledge of the broader strategy may not be present.</p> <p>Given the lack of extensive documentation of teacher support coupled with otherwise strong evidence of engagement and support, this response is rated at the low-end of the high range.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	1
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Joplin does not provide a response to (B)(5). Looking at the application holistically, there is evidence that the district plans to continually analyze its current status in implementing personalized learning environments. However, the district does not provide evidence that it will analyze its logic model and address identified gaps and needs. Thus, a low score is appropriate.</p>		

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Joplin has proposed an innovative and transformative approach to learning that reimagines the high school experience, accelerates middle school learning and engages and empowers all participating students. Although some elements of the response are slightly muddled due to editing snafus (some paragraphs appear twice, for example), the district has clearly put a great deal of thought and research into its plans and has a fairly detailed and nuanced set of strategies. Core elements of its approach include:

- Each 9th grader declares a career path (Joplin is currently partnering with the local business community in developing five, with multiple pathways within each) although students may change if they wish
- Each pathway includes connections to work (certifications), technical college (articulation agreements), four year college (AP and dual credit), and ivy league (rich opportunities for AP and dual credit)
- Each student will have an individualized learning plan for meeting college and career ready standards and individual goals tailored to their interests and needs.
- Multiple learning formats and opportunities to accelerate will be available. This includes, for example, combined courses, self-paced on-line courses, structured peer learning projects, internships, independent study, and blended courses. The district expects that up to 50% of instruction will be delivered on-line and that social media will be a component of instructional delivery.
- Students will progress based on mastery not seat time, thus allowing students to demonstrate mastery through assessment without even enrolling in a class.
- Students will have a range of supports to help them navigate their “personalized learning journey” including, an academic advisor in their career pathway who meets with them biweekly for four years; an older peer mentor in their pathway; technology to support scheduling and assignments (e.g. app to populate student calendars with activities such as courses, student projects, advisor meetings)
- Student responsibility for monitoring and problem solving about their own progress via technology tools (e.g. on-line portfolios, access to student information system, video taping and analyzing activities), as well as peer and adult mentoring,
- At the middle school level, key elements include:
 - Career exploration in each grade to prepare students to pick a focus area in high school
 - A student-parent-middle school teacher-high school teacher conference at the end of middle school to create an individualized four year plan
 - Expansion of 1:1 computing to the middle grades (currently have in high school) coupled with coaching support for teachers and supports for students to use technology effectively
 - Attention to self-monitoring and problem solving as at the high school level

Joplin presents a reasonable case that, if implemented well, this approach will meet many of the goals laid out in the selection criteria, including:

- Help students see the relationship between their learning and their goals
- Ensure students can identify and pursue learning goals linked to college and careers through a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development
- Engage students in deep learning in areas of interest
- Support students so they can structure their learning to achieve their goals and measure progress towards goals
- Provide regularly updated student data
- Provide a variety of instructional approaches and environments
- Ensure students have training and support to use resources available
- Master academic content and develop 21st century skills like problem-solving and collaboration
- Motivate students, thus improving achievement and graduation rates
- Lead to stronger preparation and smoother transitions, thus improving post-secondary outcomes

While the vision and approach is compelling, Joplin does not fully meet the requirement of having a high quality plan for carrying out this approach, which would include timelines, activities, deliverables and responsible parties. The district does provide a plan in chart format that has high level activities relating to many (although not all) elements of this approach. However, given the ambition and breadth of the approach, a more detailed plan would inspire greater confidence that the district has thought through how it will accomplish major components of the work and has the wherewithal to build the capacity for implementation.

Moreover, while Joplin’s middle schools are all participating under the proposal, the vision for middle grades transformation and how the investment in technology will impact teaching and learning is significantly less developed than is the high school approach.

Viewed in totality, this response merits a rating at the low end of the high range.

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

20

11

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Joplin sketches a vision of teaching to support the approach to learning described in (C)(1). In this vision, teachers move flexibly “from coach to direct instruction provider to resource provider”. Teachers are adept at using technology and modeling its use for students. Teachers can formatively assess learning and adapt instruction and can then personalize learning environments and strategies.

For several years, Joplin has had school based instructional coaches working “shoulder to shoulder” with teachers to raise expectations of student learning, increase ability to engage and motivate students, provide rigorous instruction, and assess and adapt instruction. Last year, when Joplin initiated the 1:1 laptop program in its high school, it also hired three “21st Century Coaches” charged with helping teachers manage new classroom and team dynamics, use technology and digital learning tools effectively to deepen expertise and learning, and develop skills such as monitoring, scheduling and pacing that allow for personalization. Teachers had, apparently, already received a minimum of 40 hours of professional development related to technology integration prior to 2011. The district also purchased tools to support teachers in effective use of technology to personalize instruction, including a curriculum database to help teachers develop their own curriculum and Blackboard, to manage technology-based instruction.

The district states that as a result of the dislocation of the tornado which resulted in 11 and 12th grade taking place in a shopping mall and 9th and 10th in a separate location, the resulting need for teachers to take on different teaching assignments, and the destruction of textbooks, teachers have already begun to embrace – perhaps by necessity, the new approaches the district envisions.

Moving forward, the district plans to build on this approach by hiring 7 additional 21st century learning coaches (4 high school, 3 middle school) to support teachers in effective technology integration.

The district does not provide any detail on the extent or quality of implementation of the current strategies upon which it plans to build, or any measure of results (e.g. teacher satisfaction, teacher practice, leading indicators of student engagement or behaviors, student results). Nor does it fully meet the requirement of having a high quality plan for carrying out this approach, which would include timelines, activities, deliverables and responsible parties. The district does provide a plan in chart format that has high level activities relating to many (although not all) elements of this approach. However, given the ambition and breadth of the approach, a more detailed plan would inspire greater confidence that the district has thought through how it will accomplish major components of the work and has the wherewithal to build the capacity for implementation

Moreover, Joplin does not address other elements of the selection criteria.

Regarding educator evaluation, Joplin states that it will revise its system to be consistent with the state requirements approved in Missouri’s NCLB waiver request for implementation in SY2014-15. Joplin does not address how it might align its evaluation approach with its vision for teaching and learning nor how it plans to address the complicated issues that will arise when applying a state-wide evaluation framework to a learning approach in which high school classes, courses and teacher of record are likely to be substantially redefined.

Nor does the response address development of principals or school leadership teams that would enable them to lead this work effectively.

While Joplin offers a vision of teaching and teacher support well-aligned with its vision for learning and consistent with the selection criteria in many respects, given the lack of evidence about the effectiveness of strategies it plans to expand on, the lack of a high-quality plan for moving forward, and the lack of attention to connections with educator evaluation, this response is in the mid-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:

Joplin states that the central office is organized to effectively support schools and that central office and school staff meet frequently to communicate and implement programming, including staff development based on identified needs. It also states that long-standing school-based professional learning communities work closely with the central office to ensure effective implementation of reforms and to inform decisions regarding budgets, schedules, resource usage, etc... However, the application provides no detail or evidence to support these claims nor does it make clear the extent of support and services provided to schools to support their success.

The responses to (D)(1)(c) through (e) are incomplete, apparently due to an editing error. However, looking at the proposal as a whole, it is apparent that the district has put in place policies and practice to allow students to progress based on demonstrated mastery and that a key element of the proposal is to give students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery in multiple ways. The proposal is less clear about specific plans to make learning resources fully accessible to all students, although the move to 1:1 laptops certainly makes this much easier to accomplish.

Given the strengths and weaknesses regarding the response to this selection criteria, the rating is in the mid-range.

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

Joplin has a strong vision of how all students will have access to necessary learning tools (1:1 computing; range of digital learning resources); tech support (new staff plus student teams); using interoperable IT systems that allow exporting data in open formats. It has identified many of the activities it would need to take to accomplish this vision, but it has not put forward all the elements of a high quality plan, such as timelines, and responsible parties. For these reasons, this is rated at the high end of the mid-range.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Joplin lays out a reasonable high level strategy for instituting a continuous improvement process. The approach includes:

- Establishing an advisory team composed of internal and external stakeholders to meet regularly to provide oversight and leadership. This team will identify program goals and objectives and measures that will be used for process evaluation.
- Development of a systems-change model to frame evaluation and monitoring.
- Close connections to each participating school. Each building provides input to the team and project staff are active members of school faculties and meet montly with building leadership teams to solicit feedback.
- Use expanded data management capabilities for decision-making at district and building level.
- Outside evaluator who meets regularly with program administrators and advisory team to ensure monitoring of progress towards outcomes and to review process evaluation and identify needed improvements in implementation.

While the district suggests a reasonable and thoughtful approach, the response would benefit from more detail about what and how it expects to monitor and measure progress and effectiveness, how the myriad data created from digital learning environments might be used for continuous improvement, what building and classroom-level strategies are to be used for continuous improvement, and how results will be shared beyond the advisory committee.

Looked at in its totality, this response is rated in the mid-range.

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

The application does not respond to this selection criteria. It is obvious from a review of the full application that the Advisory

Team and school meetings (discussed in response to (E)(1)) are primary methods for communication and outreach with internal and external stakeholders. However, the application would be strengthened not only by a direct response to the selection criteria but also by a more robust outreach strategy which might include regular updates to the school and parent community, use of social media, etc... Thus, this response is rated at the low end of the mid-range.

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

5

1

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The application states that performance measures are contained in Appendix B, but the application reviewed does not include Appendix B. An examination of the district's description of its goals under (A)(4) shows that it has established some goals that are consistent with the requirements for performance measures under this section, particularly in the areas of student performance on summative assessments and on teacher/leader effectiveness (although there are no performance targets). However, a review of the application reveals no goal or performance measures regarding non-cognitive and social-emotional learning, FASFA completion, on-track to college in the middle grades. It reveals goals but no targets for college or career readiness. As a result, a low rating is appropriate..

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

5

0

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The application does not respond to this selection criteria or elsewhere specifically address how it plans to evaluate the effectiveness of RTT-D investments or ways to more productively use resources to improve results. The response to selection criteria (E)(1) suggests an overall continuous improvement framework but does not speak to evaluation of effectiveness or productivity enhancements, even though that is clearly a focus of the Joplin proposal. As a result, a low rating is warranted.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Overall, the application identifies all funds to be used, is reasonable and sufficient, provides a thoughtful rationale for investments, and distinguishes between one-time and operational investments and considers how the effort will be sustained.

The district requests \$9,998,737. The major cost items in the budget are:

Project manager – \$313,000

7 21st Century Coaches - \$2.2 mil

5 Career Pathways Coordinators to manage development and implementation of new pathways - \$1.6 mil

Stipends for Academic Advisors - \$3.5 mil (1 hour a day for 170 days for 200 teachers x 4 years)

Data manager to oversee development of new system - \$312,000

Data management system - \$425,000

1:1 iPads for middle school - \$1 mil

3 Additional tech support personnel - \$414,000

The costs of rebuilding schools and configuring them to support high levels of technology use and this new vision of learning is paid by FEMA, insurance, donations and a \$62 million bond issue the community passed after the tornado. All other costs of the project will be paid by general operating funds.

These investments appear to be reasonable and appropriate to carry out the strategies the district proposes. The budget is heavily weighted towards investing in people who can build systems, structures and educator capacity to carry out this work over time rather than merely investing in technology that might sit on a shelf.

The district has been thoughtful in identifying one-time vs on-going costs and how on-going costs can be sustained. For

example, the district considers the costs of the project manager, 21st century learning coaches, and a data manager to be one time investments for a start up period and that the “roles and responsibilities can be integrated into the district’s administrative structure.” The reforms will become “the district’s way of doing business” and will not require additional FTE to support it.

As for on-going costs, it states that the on-going costs of 1:1 computing can be borne by the district as it transitions away from a computer lab format. The major costs of stipends for academic advisors would be on-going and the district states it would seek a levy to pay for it.

The district’s view that this work becomes “the district’s way of doing business” is credible given that Joplin seems have made the transformation to personalized learning its highest priority. However, given the ambitious scope and scale of the initiative, it appears optimistic to believe that additional FTEs will not be needed to support implementation of the initiative beyond the termination of this grant.

Given this optimism, overall the budget response merits a high rating.

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

As stated in comments under (F)(1), the district has been thoughtful in identifying what costs are one-time versus on-going costs and how on-going costs can be sustained. It has been clear what on-going costs the district believes it can continue to cover from its general budget and what costs would require a levy in order to continue. Given that this proposal represents the overarching strategy for the district and that the district has demonstrated significant community support for the work, the odds of sustainability appear to be good.

However, the district has not presented any plan for sustainability (e.g. reallocation of current budgets, timelines, project projections). It has not indicated any specific financial support for sustainability of the project goals from state or local leaders, although there appears to high levels of community and policy support for the vision and goals. As a result, this response is rated in the midrange.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	1

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

Joplin provides a summary of a range of community collaborations to support students and families. These include coordination with the area mental health agency, participation in emotional/spiritual counseling long term recovery committee, and leadership in the Bright Futures Initiative designed to help schools access resources for students and families that already exist in the community.

However, Joplin provides no information about future plans to integrate private or public resources to provide additional family and student supports. Nor does it provide any population desired results or most of the other specific elements called for by this priority. Review of the optional budget supplements reveals three specific projects the district aims to do with Bright Futures (discussed in comments on optional budget supplements). The district is requesting RTT-D funds to support those projects and indicates only a minimal amount of funding from other source. However, this competitive priority focuses on collaborations that augment district resources with funds from other public or private sources, not what the district would do with additional funding from RTT-D.

As a result of these omissions and weaknesses, this is rated in the low range.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
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Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Joplin has clearly met the absolute priority. It has a coherent and comprehensive approach to create effective learning environments that personalize learning, are aligned with college and career ready standards, accelerate learning, achievement and attainment, and increase equity. While the application is somewhat stronger on vision than on providing concrete, high-quality plans regarding implementation, it has handily met the absolute priority.</p>		

Total	210	125
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	2

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

In 2010, Joplin partnered with the community to create Bright Futures to connect community resources with students and families in need. In 2011 a non-profit was established to work with Joplin and 5 affiliate communities that were using the framework first developed in Joplin. Details of the framework are not provided in the proposal.

Joplin seeks \$454,972 to complete development and implementation of an on-line software that catalogs local community resources, allows listings to be regularly updated by community providers, and allows staff to connect student needs to readily available resources. The application includes a detailed budget which appears reasonable and sufficient.

While it is likely that an easily accessible compendium of community resources would be useful, the proposal is not highly rated for the following reasons:

- Based on the limited description of the project that the district provides, it does not appear to be an innovative solution but rather merely placing a typical catalog of resources on line and allowing providers to update
- The district does not explain how the solution is linked to the academic outcomes outlined in the Absolute Priority, and on its face there is not a tight connection
- While the software might be transferable to other districts, only \$50,000 of the budget is allocated to software development; the remainder is primarily for coordination with and outreach to local service providers, which does not lead to a replicable solution
- There is no attempt to provide a rationale regarding the area or population to be addressed
- There is no plan, or even reference to, how this would be co-developed and implemented across two or more LEAs

For all these reasons, a rating in the low range is appropriate.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	1
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Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Joplin seeks \$1,892,643 to expand and implement Operation College Bound and to implement a Reading Initiative, both in partnership with Bright Futures Joplin.

Operation College Bound is designed to support a college going culture starting in elementary school. Joplin and Bright Futures have launched in one elementary school an effort that includes annual college visits, research on college and career opportunities, and information on the college application process. The grant would fund expansion of the program to other elementary schools and ultimately to middle and high school. The budget would fund curriculum development, support for school implementation, and a transition coordinator who works with counselors and post-secondary institutions, among other costs.

The Reading Initiative, scheduled to launch in 2013, will strengthen elementary reading through parent engagement, improved assessment, new instructional models, digital learning tools, and volunteer tutors for struggling readers. The grant would fund 5 staff to carry out assessment, engage the community, and recruit and support tutors, and purchase 2,581 e-readers and digital content.

The proposal does provide a basic rationale for focusing on early reading and on college awareness starting in elementary school. However, the proposal is not highly rated for the following reasons:

- Based on the limited description of the project that the district provides, it does not appear to be an innovative solution;
- There is no evidence that the proposed solutions are being designed with replication in mind or would produce tools, documentation, software, curriculum that would support replication;
- There is no plan, or even reference to, how this would be co-developed and implemented across two or more LEAs
- The budgets, while reasonable for what the district is proposing, do not support the over-arching goal of the budget supplement to create innovative solutions that can be replicated

For all these reasons, a rating in the low range is appropriate.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	1
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Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Joplin seeks \$1,558,657 to expand its service learning and mentoring programs. With these funds it would hire 5 staff and 7 Vista volunteers to design new programs that complement current efforts, and coordinate and lead efforts in schools. The proposal does provide a basic rationale for how service learning and mentoring will address the absolute priority, including improving student achievement and engagement and improving achievement and attendance. However, the proposal is not highly rated for the following reasons:

- Based on the limited description of the project that the district provides, it does not appear to be an innovative solution;
- There is no evidence that the proposed solutions are being designed with replication in mind or would produce tools, documentation, software, curriculum that would support replication;
- There is no plan, or even reference to, how this would be co-developed and implemented across two or more LEAs
- The budgets for the two activities, while reasonable for what the district is proposing, do not support the over-arching goal of the budget supplement to create innovative solutions that can be replicated



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0851MO-2 for Joplin Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The Joplin School District was impacted severely from the tornado in May, 2011. About half of the school buildings and classrooms were destroyed. This was used as an opportunity to rethink the educational system they were using. All students will successfully complete a personalized, career-oriented learning pathway that allows successful transition from high school to further post-secondary education.

- High quality professional development will be provided for teachers and administrators
- Implementation of a Career Pathways course of study that provides personalization
- Rigorous standards and learning outcomes that predict success
- instructional strategies and technology tools that all teachers to determine and met the needs of individual students
- Integrated data management system to inform decision-making for students, schools and the district
- Interactive scheduling instructional management system that analyzes data and then schedules student activities and learning experiences with needs of individual and/or groups of students
- Policies and practices based on student competency
- Comprehensive system of learning supports designed to address barriers to teaching and learning
- Infrastructure that facilitates the building of consensus around changes, and systematic plans for changing

The vision builds on the four core educational assurance areas. Rigorous standards and assessments are adopted. A data system is being developed. Professional Development is planned to recruit, train and retain effective teachers, and will provide job-embedded professional development on the use of technology and personalized learning in the classroom. A plan of action is in place to turn around the lowest achieving schools and personalize learning. Since all sections of the criteria are being addressed, this section is receiving a score of 10.

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

There is a list of all the schools participating in the implementation of the proposal.

There is a description of the process used to select schools because all middle schools (three) and the one high school will participate. Middle schools are included because they must develop 21st Century skills and because the model is appropriate for them. The total number of students participating will be 3,817. The number of educators is 250. Almost 60% of the students receive free/reduced lunch. Over 250 students meet the definition of "homeless". 1,823 students are high need students and 1,927 are low-income.

The narrative meets all the criteria for this section and is receiving a score of 10.

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

There is a plan for implementing reform in participating schools and scaling-up to the overall district. All middle and senior high students are included so there is no pilot plan of implementation. The assessments of the data will ultimately be used to inform needed change at the elementary level and continuous improvement at the secondary level.

- The use of 21st century Instructional Coaches will provide high quality personalized professional development that will meet the needs of individual teachers, departments and building.
- A data system will create teacher efficiency and remove barriers so that instruction can be personalized
- Effective learning technology will be used

There is a belief that this reform can be implemented.

- Leadership is in place to make change possible.
- Motivated staff sees the need for an educational system that works differently.
- The implementation of the knowledge, attitudes, skills and habits needed to create personalized 21st century learning and teaching has already begun.
- The technological and staff development infrastructure is in place.
- The district has the fiscal strength and flexibility to support and sustain the high school and the middle schools so sustainability will not be a problem.
- The community understands and supports the plan. A \$61,000,000 bond issue has been passed.

This section describes how the reform proposal will be translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change. The narrative discusses how the collection and analysis of data will allow "lessons learned" to inform needed change at the elementary level while at the same time it is generating hypotheses and providing information that will fuel the continuous improvement cycle that powers change at the targeted level.

This is not a high-quality plan because it does not include the qualities that make it high-quality. It discusses scaling lessons learned to the elementary level but it does not discuss how it will do that or even when. Because this narrative does not include a high-quality plan for scaling up, it is receiving a score of 7.

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

10

10

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The goals set forth are expected to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity. Objectives are listed for each goal.

- Using standardized state assessment data (Communication Arts and Math MAP and End of Course examinations), all areas of student achievement will meet or exceed expectations established by the Missouri School Improvement Program. (MSIP 5).
- Graduation rate will increase by 5% per year for all students.
- The percentage of students who graduate from Joplin Schools college and career ready will increase annually.
- The number and percentage of certified staff who are ‘highly effective’ or ‘effective’ will increase over baseline. [Note: The current evaluation process, will be revised by the 2014-2015 school year.

The proposal includes a reflection of where the students are today. The district has received a designation for six years in a row as being "Accredited with Distinction", but high drop out rates continues and low achievement and post-secondary success levels support the district needing a new direction.

- Current achievement data reveals that they are not meeting their current goals
- There are other indicators of student need such as an increase of free/reduced lunches, more students being identified as at-risk., and more students are being served for behavioral/mental and emotional/behavioral disorders.

A high-quality plan is included to meet the district goals and the state standards. The activities, timeline, deliverables and responsible parties are included.

The applicant’s vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goals, overall and by student subgroup. Goals are included for performance on summative assessments, decrease achievement gaps, increase graduation rates and increase the percentage of students who graduate college and career ready.

This narrative of this section meets all the criteria for the above reasons and receives a score of 10.

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	5

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district has a record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement. Some indicators showed a decline in the prior year that is being attributed to the tornado. The total picture is being considered to see the upward trends. Very little achievement data was included, resulting in not being able to determine that there is a clear record of success.

- Graduation rate increased about 6% to almost 80%, since 2003. Special education is the only subgroup that is lower

than the aggregate.

- ACT scores have always been above the state average and are improving.
- Attendance rate (95%) exceeds the state average.
- The end of course scores showed no dip after the 1:1 technology plan was implemented.
- Suspension rate slightly lower than the state.
- The placement rate for career/technical students (63.2%) exceeds the state average by over 6%.

There is evidence that the applicant will be able to raise student achievement, high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates. The leadership is in place and the staff is motivated. The implementation of the knowledge, attitudes, skills and habits have already begun. The end of the course comparison did not show the expected dip in the first year of implementation. Technology and staff development are in place, as well as PLCs, collaborative leadership teams, tools and process that facilitate data collection, management, analysis and problem solving.

Points are being deducted for the lack of information of the data system and how student performance data is made available to students, educators and parents in ways that inform and improve participation. There is also a lack of the types of data available to prove that there is a clear record of success." Ten points are being deducted for these deficiencies.

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

District financial data is developed, managed and reported in accordance with state requirements. All information is available to the public. The capability to disaggregate information at the school level exists, but it is not reported as such. Schools receive reports on expenditures, but not salaries.

The following are not reported:

- Actual personnel salaries by individual and district are available. School-level instructional and support staff salaries are not reported.
- Actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff only
- Actual personnel salaries at the school level for teachers only; and
- Actual non-personnel expenditures at the school level

The transparency of the district is limited and does not make the four categories of school-level expenditures from State and local funds available. This section is receiving 2 points because of this.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	5
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

There are successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described.

- The State Supervisor and the Commissioner of Education are encouraging the district to continue to develop the vision and support their efforts.
- Their backing has helped remove barriers that would have blocked creativity.

However, by not providing direct comments from the state or a letter of support from the state, there is no evidence that this support will provide successful conditions and sufficient autonomy to implement the personalized learning environments described. This section is receiving a 5 points because the support from the state that would enable the district to implement the proposal is not clear.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	6
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

There has been meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal.

- Meetings have been held since 2005 that include students, teachers, parents, administrators, and business community representatives.

- An April 2011 meeting resulted in defining 21st Century Learning Citizen Skills that are targets for the graduates.
- Three weeks after the tornado a Dream Meeting was held to chart a course for the future of secondary education in Joplin. Representatives from the same groups were included and additional experts from various educational and business organizations such as the International Center for Leadership in Education, McREL, Leadership and Learning, eMINTS National Center, the Missouri Dept of Elementary and Secondary Education and Apple. Five additional meetings were held over the span of 15 months. The following steps were taken to refine the vision.
 - Determined that a 24-7 laptop initiative would be implemented for grades 9-12 by purchasing and checking out Macbook laptop computers for all students.
 - Decided to NOT purchase textbooks or digital textbooks for grades 9-12 except where required by college/Advanced Placement courses.
 - Elected to combine the high school and technical school into one building while still maintaining the opportunity for other school districts to send students to be educated at Franklin Technology Center.
 - Explored innovative schools across the US by taking business representatives, administrators, teachers and board members on site visits in Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Arkansas, Illinois, Texas, California, etc.
 - Provided support for implementing the 1-1 laptop program with high level professional development for all high school teachers.
 - Determined the high school would engage ALL students in a career path as freshman.
 - Determined students would be allowed to switch career paths and or take an a-la-carte approach to the curriculum
 - Determined students will be empowered to increase their effort and motivation to move through high school opportunities at a personalized rate.
 - Defined 5 Career Paths to be offered at Joplin High School with a final step of meeting with area human resource directors organizations.
 - Committed to each career path having a pathway from high school to work with a job that pays well, high school to technical school with articulated agreements, and high school to college in order to meet the needs of every student.
 - Committed to assist students in graduating high school with work ready certification and/or associates degree.
 - Developed a plan for career path preparation to be implemented at the middle school level so that students will be prepared to make choices as they enroll in high school.
 - Elected to encourage students to learn through internships within the community.
 - Decided to re-imagine how we use time in high school by creating many different types of courses ranging from testing out, blended learning, online learning, traditional setting, independent study and courses combined to earn two credits in one class (science and math or English LA and history).
 - Passed a \$62 million bond issue to fund the facility needs beyond what we had prior to the tornado with the vision for the high school and middle school serving as a critical element for the support. Trained 14 people on Design Thinking for problem solving and thinking outside the box.
 - Requested by many groups across the nation to present about the career path vision.
 - Partnered with the Joplin Chamber of Commerce and the Workforce Investment Board to attempt to become the first Work Ready Community in Missouri. Developed an employability report card to be implemented at the high school for the 2012-13 school year.
 - Hired five Career Path Coordinators with business world experience and networks to create a new curriculum and program of study for the high school based on the five career paths.
 - Began discussions regarding the software systems necessary to support the new educational program. Committed to implementing one-to-one technology at the 8th grade level.
 - Developed the RTTT application in cooperation with these same stakeholders.
 - Shared the RTTT application with appropriate stakeholders for feedback and support

Over 100 different people have been involved in creating the vision. Letters of support from various organizations are included in the appendix.

Stakeholder engagement involvement and support is very evident. The district went out of their way to include organizations to provide input to create the best model for their schools. There are many letters of support from the community and partners. There are no letters of support from teachers. Unfortunately there is no evidence that at least 70 percent of teachers from participating schools support the proposal. It is implied that there is support, but no statement is included to verify that. Because of this, four points are being deducted resulting in a score of 6.

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

5

5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

In prior sections the district has an analysis of the applicant's current status in implementing personalized learning environments and the logic behind the reform proposal.

- A high-quality plan is in place that includes goals, activities, a timeline, deliverables and names of those responsible for each action.
- There is community, state and stakeholder support
- The district wants to implement a more engaging and different high school experience that prepares students for the personal future.
- The rebuilding process is being funded through a \$62 million dollar bond issue, FEMA to rebuild the schools, and donations, including \$1 million from the United Arab Emirates.

This section is receiving full credit because it meets the criteria of this section.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

A system is being put in place that engages and supports all learners. The learning environment is personalized in order to prepare all students for college and career.

- It will encompass high quality instructional strategies designed to meet the needs of all individuals, including those with special needs
- It will incorporate continuous assessment that informs instruction and demonstrates the effectiveness of instruction
- Provide opportunities to think, problem-solve, experience and manage learning
- Students will have access to rigorous standards and variety of instructional approaches, and technological learning tools
- Ongoing and regular feedback will be provided and accommodations used as needed

The plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college and career ready includes the following components:

- Personalized learning paced to the individual needs of each student. A learning plan will be tailored to learning preferences and interests of each student. The path, curriculum, instruction and schedule will be personalized to meet needs of each student.
- A "blended learning model" will allow effective and efficient use of teacher time and allow for greater student engagement and self-initiative. Students progress at their own pace, based on mastery and not seat time.
- The use of modern learning technologies will provide opportunities for student/teacher interactions that are more meaningful. Technology will allow students to opportunity to participate in anytime/anywhere learning
- The proposal model is build around a Career Pathways Course of Study Framework and is based on interest and provides a head start toward post-secondary education or toward employment. The five career paths are Health Sciences, Technical Sciences, Arts and Communication, Human Services and Business/Technology.
 - Students select a career path when beginning high school.
 - Each career path will have multiple pathways so that no matter what level they enter at, all students will leave high school college and career ready.
- All students will meet required Common Core State Standards for high school graduation. Each pathway will embed the standards differently in order to focus on the key learning that is most important to the student.
- Opportunities for students to accelerate through the courses are available. Students manage their own learning. The courses that will be available for acceleration will be dependent upon the identified career path. Students can demonstrate proficiency through an assessment in a subject to avoid enrolling in the course at all.
- The time spent in high school will be different. Students learn time management skills and will be empowered to choose how, when and where they learn best.
- Other opportunities will be available for students who elect to put forth the effort. This includes the opportunity to earn credit by demonstrating competency rather that attend classes.
- Students can move through courses based on their learning instead of seat time. Students will continue to be required to pass state-required curriculum for high school graduation, but how they do so will be their choice ranging from traditional courses, online courses, blended courses, independent study with assessment for mastery, etc.
- The different model will require a change to graduation requirements. The model for this has not been finalized, but the district is in communication with the state about a waiver.
- The collaboration with the Dream Team set this model in place. There is ongoing planning and development of curriculum.

- The model is chosen for all students to create equality. Involving middle school students in career exploration in a systematic approach will allow students to enter high school prepared to select a career path. Each path will have introductory courses so students know and understand their direction.
- The development of the program of study and course curriculum for each career path is being developed and will be merged with the state required high school and career competencies. Each career pathway program will be developed by advisory groups including educators, community and college representatives.
- A team composed of a facilitator and coordinator for each pathway will lead the selection of staff. The facilitator will be an educator responsible for ensuring the curriculum and programs of study developed will work across paths. The coordinators will come from business and industry and will be the liaison between education and the real world. The curriculum process is to be accomplished during the 2012/13 school year and phase in of the new high school begin fall 2014.
- Students will have support and counseling for the career path which include adult and peer connections as well as the ability for the student to monitor grades and progress through the internet. An academic advisor will be assigned to each students. Older students will mentor younger students.
- Students will have multiple opportunities to gain feedback on their progress.
 - Beginning in elementary school, all students will be taught to take responsibility for monitoring and problem-solving about their own progress in academic and work/study/behavior skills.
 - Students will use technology and activities such as peer mentoring, self-monitoring, teach, advisor, parent and business mentoring to analyze progress and to plan future directions.
 - Students will maintain portfolios and be able to articulate strengths, aspirations, etc.
 - A method of gradual release will be used to go from a traditional model to the self-monitoring model described.
- Parents will have access to information about their child on the web.
- Technology will be used to provide real-time personalized approaches to communication. An application has been developed to help students monitor their changing routine. Advisors will meet at least biweekly and more if needed. Technology will all for the efficient and effective collection of data and the analysis and use of data.

This is a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. This plan includes an approach to implementing instructional strategies for all participating students that enable participating students to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to college- and career-ready standards and college- and career-ready graduation requirements and accelerate his or her learning through support of his or her needs. The details of the high quality plan are located in another section (A4) and include goals, objectives, timelines, deliverables and who is responsible.

Students are able to identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college and career requirements. Using the tools available, the students should be able to understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals. The data system will allow the students to measure progress toward their goals. Choosing a pathway will allow the students to be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest. Students will be able to master critical academic content. The system described provides opportunities to set goals, collaborate with others, persevere, think critically, build communication skills, think creatively and problem solve.

Students will have access to a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development that enable them to reach individual goals. A variety of instructional approaches and environments are described in the narrative. Rigorous content, including digital learning content will be taught. Technology will provide personalized learning recommendations based on career pathways.

There are deficiencies in this section.

- The narrative does not address how students would understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals. Their learning is personalized, and goals are set but there is no tie in.
- Selecting a career pathway might be limit student access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts and perspectives.
- Although the section on feedback is lengthy, it does not address the frequency that students will obtain feedback and a description does not exist how the data system provides information on more than scheduling.
- Accommodations for high need students are not addressed. It is presumed because the system is personalized that all needs are met but the narrative does not include a discussion on how the personalization would help students with needs.

This section is receiving 15 points instead of 20 because of the deficiencies listed above.

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

There is an approach to helping educators improve instruction and increase capacity to support student progress. The plan for

improving teaching and leading will be based on the provision of high quality professional development, sufficient resources (including technology) and a supportive infrastructure which includes administration, policy, practice and support for overcoming barriers to learning.

Teachers will demonstrate in their teaching the same 21st century skills they are expecting from their students.

- These teaching skills form the basis of the professional development what will be provided collaboratively and job-embedded by instructional coaches.
- Teachers have been asked to examine their beliefs about what students learn and how they learn.
- Teachers learned the importance and how to engage and motivate students while providing a rigorous and relevant core curriculum
- Teachers have learned about formative assessment and how they provide evidence of where the student is and to inform instruction
- Teachers have learned to personalize learning environments and strategies and to adapt content and instruction to allow students to work collaboratively.
- Each coach supports 25 teachers with the implementation of a textbook-less technology-based model.
- Teachers received from 40 to 400 hours of professional development in technology integration for learning.
- Additional software purchased includes Blackboard and a new curriculum database.
- There is anecdotal evidence teachers are seeing an improvement in student engagement and progress using this model.

21st Century Coaches enhance the development of the skills needed and support the implementation of the 1:1 initiative.

- Developed expertise in managing new kinds of classroom dynamics
- Use technology to expand, organize and deepen expertise
- Provide complex management (including monitoring, scheduling and pacing) that allows for personalization.

Teaching will look different. Time, space and resources will be managed to allow the teacher to move easily from coach to direct instruction to providing resources. Students will be researching, analyzing, experimenting, collaborating, evaluating and communicating. Students will have access to learning tools (technology, labs, internet) and teachers will balance direct teacher-led instruction, online instruction, collaboration, individual research and exploratory learning.

- Teachers are collaborating on redeveloping lesson plans and are being innovative.
- Students are collaborating more and having more control and choice over how their time is spent and how they engage in learning.

A new teacher and principal evaluation system is being revised to align with the Missouri Educator Evaluation System. A set of three assumptions is included as a theory of action. The principles that will be included are:

- Measuring performance based on research-based and proven practices
- Using differentiated levels of performance
- Highlighting the probationary period as a significant time of intensive support
- Including measures of growth in student learning as evidence of performance
- Providing regular, timely and meaningful feedback on performance
- Including standardized and ongoing training for evaluators
- Using evaluation results to inform employment decisions and policy

All participating educators engage in training, and in professional teams or communities to support the effective implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies that meet each student's academic needs and help ensure all students can graduate on time and college- and career-ready. Teachers will adapt content and instruction, providing opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks, in response to their academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches. Student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards and requirements will be frequently measured. Data will be used to inform both the acceleration of student progress and the improvement of the individual and collective practice of educators. The use of feedback provided by the teacher and principal evaluation systems will improve the teacher and principal practice and effectiveness, and provide recommendations for improvement.

All participating educators have access to, and know how to use, tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready graduation requirements. Those resources must include information that helps educators identify optimal learning approaches that respond to individual student academic needs and interests. There are high-quality learning resources (e.g., instructional content and assessments), including digital resources, as appropriate, that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards or graduation requirements, and the tools to create and share new resources. Processes and tools will be in place to match student needs with specific resources and approaches to provide continuously improving feedback about the effectiveness of the resources in meeting student needs.

All participating school leaders and school leadership teams have training, policies, tools, data, and resources that enable them to structure an effective learning environment that meets individual student academic needs and accelerates student progress through common and individual tasks toward meeting college- and career-ready standards or graduation requirements. The training, policies, tools, data, and resources must include information, from such sources as the district's teacher evaluation system, that helps school leaders and school leadership teams assess, and take steps to improve, individual and collective educator effectiveness and school culture and climate, for the purpose of continuous school improvement. Training, systems, and practices continuously improve school progress toward the goals of increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps.

The applicant has a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals, including in hard-to-staff schools, subjects (such as mathematics and science), and specialty areas (such as special education).

This is a well-thought out narrative which addresses all points required. It is therefore receiving a score of 20.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	10
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: There are practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The central office structure is organized to provide support and services to all schools principals, school leadership teams and central office meet frequently for the purpose of communication and implementation of programming. All staff development is based around these identified needs. The Board is committed to support these efforts. • All school leadership teams (PLC's) that have been functioning for several years. They work hand-in-hand with the school and central office leadership to ensue the effective implementation of school reform. They influence all decisions, including scheduling, staffing, resource usage roles and responsibilities and budgets. • Students are given the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic. • Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple ways. This was not addressed here, but was addressed fully in C1. • Learning resources and instructional practices are provided that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners. <p>The narrative, although brief, addressed most of the requirements of this section. Additional information to make this section complete is found in section C1. Although the narrative in this sections states that learning resources and instructional practices are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, no information can be located here or in C1 on how the accommodations are made for students with disabilities and English learners. Five points are being deducted for this deficiency.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	7

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The district and the school infrastructure supports personalized learning.

- All participating students, parents, educators, and stakeholders have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources in and out of school.
- Training and support is available for all students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders through peer support, online support, or local support.
- The information technology system will allow parents and students to export their information in an open data format and to use the data in other electronic formats.
 - The system will include human resource data, student information data, budget data, and instructional improvement system data.
 - It will facilitate data mining to ensure periodic formative assessment of student growth and achievement and help teachers and principals determine how they can improve instruction and outcomes for individuals, schools and

the district.

- o It will be able to analyze program improvements, resource allocations and support for determining effectiveness.
- o Allow for visualizations of the data to facilitate communication with stakeholders and for strategic planning.
- There are long term goals.
 - o By the end of the grant, 100% of school teams will report that the use of data for progress monitoring and decision-making has improved building achievement for all students and stakeholders.
 - o There will be a 25% increase over baseline in percentage of teachers who report significant use of data-based decision making in personalizing learning.
 - o By the end of the grant, quarterly Innovation Configuration data from all schools will demonstrate progress on key implementation indicators.
- Currently the district is training staff to use the Student Information System do analyze data. They are using the data dashboard system for targeting outcomes. There are computerized standard-based diagnostic systems but the systems are separate and not interactive. A behavior tracking system exists but needs improvement. There is a parent portal that provides access to certain student information. A system is being established that will focus on social/emotional issues.

Activities to meet objectives.

- Build capacity for current Student Information System to be able to integrate data.
- Analyze the current system and develop a plan that will enable the district to collect and use to track students from preschool to high school graduation and college.
- A system will be developed to provide continuous feedback using formative quantitative, and qualitative data.
- An interactive scheduling instructional management system will be developed to monitor personalized learning plans.

The district supports personalized learning. All participating students, parents, educators and other stakeholders have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources in and out of school. There is technological support provided for students and parents, educators, and other stakeholders. A system will be developed that will allow parents and students to export their information into an open data format. An interoperable data system is being developed.

This section does not have any deficiencies. The narrative includes a plan with goals for the data system and use of data. This plan addresses goals and activities. The deliverables are included in the goals. The deadline stated is by the end of the grant but does not include a timeline, nor who is responsible for carrying out the goals. Because the plan that is included does not meet all the requirements of a high-quality plan, three points are being deducted, earning a score of 7.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district has a strategy for implementing a continuous improvement process.

- The project was developed with the input of school and district administrators, teachers, university and college personnel and community leaders. This group will serve on the Advisory Committee. Parents and business partners will be recruited for the committee. The committee will meet on a regular bases to provide oversight and leadership. Each building will provide input. All project staff will meet monthly with the Building Leadership Team to discuss services and grant activities. Project staff are on the faculty will collaborate in all PLC activities.
- The Project Manager and Data Manager will establish an ongoing continuous evaluation process. Meetings will be held quarterly to review the evaluation findings and to monitor progress towards outcomes, and review process evaluation findings that identify success and gaps in the implementation process.
 - o At the beginning of the grant the Project manager will meet with the Advisory Committee to identify program goals, and objectives and develop measures that will clarify program strengths and weaknesses, and facilitate decision making.
 - o From this information, a draft of a system-change model will be created
 - o There will be work within the database to be able to provide data to building administration as well as program administrators at regular intervals.

Timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the term of the grant. The strategy includes creating measures that will help with this process. The narrative

discusses how it will share the data with its committees and participants but does not address how it will supply this information to people and stakeholders not on the committees. Five points are being deducted for that weakness in the narrative, giving a total score of 10.

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

5

2

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The project was developed with the input of school and district administrators, teachers, university and college personnel and community leaders. This group will serve on the Advisory Committee. Parents and business partners will be recruited for the committee. The committee will meet on a regular bases to provide oversight and leadership. Each building will provide input. All project staff will meet monthly with the Building Leadership Team to discuss services and grant activities. Project staff are on the faculty will collaborate in all PLC activities.

The narrative does address ongoing communication and engagement with those on committees and/or involved in the project. However, there is no narrative addression how communication and engagement will take place for stakeholders not on the committees. Three points are being deducted for this weakness, giving a total score of this section a 2.

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

5

2

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The performance measures are included in section A4 with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures. For each measure, the rationale for selecting the measure is included. It is not addressed in the narrative for Section E.

Academic Measures include:

- Standardized state assessment data (Communication Arts and Math MAP and End of Course examinations). All students will meet or exceed expectations established by the Missouri School Improvement Program.
- Graduation rate will increase by 5% per year for all students
- The percentage of students who graduate from Joplin Schools college and career ready will increase annually.
- The number and percentage of effective and highly effective certified staff, including principal

There is narrative on how the measures will provide formative information to analyze the success of the plan.

The narrative in A4 lacks the requirements needed in this section. It does not address how it will review and improve the measures over time. There are adequate assessments, but the number and percentage of participating students who complete and submit the FAFSA form is not included as a criteria. This narrative is considered weak for these reasons and is receiving a score of 2.

The applicant must have a total of approximately 12 to 14 performance measures.

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

5

2

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

There is a strategy in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the funded activities. This has been addressed in the prior sections of Continuous Improvement and not addressed separately. There are no performance measures included with annual goals. Therefore, this section is receiving 2 points.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's budget, including the budget narrative and tables identifies all funds that will support the project and is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the proposal. There is a description of how the funds will be used and how many years each item will be needed. Requirements needed to be hired are listed as well as expected duties.

- Project Manager will direct, coordinate and manage the project. There is no expectation that this position will be needed post grant.
- Seven 21st Century Learning Coaches. There is no expectation that this position will be needed post grant.
- Five Career Pathways Coordinators. These coordinators are being hired for a period of two years to provide curriculum and model development for the Career Pathways.
- One hour per day of Academic Advisement Time is being provided to each teacher for four years to provide funding for teachers to meet with students, monitor student progress and collaborate with other teachers. It is anticipated that this will be an ongoing expense and funding sources will be explored.
- Contract services to Coaches, staff and other educators. A train-the-trainer model will be used. It is expected that this expense will be minimal after the grant because the district is building capacity of its own staff.
- Data Manager to manage the data system. It is expected that this position will be integrated into central salaries after the grant.
- Development of Current Data Management System
- Technology to provide iPads to every student in middle school
- Addition Tech Support. These will be ongoing positions and funding sources for after the grant will be explored.

The narrative and the budget sections identify all funds that will support the project. The budget seems reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the proposal and provides a thought rationale for the use of funds. Through the narrative, it identifies how long each funding source will be needed.

There is a concern about the sustainability of this project without a Project Manager, 21st Learning Coaches to keep teachers current with new technology, and a Data Manager. Further, the cost of replacing technology after the grant should be considered. Two points are being deducted because there is a lack of focus on strategies that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments.

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

The applicant lacks a high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the grant. The project is to be continued but many of the supports of the grant will be eliminated. It is expected that general operating costs will be coming from the district's general operating budget for secondary schools. The only funding expected federally is IDEA funds. Rebuilding the district after the tornado is being conducted with insurance, FEMA and the \$62 million bond issue. This section is being assigned a score of five because the reduction of the support given through the years of the grant most likely will lead to lower implementation. Coach and data supports are surely needed to continue this project. There is new technology and new teacher professional development to be considered.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	5

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The school district understands the importance of developing relationships with parents, community members, community organizations and agencies, the city government, the Chamber of Commerce and faith-based organizations.

- Current collaboration exists the the area Mental Health Agency, Ozark Center to provide mental health services for students and staff after the tornado. The district received emergency one-year funding to employ 5 school-based mental health counselors and 5 school-based case managers. Teachers and staff were trained in recognizing and dealing with the effects of trauma.

- Bright Futures initiative helps schools connect needs with resources that already exist in the community. The organization has grown to include over 75 local partners and national and international affiliates.
- Emotional/Spiritual Counseling Long Term Recover Committee was developed to identify and meet emotional and mental health needs of the Joplin community post-disaster. This committee meets twice monthly and has over 30 community members from a broad base. They provide various services to the district.
- Other partnerships exist with the various agencies in the city.
- Each school has at least one business partner
- All schools have Site Councils that are comprised of school, community and business representatives.

The district has described partnerships it has formed with public and private organizations. Population-results are not directly addressed. Each partnership has a specific purpose but it is not described in outcomes for students. It does not describe how the partnerships would measure the data, except vaguely in terms of a data management system that is not yet set up. The partnerships have been in force for several years and it is expected that they will continue. At present, it seems that they are reaching all students in need. It does not describe how education and other services would be integrated. There is a statement how staff was trained to identify and deal with the effects of trauma but there is a lack of further discussion on how building the staff capacity would be addressed. There are no performance measure with a description of desired results.

The deficiencies noted in the above paragraph take away from the strengths and scope of the existing partnerships. Therefore, a score of 5 is being assigned.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The plan coherently and comprehensively addresses how it will create learning environments that are designed to improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college and career-ready standards.

- The adoption of the Common Core State Standards and the MAP assessments, along with the strategies described in the proposal will personalize the learning environment.
- The instructional model will accelerated student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student. Students will learn how to manage their own education. Career Pathways will enable students to be career and college ready.
- The focus on professional development through the use of 21st Century Coaches and Instructional Coaches will create effective teachers who are able to use technology in their instruction. The one on one job-embedded professional development will allow the teachers to meet the needs of all of their students and decrease achievement gaps and increase the graduation rate.

The learning environments described will significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports that are aligned to college- and career-ready standards and requirements. It will increase the effectiveness of educators, decrease achievement gaps and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.

Total	210	146
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

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

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

The applicant submitted three Optional Budget Supplements: Bright Futures Joplin Software Development and Implementation,

Operation College Bound and Reading Initiative and Service Learning Curriculum and Mentorship Program. These would all operate under the umbrella of Bright Futures.

The applicant has a clear, discrete, and innovative solution that can be replicated in schools across the Nation.

- Bright Futures started as a reaction to poor graduation rates, which were identified as a community issue, not a school issue. The Joplin schools worked with the community to develop Bright Futures to connect community resources with students and families in need through the school system.
- The first year, which was funded from a grant from the Economic Security Corporation of southwest Missouri, resulted in a decrease in the drop out rate and an increase in attendance. Students and staff morale improved.

Bright Futures Joplin

- The success of Bright Futures brought discussions from nearby districts to replicate the framework in their communities.
- IN 2011 the non-profit organization Bright Futures USA was established using the successful framework from Bright Futures Joplin. By the end of 2011, five communities were using the framework to tackle poverty and close achievement gaps in their communities.
- The district is seeking funding for further development. Through community engagement, relationship development, channeling resources and meeting basic needs, Bright Futures Joplin will promote student success to implement programs to support successful and meaningful student success by implementing programs to support successful and meaningful post-secondary education. They are seeking to do this through software development, the creation of new programming, and the implementation of existing programming.
- The success of Bright Futures Joplin would be increased through the development and implementation of online software. Currently half of the structure is available. Completed development, customization and implementation will allow for a fully functional website that will meet student needs and ultimately affect education.

Operation College Bound and Read Aloud

- This is the initiative from Bright Futures Joplin to personalize education and produce higher levels of success at every grade level.
- Operation College Bound is designed to begin the discussion of college as early as kindergarten and make college or career training a reality for every student.
- The Reading Initiative will model the Read Aloud structure for daily literacy and parental involvement. It is a community effort to prepare students for kindergarten by promoting 1000 hours of literacy, 4.25 hours weekly, before enrollment. The initiative is designed to increase a parent's involvement in their child's education. The goal is to dramatically improve a student's ability to read at grade level.
- Students with low test scores will receive 1:1 tutoring throughout the year to improve the chances of reading at grade level.

Service Learning Curriculum and Mentorship Program Development

- Service learning offers children an opportunity to apply classroom learning to support or enhance project for the betterment of their community.
- Through service learning, students are taught how to identify problems in their community and provide solutions. They learn about volunteerism, leadership, citizenship and ways to share their own time for the benefit of the community.
- Bright Futures Joplin is currently implementing service learning curriculum with Joplin's annual Stuff the Bus campaign.
- Bright Futures Joplin also provides venues for student and community collaboration through mentorship. Mentorship programs provide students with a safe context to build healthy relationships with adults in their community. Developing and implementing mentorship programs at every grade level is important to personalize education, identify and close achievement gaps and engage community support.

The budget supplement will provide additional resources to the community. The funds requested are for separate initiatives that are under the umbrella of Bright Futures and will not affect the basic plan if not funded. However, funding the Optional Budget Request will enhance the proposal and make it more successful. The applicant has a clear, discrete, and innovative solution that can be replicated in schools across the Nation. The rationale will assist students to stay in school and be successful in the proposed personalized environment. The proposed budgets are adequate to fund the resources. A very brief timeline exists within the narrative of the budgets and explains what personnel would be doing each year.



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0851MO-3 for Joplin Schools

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>It is the mission of Joplin Schools to ensure that all students benefit from the challenging and enriched educational experiences necessary to prepare them to be successful adults – learners, workers and citizens. Though students have varied interests, aptitudes, skills and ambitions, all have the right --- and will be given the opportunity --- to pursue their own dreams. It is Jolin's goal that all secondary students will successfully complete a personalized, career-oriented learning pathway that allows successful transition from high school to further post-secondary education (e.g.. college, technical training, apprenticeship, on-the-job training) and/or successful suitable employment leading to meaningful and profitable careers (e.g... occupational credentials).</p> <p>The major components of their proposed model include: 1) the provision of high quality, effective professional development; 2) implementation of a Career Pathways course of study that will provide each student with an education that has been personalized to their needs, aptitudes, aspirations and motivations and will ensure the development of 21st Century skills and competencies; 3) an articulated set of rigorous standards and learning outcomes that truly predict post secondary success; 4) instructional strategies ... including the use of technological tools ... that allow teachers to determine and meet the needs of individual students; 5) an integrated data management system that will support timely, informed decision making that leads to improved outcomes, both for individual students, schools and the district as a whole; and, 6) an infrastructure -- including leadership -- that facilitates the building of consensus around the need to change what we do, defines these changes, and institutes a systematic plan for creating them.</p> <p>In the eyes of the reviewer, this proposal creates a picture of need by sharing that it has been devastated by tornados and other weather related calamities. They present present a clear vision, but there is no mention of how the reform vision builds on its work in the four core education assurance ares.</p> <p>Joplin School District discussed the goal for their secondary students, 6-12, defined as a personalized career-oriented learning pathway that allows successful transition from high school to further post-secondary education. However, the components under the goal are general and vague. In addition, the District does not explain how the components of the goal will meet the needs of the two targeted groups, middle and high schools students. Furthermore, by just providing a list of components did not define an articulate the approach to the goal in order to accelerate student achievement, deepen student learning, and increase equity.... Therefore the applicant has receive a medium score..</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The target population for this project will be all secondary school students (grades 6-12). This includes 2,125 Joplin High School (JHS) students and 1,692 students in middle school -- grades 6-8 (648 South Middle School (SMS), 482 East Middle School (EMS) and 562 North Middle School (NMS). All high school students attend one school and all three middle schools feed into it.</p> <p>The reviewer observed that their description was based on the eligibility requirements for free/reduced rates in its schools. They also list students with disabilities and separated subgroups and shared demographics for participating schools. The focus on a more limited number of high need students is estimated to be about 1,800 students.as participants and 25 participating educators.</p>		

The District met the requirements of this section and received a high score.

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

10

5

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The proposed model is scaled to occur as an integral component of district-wide reform. Since the model they proposal includes all students at the secondary level, they are not “piloting” the reform for a few students or one school.

Their proposal notes that the key to an assurance that all students stay on track to master the rigorous competencies (Core Competencies) necessary for success in the 21st Century is effective teachers who have the resources necessary to recognize and meet the needs of all students and, then to provide them with the personalized instruction needed by each to ensure that they stay on track. Thus, they say they have in place the highest quality professional development that recognizes the needs of individual teachers, departments and building and provides the support they need to grow and develop as necessary. They believe they have effective, efficient readily accessible data collection that will be at the core of their comprehensive reform efforts.

They say they have already instituted a 1 to1 initiative at the high school and are proposing the expansion of 1 to1 devices to the middle level. They plan to build their technological resources this will allow to expand district resources to meet the technological needs at the elementary level. They say they already have the cutting edge technological and staff development infrastructure that provides a firm foundation for the “next generation” paradigms they are proposing. They say that have already implemented a successful coaching model for support and professional development district-wide and believe this model – in concert with shared vision, PLC’s, collaborative leadership teams, tools and processes that facilitate data collection, management, analysis and problem solving – will further implementation. Moreover, they have expressed their belief that, based their current structures and competencies, they are ready to move to the next level.

A weakness of the proposal is that they tend to list their current competencies in terms of leadership and educators. However, they have not articulated an independent logic model or theory of change or a description as to how the reform model will be scaled up other that inclusion of all 6 - 12 schools. Therefore this section receives a medium score.

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

10

4

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Joplin expects to dramatically improve 1) the number and percentage of students who graduate from high school able to successfully participate in post-secondary educational experiences; and 2) successfully complete at least one year of higher education or career education; and/or increase the proportion of young people who obtain meaningful postsecondary credentials and/or work. Joplin noted that Missouri’s Department of Education established new performance standards and procedures for measuring. Therefore, the District will need to establish baselines and will not be able to compare to prior year data.

The primary goal of the Joplin School District is to use standardized state assessment data (Communication Arts and Math MAP and End of Course examinations), to ensure that all areas of student achievement, including super subgroups, will meet or exceed expectations established by the Missouri School Improvement Program. The District goal for all students including the super subgroups will meet or exceed the standards for two distinct assessments (i.e., State and District assessments), is ambitious and may be unachievable to set for one year’s progress.

The District’s attendance goal is that for attendance rates - annually ninety percent of students will at a minimum maintain a ninety percent attendance rate. Upon review of prior successes they say their current rate is 95 percent.

There is little evidence that they carefully thought through the prospects for closing the achievement gap (i.e., subgroups will score 100 percent on State assessments). Under college enrollment Joplin states that the percentage that graduates will

increase annually. It is not specified what their actual goal for college enrollment is predicted to be. This is considered a weakness.

The reviewer concludes that they should receive a medium score on this section.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	8
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Joplin County states that their graduation rate, has been a major concern for well over a decade. The drop out rate has increased about 6% because of the tornado, Prior to the tornado, it had improved for the past 6 years. Joplin intends to show Improved student learning outcomes and close achievement gaps by raising student achievement via high school graduation rates, and college enrollment rates. To show the improvement they provided five charts that are barely indicative of improvement. The charts show they are above state average on three charts: ACT scores, Career and technical placement rates and graduation rates are indicated. According to the charts and the narrative, the Joplin Special Ed is lower than the state average and the disciplinary suspension rate is lower than the state average. The District plans to student performance data available to students, educators, and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and services.</p> <p>Joplin intends to achieve reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools and in its low-performing schools but they did not provide examples of the intended reforms (depicts the same data). Overall the charts are not exemplary of the intended outcomes. This is considered a weakness. The applicant received a medium score.</p> <p>The reviewer scores this section as medium.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Joplin indicates that they develop, manage and report all district financial data in accordance with state requirements. All information is available to the public. While their system has the capacity to disaggregate information to the school level, currently they do not aggregate it in such away. They analyze and report public data at the district level. Schools receive reports on expenditures, but not salaries, etc. They state that information is available, but is not routinely reported in this manner.</p> <p>This is considerable weakness in this area because it is not transparent and is somewhat contradictory. They do not make teacher salaries readily available for teachers or non-personnel expenditures at the school level. Therefore the reviewer scores this section as medium score.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	2
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This area is designed to depict successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in the applicant's proposal. Joplin stated that the new vision requires that they be allowed to pilot new ways and get waivers from specific requirements. The District did not address sufficient autonomy under State, legal, statutory and regulatory requirements.</p> <p>Apparently the effect of the tornado was the catalyst for the creation of the vision for the new Joplin High School and Franklin</p>		

Technology Center. There is no evidence that they have requested or received legal authority to implement the personalized learning environment from any political entity. The reviewer scores the section low.

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

10

2

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

This section addresses meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal and meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal.

Joplin states that they held a meeting in April 2011 that resulted in defining 21st Century Learning Citizen Skills that are targets for our graduates. They defined their stakeholders as students, parents, teachers, administrators and business community representatives. They say the new school building will be ready in 2014. This is evident of the fact that Joplin was conducting a large scale strategic planning for a new high school that does not currently exist. Their descriptive engagement of stakeholders was designed to refine the vision for the future of education in Joplin.

Currently, they have participation for strategic planning and to refine their vision, they do not show evidence of engagement in the development of the proposal other a meeting of the "tether team" that met for the first time in September 2012. There is no evidence of collective participation or support. Letters are available from stakeholders. However, they appear to be more engaged in the strategic planning as connected to long term planning to become a participating school.

The reviewer scores this section low.

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

5

3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The LEA described its intent to develop a high-quality plan. However, the District failed to produce evidence that they have an analysis of the District's current status in planning personalized learning environments. The logic behind the reform proposal contained within this section does not include identified needs and gaps that the plan may address and implement in 2014. Joplin's discussion is more about refining the vision for future education by conducting meetings for teachers and business representatives to define what students should know and be able to do in order to be successful in specific pathway career choices.

The reviewer understands that the planning and analysis is in the fledgling phase. However, the District did not totally meet the criteria of this section. There was no clear delineation of section B5 in the document. The applicant received a medium score.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	4

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

This section details the extent to which the applicant has a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college-and career-ready.

The LEA states that, "all Joplin High School students will receive extensive personalized, "real-world" experiences that will equip them to successfully pursue their post-high school aspirations." They say "... we will ensure that we have in place a system that engages and supports all learners (particularly those who struggle)." They also expressed that "...Students will have access to rigorous standards, a variety of instructional approaches, technological learning tools, on-going and regular feedback and accommodations as needed." These statements demonstrate the fact that Joplin is not currently participating in improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment at this time and the plan is not in the implementation stage. They plan to design and implement a high quality personalized learning environment.

The District lists a lot of components for each section without describing how the components link to students understanding deep learning or what is key for students to be successful in accomplishing their goals. There was no mention of regular and

ongoing feedback to high needs students or mechanisms in place to provide training and support for students to ensure that they understand how to use the tools and resources to track and manage their learning. A glaring weakness in this section is the District failed to produce evidence that parents will be informed or included in understanding the concept of the proposed plan of personalized learning environments.

For the aforementioned reasons, the reviewer rates this section as low.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	4
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

This section is to detail the extent to which the applicant has a high-quality proposed plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. The District begins with a description of a "new" way of teaching. The applicant shared that these teachers will become 21st century teachers. However, the applicant did not define what 21st teachers will know and be able to do. Included in this section was what "Teachers Will Look Like." They say the teacher will move fluidly and from coach to direct instruction provider and resource provider without any explanation regarding these two positions.

The applicant failed to address if teachers will be trained on instructional practices to personalized learning environments or training on how to measure or accelerate student progress. There was no mention as to whether participating educators have access to, and know how to use, tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready graduation requirements. The District does use the state approved evaluation for both teachers and principals.

Base on not discussing or meeting expectations on areas of this section, the applicant received a low score.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	3

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

This section examines the extent to which the applicant has a high-quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator, and level of the education system (classroom, school, and LEA) with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed.

Central office meets the criteria of providing support and services for their schools. Additionally, school leadership teams do participate in the development of school schedules, staffing models, and budgets. However, there was no mention if school leadership participates or has responsibility for developing school calendars, school personnel decisions or responsibilities for educators and noneducators.

The applicant indicates that students are given opportunities to progress and demonstrate mastery of standards without time restraints, yet they failed to give any description of the opportunities. In fact, for three areas of this section, the applicant simply restated the criteria in the section.

The applicant scored low in this section.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	3
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

In this section the applicant must demonstrate the extent to which the applicant can develop a high-quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator (as defined in this notice), and level of the education system (classroom, school, and LEA) with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed.

Joplin School District infrastructure is said to support personalized learning. They stated that they have 1 to 1 access for all students in and out of schools, but they do not describe what 1 to 1 access is or means. While they say wireless internet is assessable to all stakeholders, the applicant does explain how it available to low-income parents and students. Nor do they

give examples of parents or students have access to necessary content, tools and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of the applicant's proposed proposal.

The Joplin plan states, "we must put in place an integrated data management system that will:..." They report needing access to an integrated data management system that will facilitate data mining to ensure periodic formative assessment of student growth and success and help teachers and principals determine how they can improve instruction and outcomes for individuals, schools and the district. The applicant did not discuss training for parents and students or data based accessibility for parents and students.

In this section the applicant scored low medium.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	3
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Because the applicant's high-quality plan represents the best thinking at a point in time, and may require adjustments and revisions during implementation, it is vital that the applicant have a clear and high-quality approach to continuously improve its plan.</p> <p>Joplin indicated that this project was developed with the input of school and district administrators, teachers, university and college personnel and community and business leaders. They further state that this stakeholder group will be invited to serve on the Advisory Committee that will oversee the implementation of the grant. Lastly, they indicate that parents and business partners will be recruited to participate on the Advisory Committee. The reviewer finds that this plan is very disjointed because the discussion in section B4 referenced strategic planning and dream meeting planning without any concrete regard to this proposal..</p> <p>In this section they introduced two positions, a data and a project manager, to be in charge of managing an ongoing. These positions were not previously mentioned. All prior references in this proposal has been written in future tense (i.e., "it will be"). This is a major weakness and point of contention.</p> <p>Joplin indicates that the managers will help stakeholders monitor progress toward outcomes of the Project, and to review process evaluation findings that identify success and gaps in the implementation process. They added an evaluator who will also help facilitate discussion and decision-making on improvements in program implementation and impact based on the data. The evaluator will also be responsible for preparing a draft of a system-change model, then revise and refine it working with program administrators.</p> <p>Although the applicant addressed how it will monitor and measure the quality of its investments funded by race to the top, it did not include that it will publish or otherwise share the information. Given the disjointed descriptions and lack of congruency the reviewer rate this section low.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	0
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The reviewer searched and could not find this section or reference to this section in the document. Because they did not answer this section they received a low rating.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	0
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Unable to locate reference to Appendix B Performance Measures . This section is rated low.</p>		

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0
(E)(4) Reviewer Comments: The section was not submitted. The applicant received a low rating.		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	7
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: While the district provided a narrative for their budget, they did not submit an overall budget chart. Although individual budgets for personnel, staff development, etc. were available for review, the District should have tied the individual budgets to an overall budget. They did not define any foundation support, but the indicated that they will receive \$62 million from a combination of insurance, FEMA, donations and a bond issue the community passed. The reviewer finds that the applicant discussed at length the need for receiving the grant and they presented a lot of charts budget documentation; however, they did not submit an overall budget summary. The applicant received a medium rating.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	0
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: F2 was not submitted. The rating is low.		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	2
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: Joplin recognized and articulated the need for having a coherent and sustainable partnership. They acknowledge that it is important to develop partnerships; however, JPS did not identify a coherent and sustainable partnership. The District provided a list and description of service organizations that supported the community following the tornado strike. Additionally, the applicant stated that they expect to receive funding from FEMA and other sources. The glaring weakness is that the District has not established a coherent and sustainable partnership that is directly related to this proposal request as it relates to the priorities in this section. Therefore, the applicant received a low rating.		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: The applicant addressed many needs and is in a planning stage to address the needs. Most of the proposal language is written in future tense and indicates what they plan to do if funded. There is little evidence based on the responses in the proposal that they have a plan that is being implemented. or partnership that is coherent and sustainable to address the needs of high risk students in a personalized learning environment. The proposed plan does offer how the District would create learning environments to improve learning and teaching. Joplin does set achievable goals related to students and educators, and they have expressed a methodology of how to decrease		

achievement gaps and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepare for college and careers.

Total	210	65
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

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

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

This applicant requested an optional budget supplement for its Bright Futures program that uses the Joplin framework. This coherent and well stated request was developed because Joplin Schools worked with the community to develop Bright Futures to connect community resources with students and families in need through the school system because of identified low graduation and drop out rates. This demonstrates the initiative of the District but has not long been in existence. They state that drop out rates have decreased and graduation rates have increased. It does not indicate how this can be replicated or co-developed across other Districts. But it does have a priority to effectively the close achievement gap. However, the framework offers a non-specific approach to closing the achievement gap.

This project could be significant foundation toward planning to meet community needs and integrate planning enhancements toward a individualized learning project if it can employ personnel to address the criteria.

Had more detail been provided, the initiative could be judged more favorably on the extent to which the applicant has a clear, discrete, and innovative solution that can be replicated in schools across the Nation. This section has received a meduim rating.