Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0972KY-2 for Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that builds on its work in the four core educational assurance areas as evidenced by:

A consortium of 16 rural school districts made the commitment to share resources and professional learning opportunities and also work to affect policy and protocol in an effort to connect learners to highly effective teachers every day. This resulted in the development of the Appalachian Renaissance Initiative (ARI). The ARI will create systems, resources, and tools which will implement five integrated and programmatically interconnected projects:

1) Personalized Learning Environment,

2) Next Generation Classrooms,

3) Accessible Data Systems;

4) Effective Teachers and Leaders; and

5) College- and Career-Readiness.

The applicant will develop effective teachers and strong principals and engage families in a collaborative effort to provide students with a personalized learning environment that will result in high student academic achievement, a reduction of learning gaps, the turning around of low performing schools, increased graduation rates, higher college enrollment and post-secondary completion, and citizens who are responsible and capable to participate nationally and globally in successful careers.

The applicant addresses three of the four core areas: Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed; Data systems that measure student growth and success and inform teachers and principals with data to improve instruction; and Recruit, develop, reward, and retain effective teachers and principals.

Although the applicant did not specifically address how it would turn around low-achieving schools, all the schools are low-achieving and the Students Transforming Appalachia with Real Solutions (STARS) program is designed to address this issue in all the participating schools.

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

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents a strong approach to implementing its reform proposal and demonstrates how it will support high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation of that proposal, as shown by:

- The schools and districts identified to participate were selected based on their commitment and readiness to provide students with a high quality education and their willingness to engage in innovative strategies to drive academic achievement, increase graduation rates, and increase college and career success.
- The participating 95 schools and 16 school districts will collaborate and share instructional resources, share professional learning opportunities, and work to affect policy and protocol in an effort to connect learners to highly effective teachers and leaders every day.
- The applicant will serve all 40,543 students, the majority of whom are high need and low income, and 2,724 teachers in 16 school districts.

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

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant includes a high-quality plan describing how the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools and will help the applicant reach its outcome goals as demonstrated by:

- The applicant's personalized learning model fosters a collaborative partnership between the teacher, parent, student and school that designs a tailored learning program for each student according to the needs and interests of each student.
- Instructional coaches and facilitators will engage all teachers in regional Professional Learning Communities and job-embedded professional development to empower educators with the most current research-based strategies that positively impact learning in the classroom.
- The initiative will support member districts in their effort to develop a "one to one" technology model at specific grade bands; "next generation" classroom technology and "intra-district" collaboration for virtual learning opportunities.
- The ARI will also create a distance learning network to dramatically expand curriculum opportunities, peer-to-peer learning, and mentoring opportunities.
- ARI will focus educator efforts on: developing technology-enhanced, student-centered learning environments that organize interrelated learning themes into meaningful contexts; and developing Student-Centric Classrooms that use Project-Based Learning to enable students to generatively learn by building on their own experiences within one of 14 career clusters.

The applicant's logic model clearly describes needs and barriers, inputs and resources, projects and activities, goals, outcomes, and impacts, all of which are part of a high-quality plan.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	8

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

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 that are equal to State ESEA targets for the LEA(s), overall and by student subgroup, as noted by:

- Improving student academic performance by increasing student performance substantially on the state and PLAN assessments in Mathematics and Literacy over the term of the grant. It is unclear why literacy is the focus only in Grade 3.
- Decreasing achievement gaps for low-income students and students with disabilities on the state and PLAN assessments.
- Achieving a graduation rate of 93.21% by the 2016-2017 school year. A weakness to the application is that a definition for PLAN could not be found making it difficult to determine its usefulness in meeting goals.
- Achieving an achievable college enrollment rate for their 2016-2017 cohort of graduates enrolled in a higher-education institution during the 16 months after graduation of 38% from the current 31%.

It is unclear whether the goals expressed met or exceeded the state requirements.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	7

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has not clearly demonstrated a clear record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching in all the participating schools as evidenced by:

- The lead LEA cites a state report that reflects steady and sustained decreases in the number of students who are scoring in the novice range and a marked increase in the percentage of students who are scoring proficient and distinguished on the state assessments for their schools. However, the applicant does not cite performance data for any other schools.
- The lead LEA has taken an active role in equipping teachers and administrators to provide quality programs that meet

the needs of every student. However, information about activities in most other schools is absent.
- No evidence of high school graduation rates and college enrollment data for any of the participants is presented.
- With the help of the lead LEA, one of the persistently low-achieving schools in this application improved the number of students scoring
  proficient or distinguished in reading and mathematics by 24.25 percent, the most of any of the 10 schools identified as persistently
  low-achieving and met AYP. While this is a strength, insufficient information about reforms at any other low-achieving schools is presented.
- The applicant states ARI will incorporate a blended communication and information sharing model within the region to ensure that student performance data is accessible and understandable; however, there is no evidence presented that this data is currently available to anyone other than educators.

The applicant does discuss what it plans to do to address these areas going forward, but does not sufficiently address what it has already done in the past four years.

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

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Each LEA has demonstrated evidence of a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments, as shown by:

- KVEC and each district communicate and make public the personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff; personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff only; personnel salaries at the school level for teachers only; and non-personnel expenditures at the school level through:
  - Board of Education Meetings,
  - School Based Decision Making meetings,
  - Links to school and district websites,
  - an Annual District Data Profile, and
  - Kentucky's DOE Portal.
- School Based Decision Making Councils (SBDMs) provide to the Districts' Board of Education, in an open meeting environment, monthly
  reports including school expenditures and student achievement.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	7

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Each LEA has partially demonstrated evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in the applicant's proposal. They do state:

- ARI districts and schools are currently engaged in developing plans for submission to the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) that "re-think and re-vision" what a school might look like and how it might function in the best interest of learners.
- ARI districts are redesigning student learning and developing innovation plans in an effort to engage and motivate more students and increase the numbers of those who are college and career ready.

However, the applicant does not state whether either of these plans have been presented to or are approved by the state, just that they are engaged in developing plans. The applicant does provide a copy of correspondence from Kentucky's DOE that states they reviewed the proposal and found that it meet the requirements of the grant instructions.

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

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Each LEA has demonstrated evidence of meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal and meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal, as indicated by:

- An on-line student survey was developed and sent to a randomly selected target student population. The Team received responses from over 1,800 students.
- Each building Principal provided their school staff with ARI action plans, measurable objectives, and implementation

strategies and the current version of the application. Teachers across the region contributed to the ARI design through focus group discussions and technology assisted interactions with Design Team Members throughout the process. Average teacher support for the ARI throughout the districts was over 94%.
- The ARI Design Team collected over 100 letters of support and commitment from parents, parent organizations, student organizations, early learning programs, business community, civil rights organizations, advocacy groups, local civic and community-based organizations, and institutions of higher education.

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

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Each LEA has demonstrated evidence of a high-quality plan for an analysis of the applicant's current status in implementing personalized learning environments and the logic behind the reform proposal, as shown by:

- ARI will conduct an assessment of the needs and gaps in implementing a personalized learning environment and provide advisement on the district-wide implementation of personalized learning environments. Based on their analysis of academic gaps in learning and the substantial share of low-income students in the region, they have already chosen to focus on closing the achievement gaps of low-income students as part of their goals.
- ARI will contract with the Rand Corporation to conduct an external evaluation, assist in the implementation of a Continuous Quality Improvement plan, and conduct a needs assessment and gap analysis in the implementation of personalized learning environment.
- One of the gaps they have identified is that Southeast Kentucky is one of the most distressed regions of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. It is an area characterized by low incomes and high rates of poverty, high unemployment, and low levels of education attainment among the working age population. All but one of the 12 counties have been classified as "Distressed Areas" in accordance with the Appalachian Regional Commission's (ARC) County Economic Status Classification System and Distressed Areas since 2007.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant 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, as evidenced by:

- The applicant will follow Kentucky law which mandates that education agencies develop a unified strategy to reduce college remediation rates of recent high school graduates by at least 50 percent from 2010-2014 and to increase the college completion rates of students enrolled in one or more remedial classes by three percent annually from 2009 to 2014.
- The ARI will provide a personalized learning environment aligned to college and career ready standards for all students which will ensure they have the supports that will enable them graduate academically prepared to be successful in the post-secondary world.
- The ARI approach engages teachers, parents, and students in a collaborative partnership which will be tailored for each student according to their needs and interests.
- The applicant will utilize project-based learning experiences which will allow students to use technology and scientific inquiry to respond to complex issues, problems, or challenges in their community which demonstrates deep learning under diverse contexts.
- The ARI STARS program will provide students with opportunities for real world project-based learning that solve community problems.
- Curriculum/Instructional Coaches from the ARI program will work with groups of teachers from math, science, and literacy which will help develop integrated project-based curriculum.
- Activities will be developed to allow students with different levels of mathematical, literacy, and science sophistication to participate in different ways within the same learning module to master critical academic content.
- The ARI Personalized Learning model fosters a collaborative partnership between the teacher, parent, student and school that designs a tailored learning program for each student according to the needs and interests of each individual student linked to college- and career-ready standards or college- and career ready graduation requirements.
- The ARI staff will work with school districts to implement ILPs for students in grades 6 through 12.
- ARI will develop new mathematics and literacy frameworks for participating classrooms based on the state common

core.

- ARI Instructional/Curricular Coaches and Facilitators will work with participating districts through regional PLCs, mentoring, and direct training which will increase a curricular and learning focus on flexibility in Mastery Learning.
- ARI Leadership, working in conjunction with a regional focus team of education leaders, will continue ongoing work in partner districts to re-vision awarding academic credit in a regional effort to increase learning and engagement and help students graduate ready for success in college and careers.
- Students will use problem-based learning (PBL) in the context of challenging, open-ended lessons that squarely address common core standards.
- ARI will focus educator efforts on developing technology-enhanced, student-centered learning environments that organize interrelated learning themes into meaningful contexts and developing Student-Centric Classrooms that use Project-Based Learning to enable students to generatively learn by building on their own experiences and within one of Kentucky's 14 identified career clusters.
- ARI will provide rural learners in very small districts with very small class sizes increased curriculum opportunities through distance learning.
- Students will have access to webinars with rotating businesses representing high-demand jobs, at different entry levels, and with two- and four-year colleges.
- Participating ARI schools will develop a distance learning program to provide students with opportunities to participate in classes with students from other locations.
- ARI regional Professional Learning Communities will engage teachers and leaders in ongoing opportunities for professional growth in the area of data analysis and interpretation related to academic growth.
- All students will have the resources and supports to develop individual student E-Portfolios.
- All participating ARI districts currently utilize the WIN Career Readiness Courseware® for integration into the high-school curriculum to support this commitment to learning for all students, including those with disabilities and Limited English Proficiency (LEP).
- The existing KVEC Career and College Readiness Transformations program provides students with digital learning content through a web-based software program, customized for rural KY, which compiles, analyzes, and displays the most current education, workforce, and economic trend data for industries and jobs, locally, regionally and nationally so that students can plan for careers and college realistically and relevant to current and projected workforce demand.
- The ARI will collaborate with ATLN in an ongoing effort to systematize educational supports across the region.
- The ARI will develop and coordinate a series of 16 annual and ongoing workshops/trainings/forums across the region which will provide parents and caregivers increased opportunities for interaction and engagement in the education process.
- The mentor program will utilize existing information from students' Individual Learning Plan (ILP), coursework, and other career inventories to identify their key interests.

The applicant provides a high quality plan for learning that demonstrates an adequate time line for deliverables of activities and responsible parties.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	18

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents 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 as shown by:

- The applicant states an integrated team of regional ARI Coaches and Facilitators will engage teachers in training in their classrooms through a system of regional PLCs and through involvement in the PETLL Initiative.
- The ARI model will provide interactive activities that enable educators to address unique learning interests and needs, study multiple levels of complexity, and deepen understanding.
- ARI will provide teachers with regional professional learning opportunities via face to face or distance learning platform.
- A team of ARI Instructional Coaches and facilitators will work with districts to provide coaching on integrating curriculum and implementing co-teaching in a job-embedded professional learning framework.
- The ARI data portal will work in collaboration with the Kentucky Department of Education's (KDE) "Open House" data warehouse and provide teachers with current and relevant data on student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards.
- Each district will have a Data Analyst/College/Career Readiness District Coordinator who will collect/analyze individual student data.
- A team of ARI Perpetuating Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Leadership (PETLL)/Effectiveness Coaches will be identified, selected, and provided rigorous training in the KDE effectiveness model and coaching strategies.
- The ARI coaches will work with teachers and instructional leaders across the region to successfully implement the effectiveness model and improve teaching, leading, and learning in the participating district.

The ARI Coaches will form a cadre of teacher leaders and administrators who will engage in extended training to serve as mentors to their colleagues and to engage in intra-district PLCs centered on effectiveness using a blended model (face-to-face and web -interaction) for appropriate and timely feedback on instruction and teaching practice.

- The ARI Leadership Team will form a representative Advisory Board from ATLN membership and from nationally recognized education experts that will meet quarterly to share information, create new strategies, and engage in meaningful and substantive conversation and work focused on the ARI activities and implemented strategies.
- ATLN will continue to develop as a scalable model that can be replicated or expanded to serve other regions and to address unique needs and challenges.
- ARI will identify a cadre of exemplary teachers and engage them in intense Quality Core trainings. This cadre will be charged with developing additional Quality core units which they model for their peers.
- ARI will also provide teachers with access to distance learning professional development activities.
- ARI will provide teachers with enhanced Rtl training to expand Rtl use in schools.
- Through PETLL, teachers will receive visits from building leaders as part of a series of classroom observations and discussions in small groups and face-to-face settings. These visits will also assist teachers in selecting the right tools and resources for matching the student needs.
- Technology Curriculum Facilitators will provide training on integrating technology into the classroom to provide them additional skills in using high-quality resources and tools.
- ARI will expand on the existing regional integrated model of service delivery that focuses schools and districts on addressing specific issues relevant to GAP populations and use staff specialists in areas including data analysis, special needs, and instructional interventions.
- ARI will incorporate existing expertise as part of the regional effectiveness team to provide support to districts and schools as the state-wide pilot goes into effect.
- Charlotte Danielson has contributed to the ARI design for the Teacher Growth and Evaluation System and will work with ARI as a member of the Expert Advisory Group during the scope of the Initiative beyond.
- Real time observation with feedback will take place between teachers and instructional leaders across the region. ARI Coaches will work with educational leaders to assist them to internalize and use instructional observation analysis to inform instructional improvement.
- ARI will develop a regional specialized peer observation/consultant cadre who will work with identified teachers in the ARI district schools who have received an ineffective rating on teacher evaluations.
- Consultants will conduct classroom observations, assist principals and teachers in development and monitoring of Professional Growth Plans, and conduct classroom observations with assessments of teaching and learning.
- ARI will engage in rigorous training focused on instructional leadership and provided multiple growth experiences and activities that will prepare them to be quality teacher leaders for their school and district.
- ARI will provide professional development to teachers which incorporate the "train the trainer" model so that the programs can be continued and sustainable through the seven measured years of the grant and beyond.
- ARI will expand on the existing regional integrated model of service delivery that focuses schools and districts on addressing specific issues relevant to gap populations and use staff specialists in areas including data analysis, special needs, and instructional interventions.
- The applicant has a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principal during the five year duration of RTTT funding and states there will be a 5% yearly increase in the number of Effective Teachers and Leaders as measured by the Kentucky Effectiveness System. This will be accomplished by providing them with professional development, resources, tools, and support.

The applicant does not present a clear 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, and specialty areas.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

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 with the support and resources they need as demonstrated by:

- All of the 16 school districts in the ARI consortium will collaborate through the Appalachian Teaching and Leadership

Network (ATLN) in an ongoing examination engaged in a process to determine best practice for leadership organizational structure and governance.
- ARI leadership will provide coaches to administrators on Educator Effectiveness, Instructional Technology, and Career and College Readiness.
- The strong collaboration between ARI and ATLN will enable regional leaders to use their strengths as policy leaders to overcome obstacles in this shift to a competency-based education system.
- ARI consortium districts have worked toward greater levels of flexibility in school decisions for several years in the areas of scheduling and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and noneducators, and school-level budgets.
- The ARI will use Learning Trajectories Mathematics and English/Language Arts modules which provide students the opportunity to engage in the same curricular concept at their own learning level. Students will access individualized, learning trajectory modules, to increase their own competencies in one or more topic areas in a project-based, collaborative classroom.
- Training will be provided on Mastery Learning, Compacting Learning, models in the region.
- ARI will provide each middle and high school with online learning licenses that will provide students the opportunity to accelerate credits during non-school time or during study halls.
- The ARI Project Director will work with local colleges and participating high schools to increase student participation in Dual Credit Coursework.
- ARI Leadership, working in conjunction with a regional focus team of education leaders, will continue ongoing work in partner districts to re-vision awarding academic credit in a regional effort to increase learning and engagement and help students graduate ready for success in college and careers.
- ARI will provide students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways. ARI Instructional/Curricular Coaches and Facilitators will work with participating districts through regional PLCs, mentoring, and direct training to increase a curricular and learning focus on flexibility in Mastery Learning.
- ARI will provide districts with rich and robust opportunities for learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners.

It is apparent this is a high-quality plan that should be successful.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	10

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

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 with the support and resources they need, as evidenced by:

- ARI will provide students and families with increased access to content through lending libraries and by creating an infrastructure and providing schools with the technology to provide distant learning.
- ARI will develop a Web-based Instructional and Curricular Data Base populated by educators within the collaborative. This instructional and curricular data base will include on-line curriculum, tutorials, study guides, and video of exemplary lessons that meet criteria for relevance and rigor in the Common Core standards and framework for highly effective teachers. The database will be accessible to students, parents, the community, and all caregivers.
- ARI will purchase online curriculum content for use by schools for grades 7 -12. which will be aligned with the common core standards and will include all courses necessary for graduation as well as some initiatives.
- The ARI project is also funding additional end use devices so that each district may achieve their goal of 1:1 technology device to student for students in grade 6-12.
- ARI will provide technical supports to students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders involved in this initiative in the form of job-embedded professional development, community engagement forums, and targeted trainings and workshops.
- ARI will provide Education Technology Support Staff to install and maintain technology for distance learning, to assist districts with Web-based Instructional and Curricular Data Base support, lending library, and provide support for the obtainment of the one-to-one Technology ratio. The ARI Instructional and Curricular Data Base will have 24/7 online supports.
- The ARI instructional and curricular data base and the KDE data base will be used to inform teacher and leader needs for additional learning supports and interventions. These systems are in open data format that allow for extraction, data translation, and/or manipulation in order to be used in electronics systems.
- The ARI Instruction and Curricular Data Base, the KDE "Open House," the ILP, and the Individual Student e-Portfolio are all interoperable data systems that are accessible by teachers, students, and parents.
- ARI will conduct an ongoing series of parent and community workshops/trainings that provide parents and caregivers

with opportunities to increase their data fluency.

The applicant presents a table that outlines ambitious but achievable Activities, Timelines, Deliverables, and Responsibilities for all these practices.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents an actionable strategy for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the term of the grant as demonstrated by:

- ARI has been designed with a strong Continuous Improvement Process in Mind. RAND Corporation has agreed to provide ongoing support with the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process by developing a logic model, identifying the intermediate outcomes, and mapping data sources to serve as indicators to achieving the intermediate and long term outcomes.
- KVEC will form an ARI Leadership Team for the implementation of this project which will meet regularly to conduct systematic reviews of data, troubleshoot implementation challenges, and plan methods to enhance performance or quality programming.
- The ARI project will expand the ATLN advisory board to include national experts in education, college and career readiness, and educator effectiveness.
- All districts participating in the ARI will engage in regular academic reviews to analyze school and district student achievement data to determine individual student needs as well as school wide curricular strengths and areas for improvement.
- PETLL requires school staff members to engage in an analysis of multi-year student performance data, school staff members to prepare presentations of their data analysis and findings, external team school visits that include classroom observations focused on teaching and learning, external team reports about the observed instructional snapshots, systematic analysis of school-based and external team reports about teaching and learning in each schools, and strategic plans that target areas of improvement to guide reform efforts and observations.
- ARI project will create intra-district PLCs to focus on operationalizing the PETLL review plans as well as implementing personalized learning environments, mentoring, and classroom observations.
- College and career readiness design teams currently participating in the i-3 regional C3R initiative will design an implementation model for soft skills, foundational skills, and individualized student e-portfolios to be actualized throughout the ARI participating districts.
- KVEC will establish a web site for the RTTT-D project which will provide information on the program to include updated results from their external evaluator. KVEC will make broadly available through formal (e.g., peer-reviewed journals) or informal (e.g., newsletters) mechanisms, and in print or electronically, the results of any evaluations it conducts of its funded activities. KVEC will work with community and business partners to provide a broader dispersion of our research.

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

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates adequate strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders as shown:

- KVEC will have ongoing engagement with the ARI Consortia Leadership team which will collect and report feedback from each of their districts.
- KVEC will establish a web site for the RTTT-D project which will provide information on the program to include updated results from their external evaluator.
- KVEC will work with community and business partners to provide a broader dispersion of their research.
- The ARI project will expand the ATLN advisory board to include national experts in education, college and career readiness, and educator effectiveness.
- ARI will institute a series of ongoing parent and community workshops, trainings, and forums designed to provide important information on a variety of topics and as importantly serve as a face-to-face two way communication link

directly to the community.
- The ARI web portal will provide all stakeholders with information on the projects mission, vision, scope, goals, and plan. The site will also provide stakeholders with a current status of all projects utilizing the high-quality plans as a format. The web-site will provide for comments and blogs from students, parents, and other members of the community.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has provided ambitious yet achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup, with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures, as shown by:

- KVEC selected appropriate measures based on the need to place literacy and math measures at the elementary, middle, and high school level. The ACT Plan and Explore were used as a measure of college- and career-readiness because of their national acceptance.
- KVEC has chosen measures based on state assessments which will provide information on the success of the program at key times within a student's development at grade 4 and 8 and summative measures at grades 10-12.
- KVEC has also chosen measures based on state assessments which will provide information in literacy and mathematics, as well as non-cognitive, career, and college- and career-readiness.
- The CQI Principal Investigator along with the ARI Leadership Team will collect, analyze, and disseminate data to project personnel and the US Department of Education to ensure that timely and informed decisions about implementation are made throughout the life cycle of the program to gauge implementation progress.

For the grade 4-8 population, the applicant does not propose at least one grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan.

The applicant plans to revisit the Fidelity of Implementation Measures with the ARI Leadership team monthly to assess the fidelity between the
projects as proposed and the projects in action, and help ensure that program activities are planned with a sufficient level of frequency,intensity, and duration to produce the desired outcomes.

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

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has strong plans to evaluate the effectiveness of Race to the Top – District funded activities, such as professional development and activities that employ technology, and to more productively use time, staff, money, or other resources in order to improve results, through such strategies as improved use of technology, working with community partners, compensation reform, and modification of school schedules and structures, as evidenced by:

- The ARI Leadership Team and CQI Consultant will work with the Department of Education to ensure that data collection and program design are consistent with plans to conduct a rigorous national evaluation of their program and of specific solutions and strategies being pursued.
- ARI and the CQI Consultant will develop, in consultation with the national evaluator, a plan for identifying and collecting reliable and valid baseline data for program participants.
- ARI and the contracted CQI Consultant and evaluator, the Rand Corporation, will share metadata about content alignment with college- and career-ready standards and use through open standard registries.

The applicant has an adequate plan for addressing this criterion.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(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 applicant’s proposal and clearly provides a thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities, as noted by:

The project is fully funded with RTTT-D funds and KVEC has an Investing in Innovation Development grant that will complement efforts.
- The Appalachian Training and Leadership Network (ATLN) provided a means to gather resources and connect schools to business and organizations that provide project-based learning opportunities and mentorship that are in-kind.
- The KVEC budget is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the proposal.
- KVEC will invest in projects that will assist all 16 districts in this proposal to implement personalized learning environments, build 21st Century classrooms, and improve teacher effectiveness.
- An adequate description of funds is provided for each budget item.
- One-time investments are identified which are not part of ongoing operational costs that will be incurred during and after the grant period with a focus on strategies that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	8

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant as shown by:

- ARI efforts will develop effective teachers, strong principals, and engaged families and students who will collaborate to provide students with a personalized learning environment that will result in high student academic achievement, the reduction of learning gaps, increased graduation rates, higher college enrollment and post-secondary completion, and citizens who are responsible and ready to participate as
responsible and engaged citizens, nationally and globally in successful careers.
- KVEC has built tremendous community support for the project as evidenced by the nearly 100 letters of support received.
- KVEC has built strategic partnerships with organizations throughout the region which will provide knowledge and resources that will assist in sustaining efforts well past the grant.
- The professional development programs the district has created will develop strong and effective teachers which will sustain internal systems to ensure that the necessary fiscal, personnel, evaluation and other internal capabilities are able to perform effectively.
- Several mechanisms are in place and will be expanded and institutionalized into the core of the school and community to ensure sustainability of the ARI.
- KVEC expects that well past the RTTT-D grant funded period, the resources identified by KDE and KVEC will continue to support efforts within the 16 districts and 95 schools in this application as well as scaling them up to include additional districts beyond the initial ARI districts.

The applicant's plan lacks specificity as to how they are going to engender continued support from State and local government leaders and financial support.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes to integrate public or private resources in a partnership designed to augment the schools' resources by providing additional student and family supports to schools that address the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of the participating students, giving highest priority to students in participating schools with high-need students, as shown by:

Partnership

- ARI will focus on creating services to support the 'whole' child and their families through a wrap-around approach with resources to help students successfully move through grades K-12 and into the college system.
- ARI will create a partnership to augment the schools' resources by providing additional student and family supports that address the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of students.
- Kentucky River Community Care (KRCC) and Mountain Comprehensive Health Care will partner with KVEC and ARI to establish new school based clinics in all 16 school districts schools in the ARI proposal.
- To combat the addiction problems ARI will partner with our public health partners and the Treatment Research Institute (TRI).

The applicant states that benefits of these school based health clinics for their school system are:

- An increase in the average daily attendance (ADA), an increase in student instruction days due to a decrease in absenteeism, and an increase in staff productivity due to a decrease in teacher/staff absenteeism.

Tracking, targeting, and scaling

- The KVEC external evaluator will collect data on the selected measures on a quarterly and annual basis to target resources on students from low-income families.
- ARI plans to work with districts to scale up these programs once they prove successful and as resources permit.
- The ARI Leadership Team which will use the continuous improvement process to improve results over time.

Integration

- The program will integrate with educational and counseling services by providing educators, counselors, and students with education on health and mental health.
- Based on analysis of academic gaps in learning and the very disproportionate share of low-income students in the region the applicant has chosen to focus on closing the achievement gaps of low-income students as part of its goals.
- According to the Kentucky Institute of Medicine (The Health of Kentucky- A County Assessment - 2007) seven of the least healthy counties in Kentucky are here in eastern Kentucky; five of those counties are participants in the ARI.
- The rural communities in KVEC's service area are located in the bottom percentile of landscape, industry, rural/urban distribution of population, socioeconomic factors, level of education and health.
- The ARI and the ATLN quarterly advisory meetings will be used to identify and address critical health issues and well-being indicators and propose solutions to confront those issues.

Building capacity

- The ARI will provide workshops throughout the region with students, family, teachers, and school leaders to create local and regional capacity and provide parents in each of the communities an opportunity to examine their current educational system.
- KVEC will contract with an external evaluator who will collect data on a quarterly basis and an Assessment Team will be organized that
  will initially analyze the needs and gaps for the project.

Ambitious yet achievable performance measures

- The applicant presents a table of annual ambitious yet achievable competitive preference priority performance measures of reducing student
  absenteeism, reducing drop-outs, and increasing the percent of students meeting or exceeding College and Career Readiness that are fully compatible with this partnership.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant, the Appalachian Renaissance Initiative, has demonstrated it will create systems, resources, and tools which will lead to a revival in educational achievement in the Appalachian Region.

The ARI will develop effective teachers, strong principals, and engaged families in a collaborative effort to provide students with a personalized learning environment that will result in high student academic achievement, the reduction of learning gaps, turning around low performing schools, increased graduation rates, higher college enrollment and post-secondary completion, and citizens who are responsible and capable to participate nationally and globally in successful careers.

This is a strong application specifically tailored to the needs of its citizenry, which aligns with the four core educational assurance areas and is very likely to be successful.

Total	210	191

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0972KY-3 for Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The proposed plan clearly supports the RTT-D goal by proposing to implement a comprehensive program involving 16 school districts and a number of community groups and organizations. The proposed approach is a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that when fully implemented will build upon the four core assurance areas. The evidence provided to carry out the vision includes the commitment of the 16 districts who will share resources and professional learning opportunities and who will support policy changes and efforts that will lead to empowering learners and connecting them to highly effective educators. The vision has a partnership that includes community and regional health organizations and post secondary institutions who have made commitments to reduce acheivement gaps, increase graduation rates and improve college graduation rates. To that end, the plan of the consortium of 16 districts will carry out 5 interrelated projects, provide appropriate training to produce effective teachers and principals, increase learning achievement and reduce gaps, turn around lowest performing schools, and increase the number of students graduating high school college-and career ready.

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

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The consortium selected the participating schools based on a number of factors that included a commitment to the implementation of the project and their readiness for providing the students opportunities to improve their learning and accelerate the college- and career-readiness support that includes commitment to the proposed innovative educational solutions such as improving learning and revitalizing teaching, learning, and leadership systems. The applicant also included a list of the participating schools (16 districts and 95 schools) all meeting eligibility requirements. The consortium will serve 40,543 students and 2,724 teachers and will include 58 elementary schools, 14 middle schools, 21 high schools, and 2 K-12 schools. The project will include 28,876 students from low-income families, and 32,946 students who are high-need students.

The schools were selected to participate in the project based on their commitment to the vision and goals of the project and their readiness to implemnt initiatives and activities aimed at increasing academic excellence and for providing a high quality education for all students. Thus, the applicant has presented a high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation.

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

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes a high-quality plan that addresses several initiatives for scaling up and supporting meaningful reform. The proposed approach combines five projects (personalized learning environment, next generation classrooms, accessible data systems, effective teachers, and college- and career readiness) that when combined with the project's professional development strategies is comprehensive and one that will help the applicant reach its outcome goals. The applicant proposes to carry out a number of goals and illustrates the activities, timelines, and parties responsible for implementing the activities. As outlined, this is clearly a comprehensive and sound plan. A logic model has also been provided that effectively displays in a concise manner what the project will do and outlining how the activities are linked to the project's expected outcomes. Examples for how the plan is expected to reach district and school levels

include reform efforts through the creation of regional learning communities, research-based, job-imbedded professional development, and a commitment to incorporate a renewed technology model that reaches individual classrooms at specific grade bands and virtual learning environments.

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

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Based on the applicant's proposed vision that includes an intra-collaborative consortium of 16 districts and that will create systems, tools, effective teachers and principals and families involved in the process, the applicant's proposed targets are achievable targets and ones that are likely to result in improved student learning. The applicant has included targets for all students and low-income students, and for each of the four areas: performance on summative assessments, achievement gaps, graduation rates, and college enrollments. To achieve each of the target areas, the applicant outlines a comprehensive plan that includes goals, activities, timelines and deliverables within each of the five projects. The applicant has identified benchmarks and LEA-wide goals for all student groups and within each core area. To measure growth, the applicant is using the number of students who will be proficient or above on the State's K-Prep assessment and will use the mean growth percentile as their method of determining growth.

The applicant will use state assessments as the benchmark but does not provide what this benchmark is; therefore, it is unclear what the state goal is and it is not possible to determine whether these goals are ambitious.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

As the lead group in the proposed project, the Kentucky Valley Education Cooperative identified a number of programs, assessments, interventions, and an attention to data collection and analysis that clearly demonstrate evidence of success for advancing student learning and achievement. The applicant presented data from assessment scores that showed improvement in student learning outcomes, and increased numbers of students, all students and special needs students. These scores were reflected by a demonstration of percentages scoring at the proficient and distinguished as compared to previous years. For example, the applicant proposes to improve student academic performance by increasing mathematics performance, grades 3-11. The applicant also indicates that achievement gaps for low-income students by decreasing gaps in core areas as measured by the state assessment tests. The applicant also described strategies and initiatives implemented to bring about improvements in its lowest-achieving schools making AYP and recognized at the White House School Turnaround Champions of Change event.

The applicant did not fully address reform efforts for its persistently lowest-achieving schools or its low-performing schools. What the applicant did was to provide data for only one school and provided data for 2010 and not for the required 4 years. Therefore, the applicant did not provide evidence for how it will achieve ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools or in its low-performing schools.

With respect to availability of student performance data to its stakeholders, the applicant indicated that it works with all its existing partnerships and numerous groups to help create awareness and to make the data available to all stakeholders. Other avenues identified included home visits and bus transportation for parents to visit schools and meet with educators. Because the applicant does not state that these opportunities were made available in previous years only that these are being proposed, the applicant has failed to address this area.

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

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant identified a number of venues used by the applicant and each of the participating school districts that indicate a high level of transparency for each of the four categories. These include monthly and open Board meetings, websites, school based decision making meetings, publication of a district data profile, and the state's data portal that includes data on students reaching proficiency and data reports used to analysis schools and districts success and financial data. Therefore, the applicant has provided conclusive evidence to fully address the criterion.

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

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has provided several examples and specific conditions to demonstrate that each LEA inclusive of the lead agency has sufficient autonomy from the state and its Department of Education to implement the personalized learning environments. These examples include a statute that is designed to support innovation and implementation within the region, and a House and Senate bill that allows districts to request exemptions from administrative and statutory requirements. Furthermore, the state has enacted a bill that focuses on college and career-readiness standards for all their students. The evidence provided by the applicant demonstrates that the conditions and supportive autonomy given to all will lead to successful implementation of the personalized learning environments as described in the proposal.

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

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

With buy-in from each of the participating district superintendents, the applicant organized a 26 member ARI Design Team that included school administrators and teachers, students and parents and engaged them in the development of the proposal. This same group went about gathering input from a number of stakeholders using a variety of communication outlets such as emails, focus groups, and community forums. The applicant also provided evidence on how it engaged and secured feedback from over 70% of the teachers in the participating schools. Letters of support submitted as Appendix K were secured for key stakeholders - parents, advocacy groups, community-based organizations. Given these activities, it is evident that each LEA has given evidence of meaningful stakeholder engagement, active involvement and support in the development of the proposal.

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

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a strong plan and has identified several initiatives and strategies and is designing research-based projects to address the gaps and needs of its target populations. Examples of these include proposing an integrated and concerted K-20 model to address regional systemic challenges; maximizing available resources and coordinating educational services; providing regional and ongoing workshops for parents; and designing expended curricular opportunities via a virtual learning network and curriculum for those districts experiencing rural isolation. The proposed logic behind the reform efforts was driven by research-based best practices as well as information obtained through student perceptions about teacher effectiveness, an understanding of not only the academic and cognitive needs of students but also by what research and industry are considered soft skills lacking in the current learning environments. The applicant also plans to conduct a needs and gap analysis assessment to identify barriers, obstacles and limiting factors to a personalized learning environment. As such, the applicant provides clear evidence of a high-quality plan that includes timelines, activities, deliverables, and responsible personnel.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant makes a strong case for their development of a comprehensive plan to implement a personalized learning platform for all students with the support of parents, educators, and students. This is evidenced by including strategies that involve all students in a rigorous course of study leading to college- and career-readiness. The proposed plan provides allowances for all students to understand how to reach educational goals linked to their individual college- and career goals. A variety of project-based learning experiences will be offered that are tailored to individual needs and interests. Examples of these include a mentoring program with community leaders and regional workforce for networking opportunities, teacher facilitated and student driven opportunities to involve students in real-world based learning mapped to common core state standards in literacy, math, and emerging science standards. These activities will be designed regardless of a student's level of understanding so that all students can be involved. To allow students access to diverse cultures and perspectives, the applicant has teamed with higher education institutions to provide distance learning opportunities. The applicant provides sufficient information to indicate a commitment to providing students with a personalized course sequence tailored to students' needs and geared to helping students meet their individual educational goals. The plan includes a variety of structural approaches and environments such as a trajectory-based curriculum, blended classrooms, and differentiated instruction. Initiatives and opportunities for teachers to ensure quality content are being provided in a variety of venues. Each of these initiatives are set to support full differentiation of learning and teamwork; aligned with US DOE and DOL career clusters, and aligned with common core state standards for reading. Professional conversations through professional learning communities will provide opportunities for reviewing and adjusting student data

and for making informed recommendations based on student knowledge and skills. To keep teachers informed and knowledgeable with the data, the applicant will engage teachers and principals in ongoing opportunities for professional growth. A courseware that allows for use of unique tired-learning levels will readily accommodate the needs of LEP and learning disabilities students. Mechanisms have been identified that support the training and support to students that include web-based software program and mentors to help guide students.

For the goal to create a personal learning environment, a high-quality plan was included that has timelines, activities, deliverables, and personnel responsibilities. This is considered a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching as it personalizes the learning environment and provides all students the support that will help them graduate college and career-ready.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	19

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposed a coordinated and focused delivery system that supports job-embedded professional learning. Coaches and facilitators will lead, through professional learning communities, the training support. These include interactive activities through technology enhanced and that support personalized learning environments and are student focused. Through the integrated technology and project-based learning strategies, the applicant provides assurances for educators to adapt content and instruction that are responsive to all students' academic needs. This will occur via the proposed coaching on integrating curriculum and implementing co-teaching in a job-embedded professional learning framework which will be provided by the coaches and facilitators. The applicant also outlines how teachers will be provided access to student data through the open house data warehouse thereby providing teachers with current and useful data. By following an innovative and improvement model, Perpetuating Excellence in Teaching, Leadership, and Learning (PETLL), the applicant has identified an ambitious and appropriate plan for improving teacher and principal effectiveness. The proposed model includes assurances for developing a sustainable professional learning culture which is said to be measured by students' and schools' academic performance, teacher and leader efficacy. The use of a data analyst assigned to each school provides assurances that teachers and school leaders will have access to and will know how to use data and resources. These include a career and college-ready initiative, PETLL reflective analysis and the Appalachian Teaching and Leadership Network research. Distance learning and intense quality core training are two other resources identified by the applicant giving access to data, tools, and resources. The technology curriculum facilitators and the professional learning communities are two examples provided by the applicant giving evidence that it will provide teachers with feedback that the tools and resources provided them are effective. The applicant states that it has a teacher evaluation system in place and provides assurances that school leaders will assess and take appropriate steps to improve teacher effectiveness and school culture for the purpose of continuous school improvement. These include the use of multiple measures such as school leader and peer observations, rigorous training focused on instructional leadership and multiple growth experiences, self reflection and student growth. The applicant proposes using the train-the-trainer model which will become a sustainable model beyond the grant period. Evidence of a sound training program to continuously improve school progress was evident via 6 training clusters for which the applicant provides assurances for reaching the goals of increased student performance and for closing the gaps. Use of staff specialists will also help close gaps in areas such as special needs, data analysis and instructional interventions. By committing to implement a new growth and effectiveness system for determining teacher and leader effectiveness, the applicant is also committing to increase the number of students who have effective teachers. The applicant addresses offering opportunities for all educators that would translate into effective educators for all students. However, there was no evidence of a high-quality plan for providing highly effective teachers and principals in hard-to-staff schools, subjects, and specialty areas.

The applicant does provide a strong high-quality plan for increasing teacher and leader effectiveness and provides a plan that includes activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible personnel.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes a high-quality plan that includes activities, deliverables and personnel and one that provides assurances that the lead agent will have the appropriate administrative leadership and coaching support necessary for conducting and implementing the proposed project. At the same time, the applicant outlines a number of policies and practices that support all participating school districts in the consortium such as the proposed collaboration and involvement of all 16 districts in the Appalachian Teaching and Leadership network, giving each district and school an equal voice and opportunities for engaging in ongoing self-reflection with other regional and state leaders. Member districts are also going to participate in a number of forums offering additional opportunities to discuss and share how best to reach greater levels of flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators, and school-level budgets. Through the

trajectories modules, dual credit and AP courses, the applicant provides assurances that students will have opportunities to progress and earn credit based on mastery. These opportunities including several educational options are being provided both during school time and non-school time. The applicant supports a plan that is flexible, adaptable, and fully accessible to all students including English language and students with special needs primarily through the following strategies: project-based learning, a personalized learning environment, and the use of an Individual Learning Plan.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	10

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has proposed a high-quality plan that supports the implementation of the project through comprehensive policies and a solid infrastructure. The plan provides activities, timelines, deliverables, and personnel. In addition to providing 1:1 technology devices to all schools, the applicant will also support creating an infrastructure and providing schools with the technology to provide distant learning. Providing this access will give students the opportunity to use technology to participate in intra-district shared learning and to participate in learning world-wide. This resource will provide schools with the tools and resources to expand student learning beyond the typical learning day and school curriculum and provide additional learning opportunities. Furthermore, the applicant will provide technical support to students, teachers, and educators in the form of job-embedded professional development, community forums, and trainings and workshops.

The applicant also provides evidence that it will use interoperable data systems which are in open data formats accessible to all. These systems will provide increased access to content, student information data, and instructional improvement plans.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has outlined a comprehensive continuous improvement plan and will use RAND as the external contractor charged with leading the process and will provide on-going support and leadership to analyze data and prepare dashboard reports to guide decision-making at the overall project as well as district level. Qualitative and quantitative analysis will be included as part of the quarterly and ad hoc reports. Regular and timely feedback is assured through the ARI leadership team that meets quarterly and through the ATLN Advisory Board. Formal tools for facilitating meetings and reviewing key indicator data for reform efforts will also be included in the continuous improvement process. Beyond this, the applicant also proposes to have each member district engageing in regular academic reviews to analyze student achievement data and seek out areas for improvement. Intra-district professional learning communities and college and career-readiness teams make up the other groups involved in carrying out continuous improvement activities.

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

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The proposed plan includes timelines, activities, deliverables and responsible personnel to make this a high-quality communication and engagement plan. In addition to the ongoing and timely communication that has been established via the consortium leadership team, the project will establish a web site for the project providing information and updated results. Articles in peer-reviewed journals and newsletters are two additional sources the applicant mentions that will be used to provide ongoing communication and engagement. Community engagement forums and the project's web portal will be used to keep the community and parents involved and aware.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The proposed performance measures are ambitious and achievable and include annual targets for each of the required performance measures. Each measure has an appropriate rationale as well as how the measure will provide rigorous, timely and formative information. The applicant selected these measures based on the need to place literacy and math measures at the elementary, middle, and high school

level and will use the ACT Explore as the college and career-readiness measure as this is widely used nationally. Accordingly, the proposed measures will provide timely and formative information during key times of a student's development, grades 4-8, and summative measures, grades 10-12. However, the applicant did not propose a 4-8 grade health or a social-emotional indicator. All measures are to be tracked quarterly and also annually. The proposed plan provides appropriate timelines for collecting and analyzing data, and includes activities, deliverables and responsible personnel. The applicant includes assurances for fidelity of implementation and provides evidence that project activities are provided with sufficient level of frequency, intensity, and duration.

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

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The proposed effectiveness of the investment plan is considered to be a high-quality plan that identifies the goals, the timelines, activities, deliverables, and responsible personnel. The applicant provides a number of assurances it will have in place to guarantee its effectiveness of investments. First and foremost, the applicant states that it will work with the Department of Education to ensure that data collection and program design are consistent with plans to conduct a rigorous national evaluation of the program. Further, the fact that RAND is conducting their evaluation addressess the need for an effective evaluation of the project's investments. The applicant will include provisions in the vendor contracts to provide data as well as designing a plan for identifying and collecting reliable data as well as a mechanism for sharing metadata about content alignment with college- and career-ready standards and use through open standard registries.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

While being complemented by a round 2 i3 project, the applicant indicates that the proposed project will be supported entirely by RTT-D funds. The applicant also identifies a number of one-time investments as separate from those that will be used for ongoing operational costs. Having an operational cost of $190, which is the amount the applicant indicates will be available after taking out the one-time investments, does appear to be reasonable and sufficient. The five projects identified by in the applicant's vision narrative designed to improve teaching and learning at the classroom level are a sound rationale for the proposed investments and priorities. Each of the proposed budget items are reflective of the potential for long-term sustainability. The proposed budget summary and subsequent budget narratives are appropriate as noted by the investments and priorities given to each project's budget categories.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	9

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a rationale for the proposed investments and priorities, thus addressing some points for the sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. The applicant also identifies a number of mechanisms it believes will be institutionalized and sustained long after project funding ends. Two of these examples are the web-based school improvement platform provided by the state's department of education and the state's open-house data system. The proposed project plan for sustainability is supported by helping schools increase and elevate the quality of Personalized Learning, refining and institutionalizing projects, and sustaining project initiatives after the four year grant period is over. The applicant also includes a detailed high-quality plan that outlines appropriate budget goals, the activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible personnel. While the applicant provides information that indicates it will be receiving support from state govenment leaders, there was no reference regarding any type of local government support that was being committed. It further did not reference a local government sustainability plan beyond the project funding period.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has identified a strong partnership through the Appalachian Teachers and Leaders Network (ATLN) which will provide services that address the needs of the whole child and the families. Two entities within this partnership, Kentucky River Community Care (KRCC) and Mountain Comprehensive Health Care, dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of the community, are set to establish school-based clinics in each of the 16 partner districts. Medical and emotional health support will be provided for both students and family members. An additional partner, Treatment Research Institute, will augment services by providing substance abuse treatment support. The applicant identified three population-level desired results that describe a positive alignment with and support of the broader RTT-D proposal. These are to increase daily attendance, increase student instruction days, and an increase in staff productivity due to a decrease in teacher/staff absenteeism.

The applicant provides a strong plan for tracking the proposed indicators both at the aggregate and at the student level and includes performance measures for the targeted students, which are considered to be ambitious and achievable. For example, all students' daily attendance will increase as a result of the family support services including decreasing the untreated health issues of low-income students. The external evaluator will collect data on each measure, quarterly and annually. Data will be collected at each school and housed in the data warehouse at the State's Department of Education. The majority of the resources will target the large number of students from low-income families. The proposed strategy for scaling up is strong and includes a model that will eventually include all 20 districts within the region.

The applicant's proposed continuous improvement process provides sufficient support for improving the results over time. The applicant outlines a good plan for integrating services with educational and counseling services by providing educators, counselors and students with education on health and mental health well-being and by providing opportunities and health care practitioners at the school-based clinics.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has not only coherently and comprehensively described how it intends to build on the core educational assurance areas but also provided a significant amount of detail with each of the required sections to succinctly describe how it will achieve the desired results within the areas of learning and teaching. For each section, the applicant outlined a high-quality plan that identified goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible personnel and a plan to address these all within an operational cost per student cost of $190 once initial one-time investments have been committed.

The applicant articulates a strong reform vision to improve student achievement through the implementation of personalized learning environments based on the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that will accelerate student achievement and increase the number of their students that are college and career-ready.

Total	210	199

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0972KY-4 for Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a well-thought out vision for the project that includes a plan to create five interconnected projects that will address personalized learning environments, Next Generation classrooms, assessible data systems, effective teachers and leaders, and college and career readiness. It is unclear how the applicant plans to address turning around the lowest-achieving schools. This vision involves contributions from university and community college partners, several CTE organizations, and regional health care agencies that will reduce achievement gaps, increase graduation rates and impact college enrollment rates. Details that explain how the components of the vision will work together towards comprehensive reform are depicted in a logic model provided in the appendix. Overall, as a result of the well designed projects that address personalized learning, the applicant provides a strong vision for reform in 16 districts and includes a credible approach to accelerating student achievement through personalized student support.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The applicant states that selection of the schools in the consortium who will be involved in the project was based on their commitment and readiness to engage in innovative education strategies, and their willingness to develop a plan for reform the relationship between students and educators and to shift a focus to personalized learning environments. The applicant states that all schools in the consortia are eligible to apply. Details regarding how eligibility was determined are not provided.

(b) The applicant provides a detailed list of the schools that will participate in grant activities and includes a signed memorandum of understanding from each of the 16 districts in the consortium.

(c) The applicant states that the total number of participating students will include all 40,543 students in the consortium, 28,876 from low-income families, 32,946 participating students who are high-need students and 2,724 participating educators.

Overall, the applicant provides evidence of a well-designed approach to implementing a project that will support districts-level and school-level reform.

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

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a high quality, comprehensive plan that addresses personalized learning environments, Next Generation classrooms, assessable data systems, effective teachers and leaders, and college and career readiness. This plan includes the development of an intra-district network that will create virtual learning opportunities for expanding curriculum opportunities, peer-to-peer learning, and mentoring opportunities in a personalized learning environment. Details regarding a Personalized Learning Model are provided and include strategies for the implementation of a blended learning approach that involves the use of individual learning plans and student e-portfolios. The applicant clearly addresses how it will create student-centric classrooms that utilize project-based learning to promote learning in 14 career areas, and provides specifics regarding how it will leverage distance learning, varied learning activities that connect to themes in a meaningful context, technology training, and the implementation of Common Core Standards with an emphasis on experiential learning. Other components of the plan address building capacity through 16 workshops that focus on parent engagement, deconstructing student achievement reports in order to promote data literacy, and developing plans to enhance Mastery Learning through the involvement of the local community. A timeline for achieving project goals is also provided, along with a graphic that provides a rationale for the model and depicts targets for middle school career awareness and high school college- and career readiness. A well thought out example of a personalized learning strategy is outlined through the applicant's description of Next Generation classrooms, which will connect students virtually to other communities and to higher education institutions for dual credit. Details include the use of a web-based data portal that will house on-line curriculum, study guides, tutorials, and videos of exemplary lessons that focus on rigor. In addition, the applicant describes a plan to create a regional data base of resources that contain examples of teaching that will identify master teachers and best practices, as well as multiple professional learning communities to support educators' needs. Strong evidence of a high-quality plan that will be translated into meaningful reform is provided.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	9

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a detailed description of supports that are likely to result in improved student learning and increased equity for rural students in 16 participating districts.

(a) The applicant includes a table listing ambitious yet achievable goals for performance on summative assessments. Goals for all students and for low income students are provided from 2010-2017, and include annual increases in proficiency rates on state assessments. For example, the applicant states that it will improve proficiency rates on third grade mathematics state assessments, incrementally, from 76% in 2012 to 85.6% in 2017. However, it is unclear how State achievement goals relate to the project goals, since State baseline data is not provided.

(b) The applicant includes a table listing ambitious yet achievable goals for decreasing achievement gaps between white students and low income students from 2010-2017. For example, the applicant plans to reduce the gap in third grade mathematics from 7% to 6.2%, and by 7.5% to 4.2% in third grade reading. Similar goals for decreases in gaps are proposed for fifth grade, eighth grade, and eleventh grade mathematics and reading proficiency rates.

(c) The applicant includes a table listing an ambitious yet achievable goal for graduation rates between white students and low income students from 2010-2017. This goal states that graduation rates will increase from 77.39% to 93.21% by 2017.

(d) The applicant includes a table listing an ambitious yet achievable goal for increasing college enrollment rates from 31.8% in 2010 through to 38% by 2017.

The applicant's vision is well designed, with evidence that supports the likelihood that it will improve student learning.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The applicant describes a record of success in regard to consistent improvements in student learning outcomes on state assessments from 2007 to 20010, and mentions a Performance Report that found steady decreases in the number of students scoring at the novice level during the past four years. However, details regarding progress in regard to closing achievement gaps, increasing high school graduation rates and increasing college enrollment rates for the past four years are not provided.

(b) The applicant provides a clear description of how it supported a persistently low-achieving school from 2010-to present, that illustrates a track record of success for this time period. However, evidence of similiar efforts during the past four years is limited.

(c) The applicant does not clearly address a track record for making student performance data available to students, educators, and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and family services. Though plans are provided for this that include working with partners such as Family and Youth Services to provide home visits, face to face meetings and events, and providing bus transportation to faculty to travel with parents and families to educational opportunities, it is unclear how the applicant has achieved this in the past. The applicant describes a data,reporting and communication system that will be leveraged in ways that will make data more available to parents and community members, and promote a two-way communication system, but details regarding how this has been used during the past four years are limited.

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

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a description of strategies depicting how it provides a level of transparency by making relevant information public. These strategies include presenting expenditure information at Board meetings, in website postings, at monthly School Based Decision Making meetings, and in monthly reports that are provided to Board regarding school expenditures and student achievement. The applicant states that school finance information is made public, however details regarding how the applicant specifically makes available actual personnel salaries at the school level

for all school-level instructional and support staff, based on the U.S. Census Bureau's classification used in the F-33 survey of local government finances are not provided. Similarly, it is unclear if the applicant provides transparency in regard to 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 (if available).

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

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides details that outline specific conditions regarding State regulations that allow districts to apply to be exempt from certain statutory provisions, as well as waive Board regulations, in order to provide innovations that increase student motivation and help prepare them for college and careers. Examples include ideas that provide the State's context for improving education, such as the Innovation Lab' s concept that every student must be given the opportunity to create personalized learning pathway. The applicant clearly describes a Learning Innovations model that includes the flexibility to use non-traditional approaches to education, such as alternative calendars and modified learning times (before and after school), new measures of college and career readiness such as ACT and Career-ready Technical Benchmark assessments, and regional Professional Learning Networks that engage teachers in professional development. The applicant also describes a context for implementing personalized learning environments that are aligned with college and career standards, and refers to a Senate Bill mandating education agencies to develop a unified strategy to reduce college remediation rates of recent high school graduates by at least fifty percent from 2010-2014, and to increase the college completion rates of students enrolled in one or more remedial classes by three percent annually from 2009 to 2014. Overall, the applicant provides clear evidence of successful conditions for implementing the proposed project.

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

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides strong evidence of meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal and includes details such as the results of a student electronic survey. Strategies such as the formation of a Design Team, focus groups, community forums, and electronic information sharing are described. The applicant mentions that faculty and principals met for a minimum of three times to discuss the proposal. A table is provided that depicts over 90% of teachers support the proposal from each participating district. The applicant describes hosting forums and presenting information about the proposal to over 300 parents and care givers. Letters of support from such key stakeholders as the mayors from participating areas are provided, along with quotes from these letters. The applicant provides evidence of how it shared the proposal with the Department of Education, mayors offices and other officials, and conducted face to face meetings to obtain feedback. The applicant provides 100 letters of support are included in the appendix and include those from the judicial system, chambers of commerce in the impacted area, mayors offices, community colleges, technical colleges, universities, the Office of the Cabinet for Education and Workforce Development, the Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the NAACP. The applicant provides compelling evidence of community and stakeholder engagement in the development of the final draft of the proposal and support for the project.

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

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a solid plan for conducting an analysis of needs and gaps. A timeline for addressing each activity in the plan is provided, and includes details regarding hiring an external evaluator (Rand Corporation) to to work with data teams in order to conduct this study. Results of a student survey regarding personalized learning environments that depicts students' perceptions of the current status of the education terrain are provided, along with details from a Gallup Healthways Well-being Index survey that provides a measure of well being for students and families in the area. A rationale for targeting personalized learning environments is described using the results of research on students' motivation in relation to mathematics. Logic behind the reform activities targeting effective teachers is described in relation to research that shows the importance and reliability of student perceptions as they relate to teachers' control of the classroom and their ability to challenge students. A logic model is also provided. The applicant states that this evidence influenced them in deciding to utilize a measure of student perceptions in teacher evaluations. Demonstrated evidence of a high-quality plan for identifying needs and gaps is provided.

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

	Available	Score

(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	20

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides several well developed strategies to empower all learners. One example is the Students Transforming Appalachia with Real Solutions (STARS) initiative that allows students to utilize a community-based problem solving methodology to solve local challenges in the region, and to propose solutions that can be realistically implemented. Another example is a mentoring program that utilizes existing information from students' Individual Learning Plan, coursework, and other career inventories to identify their key interests and provides students with a mentoring program that includes networking opportunities with community leaders and the regional workforce. In addition, there is a plan to ensure that all stakeholders will have access to a wide range of information through the Web-based data portal, and to provide 16 workshops for parents and stakeholder that focus on engagement in the educational process. Project based learning and community problem solving projects are described as examples of strategies for deepening individual student learning through in-depth and rigorous projects mapped to the Common Core State Standards for math, literacy, and the emerging science standards. The applicant states that the development of Individual Learning Plans involves a collaboration between parents, students and educators and results in tailored learning program for each student that is aligned to college and career-ready graduation requirements. The applicant mentions that technology based curriculum will be developed that involves Mastery Learning, and includes options such as Independent Study, that will allow students the flexibility to conduct their own research. Ongoing feedback strategies include the use of assessments that are jointly designed by the students, teacher , mentor, and school counselor, and require a presentation to a Mastery Learning committee. In addition, the applicant articulates how feedback will be provided through the use of data from frequent formative and summative assessments that, in some cases will allow students to test out of courses for credit and move ahead at their own pace. Personalized learning recommendations are addressed through the use of e-portfolios that capture student's current knowledge and skills. Other strategies include the use of educational travel, distance or online learning, internships, mentorship and service learning. The applicant describes additional strategies for providing accommodations for high-need students, such as the implementation of a curriculum called the WIN Career Readiness Courseware® that will be integrated to support learning for all students, including those with disabilities and limited English proficiency. The applicant provides details regarding mechanisms for providing training and support to students, and includes examples such as mentors who will help them navigate college and career planning resources, Family Youth Service Centers that provide parent and student support, and software designed to assist students with training and awareness of relevant literacy, math, and science topics that match their interests. The applicant states that students will be provided support in the use of resources that allow them to track and manage their own learning, such as e-portfolios. Overall, the applicant provides strong evidence of an approach to learning that targets empowering students in an age-appropriate manner.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	19

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a high-quality plan for ensuring that all participating educators engage in training that supports personalized learning environment, and provides strategies for implementing regional professional learning communities, face to face learning opportunities and distance education platforms that address training in Project-Based Learning, Response to Intervention, Integrating Technology in the Classroom, formative assessment, and the use of ongoing analysis of pertinent data. Examples include the use of a cadre of highly trained Instructional Coaches and facilitators who will work with districts to provide coaching on integrating curriculum and implementing co-teaching in a job-embedded professional learning framework. There is a plan to utilize an Open House" data warehouse and provide teachers with current and relevant data on student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards and to provide a Data Analyst/College/Career Readiness District Coordinator to each district, who will collect/analyze individual student data. An Advisory Group and Leadership Institute are also mentioned, in regard to continuous improvement, the creation of new strategies, and the provision of timely and effective instructional practice feedback to teachers. There is a plan to ensure that each district has access to a data analyst who will speed actionable data to teachers and engage teachers in using data, however, it is unclear how this data relates to project based learning. There is also a plan to video and make available exemplary lessons recorded in Next Generation classrooms by experienced teachers, that will contribute to a Quality Core online resources. The applicant mentions the use of Technology Curriculum Facilitators who will assist teachers with the use of a data warehouse Open House resource. Strategies for using teacher evaluation information to improve teachers are described and include the use of peer observation consultants, mentors and coaches. Ideas for closing the achievement gap through effective teachers are described in regard to a continuous improvement system that utilizes a train the trainer model for professional development in six clusters: Training Cluster #1 - Re-visioned
Role, Training Cluster #2 - Diagnosis of Learning Characteristics: Training Cluster #3 - Culture of Collegiality: Training Cluster

#4 Interactive Learning Environments: Training Cluster #5 - Flexible Scheduling and Pacing, Training Cluster #6 Authentic
Assessment. The applicant provides a plan to ensure that districts receive training in providing instructional practices that are well designed for all students, including students with disabilities and English learners, such as Project-Based Learning, a personalized learning environment, and the use of Individual Learning Plans. However, it is unclear how the applicant plans to address increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective or highly effective teachers and principals in hard-to-staff schools, subjects, and specialty areas. Overall, the applicant provides a strong description of an approach to improving teaching and leading through project activities.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a plan for facilitating personalized learning in each participating district that includes engaging in self reflection with regional leaders from Higher Education, local and state government,employers, civic groups and nationally respected educators. These interactions are expected to promote best practices and improved strategies for attaining greater levels of flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators, and school-level budgets. In addition, coaches, a council of councils made up of members of Decision-making Teams, and Leadership Teams will be provided to administrators to assist with enhancing Educator Effectiveness, Instructional Technology, and Career and College Readiness. The applicant also plans to provide expertise to school leaders in the form of regional professional learning communities, data coaches, and technology resources, such as videos of exemplary lessons. Strategies for improving student mastery learning include training in the use of Learning Trajectories Mathematics and English/Language Arts modules, that provide students the opportunity to access individualized, learning trajectory modules, to increase their own competencies in a project-based, collaborative classroom. Additional opportunities include Independent Research, testing out/Mastery learning, and distance education. The applicant describes the use of Individual Learning Plans, e-portfolios, and the use of distance education techniques that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners. Overall, the applicant provides a strong plan for implementing personalized learning and includes a clear description of policies and practices that support this.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	9

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a plan for ensuring that all students have access to technology by providing a lending library of technology devices to students who do not have their own, and by purchasing online curriculum resources, such as distance education, study guides, tutorials and videos of exemplary lessons. The applicant mentions the use of Data Analysts, who will collect, analyze, and disseminate individual student data, and Education Technology Support Staff to assist with Web-based instruction and Curricular Data Base support. There is also a plan to provide students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders with training through community engagement forums and 24/7 technical support. Resources such as an online Open House, Individual Learning Plan, and Individual Student e-Portfolios are interoperability data systems that are accessible by teachers, students, and parents. Reports from the data base are exportable for reporting, through an open data format. The systems are designed to provide relevant and timely information to staff about student learning. However, it is unclear if these systems include linkages to systems that provide human resources data, budget data or other information relevant to instructional improvements. Overall, the applicant provides a plan to develop a well-designed plan for implementing an infrastructure that supports personalized learning.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a well designed continuous improvement plan with numerous high-quality strategies for obtaining and providing feedback on the progress of project activities. Examples include hiring a reputable external evaluator to implement a Continuous Quality Improvement process that includes the development of a logic model, with intermediate and long-term outcomes and mapping indicators to measure progress. Strategies for monitoring progress include tracking all measures on a quarterly basis, reviewing progress reports at weekly and monthly meetings, and reviewing dashboard and annual reports prepared by a qualified external evaluator. The applicant plans to form a Leadership Team, an Advisory Board, an intra-district professional learning community, and school based support teams that will participate in academic reviews. Strategies for publicly sharing information about progress include a blog and a web portal that will post status reports, plans, and updates on project activities, as well as capture feedback from stakeholders through a feature that allows for comments. In addition, the applicant plans to share information and capture feedback at stakeholder forums and workshops. Evidence of a solid continuous improvement plan is provided, along with examples of instruments to measure progress, such as perception surveys, a Reflective Analysis Tool, and a leadership inventory.

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

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a clear description of several strategies that will promote ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. Examples include an intra-district professional learning community, an Advisory Board, community forums, and workshops for parents. The applicant describes tools for capturing perception feedback from students and teachers through surveys and leadership inventories, as well as through face to face meetings. A website, with a page for each participating district, is described in regard to sharing information with parents, students, and the community. In addition, Monthly meetings, annual reports, and journal articles are mentioned as strategies for reaching external stakeholders and informing them about project activities. Overall, the applicant provides strong evidence of well-thought out strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with stakeholders.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes 12-14 appropriate measures for student achievement and college and career readiness indicators. Ambitious yet achievable target goals are provided for all students and for low income students. For example, the applicant provides a target for third grade math proficiency rates on state assessments that includes an increase from 73.8% in 2012 to 85.6% by 2017 for all students, and from 69.2% to 82.2% for low-income students. A rationale for selecting math and literacy state assessment measures for elementary and middle school students, and ACT measures at the high school level is provided. The applicant mentions working with an external evaluator, in order to develop a plan for capturing valid baseline data, reviewing a Fidelity of Implementation Measure with the Leadership Team, to ensure that project activities are implemented with sufficient frequency, intensity and and duration to achieve desired outcomes. However, it is unclear which grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator the applicant plans to utilize, in order to capture information about students non-cognitive need in grades 4-8. For example, it is unclear if the college and career readiness indicators measure social-emotional or health issues. Overall, the applicant provides solid evidence of ambitious and achievable goals and measures to be used in the project.

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

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a high quality plan for evaluating the project that includes hiring a reputable external evaluator to develop a logic model, effectiveness measures, and other data collection instruments, and to analyze data for frequent status reports that will inform stakeholders about the progress of the project. Examples include plans to evaluate professional development activities through the use of an Advisory Board that includes leadership experts, and measure increases in the number of students who are taught by effective and highly effective teachers over time. Numerous data collection activities are mentioned, include the use of a Fidelity of Implementation Tool, a Reflective Analysis Tool and leadership inventories. However, it is unclear how the applicant plans to specifically evaluate some key activities, such changes in performance due to modifications in school schedules. The applicant provides support for a solid, comprehensive evaluation plan.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states that grant funding will provide all funds that will support the project, and mentions an i3 grant that will compliment the project. Costs are reasonable and sufficient to support project activities. For example, the applicant states that after all one-time investment costs, the project will only require $190 per year. A list of all one-time investment costs is provided, along with a rationale for how these investments will help to sustain the project. For example, the applicant describes how using distance education tools for Mandarin instruction across 16 districts will save the cost of a teacher in each location. Long-term sustainability strategies for personalized learning environments are clearly described and include the integration of information from the State Department of Education's Open House data system, a student information system called Infinite Campus, and a system that tracks Individual Learning Plans. The applicant provides several strategies for sustaining systems that will ensure that the necessary fiscal, personnel, and evaluation processes are maintained after the grant period, and includes cost saving initiatives that will improve efficiencies through technology. Overall, the applicant provides strong evidence of a reasonable budget that clearly specifies how funding will be utilized and sustained.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	9

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a solid plan for sustaining project goals after the grant term and includes a formula for accomplishing this. Strategies include leveraging groups such as an intra-district professional learning community, a support service delivery model, and integrated service delivery model and a leadership network that includes leaders from pre-K through high school programs, as well as higher education educators. Financial support for an Innovation grant is mentioned, along with several other US Department of Education grants and State funding. The applicant states that grant funds will allow for a person in each district, who will be charged with securing funds to continue project efforts. Quarterly meetings across districts are also planned that will focus on continuous improvement. The applicant states that they have the support of State and local government leaders, however, it is unclear how the applicant plans to sustain support from local government leaders in regard to the project, after grant funding ends. Overall, the applicant provides a strong sustainability.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a clear description of a sustainable partnership with a mental health agency, a county health agency and other Family and Youth Services organizations that will provide wrap around services to students and families involved in the project. This partnership will implement school based health clinics in all 16 participating districts and support the health care and social-emotional needs of students, families and staff involved in the project. Through this partnership, physicians and nurses will provide health care services on campuses through a rotating schedule. Funding for most services will be paid for by Medicaid and the districts' health insurer. Six population level desired results are described and include academic and non-academic targets. Examples include a 35% decrease in the number of untreated health issues, a 40% decrease in student absenteeism, a 1% decrease in teacher absenteeism, and a 20% decrease in the drop-out rate. The applicant states that an external evaluator will collect data on selected measures on a quarterly and annual basis, and house this data in an Open House data warehouse provided by the State Department of Education. The applicant describes a detailed assessment of needs and assets and provides a data table of the results. The applicant also mentions poor performance of the Gallup-Healthways Wellbeing Index survey that indicated a high need for services in the participating districts. A clear plan to scale up the number of clinics from four to six-teen is also described. The applicant mentions support from a Leadership Network made up of educators, community leaders and health care providers, that will work with all K-12 school districts in the region to focus efforts, drive innovation, work toward efficiencies and significantly increase the percentage of students who graduate from high-school college and career ready. Well-thought out strategies include quarterly advisory meetings that utilize Community Initiated Decision Making, interpret data, reflect community priorities and values, develop and priorities and values,

and enhance working relationships within the community in order to implement action plans for health improvement. The applicant provides a strong plan to engage parents and families of participating students in workshops designed to create local and regional capacity and provide parents in each community the opportunity to examine their current educational system and provide feedback on continuous improvement. A well-designed plan to have the external evaluator analyze quarterly and annual measures is described, and includes a table listing ambitious yet achievable targets. Examples include reducing the drop out rate from .9% in 2010 to .7% by 2017 and reducing student absenteeism from 8.1% in 2010 for high school students to 4% by 2017. There is also a plan to increase college and career readiness in grades 7-12 from 31% in 2010 to 39.6% by 2017. Overall, the applicant provides compelling evidence of a sound plan for integrating services through strong partnerships in 16 districts, in order to achieve project goals.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a clear description of a plan to implement personalized learning environments that includes creating interconnected projects; Next Generation classrooms, assessable data systems, effective teachers and leaders, and college and career readiness. This vision involves contributions from university and community college partners, several Career and Technical Education organizations, and regional health care agencies that will reduce achievement gaps, increase graduation rates and impact college enrollment rates. Distance education, dual enrollment, testing out of courses and the use of electronic individual learning plans are also mentioned in regard to accelerating learning, as well as strategies such as project based learning and mastery learning. A strong plan for professional development that includes an intra-district professional learning community is described, as well as a well developed plan for creating a strong technology infrastructure to support online and dual enrollment classes.

Total	210	194