



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0804TX-1 for La Marque and Hitchcock Education

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	4
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium proposed a vision that included the development of a Prek-12 educational reform plan that would improve teaching and learning in reading, math, and science and the creation of two career academies. The applicant did not identify the academic content of the two career academies. The section referenced building on current strategies through acceleration and increasing depth, implementing new strategies, and changing culture and climate. However, the section did not identify how the proposed vision would build on the four core educational assurance areas, particularly the educator evaluation system and robust data system. This section needed more details on how they would accelerate achievement, deepen student learning, and increase equity through personalized student supports. Therefore, this section was given a rating of low medium.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>: (a) La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium described the process they used to select schools to participate. The process included committees, review of student data and surveys, and identification of priority areas for strengthening teaching and learning in particular subject areas of reading, math, and science and two career academies at two high schools. According to the data in the completed tables, all participating schools had at least 40% of students from low-income families.</p> <p>(b) The Consortium, which will include one early childhood learning center and four elementary schools from one ISD in the project, identified the names of the schools, the grade levels, and the targeted academic subjects. For the other ISD, one primary school, one elementary school, one middle school, and one high school were identified on the school demographic tables. The names of the schools, grade levels, and academic subjects were identified.</p> <p>(c) This section included tables on demographics of participating schools, including: the total numbers and percentages of participating students who are from low income families and high-needs students. The numbers of educators were also identified for each participating school. Therefore, this section was rated as high.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium identified a primary goal as high expectations for student achievement. The plan laid out four key activities across the districts that address curriculum, response to intervention, support and professional development, and integration of technology. Additional activities were identified for secondary schools: increasing rigor, student transition, and improving graduation through a variety of strategies. In addition, the Consortium described the approach to professional development and professional learning communities. This section did not identify timelines for each of the activities nor the persons responsible. The section also did not include a logic model or theory of change. Therefore, this section was rated as high medium.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>a) La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium described the state assessment system with the latest changes and sources of data for each of the sub-criterion. The first goal and objectives focus on increasing student achievement in math, reading and science for grades PK-12, conducting additional assessments, and career inventories of students at four different grade levels. Baseline and goals for summative assessments were included in table format for overall students and for each student group for each school district in the consortium. One school district indicated yearly goals for students groups in the following grade levels and subjects: 3-11 reading/ELA yearly goals increasing from 6% to 8%; 3-11 yearly math goals increasing from 6% to 12%; and 5-8 science yearly goals increasing from 3% to 10%. The second school district indicated for student groups in the following grade levels and subjects: 3-11 reading/ELA yearly goals increasing from 6% to 10%; 3-11 yearly math goals increasing from 3% to 10%; and 5-8 science yearly goals increasing from 4% to 8%. These appear to represent ambitious and achievable increases.</p> <p>(b) The Consortium described the data sources for this sub-criterion. The section included completed tables of baseline and goals with achievement gaps identified among student groups comparing each district and state student performance by using raw scores. It was noted that the new assessment data will not be available until January, 2013. However, using raw scores as goals poses significant problems in comparing progress across student groups and years and determining if goals are ambitious yet achievable. A raw score on one test does not accurately indicate the same level of achievement on another test. Raw scores provide limited information that cannot be used to identify the closing of achievement gaps. It was not possible to determine if the goals would be achievable and ambitious.</p> <p>(c) The Consortium's second goal and objectives addressed increasing the percentages of students graduating who are college and career ready and college enrollment. A completed table identified for each ISD included baseline and goals for graduation rates overall and by student groups. For one</p>		

district, yearly increases ranged from 4% to 9%. The second district yearly increases ranged from 3% to 10%. By the end of the grant period, graduation rates overall and for each student group would be range from 90% to 97%. These appeared to be achievable and ambitious goals.

(d) The Consortium's second goal and objectives addressed college enrollment as well as graduation. A completed table for each ISD identified baseline and goals for college enrollment rates overall and by student groups. One district indicated yearly increases of 5% overall and for each of the African American, Hispanic, and white student groups for years 2012-13 to 2016-17. The second district indicated yearly goals of 5% overall and for each of the African American, Hispanic, and white student groups for years 2012-13 to 2016-17. These goals appeared achievable.

(e) Postsecondary degree attainment: A completed table with baseline and goals overall for both ISDs and for each ISD were completed. Overall, the yearly goals represented 5% increases. Both districts identified baseline and goals for college enrollment rates overall. Yearly increases of 5% were noted for each year for each district. These goals appeared achievable.

In addition, the Consortium's third goal addressed effective teachers and leaders in areas, such as degrees, training, effectiveness as measured by the state's evaluation system, and use of data systems. A fourth goal addressed easier access to student performance data for parents and educators.

Given the above comments, this section was given a high medium rating.

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	6
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(1) La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium presented a summary of their approach to the project, including teacher incentives, using data systems to collect assessment data, career academies, blended instruction, interventions and strategies, personalized learning plans, and summer programming.</p> <p>(a) The Consortium presented a table that included 2013 cohort information from 2008 to 2012 for 8th-11th grade that compared student performance in the two districts and state in ELA, math, science, and social studies. Data was missing for 09-10 in science and social studies. One district presented evidence of progress except for a dip in 09-10 in math and 10-11 in reading and science. The second district presented evidence of progress except for dips in 09-10 in reading and math. Therefore, there was not a clear record of improving student learning outcomes in the past four years. The proposal also described the increases in the percentages of students enrolled in postsecondary institutions from 2010-11. The proposal also included a comparison of the percentages of students of two high schools and the state in ELA, math, and both from 2009 and 2010. Since they had proposed a comprehensive PreK-12 plan, this section needed to present four years of student performance data by student groups and K-12 grade levels in major academic subjects rather than just cohorts.</p> <p>(b) The Consortium presented information on the actions/reforms they have taken to address low performing schools, including changing personnel, school schedules, and professional development.</p> <p>(c) The Consortium described their current systems for parents, students, and educators accessing information and performance. However, they did not describe how the systems and data would be used to inform and improve participation, instruction, and services.</p> <p>Overall, this section received a rating of Medium.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium proposal included a copy of a state award that one of the systems had received for their level of financial transparency for the last three consecutive years. The certificate stated that the state's comptroller leadership circle gold member was awarded to the district "for setting the bar for financial transparency and opening the books to the public. The program recognizes local governments that are striving to meet a high financial transparency online. By providing citizens with a clear, consistent picture of spending and sharing information in a user-friendly format, you are setting a strong example of other governmental entities to follow." The certificate is dated January 30, 2012. Specific criteria for the award was not identified.</p> <p>(a) (b) (c) The description identified that the districts post salary schedules on their website with actual personnel salaries for specific individuals available through the Open Records Act. However, they did not identify whether the salary schedules are at the district or school level. There was no evidence for any school-level salaries being available.</p> <p>(d) The Consortium identified that both districts post monthly expenditures and check register on their web sites and that annual audit reports are reported in general session. The audit reports are also posted on the state's website. There was no mention of expenditures reported at the school level.</p> <p>Given the above, this section was rated in the medium range.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium proposal described their experience of implementation of programs such as STEM, magnet programs, and career and technology programs. The section also described their proposal for two career academies and pathways which seemed to imply that they have conditions and autonomy under the state to create these. References to the state context included one district receiving a STEM designation and the state's college and career initiative. There were also references to new magnet programs in the next few years. The section was rated high.</p>		

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	5
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium described how students, families, teachers and principals were involved through meetings, teacher committee meetings, student surveys and obtaining letters of support. Copies of results from two different surveys were included in the appendices. However, there was no explicit details on how the proposal was revised based on their engagement and feedback.</p> <p>(ii) The Consortium does not have a collective bargaining representation. There was a reference to teachers participating in meetings and through a survey. There was no statement or documentation that at least 70% of teachers from participating schools supported the proposal.</p> <p>(b) The Consortium included a variety of support letters from the two mayors, a local council on drugs and alcohol, children's center, community resource coordination group, local union and businesses, regional STEM Center, educators alliance for articulated credit, and state agency provisionally approving a STEM academy. The state education agency provided a letter but with no comments on the proposal. This section was given a medium rating.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	4
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>In this section, La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium provided a description of their review and analyses process and a variety of data sources. They listed ten gaps that addressed: college and career readiness, student achievement, curriculum, professional development, course credit, and transition programs.</p> <p>Sections (D)(2) and the appendices included the Race to the Top District Plan. The district plan identified four goals which included: I. Increase student achievement in math, reading, and science. ii. Increase student graduation rates and and numbers of students college ready. III. Effective teachers and leaders. IV. Robust data systems to support instruction. The plan also included: objectives, strategies, persons responsible, resources, core assurances, timelines, formative evaluation and summative evaluation.</p> <p>In relationship to the presented project plan, there were clear linkages between the following identified gaps and the proposed goals and activities:</p> <p> increasing numbers of students college/career readiness through Goal II, increasing graduation rates and students college and career ready, activities: Spring Board college curriculum, PBIS, AP classes</p> <p> improving student achievement through Goal 1, increase student achievement, activiites: curriculum enhancements and alignment, professional development, magnet programs</p> <p> The plan's goals, objectives, strategies/acitivities and timelines appeared logical and credible.</p> <p>Therefore, this section received a high rating.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	12
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium proposed an approach for all students that included a variety of activities and strategies, such as: student assessments, development of individualized plans, career academies, summer mentoring program, specific courses and dual credit courses, and access to advisors, counselors and mentors and a career counseling/resource center. The proposal also included proposed activities for students in grades 4-7.</p> <p>The description as well as additional details appeared to represent strategies that would enable:</p> <p>(i) All students understand their that their learning is key to their success through the Consortium's proposed assessment of students' learning styles, interests, and skill inventories which will assist students in developing individualized plans. The proposal addressed this sub-criterion.</p> <p>(ii) All students identify and purse learning and development goals by the Consortium proposing the use of a software program to explore career and education goals prior to students developing individualized plans. The proposal addressed this sub-criterion.</p> <p>(iii) All students be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interes: The Consortium proposed that students research their two programs of study based on surveys and then develop a six to eight year plan. Students will select courses from the career academies, virtual school network, articulated/dual credit courses, and a summer mentoring program. The proposal addressed this sub-criterion.</p> <p>(iv) Students access to diverse culture, enviornments and contexts: The proposal had a a general reference to students having access to and exposure to diverse cultures, environments, and contexts but this statement needed more details for evidence. The proposal did not fully address this sub-criterion.</p> <p>(v). Students master critical academic content and develop skills: The Consortium referenced that students would take a course, Skills for Success, that would include the skills identified in this sub-criterion, during their first semester or participation in "Go Center." The proposal addressed this sub-criterion.</p> <p>(b) La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium proposed an approach to the selection and enhancement of staff for the career academies. They justified that for students to be successful, the Consortium needed to address highly qualified teachers who are versed in effective instructional strategies.</p> <p>(i). Personalized sequence: There was a reference in the proposal that each student would develop an individualized education plan to ensure that</p>		

students reach their goals. But more information was needed on how the instructional content and skill development would be personalized. Therefore, this proposal did not fully address this sub-criterion.

(ii) Variety of approaches: The proposal identified the following instructional approaches and environments: Career academies, blended curriculum, instructional strategies based on a learning style framework, personalized learning strategies, articulated/dual credit courses with local community networks and College of the Mainland, Virtual School Network, summer mentoring program, Skills for Success course, and tutoring and remediation. The proposal addressed this sub-criterion.

(iii) High quality content and digital: The proposal generally referenced advanced placement courses, articulated/dual credit courses with colleges, Virtual School Network, and potentially students could achieve a National Career Readiness Certification. More information was needed. Therefore, the sub-criterion was not fully addressed.

(iv) Ongoing and Regular Feedback: Under the section for C.1.(a), there was an indication that the ongoing and regular feedback would include:

(A) Frequently updated individualized data. There was a reference that before the second semester, students would reevaluate their plan and see if any modifications needed to be made. Students with meet with their CTE teachers as their advisors on a regular basis. But this section needed to more clearly delineate when and how student data would be used to determine progress. Therefore, this sub-criterion was not fully addressed.

(B) Personalized learning recommendations: There was a reference that students would receive learning styles assessments and interest and skill inventories and opportunities to explore career and education options prior to the development of an individualized plan. Therefore, this sub-criterion was addressed.

(v) Accommodations and strategies for high-need students: There was a reference that students in lower grades would be assisted by instructional coaches and that students would receive remediation through software programs and tutoring. But there were no specific descriptions of how specific groups of high-needs students would receive accommodations and strategies. Therefore, this sub-criterion was not fully addressed.

(c) This proposal in this section did not address training and support to students so they would manage their own learning. There was reference in the earlier section that an advisor would work with students to develop independence and ownership of their plan, goals, and learning and that students would use technology to track their progress. But this needed more specific descriptions on how students would be taught to use tools and resources. Therefore, this sub-criterion was not fully addressed.

Overall, this section received a rating of medium range.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	13
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) In this section, the La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium proposed for all participating educators training in instructional strategies, measuring student growth, personalized learning, tools such as computer tracking software, data analysis, as well as coaching in math, science, and reading. In a later section, Goal III of the proposed plan is focused on effective teachers and leaders. The plan includes activities, dates, deliverables, and persons responsible. The plan includes activities for: hiring, mentoring, incentive, professional development, evaluation system, project meetings, and job fairs.

(i) Support effective implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies: The proposal generally described a variety of activities for training addressing a number of topics with timelines across the project years. It was not clear to what degree the professional development and coaching would ensure effective implementation given the latest research on implementation. This section would have been strengthened with more details on how professional development, coaching, and monitoring of implementation would be coordinated.

(ii) Adapt content and instruction: The proposal identified that teachers would be given release time and common planning periods to adapt content and instruction but this was not described fully. However, the proposal referenced using extra-curricular activities for students to engage in project-based learning and common tasks. Therefore it was not clear, if teachers would be involved in designing optimal learning approaches, such as project-based learning.

(iii) Frequent measure student progress: The proposal identified that teachers would be trained on ways to measure individual student growth and that teachers would be responsible for periodical checks with students. There was also reference to using data from the PSAT, a computer tracking software program that teachers will be trained on, and a teacher academy that will include data analyses and tools.

(iv) Improve practice and effectiveness by using feedback from evaluation systems: This section identified that the teacher evaluated system would be implemented throughout the grant. There was also a reference to the implementation of a walk through process that would be used by instructional coaches and administrators.

(b) Access to and use tools, data, and resources:

(i) Actionable information to accelerate student progress and respond to individual student needs and interests: The section included a description of using data from a software program that would inform acceleration of student progress and the improvement of individual and collective practices of educators. The plan in the later section referenced providing interventions to students who need them.

(ii) Provide high-quality learning resources: The proposal included a general statement that digital resources would be considered for implementation and that the project would explore the use of bringing your own devices. There was a general reference to using resources after consideration and trial. This section needed more specific information on the types of resources that would be provided and the process the districts would use to ensure their quality.

(iii) Provide processes and tools to match student needs with specific resources and approaches: The proposal referenced that data from the PSAT would be used to customize learning opportunities for students in terms of common academic skills. The section needed clearer explanations of how the project would match student needs with differentiated approaches/resources and what processes would be used to determined their effectiveness.

(c) Participating leaders and leadership teams have training, policies: The proposal identified that the project would coach principals, conduct principal evaluations, and support principals in recruiting, removing, and retaining staff. Principals would also be trained on a walk through process.

- (i) Using evaluations for continuous school improvement: There was a general statement that a strong evaluation system would result in proving recommendations, supports, and interventions for improvement. However, this section needed further elaboration on exactly how this would operate.
 - (ii) Training, systems and practices for school progress toward goals and closing achievement gaps. There was a general statement that data analyses, tools, and resources would be used to accelerate student progress toward meeting college and career-ready graduation requirements.
 - (d) Plan for increasing numbers of highly effective teachers: This section of the proposal identified that recruitment efforts would focus on colleges and universities with predominately minority populations. In a later section, the plan includes activities, dates, deliverables, and persons responsible. The plan includes activities for: hiring, mentoring, incentives, professional development, evaluation system, project meetings, and job fairs.
- Overall, this section received a rating in the medium range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	11
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium described how the two school districts would organize personnel and governance structure for the project, including Consortium Coordinator, and two District Level Project Managers. Qualifications and duties for the Consortium Coordinator and District Level Project Managers positions were described. The proposal also included an Advisory Group/Council that would include administrators, representatives from school leadership teams, teachers, staff, parents, and community members. In another section, the proposal included student representation.</p> <p>(b) The proposal included a general statement that school leadership teams would have flexibility and autonomy over factors such as schedules and calendars, staffing models, roles, and responsibilities and budgets. The proposal elaborated that schools could provide input on schedules and calendars through extra learning time, Saturday school, and summer programs. The proposal did refer to leadership teams working with project managers to develop staffing models and input into school budgets.</p> <p>(c) Earn credit based on mastery: The proposal described an approach to student progress and earning credit that included mastery testing through benchmark tests and the use of proposed software. There was more of a focus on how teachers could use the system as well as the duties and qualifications of instructional coaches. But it was not clearly delineated when and how students would earn credits based on mastery and not the amount of time spent and what LEA policies, practices, and rules would facilitate this.</p> <p>(d) Student mastery: The proposal described the use of technology to document students demonstration of mastery. The technology included: a variety of software, mastery testing instruments, and end of course exams when students master content. But there was insufficient detail to determine exactly how these would be implemented to ensure comparability. The proposal did not identify how policies, practices, and rules would facilitate this.</p> <p>(e) Adaptable accessible to SWD and ELL: The proposal referenced generally that students with disabilities would have access to adaptable learning resources and that special educators could consult with university faculty. However, since they referenced that students are in the Special Education Program, it was not clear to what degree students with disabilities would be fully included in the proposed project activities. This section needed more details. There was also a general statement that materials and technology assisted curriculum would be adapted for English language learners. Through contracts with university experts and consultants would assist in selecting or modifying materials and provide professional development. Since they had previously identified performance gaps with these two student groups, this section needed more specific descriptions of how these student groups would be provided resources and practices that would improve performance and close achievement gaps.</p> <p>Based on the above comments, this section was rated in the Medium range.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	9
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) Access to content, tools, resources for implementation: La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium proposed website/electronic communication through a project website and district websites. A strength of the proposal was a description of parent and student access to computers before and after school and on Saturdays for each participating school as well as checkout computers.</p> <p>(b) To ensure that stakeholders have appropriate levels of technical support, the Consortium proposed: family meetings in English and Spanish, and a Consortium Advisory Council. A variety of student, parent, and professional development support strategies were identified.</p> <p>(c) To address the use of information technology systems by students and parents, the proposal described the new state student portal system that includes student assessment scores and provide information on student mastery ratings, and make recommendations. More information was provided in the appendix.</p> <p>(d) To address the use of interoperable data systems, the proposal provided a description of the state's system that includes student information data, staff, finances, programs, demographics, school report cards. The system has publicly available data as well as password protected data.</p> <p>Based on comments above, this section received a high rating.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
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(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	12
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium presented an overview description of their yearly evaluation plan by an external evaluator. The description included quantitative and qualitative data that would be collected and analyzed, and the evaluation of each of the project's goals. Interim and periodic evaluation reports will address the project's implementation and attainment of program goals and objectives. There was a general statement that the evaluation would provide continuous feedback and permit periodic assessments in achieving outcomes. There were specific references to the evaluation of professional development, technology, and staff. The section would have been stronger if it had identified how the information would inform (E)(4) evaluating the effectiveness of investments and how the information was going to be publicly shared. The proposal received a rating in the high range.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium proposed an external evaluator who would conduct quarterly visits. The Consortium Advisory Committee, which includes both internal and external stakeholders (parents and community leaders), will meet on a regular basis. In addition, yearly focus parent groups will be held. A key stakeholder group missing from their description in this section on ongoing communication and engagement were students. In addition, the description could have been strengthened by identifying other strategies beyond meetings and focus groups. Based on these comments, the section was rated in the medium range.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium proposed the following performance measures for: students, parents, teachers, principals and assistant principals, magnet program, and career academies. Annual targets were provided. The proposed measures met the requirements for the numbers of performance measures and for all students, PreK-3, 4-8, and 9-12.</p> <p>(a) Rationales are included for the selection of major performance measures.</p> <p>(b) How measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative information: In the rationale sub-section, some but not all performance measures had statements on how the measures would provide rigorous, timely, and formative information.</p> <p>(c) How it will review and improve measures over time: The proposal stated that some performance measures will be reviewed yearly. Other measures stated that they would be reviewed by the external evaluator to determine if they are valid indicators. If not, they would be replaced.</p> <p>Overall, this section received a rating of medium.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>In this section, La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium provided a description of how the lead district will financially manage expenses. The proposal also described the following activities of the the external evaluator: review all grant purchases and expenditures, technology expenditures, learning materials, staff and consultants, professional development, and parents program. The ultimate test to determine if investments were appropriate is student progress in meeting project goals and objectives. The previous E(1) section delineated evaluation activities related to project goals and objectives, including persons responsible and general timelines. This section would have been stronger if it had included how the yearly evaluation would provide a feedback loop that potentially would result in more effective use of staff and other resources and improved strategies, such as improved use of technology. Therefore, this section is given a medium rating.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	7
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium's proposal did not include a completed Table 1-1 Overall Budget Summary but rather Table 2-1: Overall Budget Summary Project List and Table 3-1 Project Level Budget Summary. The Project Level Budget Summary identified all funds that would support the project. The Appendix included additional information on the Consortium's plan including what categories of resources would be used for each of the major goals and strategies. The categories included: local, state, federal, other, and RTTTD funds.</p> <p>(b) Personnel salaries appeared reasonable and sufficient. It was unclear whether the costs for equipment, supplies, contracts were reasonable given the lack of details (see section c).</p> <p>(c) Rational for investments and priorities including: The Project Level Budget Narrative included cost descriptions, cost assumptions, and totals. The rationale for equipment listed general equipment (e.g. body shop paint booth, computers and software, equipment for construction trades) without specific details. The rationale for supplies also identified general items (e.g., STEM 101 PBL supplies, instructional supplies and materials) which needed more specific information. The contractual justification included: external evaluator, professional development, transportation, A Plus Learning, and Gallop without delineating the amount of funds for each contract. The other category included costs for testing, parental involvement activities, and printing expenses without specific details. It was unclear why these costs were not under supplies.</p> <p>(i) The Consortium identified all funds that would support the project, including other funds. In the F.2. section, there were references to materials and technology grant, state Career and Technology grants, federal Perkins fund, state funds for High School Allotment, gifted and talented funds, Title I</p>		

funding, Bilingual funds, IDEA (special education funds), state funds for technology. It was assumed that the total revenues from these sources were included in item 12. Funds from other sources used to support the project of the Budget S The Appendix included additional information on the Consortium's plan including what categories of resources would be used for each of the major goals and strategies. The categories included: local, state, federal, other, and RTTTD funds.

(ii) The budget narrative did not specifically identify which funds would be used for one-time investments and ongoing operational costs. In the F.2. section, there were general references to investments in the Consortium, materials and technology grant purchases, professional development

Overall, this section received a medium rating.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	8
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

La Marque and Hitchcock Education Consortium reported that the two districts would allocate \$20,000 each to continue the project. In addition, they identified that the Consortium would continue and other funding would be used to support the Career Academies, instruction, and coordination with other federal and state funds. The proposal included a budget for three years after the term of the grant that included description, years, source of funds, and total amounts. This section was given a high rating because it addressed all the components and the plan addressed the sustainability of the Consortium, the two career academies, and the identification of a variety of funds for specific aspects of their plan. Overall, this section, was rated in the high range.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

Not applicable.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Given the comments and ratings on all of the applicant sections, LaMarque and Hitchcok Education Consortium met the Absolute Priority 1.

Total	210	134
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Application #0804TX-2 for La Marque and Hitchcock Education

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	2

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant shared that their vision to develop and educational reform plan to improving teaching and learning, however their vision did not include information regarding a comprehensive reform vision that built on the four core educational assurance areas. It is unclear how targeting all students in K-12 in reading, science and mathematics support the vision for this project. It is also unclear how the creation of two career academies relates to the development of an educational reform plan. The applicant did not address accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, or increasing equity through personalized student support thus the response is in the low range.

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

- (a) The applicants process in the selection of all students at all schools for inclusion was done through a committee meeting where data from state and local assessments was reviewed. The committee also reviewed data from the Pupil Education Information Management System, surveys from parents, students, and teachers, four years of data on state completion rates, attendance and discipline information, and other data to support school, student, and subject manner selection. The selection process described was comprehensive and established priority areas for instructional focus.
- (b) A list of schools that will participate in grant activities was provided by the applicant. In addition the applicant specified, the grade levels and subject areas to be focused on at each school.
- (c)The total number of participating students, participating students from low income families, and participating educators in participating schools were provided in the charts (A)(2).

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	5
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- The application provided a plan to develop a reform plan that would improve teaching and learning under the grant proposal. The plan developed would address all students in both districts and target students for reading, math, and science. The plan would also include developing two career academies and include professional development for teachers.
- Each goal for the Consortium RttT District plan included objectives, strategies, responsible parties, resources, core assurances, and a timeline.
- Both Formative and summative evaluation was detailed as part of the evaluation plan.
- The applicant did not address a logic model, however goals were addressed in an evaluation plan found in the appendix.

Weaknesses:

- The applicant would conduct reviews to assess the implementation of the curriculum, however they did not share specifics regarding what curriculum would be implemented and how it would improve math, reading, and science.
- The response to intervention model was referred to as part of the plan, however the applicant did not indicate how or why.
- The applicant indicated that they would use and integrate technology, but did not detail what technology or how it would be used.
- The plan indicated that PK-12 students would be targeted. The academic goals in the plan addressed only students in grades 3-12.

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

The applicants vision is to develop an educational reform plan to improve teaching and learning. Four goals relating to student performance on standards and assessments, increased graduation rates, effective teachers and leaders, and the implementation of a data system were provided. The applicant did not make distinctions in the goals provided for each participating LEA nor did they provide data for grades PreK-2 in the tables for (A)(4), this is inconsistent with the previous tables indicating that PreK- 12 students would be included.

- Although the tables set annual goals for each subgroup, the issue of increased equity was not directly addressed by the applicant. The pass/proficient rates were included in the (A)(4)(a) chart, and the comparison data was shared in chart (A)(4)(b). Currently the majority of students in both school systems are performing below state raw scores. Percent goals on the (b) chart could not be shared due to changing tests. The applicant proposes that 90% of students will perform at or above state average in Math, 98% in reading, and 89% in science (for both systems of schools); this does not seem realistic based on the data shared. The applicant also proposes that 100% of students in grades 3, 5, 8, and 9 take a career interest inventor, however they do not share why or how this data will be used.
- In goal 2, the applicant included ambitious goals for graduation and college and career readiness. It is unclear is all of these goals are achievable based on the plan and baseline data. For example the applicant indicates a goal of a 100% graduation rate by 2017, when last year, graduation rates ranged from 50% to 81%. The applicant also stated that 100% of all students will be college and career ready, while this is an ambitious goal, statistically it does not seem realistic given the current college enrollment rates. Chart (A)(4)(c) sets graduation rates at 100% post grant for all students. For some subgroups graduate rates would need to double from 2010-2011.
- In goal three, the applicant indicates that 100% of all principals and assistant principals will receive exceptional ratings on a newly created evaluation instrument. This appears to be unrealistic, even after requiring at least 90% of them to compete 200 hours of effective leadership training. Only 85% of teachers are expected to score at the exceptional rating. The instrument will be developed in 2014 to measure effectiveness. Since the instrument has not yet been developed, it is unclear if exceptional will be the the highest rating.
- Goal five details data talks with parents and the use of new software programs on each campus. Although the campuses will implement the software programs in 2013, parent data talks will not be conducted until 2015, and then only twice a year. While this is achievable, it is insufficient meaningful and does not allow for data sharing for the first two years of the grant.
- The applicants vision to develop an educational reform plan to improve teaching and learning did not directly address increased equity.
- The applicant included a goal that 80% of graduates will achieve a minimum of 9 college hours, this goal is inconsistent with the plan provided in A3; that section indicated that low achieving students would attend career academies. These students would not have the opportunity to take college level coursework.

The applicant did not provide goals specific to each participating LEA and some of the goals are inconsistent with the plan and grade level information provided, thus this criteria was scored in the low range.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	7
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths</p> <p>The high school data provided indicated that achievement was trending up. Goals and objectives for grades 3-12 indicate that by 2017, students will score at or above state average.</p> <p>The graduation data shared indicate that the schools in the consortium are increasing graduation rates and approaching state levels.</p> <p>The applicant indicated that they have implemented ambitious and significant reforms such as replacing principals, changing schedules, adding common planning time, and increasing professional development</p> <p>Weaknesses</p> <p>Although the applicant proposed grant funded activities to increase success, the four year track record included indicating the schools have not had a clear record of success improving learning outcomes and closing achievement gaps to increase equity. The schools appear to be performing well below state averages in all areas except secondary social studies, a subject area not addressed in this project. Limited data for grades 8-11 was provided, however this grant proposes to serve all students in the two school system.</p> <p>The applicant did not provide information demonstrating a four year history of ambitious and significant reforms in persistently lowest-achieving schools or low performing schools.</p> <p>Although the applicant stated that the school systems have data systems in place for students and parents; the applicant did not indicate how this data was used to inform and improve participation, instruction, and services.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	1
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Although the applicant states that the school systems have high levels of transparency, only board agendas, board minutes, and salary schedules are detailed as readily to available to parents who have access to the school systems website. Actual personnel salaries at each school level for staff are available only through Open Records Act requests, with forms accessible only on the schools website. These requests may take up to 10 days. This system does not address a high level of transparency regarding actual personnel salaries. Non-personnel expenditures are available through an audit report posted on a website. The applicant did not detail a public process to share this information. The applicant met the minimum requirement that included a description of the extent to which the applicant already makes the data in four categories available. Since the applicant does not provide a high record of success beyond the minimum requirements, this section is rated in the low range.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	3
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application provided information that detailed several school system magnet and career and technical academy programs in both school districts as evidence that the consortium has the autonomy to create the career academy portion of the application. State legal, statutory and regulatory requirements were not addressed for the activities detailed for PreK -8th grade students, dual enrollment, and all other project activities, thus a low score was awarded in this section. The applicant included that students in grades 1-6 will take a career inventory and that students in grades 7-11 will create 6 year career plans; this information was insufficient to demonstrate that successful conditions and sufficient autonomy allowed the implementation personalized learning environments that were described in the application.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	3
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Although the applicant did provide letters of support from some stakeholders in the community, the application submitted did not meet the minimum requirements for this section. In non-collective bargaining states, at minimum, evidence that at least 70% of teachers from participating schools must indicate support for this proposal. The applicant held several meetings that included parents and conducted a survey monkey survey, however it is not possible from the information provided to determine that 70% of teachers support the proposal. The survey did not ask if teachers supported the Race to the Top proposal and did not indicate that teachers were given access to all of the components of the proposal. In addition, it is unclear if the applicants taking the survey were teachers or other staff members or if 70% of the teachers responded to the survey. Since the applicant did not meet all of the requirements for (B)(4), a low score is awarded.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	2
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths</p>		

The applicant established links between the goals and gaps to establish the logic behind the RTI section of the proposal and activities related to ELA, Math, and Science.

The goals were logical, credible, and closely tied to evaluation measures based on the data provided at some grade levels.

Weaknesses

The applicant did not provide a high quality plan for an analysis of the applicants current status with regards to personal learning environments. The logic behind the proposal appears to be a discussion regarding career academies. This does not seem directly related to the rest of the proposal. The applicant discussed some needs, however included mainly statements of what the grant would do or provide, without addressing gaps in personal learning environments.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	8
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths</p> <p>The plan provided by the applicant primarily focuses on the Career and Technical Education programs the school systems. The applicant provided a detailed plan for implementing CTE programming by preparing students for Career Academies, expanding Career Academies, and supporting students attending Career Academies.</p> <p>Conferences with parents were discussed regarding the sharing of survey results, grades, and test scores in a private meeting at the secondary level.</p> <p>Students will be grouped by learning styles and be given interest and skill inventories to direct them toward programs they have an interest in. A counselor will work with students at the secondary level at each districts CTE campus on personal learning recommendations.</p> <p>The current staff would be evaluated regarding their readiness to teach in the career academies proposed and the applicant stated the staff would be evaluated using evaluations.</p> <p>Weaknesses</p> <p>Sparse details provided support for college readiness, elementary, or middle school components of the grant. It is unclear if this approach will engage and empower all learners in the school system, in particular high-need students, in an age-appropriate manner in secondary CTE focused student programs. The applicant did not address meeting the needs of all high need learners in the plan provided.</p> <p>No mention of parent support or communication was included for elementary or middle school students. Other than CTE and support for career academies at the secondary level, the details provided by the applicant did not address providing students and parents an understanding that what they are learning would be key to their success in accomplishing their goals.</p> <p>It is unclear if students who do not elect to take CTE classes will have access to a personal learning environment. The applicant states that local community colleges will be part of the six to eight year phase of the plan, however this grant will only cover half of that period.</p> <p>Other than CTE career paths, the applicant did not address involving all students in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest, access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning; or mastering critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving.</p> <p>The evaluation methods were not defined for all teachers participating in the grant, although several options including a state system not yet developed, were proposed. Details were sparse regarding evaluation methods for teachers not hired for the career academies.</p> <p>Little information on accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students to help ensure that they are on track toward meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements were provided by the applicant.</p> <p>A software program would be used to help students explore career path options, however few details are included regarding how students will be trained and supported to use this software to track and manage their learning. The programs appear to address only students at the secondary level, it is unclear if students at the elementary level will have training and support to monitor their academic achievement.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	8
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant states that teachers will be held responsible for students to ensure they are on track for graduation and college/post secondary options. The application indicates that teachers will receive extensive training to measure student growth to help them attain the skills needed to personalize learning environments. Standardized assessments will be housed in the AWARE system for all students. Annual assessments can be accesses and can be utilized by instructional staff. 		

- Two job fairs will be held to address recommendations to hire teachers in critical shortage areas.

Weaknesses

- This plan did not include an approach to implementing instructional strategies for all participating students; the applicant proposes to serve students in K-12, however the plan addressed goals and objectives for 3-12. The applicant referred to lower grade assessments being used in the same way as PSAT data, however the use of PSAT data was not defined.
- The applicant did not define how teachers would be held responsible for student learning.
- The applicant did not include plans to prepare teachers to meet the needs of all students, including special education and ELL students to graduate on time and college- and career-ready;
- The applicant relies on exposure to extracurricular activities to allow students to experience project based experiences and does not define how the volunteers referred to will be used, trained, or evaluated.
- The availability of data does not equate to frequently measures of student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements for all students. The applicant did not share how this data would be used to inform and accelerate student progress.
- The Teacher evaluation processes was inconsistent. The grantee indicated in this section, an evaluation system would be implemented in year one of the grant, however in a previous section, the grantee indicated that a rigorous teacher evaluation tool would be developed in year two or a statewide system that has not been developed yet might be adopted by year two, or a different tool might be used.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	7
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths</p> <p>The consortium governance structure is clear and detailed staffing qualifications and duties.</p> <p>Details were included regarding the composition of the school team and the applicant shared that they would have input in school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions, and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators, and school-level budgets.</p> <p>The applicant addresses several options for demonstrating mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways.</p> <p>Weaknesses</p> <p>The applicant did not clearly address practices, policies, and rules that would facilitate personal learning for the population identified.</p> <p>The applicant did not share evidence that the team would be granted the sufficient flexibility and autonomy. No practices, policies, or rules were included indicating this level of flexibility or autonomy.</p> <p>The applicant did not address how they would give students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic. They did share one way it could be done through mastery testing, but did not indicate that they would adopt this practice. No practices, policies, or rules were included that indicated that the applicant intended to allow students the opportunity to progress and each credit based on demonstrated mastery.</p> <p>The applicant indicates that they will consult with professors from local universities to ensure full access for special needs students. It is unclear how consulting would effect comprehensive policies and infrastructure. No practices, policies, or rules regarding adaptable and fully access able grant activities were provided for disabled students or ELL students.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	4
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths</p> <p>The applicant provided a plan to distribute technology resources to the community and to support affordable internet service for parents. All families would have discounted internet service in their homes and the use of technology purchased through this grant to support the blended learning model.</p> <p>Weaknesses:</p> <p>Comprehensive policies and the current infrastructure for every student and educator was limited and unclear. Although the applicant stated that parents and students generally have access to technology, no data was shared to support this statement.</p> <p>The applicant will rely on parents to provide access to technology tools available for checkout at one school system and a computer room open afterschool and on Saturdays at each school. No staffing for this room was detailed.</p> <p>The applicant did not address how or if technology systems would allow parents and students to export their information in an open data format.</p> <p>The applicant did not provide information that indicates that an inter operable data system is in place.</p> <p>Although many strategies and resources were detailed, a high quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provides every student, educator, and level of the education system with the support and resources they need, when and where they</p>		

are needed was not clearly defined thus the score is in the mid range.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	7
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths</p> <p>A highly detailed outside evaluation plan was included with goals, objectives, strategies, responsible persons, resources, core assurances, timelines, formative and summative evaluations. Data will be collected and maintained. Interim reports will be prepared including any changes and adaptations.</p> <p>Weaknesses</p> <p>Although an evaluation overview was included, it is unclear how the data collected in (e)(1) specifically indicates a strategy for continuous, timely, or regular feedback on progress toward goals for ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the grant term.</p> <p>A timeline for feedback, reports, or continuous improvement is not provided. There is no indication of how the applicant will publicly share the data. Although the applicant included details on the outside evaluation, they did not address all of the requirements under (E)(1) including how adjustment and revisions would be made, how the application would be continuously improved, and how regular feedback and information would be publicly shared.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Limited strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders were provided. A Consortium Advisory Committee will meet regularly and the outside evaluator will visit quarterly. Parent information will be used to guide the program to an undefined degree in subsequent years after year one. The applicant did not define how student level or teacher level information would provide continuous improvement in its plan.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Most rationales for selecting performance measures indicated that they were important, but not why they were important. For example, measurement 9 indicated that the strategy was very important for improving academic achievement due to the level of funding offered from the RttT grant for a Magnet School that was not part of the vision or high quality plan discussed. Measurement 10 indicates that 100% of parents will have "pin" numbers but does not indicate what the "pin" numbers to access state assessment data. It is unclear is this is a new level of access or how this access will improve student level achievement.</p> <p>The applicant did not specifically indicate how all of the measures would provide rigorous, timely, and formative data tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant's implementation success or areas of concern.</p> <p>The applicant did not indicate how it will review and improve the measures over time.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant states that the external evaluator will review all purchases and expenditures regarding this grant; the plan does not address the effectiveness of the investments. Student progress in meeting goals and objectives will determine if the objectives were appropriate, thus at some level the effectiveness of investments is assessed. No indication is offered regarding revisions during the grant project base in the effectiveness of investments, thus the score is awarded at the low level.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	1
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The budget narrative indicated that the grant had only one project. The applicant requested funds for K-12 students and the career academies proposed would serve only secondary students. It is unclear how the applicant would fund services for pk-8 students. The applicant in (A)(1) stated that</p>		

elementary students would be targeted for reading, math and science, this expense was not listed in the budget.

The applicant did not identify the sources of all funds that will support the project.

Funds were not identified to support portions of the applicants proposal. The budget is not sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal.

The applicant did not include a rationale for investments and priorities.

The applicant did not include a description of all of the funds (e.g., Race to the Top – District grant; external foundation support; LEA, State, and other Federal funds) that the applicant will use to support the implementation of the proposal, including total revenue from these sources.

The total amount of funding for each area was included in a sustainability chart, however the applicant did not indicate how much would come from each source or the actual sources of the funding.

The applicant did not Identification of the funds that will be used for one-time investments versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs.

Purchases, such as kitchen equipment were inconsistent with the application described. The budget table incomplete. Sections 12 and 13 were not finished. The applicant indicated that other funds would be part of the grant in the sustainability table, but did not include these funds in the budget.

The applicant did not include all of the the information requested in section (F)(1) in this section or in other sections of the grant, thus the score for this section is in the low range.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	1
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The sustainability plan for the project goals does not appear to be sustainable. In the F(2) sustainability budget charts, other funds were identified, but not defined regarding where the funds originated. In addition, over 59% of the costs in the grant are related to personnel. The applicant indicated that IDEA funds would be used to sustain personal learning environments for SPED students, but did not indicate how personal learning environments would be sustained for other students. The consortium will work on other grants to fund the project, however no history of securing other grants was provided. The applicant proposes to use other federal, state, and local funds, however previously in the application, the applicant indicated that over the past three years, budgets had been tightened. The applicant scored in the low range for sustainability.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

n/a

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

This application did not describe a plan for personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards. The application described a plan to fund career academies for CTE for grades 8-12, but did not articulate how students in grades PK-7 would have a personalized learning environment. The applicant did not include specific policies, practices, and rules that indicated that a personal learning environment was feasible. The applicant did not include a plan to give students access to the most effective teachers, only that a high percentage would be effective based on an assessment that has not been decided upon or designed. It is unclear how increased access to CTE would decrease achievement gaps across student groups, and increase the rates which student graduate from high school prepared for college and careers. The applicant did not meet absolute priority 1.

Total	210	77
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0804TX-3 for La Marque and Hitchcock Education



A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	2
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The La Marque Hitchcock Education Consortium (LHEC) provides a vision statement (pg. 30), and although the applicant states that LHEC plans to develop an education reform that will improve teaching and learning, the vision does not articulate how the LHEC's vision plans to <u>build on its current work in the areas of the core educational assurance areas</u> of (1) adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy; (2) build data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals with data about how they can improve instruction; (d) recruit, develop reward, and retain effective teachers and principals, and (4) turn around the lowest-achieving schools.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) Applicant refers to a list of data (performance data, school records, parent, student and teacher surveys) used to determine that all schools and all students in the two districts would be included in this grant. Although the applicant states it used this data to make decisions about the reform initiative written into this grant, the data is not found within this application (e.g. parent surveys/input, documentation of committee meetings/agendas/minutes taken from the meetings, etc.). Much of the data described that each school reviewed was from high school-related resources. There is no real evidence that supports how the elementary schools were chosen to be included.</p> <p>(b&c) The table within this narrative sections provides the names of the schools participating, the targeted grades and the targeted subjects. The raw number of students enrolled at each school and the % of low-income families is provided in the "School Demographics" table.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not provide a clear logic model related specifically to the reform initiative of adding the career academies.</p> <p>Tables found in Appendix X does describe four separate goals, but some of the information from this criteria is not found in the tables. (e.g. outcome goals were mentioned but it was unclear how the applicant was going to meet the goals of increasing math, science and reading scores). The RtI was described in the narrative, but there no evidence written into the tables of how RtI would be used.</p> <p>Each goal provides measurable objectives that are aligned with the four core assurances. Every goal has numerous strategies that demonstrates that there has been planning made to integrate technology, but a connection of how technology would connect this plan was not clearly identified.</p> <p>The Action Plan includes science-based strategies, partnerships with public and private supporters, digital learning and accelerated learning opportunities, family support opportunities, personal student learning opportunities based on their interests, but again, there was not a clear design of how initiative would be implemented.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) Provided in the narrative (p. 34) and the data table (p. 40), a comprehensive overview of what summative assessments are being used at <u>each district</u> and at <u>each school</u> and the various grade level that were assessed. The applicant provided the methodology for determining proficiency status for each assessment. The applicant also describes how growth will be determined as outlined by the SDE (e.g. value-added, mean growth percentile, change in achievement levels). The applicant displays relevant data for the past school year as well as provides a forecast of predicted increases for each school, grade span and subgroup and overall student performance. The percent increases appears to be ambitious and specific to individual subgroups (e.g.) La Marque ISD proposes to move its overall proficiency for grades 3-11 on the State reading assessment from the baseline of 57.54% to 91.0%, and Hitchcock ISD for the same assessments will move from 62.3% to 91% by final year of the grant.</p> <p>(b) Based on the data provided, achievement gaps cannot be determined for PK-4th grade or 12th grade students, nor was there any narrative related to annual targets for these grade spans. For other grade spans it is unclear what the specific gaps were as the data for the various subjects has been combined. There was not an explanation of how to interpret the data to determine if the annual targets are achievable or ambitious.</p> <p>(c) The table for this section reflects the baseline for high school graduation rates for both of the two districts. It also includes the graduation rate for each subgroup. The goals set for graduation rates were increased annually, with 100% goal for "post-grant" year. 100% is certainly ambitious, but there was no narrative to explain the rationale in determining how the 100% goal is achievable.</p> <p>(d) The College enrollment data table details the the percentage of students who has graduated and enrolled in a Texas university or the percentage</p>		

predicted to attend a Texas university based on program services. The table reflects an increase each year with the overall population as well as in each subgroups. The increases seemed to reflect an ambitious yet attainable goal.

(e) The applicant provided data for the optional criteria of Postsecondary Degree Attainment. The Baseline data of 11% increases to 35%, which reflects an ambitious yet achievable goal.

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	9
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(B)(1) The applicant presented some data on their track record of success. Although not clear or extensive, there were positive trends described in the narrative section (reference sections a-c).</p> <p>(a) Applicant provided documentation to reflect positive trends in academic performance, college enrollment and college-ready graduates although there was discrepancies or confusion in some of the data provided in various charts. The applicant proposed to serve all students but limited data was provided for the early elementary-age students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The State's <u>academic assessment data</u> provided for each district was compared to that of the State's average. The data that was provided revealed mainly increases each year from SY 2008 to SY 2012. It was unclear what students were a part of this cohort. Both districts are scoring very close to each other, but below or at the same level as the State. Applicant reports that each year the State's "passing standards" have increased, therefore, it's hard to reflect the actual amount of growth over the past four years. Both districts reported an increase in <u>college enrollment</u> this past year. (e.g. Hitchcock High increased by 5%; La Marque High increased by 10%. From 2008 to 2012, gains were reported for the percent of students who were <u>college- and career- ready</u> in ELA scores for both districts. Only one of the two districts accomplished this percentage increase in math, which is not adequate in demonstrating a clear track record. <p>(b) The primary strength that supports the criteria is that both districts have made reforms efforts by improving their leadership and course scheduling calendar (e.g. replaced leadership-both districts replaced their high school and middle school principals, hired a new superintendent at one district, changed master schedules to provide common planning time for teachers, added professional development for staff, and both districts have adopted CSCOPE/curriculum management system).</p> <p>(c) Both districts already have parent portal systems in place. Teachers can access and input data for parents and students to view. It was not clearly identified how this data system would help support the target initiative.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(B)(a-d) Transparency of school personnel salaries is evident as the application explains that personal salary schedules are posted on the website and districts' monthly expenditure and check register is posted on websites of each district. State recognition of one district for financial transparency has been awarded the past three years. Annual audit reports are also posted. Applicant has provided enough evidence to support a high level of transparency would be reflected during this grant period.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant provides convincing evidence that both districts have demonstrated evidence of either establishing conditions for promoting personalized learning environments or the plans are under way to implement programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> STEM/Renaissance Academy program Plans to implement a Magnet subject area into several elem. schools Existing auto Tech program and health science program Proposing to add with grant funds two career academies <p>Applicant proposes within the two career academies they want to build from these grant funds, grades 1-6 will take a career inventory and grades 9-12 will build individualized 6-year career plans.</p> <p>It was unclear what the State's legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements are concerning personalized learning environments.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	7
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) Planning meetings consisted of teachers, parents, community members, campus and central office staff, which represented the stakeholders deciding on the career academies. A survey was given to teachers to get their input for support of the program. The narrative did not define how the proposal was revised based on feedback from planning meetings. The required criterion for demonstrating that 70% of teachers supporting the proposal was not met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) 127 (45%) educators completed an on-line survey asking for teachers' input and support of this grant proposal. Hitchcock's survey reported 97% of teachers supported the submission of the RTTT proposal and the initiative proposed; La Marque also reported similar percentages of support (survey results for both districts found in Appendix D). (ii) There is no local union. 		

(b) Letters of support from both mayors were included, as well as personalized letters of support from key partners and service agencies. An example of a student inventory was shown. This type of data provided input on the students' interest and supported areas of focus for program. Applicant has provided much evidence that the program would be supported from the beginning.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	4
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Consortium LHEC has established links between their goals and identified gaps in a few areas. The applicant reported that the Plan was developed from an analysis of their current status. LHEC's Plan has four goals, all aligned to the four core educational assurance areas. Each goal has between four and twenty activities. The goals appeared logical and creditable. Applicant explains rationale of activities based on results of a comprehensive needs assessment process with input from both participating districts. Identified committee members evaluated the gaps and needs of the students at each district to determine the activities. The following data was analyzed:

- CSCOPE (program that aligns curriculum standards to lesson plans)
- Effective professional Development for teachers and administrators
- Districts' Improvement plans and campus's improvement plans
- State assessment results
- Student data from STAAR and STAAR/EOC (new state tests-disaggregate using state raw score ave. comparisons)
- formation of Career Academics and program of Study for each Career Academy
- AP Exam reports from College Board, AEIS, TEA, SAT/ACT/PSAT
- College of the Mainland dual credit enrollment data

The assumed Action Plan, is written in a table format. It is 26 pages in length and Includes all of the required criteria components (e.g. timeline, month/year specific, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities). Along with this required criteria, LHEC embedded resources, and both formative and summative assessments that would be used to determine progress.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(C)(1) Learning- The only weakness found in this section (C)(1) is that not all participating students (no mention of K-3) will be involved in activities related to selection criteria.

(a)(i) Applicant provides evidence that their Action Plan describes activities and programs for some students, but not all, that will promote students setting goals and personalizing their courses based on their interests.

For MS/HS students:

- A Career Academic program is planned for both districts. it will be designed to help students be successful in accomplishing their goals, and will provide teachers within that program an opportunity to be trained on learning styles and best practices (pg. 95).
- Counselor providing recommendations, strategies, and techniques on personalized learning choices.
- Parent nights and conferences to help parents understand the importance that "learning is key to success in accomplishing goals."

For ES students:

- counseling programs
- grant provided instructional coaches

(a)(ii) Applicant provides evidence that their Action Plan prescribes activities that will allow some students to pursue learning and develop goals linked to college- and career- ready standards or college- and career- ready graduation requirements.

For MS/HS students:

- The Bridges program is presently implemented in both districts.
- Following an interests and skills inventory, students engage in a career exploration software program. Bridges track progress toward mastery of Texas College and Career ready standards or college and career ready graduation requirements.

For ES students:

- Counseling program involving career clusters.

(a)(iii) Applicant provides evidence that their Action Plan prescribes opportunist for some students to be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interests.

For MS/HS students:

- Students follow a plan of study and choose to enroll in the Career Academy at the school site, or concurrent enrollment in the local community colleges.
- Use of Virtual School Network will be offered to students. This coursework can provide students with advanced classes or to remediate students.

For ES students:

- Software acceleration and remediation coursework
- STEM Academy

(a)(iv) Applicant provides evidence that their Action Plan prescribes opportunities for some students to be exposed to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepened individual student learning.

MS/HS students

- Students will be paired up with a business/industry mentor who is working in student's field of interest. Students will participate in internships, apprenticeships, and job shadowing.
- Consortium allows students to have more program options to choose.

(a)(v) Applicant provides evidence that their Action Plan prescribes opportunities for some students to master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving.

MS/HS students

- Students required to take Skills for Success course. Course components include goals setting, teamwork, cortical thinking, communication techniques, problem solving, study skills, and soft skills (p.98).
- dual credit coursework at community college

(b)(i) Applicant provides some evidence that their Action Plan prescribes a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable the to achieve his or her individual learning goals and ensure he or she can graduate on time and college- and career- ready.

- Rigorous interview process to hire project staff, including instructional coaches for Elem. schools
- New Teacher Academy (Saturday staff trainings); limited amount of details related to professional development purpose for these days
- Two week summer professional development to train teachers in areas that support grant goals

(b)(ii) Applicant provides evidence that their Action Plan prescribes a variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments.

- Career Academics (i.e. blended curriculum and learning, virtual school option, understanding their own learning style, personal interest opportunities, individual programs of study).
- The plan includes specific strategies of how Instructors in the two districts will be "well versed in as many effective instructional strategies as possible" p.102. The newly developed teacher evaluation instrument will be used to measure teacher effectiveness.

(b)(iii) Applicant provides evidence that their Action Plan prescribes high-quality content, including digital learning content aligned with college- and career- ready standards or graduation requirements.

- Compass Learning Software
- A+ Software
- Blending learning environments
- Virtual Coursework

(b)(iv) Applicant provides evidence that their Action Plan prescribes ongoing and regular feedback.

- Bridges Transitions - tracks progress toward mastery of Texas College and Career ready standards; Plan of Study reviews; mentorship program; cohort led by same teacher for three years
- Professional Development for educators on topics such as instructional strategies and technology integration.

(b)(v) Applicant provides evidence that their Action Plan prescribes accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students.

- Dual credit classes at local colleges offered free of charge
- Computers are offered to check out to use at home free of charge
- Internet is provided to student of high need for \$9.95/mo.
- Special education students also have an individualized education plan
- Career counseling/resource center for student and parents

(c) Applicant provides evidence that their Action Plan includes digital learning, but there is little mentioned about what mechanisms are in place to provide training and support to students to use these digital offerings.

- Dual credit classes at local colleges offered free of charge
- Computers are offered to check out to use at home free of charge
- Internet is provided to student of high need for \$9.95/mo.
- Special education students also have an individualized education plan
- Career counseling/resource center for student and parents

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

20

13

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading

(a) Applicant provides a good overview of the role of instructional coaches in assisting teachers and parents on how to interpret data as a method to personalize students' learning.

- Instructional coaches as both districts and in the elem. and secondary for math, science and reading subjects. Coaches provide content training and instructional practices
- Teacher training planned to understand measurement of student growth (added value components), how to track for graduation and entrance into college, project-based teaching skills/digital learning

There is nothing mentioned about a leadership teams or communities that supports individual and collective capacity.

(b) Applicant provides evidence that a tracking tools are in place to monitor students, and will be made available to teachers in order for them to help students who need intervention or to help students who are ready to accelerate their learning. Applicant has referred digital resources that will be explored to help educators and improve instruction.

- AWARE computer tracking software - track K-12; teacher training on data analysis

(c) Applicant provides evidence that during grant implementation, and because of new Teacher evaluation system in State, principals will be involved classroom walkthrough to ensure teacher quality and that teachers are using the tools necessary to help students. It was unclear of what tool would be used to evaluate teachers.

The plan supports principals receiving continuous training on various teaching strategies and classroom management. Principals will be supported by district in removing ineffective teaching and recruiting high quality staff.

The applicant fails to provide an overall picture of how **all** K-12 students will be served. Details in several areas are weak (e.g. all subgroups of students were not addressed - ELL & SPED; leadership teams; teacher evaluation system measurement; did not address graduation on time and college and career readiness within this criteria.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	11
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant provides evidence that a leadership structure has been determined (i.e. advisory council), and quality personnel will be hired. Job descriptions are defined along with qualifications of lead personnel. Scheduling of coursework has been planned. Logistics for Career Academy at both districts have been determined. The applicant did not support a practice, policy or rule related to staffing associated with personal learning environments. Evidence is not provided on local policy that would allow initiatives such as a career academy be added to the district.</p> <p>Applicant provides some guidance on how the implementation of hardware advances and technology purchases be made in order for students to demonstrate mastery as well as to progress and earn credit at their own pace.</p> <p>The Plan and narrative establishes support that all students (e.g. physically disabled, learning disabled, ELL etc.) will be served by the grant and consulting experts will be brought in to guide teachers in choosing appropriate curriculum. Equity for these students has been established within this application.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	10
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) Applicant provides a thorough review of how their districts' website and other electronic communication will make up the infrastructure that allows for parents, students, educators and stakeholders can access for learning resources. The program will ensure that all families have access to the technology by extending the school's library hours and on Saturdays. Families will also be available to check technology out that will have broadband in order to access resources.</p> <p>(b) The plan includes a timeline for program to host parent/family meetings and consortium advisory council meetings. The appropriate means of support is identified (e.g. translators, adaptive needs for meeting sites).</p> <p>(c-d) A wide array of technology and support is projected to be offered. The applicants provides a list and rationale for needing them aligned to LEA policy and infrastructure. The Consortium have in place a portal that stores data and makes accessible to determine students' need for intervention or acceleration of students' learning as well as for electronic learning tools.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	8
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>For the evaluation of this program, the applicant has provided an overview of an annual evaluation and provided a list (see bulleted list below) of the quantitative and quantitative data that they plan to use to identify improvements needed for their program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longitudinal cohort analysis for quantitative data • State's STAAR Tests, Texas's CRT for grades 3-8 • ITBS Normed reference test K-8 • ITED for grades 9-12 • PPVT for Pk-K • Report card grades • ELL assessments • Teacher questionnaires of IT teachers • Student Portfolios • Information taken from Teacher Evaluations • Benchmark Assessments (taken from software programs) • data provided by administrators and teachers (feedback from meetings with dept. chairs, principals, etc.) <p>A strength noted is that the applicants plans to use an external evaluator. There were specific references to evaluating the program staff, the technology, objectives and activities. There was also reference made to evaluating the professional development.</p> <p>The applicant has some evidence that there three goals will be measured for program progress, but the plan was weak in determining the effectiveness of the investments and how it would be publicly shared/other than possibly the portal system.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant has provided a narrative that explains the strategies that will be used for ongoing communication (e.g. advisory committee meetings, parent input using evaluations, performance data posted on the websites and accessed through the district portal system, etc).</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has completed the tables with all of the required information and has listed the data by district when appropriate, including the measures, annual targets, the rationale for selection, how the measure will be evaluated and other considerations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades Pk-3: The proposal would have been stronger if baseline data would have been provided for a normed tests and PPVT. There was not any rationale provided of how the targets were established. Providing a measure for students' physical performance and helping parents understand how to help their child be academically successful at this early age is a strength. • Grades 3-11: All required information submitted within the table with realistic but ambitious targets for assessments. • Grades 9-12: Although baseline was not provided for the # of students enrolled in FASFA, program narrative describes process for ensuring this, which makes targets achievable. Program objectives (cohort/PSAT) will provide baseline in Year 1. Other assessment data provided. 		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has within the application that they will utilize the external evaluators expertise in planning the purchases for grant implementation. The district agrees to adhere to the Federal, SDE's, and District's expenditure policies and law.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three Goals - Included in the application is the means to measure and evaluate the following: Staff, technology, Consortium Advisory Committee activities, Parent involvement, students' performance assessment data and other project objectives related to students. 		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	3
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A budget was included, but the applicant does not adequately address this criterion because they did not provide sufficient documentation on how the budget amounts were determined (e.g. purpose for employee incentives; travel for professional development; justification for the salary amounts).</p>		

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

The applicant provides a plan for funding the RTTT-D three years after the term of the grant. Minimum reference was made for funds expected to come from local funding sources, and there was no evidence that State leaders will assist in sustainability. The applicant identifies the following for sustainability of the goals.

- The applicant proposes funding will supplement the existing programs and will be maximized by the coordination of district funds. The applicant's superintendents have agreed to continue program once it ends using Title I funds and other federal and state funding sources (e.g. Bilingual and Spec. Ed). They have also agreed to using \$20,000 of local funds.
- Rationale provided for performance measures and evidence of continuation of programs after funding ends.
- Parent Focus groups will be a part of sustainability meetings.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

NA

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Total	210	134
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