



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0419NC-1 for Lenoir County Public Schools

### 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>The application is partly responsive to the notice because it articulates a vision for reform that is grounded in current district efforts, is in line with the needs of the community, and begins with a focus on pre-K and continues through secondary education with a progression that increasingly focuses on students' own goals for education and careers. The plan also matches its nine strategies with the four core educational assurance areas (for example, matching the standards and assessments assurance area with the World View Elementary School strategy). However, the vision never really makes clear how the approach the LEA has chosen will lead to personalized student support, or how this support will improve learning and equity. Therefore the vision scores in the low medium range.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has demonstrated through data tables that all of the schools in the district have greater than 40% high-needs students and are thus eligible to participate, with a range of 43% to 95% of students economically disadvantaged in each school. Therefore, in consultation with community representatives the district has chosen to involve all schools in its RTTD program. The application is responsive in that it has provided all the data needed to support its school selection approach and all of the data requested in (b) and (c). However, the application does not address the logistics of involving all schools, but it does point out that it has started with reform efforts in three schools under the state's Race to the Top grant and that the vision for RTTD is where they already see the district heading. Therefore this section scored in the high range.9</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	3
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application is partly responsive to the notice in this section in that it presents a logic model that shows how the vision will be applied to every level of schooling in the district (preK, elementary, middle, high, transition to postsecondary) and will be supported by processes such as leadership and data driven decision making. Therefore the vision is clearly aimed at district-wide change. However, it lacks several elements of a high-quality plan as defined in the notice. A high-quality plan would have included the activities to be undertaken and their rationale, a timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities. Because the plan lacks these elements it is difficult to be confident that the approach is credible. Therefore this section scored in the low medium range.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	2
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant presents a table of annual goals tied to performance on state assessments that is equal to the state's goals, so this section is responsive to (a). While the proposal demonstrates that there are achievement gaps between subgroups in the district, and between the district and the state, no annual goals for achievement gaps are presented and therefore (b) is not responsive to the notice. The applicant also demonstrates that it has increased graduation rates over the past few years, but has experienced decreased rates of college acceptance. However, it does not present annual goals for graduation rates or college enrollment, so it is not responsive to (c) and (d). Because most of the requested goals were not included in the application, this section scores in the low range.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	4
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This section provides some evidence in response to the notice. The proposal includes data from three low-performing schools in which most reading and math scores have improved between the 2008-09 test and the 2011-12 test. It states that graduation rates have increased 6.5% over the past year. There were more college applicants in 2009-10 than there were in 2005-06, although the percentage increase is not given. Although no figures are given, the proposal states that the district has posted a "mild but upward trend" in three-year performance of students on the end-of-grade reading test, although it is still lower than the state average. In addition, the proposal indicates that students with disabilities have made gains (for example, 27.5% to 36.9% proficient in reading from 2010-11 to the next year for grades 3-8). However, the proposal does not include the information the notice asked for, which is evidence via a description, charts or graphs, raw student data on achievement, achievement gaps, high school graduation, and college enrollment over the last four years. Data are incomplete (for example, data for only three schools rather than the whole district) and only for two time points (years) rather than four.</p> <p>The proposal addresses ways in which the district informs stakeholders of events at the schools, but does not provide evidence that they make performance data beyond report cards and interim reports available to parents.</p> <p>Because of the information that is missing, this section scores in the low range.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	1
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal refers to the public nature of the salaries of public employees such as teachers, and reports an incident in which the Charlotte Observer published the salaries of all state teachers. While the proposal states that these data for the district have been available to "the community at large for a number of years," it does not say how people could access the data. The proposal says that structures are in place to report the data on the district web site, but it has not yet happened, and there are no specifics as to when these data will be available there. Therefore, the district does not appear currently to have a high level of transparency in its processes and investments, and this section scored in the low range.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	3
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The personalized learning environments have not been described with enough detail to make it clear what kind of conditions and autonomy would be required to implement them. Therefore, it is difficult to judge whether the LEA would have the ability to implement them in their environment. The proposal describes what kinds of decisions are made at the district level (e.g., textbook adoption, school facilities), which are made at the school and classroom level (e.g., curriculum interpretation and assessment), and which are made at the state level (e.g., standards and educator evaluation system), but does not highlight any particular areas of unusual autonomy or flexibility. Because of the lack of detail in the plan and lack of information about the link between the needs of the personalized learning environment and the available level of autonomy, this section scored in the low range.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	6
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal states that because North Carolina is a right-to-work state there are no teacher's unions, but the Application Assurances include the signature of the president of the local teacher's association. Because the signature is there, the relevant association head clearly must have signed off on the proposal, but the assertion that there are nevertheless no teacher's unions is puzzling. The proposal states that teachers and principals were involved in the development of the proposal but provides no specifics (numbers and dates of meetings, etc.) or evidence to substantiate the claim. There is a reference to information sessions for board members and the community, but without specifics or evidence.</p> <p>The proposal includes letters of support from numerous higher-education institutions, community organizations, government representatives, and businesses.</p> <p>This section is responsive in the area of letters of support but meets few of the requirements in the area of school-level stakeholder involvement and therefore scores in the medium range.</p>		

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	1
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application reviews some of the gaps that were identified by unspecified district leadership, school staff, and community members, such as the need for teachers to get additional teacher certifications and the need for better-quality information to make data-driven decisions. However, there is not a high-quality plan for analyzing the current status in implementing personalized learning environments. A high-quality plan would include key goals, the activities to be undertaken and rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, the parties responsible for implementing the activities. Because this section is missing most of this information it scores in the low range.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	2

<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Throughout section (C)(1)(a-b) there is a lack of detail about project activities that makes it difficult to know what the district will do to achieve its goals. The proposal does mention responsible parties for each strategy in the appendix. The proposal also lists project activities and deliverables by strategy, but these are actually more like goals than project activities. It is therefore not possible to know exactly what the district intends to <i>do</i>, when, and by whom, to achieve its vision, and how the end state will be different from the student perspective or the teacher perspective. For example, one of the nine strategies outlined in the proposal is to reorganize traditional high schools into seven career academies while implementing a 1:1 technology initiative there. The LEA proposes stakeholders and partners in this effort, including local higher education institutions and businesses along with organizations such as the Boy and Girl Scouts of America. The information in the proposal and the appendix, however, does not include how these academies would actually be created, how and why the seven academy topics were chosen, what would happen to the curriculum and to assessment after the change, how standards would be addressed by the career academies, how personalized learning recommendations would be created and communicated, how social-emotional goals such as teamwork would be addressed, how the 1:1 technology and the partners fit in, overall how the academies would be different from how the district's high schools operate today, nor when activities to accomplish this strategy would happen.</p> <p>In section (C)(1)(c), the proposal mentions that comprehensive training for students would occur. The example given, however, refers to training principals to use iPads for walkthroughs, and does not further elaborate on student training.</p> <p>Because of the information missing in this section, the applicant does not have a high-quality plan, and the section scored in the low range.</p>		
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(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	4
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<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application has some elements of a high-quality plan and some indicators of readiness to implement a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching, as described in the notice. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A variety of Professional Learning Communities that include teachers and administrators in the district</li> <li>• An outlined plan in which professional development topics are scheduled by year and strategy</li> <li>• Participation in the state's READY accountability model and the educator evaluation system</li> <li>• A list of which of the high schools will house each Career Academy</li> <li>• Some experience matching resources (e.g., Reading Recovery) to students based on assessments (e.g., DIBELS)</li> <li>• Experience in reporting how they are maintaining an effective workforce because of participation in Title I</li> <li>• A plan to hire a project coordinator as part of the Leadership, Coordination, Sustainability project strategy and assign executive and central office personnel as leads of individual strategies, so leadership is not just up to one person</li> <li>• Participation in state-level RTTT practices such as sign-on bonuses for new teachers and supplements for special education and math and science teachers, and a tracking system for ESL students.</li> </ul> <p>However, the plan is lacking in detail and is missing elements. For example:</p>		
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- There is no description of how data on from the personnel evaluation system would be used to measure student progress, or how and when the READY system provides data and how it will be used.
- Overall there are no details about who will do the professional development, who will receive it, and how intensive will it be, and when it will be done. A desire to implement blended technology was mentioned but not what that would mean for the schools and how training would be provided, except that technology specialists would be added. The proposal also mentions Habits of Mind but not who would be exposed to it and what they would gain.
- There is no specific information on how data would be used to match learning tools with student needs under the new plan, and what learning resources would be added.
- There are no details on the plan to assign highly effective teachers to low-performing schools.

A high-quality plan would also have included the key goals for developing teachers and leaders, specific activities to be undertaken and the rationale for them, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities. Because little of this information is provided, this section scored in the low range.

#### D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	5
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This section has some elements of a high-quality plan to support project implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regarding central office support, existing central office staff would be assigned to be project leads for each strategy, and there would be an RTTD project coordinator. Project leads would run regular meetings. The district intends to update its plans according to RTTD activities. The district therefore would be supporting project plans with existing district staff within existing structures, which could provide the district with the information and access to support project activities.</li> <li>• Regarding autonomy, the applicant states that schools have autonomy over the daily schedule, staff allocation, hiring, and the development of the school improvement plan. They are able to mix students across grade levels, adjust responsibilities of personnel, create new programs in the school, and allocate non-personnel funds within budget. Therefore the LEA appears to provide sufficient school autonomy.</li> <li>• Regarding mastery learning, the proposal provides some evidence that it is possible in the district (e.g., elementary students are allowed to skip grades if they perform well enough, middle school students can take high school classes, and high school students can earn college credit). The proposal mentions individualized learning plans and graduation projects.</li> <li>• The applicant states that they currently provide materials in Spanish, professional development to teachers of English Language Learners, and accommodations for students with disabilities and homebound students, so they have a history of providing resources to students with special needs.</li> </ul> <p>However, the applicant's approach to demonstrating mastery at multiple times in multiple ways is based on instructional units developing according to state-adopted principles of Universal Design for Learning, but no examples of units are provided to substantiate this. The proposal also mentions professional development in Kagan Structures as an approach to mastery learning with no description of what this is. While students appear to have access to some flexible learning options, there is no evidence that mastery learning is an approach available district-wide. In addition, the proposal does not address how the resources described in (D)(1)(e) would apply to the district's future RTTD plans.</p> <p>A high-quality plan for implementation would also have specific activities to be undertaken and rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities. Because this section is missing many of these elements, it scores in the low medium range.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	2

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes its current practices for making learning resources available (e.g., laptops available for checkout to students, online resources at the media center, access to community partners), but does not address what changes they would make to support the strategies in the RTTD plan.

The proposal states that professional development will be provided to school staff and that ESL teachers will conduct technology workshops with parents, but no specific plans for professional development or parent support are included.

The applicant describes several data systems that are or will be available as part of the state's RTTT grant (e.g., PowerSchool, the North Carolina RTTT Instructional Improvement System), but does not address the issue of information technology that allows parents and students to export their information in an open data format.

The district does not currently have interoperable systems.

Because much of the requested information was not provided, and because the plan does not address specific deliverables, activities, a timeline, or responsible parties, this section does not present a high-quality plan and thus scored in the low range.

### E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	5
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application contains some elements of a plan for continuous improvement: For example, it designates a lead for the continuous improvement process (the district superintendent), and includes a plan to track participation in RTTD programs (e.g., how many teachers participate in profession development, how many students are in early childhood programs) to determine the extent to which they are reaching their intended audience. It mentions tracking assessment data to evaluate outcomes, comparing gains to state gains to see whether the district is closing gaps, which would provide information on improvements in student achievement. The district will also expand on its middle school data collection on technology integration, which would provide some indicators of educational technology use.</p> <p>However, the application lacks some elements of a high-quality plan. There is no one specifically identified for tasks other than the district superintendent, so it is unknown who would conduct the data collection and analyses and what their qualifications are. There is no specific timeline and set of activities and deliverables. The tracking data plans focus more on participation rather than outcomes, which will make it difficult to know what gains are being achieved. It is not clear what specific data would be used, and how/when, to judge outcomes and how the information would be used for program changes. While the application mentions sharing data on the district web site, there is no more specific plan for what data will be shared and when.</p> <p>Because it is missing some key aspects of a high-quality plan, this section scored in the low medium range.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's plans for communication with stakeholders address several possible mechanisms and audiences: information on the district web site and teacher web sites, email blasts to school and district personnel, updates from staff to strategy leads, establishing wikis, reports to the board, county, and mayors, presentations to school staff and community partners, flyers and brochures to parents, parent association meetings, and teacher-parent listservs. The application also mentions an Advisory Committee chaired by the superintendent that is intended to meet quarterly. Therefore the applicant has proposed several options that could provide one- and two-way communication with stakeholders. However, the plan is not strong because many aspects of a high-quality plan are missing from this section. These include who would coordinate all the communication, who would decide on and provide the communication, a timeline for different forms of communication, the mechanisms through which some of the communication would happen (such as the updates from staff to strategy leads), and who would be responsible for acting on information from stakeholders. Without these things, this section presents more of a list of options than a credible, strong communication strategy. This section scored in the medium range.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant proposes several measures that are responsive to the notice, such as achievement scores, graduation rates, end-of-course test scores, with goals by subgroup for each year. These are appropriate measures of learning, course completion, and high school completion. It also proposes attendance as a leading indicator for grades 4-12 and justifies the approach with literature references.</p>		

However, overall these indicators are not tied to the logic of the nine program strategies, so it is not clear why they would serve as the best indicators of the progress of those strategies. There are no data presented on the numbers of students taught by highly effective teachers, as requested. Although attendance is proposed as a leading indicator, no tables of goals for attendance were found, only tables for enrollment goals. Aside from being a leading indicator, attendance is also proposed to be the measure of college and career readiness, but there is no rationale presented for this; while attending school is likely to be important for college and career readiness, it is not in itself a strong measure of that readiness. Career readiness for high school students will also be measured by the WorkKeys exam, but the applicant does not explain what this is or provide a rationale for why it is a helpful measure for this outcome. For early childhood, the non-cognitive indicator of growth is proposed to be reduced office referrals, but there is no rationale presented for why this would measure non-cognitive growth in young children.

Overall, there is no description of why these indicators would provide formative information on the success of the nine strategies, nor is there a plan to review and improve the measures over time. Therefore, this section scored in the low medium range.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	1
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

This section of the notice is about how the applicant will evaluate the effectiveness of their activities and make adjustments to improve results. The proposal does not present a coherent evaluation plan, however, and does not discuss how the evaluation would be used to choose strategies to improve results. This section also presents some new indicators of the success of the plan, including recruitment and retention rates of high-quality teachers and general population levels in Lenoir County, that are not tied to the indicators in (E)(3); it is not clear how they relate to the nine strategies of the plan. An evaluation plan could include evaluation questions, activities, data collection, a timeline, deliverables, and responsible parties. Because these are lacking in this section, it scored in the low range.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	2

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The budget section does not mention other sources of support for the project plan during the funding period other than the grant funds, but it does not explicitly state that the grant funds are the only funds to be used. However, the budget tables in the appendix note other sources of funding (district funds, GEAR UP, etc.) by strategy. Because the narrative does not address the sources of funding, however, it is not possible to know whether these notes constitute the full list of other funds. The budget information provides some strategies for long-term sustainability after the grant period, with continuing funds reasonably coming from district or state sources.

The plans for project activities in the proposal are not specific enough to allow for full confidence that the budget is reasonable, or to constitute a full rationale for investments and priorities. The proposal does not explicitly state what are the activities to be undertaken to accomplish the goals; therefore, it is not possible to judge that the budget is fully appropriate.

For example, the applicant did not state what specific activities were planned to create the high school academies. It is thus difficult to determine that the funds for teacher leader supplements are appropriately targeted. This budget lists several equipment items, such as a 3D printer and an digital plasma cutter, but it was never explained why these items were needed or how they fit into a vision for personalized learning environments. A large amount of funding (\$2,400,000) is going to contracts. The budget narrative reveals that this is for iPads (which would seem more appropriately located in the equipment section of the budget than the contractual section) for 2600 students. But there was no project plan for the high schools that explained why every student needed an iPad. There is also no explanation for why the price comes to \$923 per iPad, as that is greater than the retail cost of the device. The budget assumes that three-year-old leased iPads would be leased again at the original price of \$923 per device, which seems unreasonable for what would then be a three-year-old piece of fast-changing technology. The high school budget exemplifies the lack of connection between costs and program activities overall because of the lack of specificity in the project plans. Because of this, the budget section scored in the low range.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	3
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's plan for sustainability rests in part on banking half of the allowable indirect cost percentage. It is not clear whether or not this is permissible, but if so, it essentially sets up more of a no-cost extension than a true sustainability plan in itself. However, the plan does mention other funding options for continuation of activities, including GEAR UP and Lenoir Community College, but does not describe the amount of possible funding or the likelihood of accessing funds from these sources.

In the proposal the applicant has estimated costs per year from 2017 to 2019 by each of the nine strategies. Clearly they have considered the needs and costs of continuation of each strategy, and they report having created a sustainability committee to plan for the post-grant period, but the lack of program specificity throughout the proposal makes it difficult to judge to what extent the amounts in the sustainability plan are appropriate.

In addition, this section lacks many elements of a high-quality plan. It does not specify specific activities and deliverables and the responsible parties (in most cases). Therefore it scored in the low range.

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

This section asks the applicant to describe a specific partnership to provide student and family supports for social, emotional, behavioral needs. The proposal mentions several possible partners who have worked with the schools, but does not describe any specific plans for any particular partnership that meet the requirements of this competitive priority. The proposal mentions nine desired results but does not link them back to a partner or anyone in the list of partners, so it is not clear what role any partner would play in accomplishing the goals, nor how the desired results would related to partner resources. Without specific partnership, no clear information is provided on how the partnership would integrate education and other services. The information on capacity building included in this section does not refer to partners or their roles. Because no specific partnership is proposed, the proposal does not (and cannot) describe how a partnership would build the capacity of staff in participating schools. Therefore, this section scored in the low range.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has not coherently and comprehensive addressed how it will establish and conduct the nine strategies that are at the heart of its plans. It has not addressed with minimum specificity how it will address the professional development needs required, ensure quality products and activities, and evaluate results. For example, the proposal never contained a plan for developing the high school academies that addressed what was to be developed, who would develop it, how it was to be developed, how much each might cost, what the role of technology was, when exactly they would be initiated, and how they would be tested and used. It is therefore not possible to be confident that the applicant could carry out the strategies with enough quality to substantially improve student outcomes. Because the strategies were the centerpiece of the plan for personalized learning environments, this proposal does not meet Absolute Priority 1.

Total	210	62
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0419NC-2 for Lenoir County Public Schools

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant demonstrates its vision in the abstract section of this proposal where it describes the creation of learning environments that address all four of the core educational assurance areas. Project strategies are identified that document a comprehensive and coherent reform. The applicant discusses a current accountability system that will soon undergo changes to better address the personalized learning outcomes stated in this proposal.</p> <p>In addition the applicant states that identified strategies are selected based on current research and best practice.</p> <p>Further, the applicant describes that the focus of the proposal will be on those student groups that have previously underperformed.</p> <p>In the vision section, the applicant seek to accelerate student achievement by providing pre-school aged students with learning opportunities before they enter school. Providing 3 and 4 -year old students with critical thinking skills, and academic content, for example, seems to be age-inappropriate.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant details all schools within the district that are scheduled to participate. The applicant also provides strong evidence of demographic data regarding number of students enrolled, their socio-economic backgrounds and ethnicity. Due to the LCPS population's demonstrated low socio-economic status, the applicant presents that the proposal will benefit all students. The number of teachers participating is also clearly stated in the proposal.</p> <p>The applicant describes the commitment of local businesses and other community partners which is further documented by a large number of letters pledging support to this proposal. The applicants vision to provide a seamless approach through personalizing students' educational environments to become college and career-ready supports a high-quality implementation.</p> <p>There is insufficient evidence regarding the quality of the approach to implementing the proposal.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	2
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant describes a plan that is based on nine principles. The applicant states that the principles are aligned with the four core educational areas, although they are simply matched to the core educational areas instead of being aligned, which only demonstrates a connection. The principles described by the applicant are not all principles, some are simply components that are part of everyday managing and leading a school. Examples of principles stated in the proposal are leadership, data driven decision making, highly effective teaching and high quality schools. Other principles are the names of the respective school groups like Explore and Focus Middle School. The principles that are embedded in the various</p>		

schools are ambiguous. The applicant describes an example of how the plan will provide a seamless progression from one school group to another by explaining that career and college choices can easily be integrated into the personalized academic plans of middle school students. The description of a seamless progression is lacking clarity and detail. A model illustrates how the four components contribute to the themed schools to show a clear progression of services is insufficient. The efforts and strategies that are going to be implemented and scaled up are not documented here.

The proposal does not contain specific strategies that demonstrate how the plan will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform that goes beyond the participating schools.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	6
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

While the applicant addresses three out of four areas in which it seeks to increase and/or decrease scores, the applicant's vision is likely to result in some improvement in student learning. The applicant completely describes the state's new accountability system and anticipates that performances in various students' subgroups will be improved by the LCPS as a result of implementing personalized experiences for all students. The proposal appropriately lists the state-mandated test grades and subject areas to be tested. Grades 3-8 will need to score a 85.2 proficiency rate on the state's accountability system, for example, to demonstrate growth. Target scores set by the LCPS are slightly higher to underscore the ambitious goals of this proposal. As with summative assessments, the applicant lists the achievement gaps based on current state data and feasibly added a separate set of desired percentages that reflect a decrease in the achievement gap based on LCPS interventions.

There is no documentation of what strategies are going to be employed in the various grade levels to address the achievement gap. The applicant provides no evidence on how the nine project strategies as set forth in the New LCPS vision will insure that the percentages continue to increase. No details are provided on how college enrollment rates are going to increase under the proposal or what target rate is anticipated. The applicant's explanation of recent decreases in college enrollment is that they are attributable to economic hardships.

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	3

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant lists newly developed district goals that contain elements of increasing student learning, leadership to guide innovation, and others. The documentation of the district's success is not organized around those goals, but are stated without clearly defined parameters. The applicant provides examples of how reading scored have increased in grades 3 from the 2009/2010 school year to currently. The increase in student achievement with respect to state target scores is detailed, but only for those grade levels that are required to be tested as per state requirements. Listed in the proposal are several initiatives that have proven success records, but no clear link between these initiatives and the outcomes are made. The applicant does not show data consistently for four years and no specific efforts or strategies are attributed to the successes that are demonstrated.

College enrollment is stated in terms of how many students (numbers, not percentage) enrolled which makes it difficult to determine and compare an increase or decrease in enrollment. It is not clear whether an increase of college enrollment is due to school district efforts or perhaps other factors. Drop-out data shows combined percentage for 2007/08 and 2010/11 school year. It is not clear whether the changes are due to chance or specific efforts undertaken by applicant.

While the district's three lowest performing schools have demonstrated increases in academic achievement, it is not stated whether the increases happened by chance or are the result of targeted efforts. In addition to the dissemination of report cards, parent- teacher conferences are held and there is a TV channel that broadcasts district news to the community. Making summative information available to parents and students does not aid in improved participation, instruction and services. There is no documentation about how formative data is shared with students and parents so that adjustments can be made and learning can improve.

The applicant does not sufficiently discuss how equity in teaching will be advanced. The applicant notes that all district

teachers are engaged in creating high quality educational environments but does not explain what specific outcomes are expected.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	1
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states that the district was made aware of teacher salaries being public information when a newspaper published that data. The application states that data have been made available to educators and the community at large for a number of years, but does not cover the extent to which the applicant already makes data available. The applicant states that it will make data available as part of this grant. Several examples of how data is going to be made public are provided which include providing school administrators with copies of reports that they in turn can make available to their stakeholders. The data that is going to be made available to the public is not clearly described in terms of personnel salaries etc.

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

The applicant describes the extent to which school districts are funded in this state and explains that the LCPS is ranked 65th among the 115 districts in the state. It is not clear from the proposal whether this is evidence of a successful condition or a need for funding. The district's school board duties are listed and one of those duties is listed as creating policies that establish standards, accountability and evaluation of essential operations of the school system.

The proposal notes that the state has adopted the Common Core State Standards, but each school district, each principal, and each teacher interprets the curriculum. While this describes extensive autonomy, allowing the interpretation of state standards can hinder the successful implementation of these standards. Other academic standards are described in detail that include such evaluations as end-of-course exams. The proposal also notes that the state determines identification criteria for special populations, but notes that the services are determined by the local districts.

Autonomy is awarded to school districts to hire and fire teachers according to district policies, describes the proposal. The applicant describes current conditions and autonomy only indirectly without establishing direct connections made to how these factors are favorable in implementing the proposal. The applicant does not address whether any current state laws would prohibit the implementation of part or all of its proposal.

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

The applicant explains that the proposal was developed by the applying school district's principals and central office staff. This does not support meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal but suggests a top-down approach. Evidence of this is supported by teachers having been given the task of researching strategies to support the nine projects that were conceived by district principals and central office staff. Teachers support the proposal 100 % as stated by the applicant, but it is not documented that they were included in the development of the proposal's key components.

Information sessions were held for the Board of Education and other stakeholder. While it is essential that everyone is informed, this does not describe meaningful engagement and support of the proposal. Face-to-face meetings with stakeholders are held to seek input from the community.

Students' engagement is not mentioned in the proposal. The applicant does not demonstrate whether and how feedback from stakeholders was considered and changes were made to the proposal as a result.

Letters of support are extensive and show a wide range of community support for this proposal.

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

The application describes each of the components of its proposal, but fails to provide a high-quality plan for analysis on how it determined those components appropriate or how it will determine what components would be appropriate. The applicant refers to current research that informed the selection of initiatives that are contained in this proposal but no interpretations of this research are offered in regard to how the district's current status will be assessed and the logic behind the reform proposal. The applicant demonstrates that the district has undergone an extensive search of the literature but does not

demonstrate that a needs analysis was conducted that would establish needs and gaps specific to the district.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	8

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides broadly stated objectives that inadequately support the goals of the various schools. They are the leadership components that are needed to improve learning and teaching. Instructional strategies to promote student learning are less clearly defined. It is for example not clear whether the identified objectives such as immersion in critical thinking or collaboration building at the elementary school level are replacing other initiatives that are in place or whether these objectives form the foundation at those campuses. The proposal is not clear about how students will understand that what they are learning is leading to college and career-ready standards.

The applicant thoroughly discusses how students in the middle grades continue to master age-and grade-level appropriate content in addition to learning about college and career goals. This strategy is likely to results in students having the academic foundations while also exploring possibilities that will define their high school careers and prepare them for college or a career.

The applicant does not describe how students have access and exposure to diverse cultures and instead lists how parents with limited English skills are provided classes to improve their language skills.

The proposal suggests a number of innovative programs and ideas that aid students in meeting their goals, but it is less obvious how this is going to be implemented. The proposal lacks describing the tools that students would need to monitor their own progress such as a portfolio or a journal where they can physically track their interests and their goals and be engaged/involved in their career paths. The applicant often refers to exposure and/or opportunity when it describes students' learning, however exposure and/or opportunity alone will not ensure learning.

The applicant does not demonstrate how its current and/or proposed strategies are aligned to college and career-ready standards. An infrastructure is in place at the high school level that describes successful environments in which students can meet their goals.

A feedback loop is described by the applicant that provides students, educators and parents with updated information. This feedback look does not describe how information is disseminated. In addition, it is not clear how often data is made available and it is not described how technology can increase access to updated student information. Data driven decision making is stated as one of the programs to facilitate making recommendations regarding personalized learning recommendations, but it is lacking what type of mechanisms are going to be in place to insure its success.

Training will be provided to students and educators to learn how to use technology such as iPad for use of walk-through data by principals.

Overall, the proposal lists may innovative ideas and strategies that could be used to improve student learning. The proposal is lacking details how high need students are accelerated to have equal opportunities to succeed. In addition, there is limited description about how effective teaching supports student success. Also missing is a description of how students' individual needs are considered.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	14
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes how the leadership, coordination and sustainability component contributes to improving instruction. One of its functions is listed as organizing and analyzing data to monitor progress toward achieving desired results. This is a critical component that contributes to student success and also to program evaluation. This practice is extended through teachers' participation in professional teams where data is again examined. The plan is unclear how individual students' instructional needs are monitored and adjusted; there is extensive information about district-wide and school-wide planning, but little information is provided on how individual students and high needs student subgroups' needs are considered in the data driven decision making model.

Until the state's READY model is in operation, the LCPS is utilizing existing measure to evaluate teacher effectiveness. The applicant does not demonstrate how low performing teachers are rehabilitated through targeted professional development to become highly effective teachers.

The applicant appropriately states that teachers are trained by the district's technology specialist on how to use STEM laboratories at the middle school, for example. Less information is provided about how collaborative planning, for example, increases the capacity for personalized student learning.

The applicant reasonably describes the use of DIBELS and Reading Recovery programs to identify students needs and lists specific steps how this data is used so that teachers can more effectively address students' needs by adjusting instructional strategies.

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>The applicant demonstrates how it will organize its central office by building on the existing structure. Each of the nine components identified in this proposal are assigned to one of the existing staff members holding existing positions in the central office. It seems plausible that the superintendent takes on the role of leadership, coordination and sustainability for this proposal, but it seems unreasonable to place the director of human resources in the position of providing leadership for highly effective teaching. The proposal does not demonstrate how current staff would be able to take on these additional responsibilities.</p> <p>The proposal clearly outlines the autonomy that school leadership at the various schools has. In addition to deciding how much instructional time should be allocated to core subject areas, for example, the school leadership teams can decide on strategies to assist At-Risk students through targeted programs. Concrete examples are provided on how leadership teams may go about structuring such strategies.</p> <p>At the high school level, the applicant convincingly states that students are able to earn credit based on demonstrated mastery and lists other innovative strategies that increase personalized learning at the high school level. Middle school students are afforded the opportunity to take high school classes while in middle school.</p> <p>The applicant states that all district communication is made available in Spanish for equal access. A description how educational interventions and strategies prepare students so that they can equally access educational opportunities is missing.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant documents that transportation is available to parents to attend workshops. Laptops can be checked out to increase access to content and learning resources for parents.</p> <p>Technical support is provided to students and parents to complete FASFA forms, for example. Library books can be accessed on-line by both parents and students, and technical support is provided to parents at parent nights on how to access instructional programs such as Study Island. The applicant demonstrates through multiple examples that resources are made accessible both in and out-of school to parents and students. The applicant describes various IT systems that are used to differentiate instruction etc. A system is going to be incorporated that will allow students and parents access to students' data. A state initiative regarding the use of an interoperable data system will be employed by the applicant in the near future.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
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(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	7
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The continuous improvement process found in the appendix is not clearly outlined and lacks detail in regard to project strategies. The project strategies are not explicitly defined regarding the nature of the activities and how exactly they are going to be carried out. The goals or deliverables are stated in such broad terms, that improvements will be difficult to make. The applicant suggests that in some instances increased student achievement scores demonstrate the effectiveness of its leadership type goals. The applicant is not explicit on ways that would demonstrate improved leadership. Staff development is assessed only in terms of numbers attending and does not consider the outcomes in terms of teacher effectiveness toward its proposed goals.</p> <p>The applicant acknowledges that data have not been disaggregate by subgroups previously as this was a common practice in the district. It is explained that data will be examined by subgroups in the near future. The progress toward goals such as how many more Kindergarten students are enrolled and how many students elect to participate in high school academies, is based on quantitative measures only. The proposal does not include demonstrate how qualitative measures are used to determine progress toward growth. In addition, the proposal does not demonstrate that intermittent target goals have been establish to determine timely progress in achieving long range goals.</p> <p>There is limited evidence on how the leadership teams at the various schools monitor progress and provide feedback to teachers, students and parents so that corrective actions can be made.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not demonstrate engagement between stakeholders. The communication channel is described as a one way effort between administrators and staff and also parents. This is underscored by the frequent use of the word "to" rather than "with". The proposal states that e-mail blasts are going to occur between the district level leadership team and individual campuses. This method is a top-down approach that does not foster two-way communication among all stakeholders.</p> <p>The applicant demonstrates that it will share information with parents that will promote engagement in multiple ways. The LCPS will meet with parents in person, establish listserv, establish a website that will relevant information, and brochures and flyers that will be sent home with students.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal identifies the desired outcomes (objectives) and describes how those objectives can be accomplished. There is a strong component of research that supports the chosen activities. However, the objectives are not worded in measurable terms and lack detail which makes evaluating whether the objectives have been reached very cumbersome.</p> <p>The proposal includes how At-Risk students are identified through the monitoring of attendance data and out-of-school suspension data. This identification will lead to the initiation of research-based, targeted interventions. A level-system of interventions is described with matching strategies based on students' At-Risk factors. Grade level support teams will monitor students for additional at-risk indicators. The process used is not explained.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal states that the LCPS aims to track an overall impact of increased livability and quality of life for citizens of Lenoir County over the long term as the outcome of is effectiveness in implementing the proposal. The applicant offers suggestions on how its budget can support or sustain activities after the grant period.</p> <p>Two outcomes that are going to be evaluated for their effectiveness as stated in the proposal are improved recruitment and retention rates of high quality professional educators and an increase in graduation rates. There is no documentation how an evaluation of these outcomes will trigger data based decision making that will increase the effectiveness of the outcomes while increasing the efficiency in managing them. Without a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the RTT-D components identified in this proposal, the applicant will not have the information needed to improve those initiatives that work and maintain and monitor those that are effective.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The budget clearly describes the expenditures for each of the objectives identified by the proposal. The amounts of the budget that are allocated to the individual objectives is proportionate to the activities proposed. The budget tables provide a very detailed account of how the funds will be used.</p> <p>Special consideration is demonstrated to invest funds in long-term sustainability. The budget includes funds from other sources that support the proposal.</p> <p>The narratives and the tables provide a clear picture of the extent to which the budget will support the proposal. While the cost for leadership, effective schools, data driven decision making etc. is typically less than the higher costs of program implementations at the various schools, the budget in this proposal proportionately allocates funds in this fashion. Also noteworthy is the fairly equal allocation of funds for elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. This demonstrates that funds were allocated in a thoughtful way and promotes the collaborative and cohesive thinking that is required to meet the proposal's goal.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	9
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal demonstrates a well-researched sustainability model for the purpose of this grant. It is crafted after a training model that the applicant attended. It lists several objectives, and in addition to funding, it stresses the importance of sustaining stakeholder relations and partnerships which is a component that can easily be overlooked. The proposal includes current support from stakeholders that shows likely sustainability past the term of this grant. A sustainability plan is built into the proposal with ongoing timelines and expectations. A clear and thorough rubric depicts the long-term goals of the proposal in relation to the project strategies. The funding that would sustain this proposal is document for three years past the term of this grant. What is unclear is how the dollar amounts for the sustainability of the project was calculated.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	6
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant lists several partnerships, however, the partnerships are not very clearly described. An example of these partnerships is the City of Kinston Department of Public Safety's GREAT (Gang Resistance Education and Training) program. The applicant states that this and other partnerships help to achieve academic attainment, highly personalized learning environments, and post-secondary success toward college and career readiness. The limited descriptions are insufficient to address that the partnerships are coherent and sustainable and address the goal of the proposal. The applicant suggests that partnerships can be strengthened through the involvement of executive-level personnel with the organizations' board. While this is one example of how the partnerships can be strengthened, it is a sparse and involvement at the top does not necessarily strengthen partnerships.</p> <p>Technical training pathways are provided through a partnership that will help middle and high school students to develop their technical skills. Another example is that through a partnership with the Lenoir County Community College, students can expand on their academic and career choices by attending college while enrolling in an academy that supports their interests.</p> <p>The applicant identifies nine areas of population-level results. Measures of family and community support as well as educational outcomes are identified.</p> <p>The applicant states that the outcomes are being measures without providing evidence on how it intends to measure progress. Only one concrete example is given how progress is measured and that is by stating that a specific instrument is</p>		

used to determine 3<sup>rd</sup> grade through 12<sup>th</sup> grade benchmarking data. This provides limited information on how progress is measured.

The applicant does not clearly state that the partnership would track any of the indicators. The examples that are provided are unclear. For example, the applicant states that the rate of pre-school attendance is available and the depth is available to the LCPS. It is not clear how this statement relates to the objective in this section. The applicant notes that only two loops, and those are informal, exist to track results 8 and 9.

The applicant notes that students' who are not performing at the desired academic level are provided supports. It is unclear how students in need of interventions are identified and how it will be determined that they have favorably responded to interventions. In addition, it is unclear how the applicant identifies students' needs and matches those with services provided by the partners. While the applicant states examples that interventions are made for kindergarten students and for students with disabilities, no example or provision is included on how students from low-socioeconomic backgrounds are identified and served.

The applicant discusses the identification process of students with multiple identifiers. The applicant does not address the scale-up of the partnerships model as is asked in this section. The example provided by the participant describes how an academically low performing student can also be identified as coming from a low income family with the proposed LCPS system.

The applicant states that results will improve over time. There is inadequate information on how the partnership will improve over time.

The applicant discusses some improvements of its special populations but fails to link the services the partnerships provide to the improvements stated.

The applicant discusses that students' needs will be assessed with the state's new assessment instrument. An example is provided where academic and career plans are developed for middle school students to promote students' readiness for college and career. The applicant fails to describe how the capacity of staff to assess students' needs as a result of the partnership increases.

The applicant states that the district uses interest inventories, detailed academic and career plans and technical training programs to track and meet the needs of its students. The applicant fails to address what tools are used to inventory school and community needs.

The applicant fails to describe how a process for decision-making and infrastructure is going to be created. The applicant states that through its leadership component, careful decision-making to create personalized learning environments is in place. Simply stating that a process is in place does not demonstrate how a process is created.

The applicant lists some examples on how to increase family engagement by having parents participate in job-shadowing and guest speaking opportunities. The applicant does not mention how parents are going to be engaged in the decision making process and needs identification processes.

The applicant states that meetings will be conducted at least three times per year between stakeholders to determine the progress of the proposal. The applicant does not describe a plan on how problems would be resolved, for example.

The applicant lists the performance measures for its population. The population is very narrowly selected. It focuses on students who have participated in a pre-K program prior to entering Kindergarten, students who enter Kindergarten ready to learn, special education students in grades 3 and 8 and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students. The only outcome that is to affect all students from the districts' partnerships is that of improved student behavior. The number of students ready to enter Kindergarten after having attended a pre-school program is non-proportionate with the number of student participating in pre-school programs. Number of students does not allow for increase in enrollment.

The proposal thoroughly discusses the extent to which its partnerships support the goals identified by the applicant. Specifically, it addresses how some of the partners provide services to the district's students. Lenoir County Hospital is providing the Fuel for Success program in elementary schools, for example.

The applicant is seeking to expand partnerships with the Lenoir County Community College so that students can further explore their career interests. In addition, the applicant described that the services the partners are providing are directly related to the nine components that make up the goals for this proposal.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates knowledge of individual components of its plan such as the data-based decision making and leadership components, and demonstrates through its extensive descriptions of these that an implementation of all components linked together form an infrastructure that can support the the goals of the proposal. Further, the applicant demonstrates that it has achieved academic success with the subgroup of special education students for example. The applicant's goal to meet the academic needs of each student is underscored by its commitment to include its entire district population in this proposal. The applicant provides evidence on how students' learning environments are personalized by providing career choices to students early and supporting the students through programs that further expand their college-and career-readiness. The applicant specifies that it plans to increase certifications for its teachers and that financial incentives for teachers are strategies identified in this proposal to increase teacher effectiveness.

Total	210	115
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0419NC-3 for Lenoir County Public Schools

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	7

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Medium points were awarded to the applicant's because its reform vision goals exclude specifics elements. Its career themed district wide model will engage students based on student interest and give them exposure to curriculum aimed at positioning them on individual career paths and higher education opportunities but the plan does not specifically provide how this will be accomplished.

1. The applicant's reform vision is coherent in that it focuses on a change model for all students in the district with specific focus on its lowest performing students. This is a positive indicator of targeting gaps in learning for underperforming students. Systemic change implemented through out the district by partnering with businesses in the community. Goals aim to accelerate student performance are delineated in the plan but there is the applicant's goals do not accelerate student achievement .
2. All grade levels in the district are included in the plan (Pre K-12th, students with disabilities, and IB students/gifted students) which displays inclusion from all demographics and could provide increased student performance.
3. The applicant's reform vision includes a specific focus on under performing schools with all students personalizing their educational pathway. However the plan does not specifically describe how these populations will have the needed support for plan implementation.

The applicant describes why there is a need for the change model and goals aimed at achieving set objectives which is an indicator of a increased student success and outcomes but the plan does not include specifically how the plan will be implemented.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>High points were awarded to the applicant because its approach for implementation includes the 17 schools in the district including 3 of its lowest performing schools which have also been selected to implement transformation models tailored to each schools demographics based on benchmark test data. The selection process is inclusive which is strongly favorable to closing gaps in learning for underperforming students . The applicant's selection process specifies how and why turnaround models have been selected for the three schools where increased student achievement has been steady but slow. The plan is inclusive of all grade levels district wide. The quality of the applicant's response supports the criteria of a high quality plan.</p> <p>Overall, Section (A)(2)was scored in the high range due to the strengths on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student population and demographics clearly identified</li> <li>• Schools/population clearly identified and individual reform models selected</li> <li>• 7 out of 9 district target strategies developed by district stakeholders will be used in the turnaround schools in addition to individually selected transformation models. Tailor fitting reform models to individual schools is a positive strategy with potential opportunities to rigorously stimulate student growth and achievement based on student interests and input from administrators, teachers and staff.</li> </ul>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Medium points were given to the applicant because its "Theory of Change Model" diagrams a scaled up model to address increased student performance at each grade level over time but the plan lacks specific details as to how this will be do. Based on the applicants response, the extent to which the application includes a high quality plan is meaningful and tangible to support systemic change in the district.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A table of nine strategies which are aligned with the four core educational assurances of the RTT-D grant program is included in the application and demonstrates a sound model to increase student performance. This model directly correlates to the key goals set by the applicant but is lacking specific implementation details to scale up the model.</li> <li>2. Needs assessment and asset mapping were conducted by the district stakeholders to assess implementation needs for the reform model and also includes additional changes to the lowest performing schools, specific professional development and Rtl plans, which is an aggressive attempt to decrease gaps in achievement. The applicant's implementation plan is cohesive and over reaching to the extent that the reform model includes a change in curriculum structure and delivery of instruction for all students in the district. The plan has intent to spiral the curriculum and adjust the delivery of instruction of include student input which can positively impact student achievement.</li> <li>3. As stated by the applicant "The process is general" which does not provide details for successful implementation. However, the "Project" or specific steps outline the nine steps and are specific to each school in the district. Key goals, timelines and responsible parties are listed in the applicants plan. But the plan lacks specifics as to how it will translate into meaningful reform.</li> </ol>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(A)(4) Medium points were awarded on this section because the applicant's plan identifies target benchmarks over time with a vision to improve student learning and performance overall and by student subgroups. However, the plan does not provide clear evidence to support it will improve student learning. Subgroups are defined by the state in which the applicant is located.</p> <p>The state in which the applicant is located is in the process of rolling out a new accountability model for the measure of teacher efficacy and student outcomes. This new model recasts and expands on previous metrics for tracking student achievement and teacher efficacy and focuses on the percentage of students that score "proficient" on end-of-grade</p>		

assessments in math, ELA and science in grades 5th and 8th and the percentage of students who meet individual goals as they progress from third through eighth grade. This model is progressive in that student scores will be tracked to monitor growth over time. For students in high school, the model focuses on the percentage of students proficient on end-of-course test in Algebra 1/Integrated Math 1, Biology and English, and : ACT College Readiness Benchmarks with students that score well enough to have a 75 percent chance of getting a "C" or better in their first credit bearing college course.

The plan articulates Reading and Math Targets for student performance Overall and by Subgroups. This includes growth in student performance metrics across a five year period of about of 2.5% per target per year using State Metrics. Even though these targets are aligned with the state they are not aggressive enough to quickly decrease gaps in learning for the its subgroups The applicant acknowledges the existence of gaps between demographic subgroups. However, the applicant also notes that some of the legacy accountability ABC model (old model) information will be carried over to the new performance metrics within the expanded READY model, which includes EOY testing. This has positive implications due to students familiarity of these tests and will continue to yield meaningful data for evaluation of student achievement. However, the plan does not clearly articulate how this overlapping of models will be implemented or affect student learning. The vision to increase graduation and college enrollment hinges on implementation of the applicant's change model focus of "Connecting Every Child to a Prosperous Future", which supports of the applicant's vision but is not clear for implementation. Step five of this plan combines strategies for preparing students to graduate and become prepared for college. This will directly correlate the implementation of the plan to concrete data for improved student outcomes. The applicant already tracks the number and percentage of students who graduate and also the number and percentage of students who enroll in the state's university system. The applicant plans to continue to collect and disaggregate this data which has positive implications of continued assessments of meeting goals.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has demonstrated a clear track record of success to improve student learning outcomes and is poised to continue to improve their track record.

1. Moderate but consistent improvements on local assessments has been demonstrated across the district.
2. Steady but moderate improvements over four years in targeted sub-groups (low-income, students with disabilities, and LEP) at the lowest performing schools on end of year assessments.

Other indicators of a progressive record of success are indicated by the applicant and will lead to sustainable practices.

1. A significant reduction in disciplinary events, out of school suspensions and referrals, due to implementation of PBIS behavioral program across the district is a plus freeing administrators allowing them time to address teaching and learning.
2. Increased availability for students in the highest level of academic rigor through International Baccalaureate Programme addressed the needs for advanced students needs to be met. This demographic is often excluded due to focus on lower performing initiatives, this is a positive indicator.
3. Clear evidence of increased graduation rate form 65.6 percent in 2008 to 78.1 percent in 2012. This upward trend is promising and moving in the right direction for the applicant .
4. Strong evidence of differentiated instruction.
5. Teacher input into each schools SIP creates a high quality educational environment where teachers take ownership.

However, the plan does not demonstrate evidence of student performance data being available to students, parents and educators on an ongoing basis.

Additional strategies and models have been implemented in the lowest performing schools which have improved performance over time.

1. The fact that the three lowest performing schools selected their own transformation model to implement leads to stakeholder pride and ownership and is a strong indicator for future success. This will be effective in that these schools math and reading scores have increased. From 2008-2012 these three school went from the 32.3 - 40.3 percentage range to the 41.4 - 44.2 percentage range in Reading and 48.0 - 63.9 percentage range to 61.1 - 65.1 percentage range in Math.
2. Professional development and training of teachers in their respective transformation model has increased teacher and

student understanding of the model and informed teaching strategies. Professional development is a highly effective and sustainable practice.

The applicant has formed several community partnerships with local businesses which sponsor activities for students, teachers and other stakeholders. These partnerships are positive in that they incorporate collaborative practices within the community where district information is disseminated to parents, community members and businesses. However, there is no mention of student data being made available to parents. This is not an inclusive practice. Parents not allowed access data can not be considered to be in partnership with schools and teachers.

Scoring for Section (B)(1) Medium range based on scoring criteria being addressed.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant scored in the Medium range in the area of transparency, processes and practices. As noted in the application, disaggregate data regarding school level administrator salaries, school level personnel and staff salaries can be accessed via the internet and the applicant has listed the local newspaper where a link to the state website can be accessed. Salary and expenditure information per school is located on the district website. Also, a report that is disseminated to school board members includes salaries of school level personnel with plans for a hardcopy of the report to be available at each school. There is no mention of non-personnel expenditures being available at the school level. Transparency with stakeholders is lacking by not making financial data accessible and readily available to parents and the community at large on a consistent basis at the school level.

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

Autonomy within the applicant's district has limited due to state legal, statutory and regulatory requirements to implement personalized learning environments. The applicant's school board establishes policies for academic program implementation in the district which is positive for the district but they have not provided evidence of its autonomy from the state.

The applicant has incorporated state mandated Common Core Standards as well as NC Essential Standards. However, these standards drive the selection of reform models, state and local tests, and ongoing formative assessments. Schools in the applicants district create formative test banks based upon its selected curriculum. Teachers have freedom to set interim benchmarks to monitor student achievement as well as create interventions to address individual student needs. This practice allows opportunity for positive outcomes for students within each school as well as the district as a whole but these are regulated by the state not the district.

The applicant's state sets criteria for identification of sub-group criteria. However, the district sets criteria for Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners. This is a flexible practice which leads to allowances for schools to set individual learning plans or personalized learning tailored to students and aggressively focus on gaps in learning.

Based on the applicants response to (B)(3) score is in the low range.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	5
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant was awarded points in the Medium range because the plan provides information regarding stakeholder support of the grant application including letters of support from various politicians, businesses, community leaders, pastors, administrators and teachers plus the state educational association. According to the plan, during the summer of 2012 principals and central office staff developed the nine projects that are the back bone of the grant application. Teachers and administrators have been involved in the collection and analysis of data for inclusion in the plan. The literature review which has been incorporated into the budgetary portion of the plan was researched by teachers. School board leaders and community members participated in information sessions with updates to the plan presented to key administrative personnel by the district superintendent. However, the plan does not mention inclusion of these same stakeholders, except for teachers and administrators, in the writing of the plan. The applicants response does not provide any reference to meaningful stakeholder participation in the initial development of or revisions to the plan. The support documentation is evident but the development of the plan excluded key stakeholders such as parents and students.

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

Maximum points were awarded due to the extent to which the applicant has demonstrated a high quality plan for analyzing its current status in implementing personalized learning environments is strong and favorable. Specific points in the plan articulate how the personalized learning environments have been delineated by the applicant; to the point of targeted demographics and subgroups. According to the applicant, targeted skill set gaps for specific subgroups need to be and will be developed and refined to meet the individual needs of the students. This is a positive assessment of current data and will produce high retention rates of students.

Also, the plan emphasis how gaps in leadership, coordination and sustainability will be addressed along with changes in the roles of leaders necessary to produce efficacy of implementing the reform plan. For example, key district level leaders responsibilities shift to supervisory positions and roles for the five age group based project strategies and include an additional RTT-D manager.

The logic for implementation behind the reform proposal is effectively defined and comprehensive to the point of including the relational affect of Kindergarten readiness to college and career preparedness. The applicant's Theory of Change contains five key concepts: arriving in Kindergarten ready to succeed; mastering fundamental literacy and numeracy while establishing a lifelong interest in learning and education; identifying educational and career goals; refining one's educational path and career interests through the avenues of themed content academies; and either continuing to post-secondary education environments or entry to the workforce. This logic has strong implications to the success of the reform outcomes of the district, to positively accomplishing its goals and as a result meeting the educational outcomes it intends for the students.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	10

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(C)(1)(a) Medium points were awarded because the applicant's plan provides evidence of its intent to assist students with personalized learning by aligning individual goals to targeted instructional strategies linked to college-readiness and a career-ready standards. However, the plan does not include how parents, educators and all students will understand that what they are learning is key to success in accompanying their goals. The applicant's plan articulates intertwined or "seamless" project strategies for stakeholders, specifically high needs students and low performing schools. But teachers and students are the focus of goals to the exclusion of parents within the school setting. The plan included reference to external entities to address parental involvement. Also, the applicant uses the terms "rigorous" and "accelerate" as it relates to instruction but does not detail what actions or outcomes define these two terms.

There is evidence in the plan for students to have access and exposure to diverse cultures through the reform model. Individualized student goal setting in the plan is clear, but the plan does not include how goal setting and exposing students to master critical academic content, perseverance, communications, creativity and problem solving will be included in learning and teaching which are key elements of a high-quality plan. The plan intends for under performing students to have the opportunity to attend summer school which is positive to the extent that extended time on task can potentially further close gaps in achievement. The applicant has established a strategy for a personalized sequence of instructional content and development designed to enable students to achieve individual learning goals for a certain population of students but lacks specifics to achieve full inclusion of all populations.

Tool usage is limited to virtual schools but is aligned to college- to career-ready standards. Access to data is limited to the district calendar, but the vision is to expand feedback loops to include community based career and technical skill development which will provide students, parents and teachers with feedback on an ongoing basis. This practice will effectively allow for more frequent and ongoing stakeholder communications and close gaps in communication. The plan incorporates project strategies to increase teachers and administrative use of technology which is supportive to accessing data for increased learning and teaching.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	8
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Medium points were awarded to the applicant for Section (C)(2) because the applicant has evidence of continuous professional development practices which include professional learning communities specific to individual school models. Also, the plan calls for increased professional development related to specific goals necessary to implement the plan. For example, PD will be tailored to Academies for middle school teachers, while elementary teacher's PD will center around

global awareness. PD for administrators will be tailored to the evaluation process and so enabling teachers to become highly effective. This is an effective practice which will lead to increased teacher confidence and enhance student performance. The state's RTTT initiatives have increased data driven decision making and transparency for the district, but the plan does not detail how data will be used to improve student outcomes. Plans to increase administrator and teacher capacity directly relate to effective teaching practices and are overarching to support the plans implementation but there is no evidence in the plan as to who will provide professional development for the district.

Administrative and educator performance measures are driven by the state. The district's plan aligns with the state evaluation system and provides clear and sustainable practices for data usage in all areas of teaching and learning with specific strategies to support deliverables noted in the plan. It is clear in the plan that the district relies heavily on the state to guide professional development outcomes with regards to meeting standards for the purpose of testing. This is a highly effective strategy which will promote teaching practices that will prepare students for standardized state assessments. However, the measure to which the district will overlap selected college-to career path readiness is not clearly noted in the plan.

Professional learning communities which already exist in schools work on teams to develop and map curriculum. Activities associated with the applicant' Data Driven Decision Making projects include: coordination with the state's RTTT initiatives to collect and analyze data for regarding attendance, suspensions, professional development for teachers and administrators, state technology forums and A+ Schools programs for the district's 5% schools. These existing practices are favorable for supporting effective individuals learning environments.

Technology usage is lacking and the necessary means to engage students and provide teachers with specific capabilities to aggressively move students from where they are to advancement in college and career readiness is questionable.

The district monitors school improvement plans and advises schools regarding recruitment and retention of highly effective teachers system wide. This practice is sustainable and is a clear indicator of effectively meeting the needs of some students students. Staffing low performing schools and classrooms for students with disabilities has not been addressed in the plan.

#### D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	8

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Medium points were awarded to Section (D)(1).The applicant's central office organization is well positioned to provide support and services to the schools and personnel assigned to implement the plan. An organization chart has been provided with additional roles assigned to existing personnel for initial implementation and oversight of stages implementation. These assignments and roles seem to be clearly defined. The superintendent is listed as the "go to" administrator in the district for the plan which is promising to the extent of complete implementation and fidelity to the plan. Other examples of support include monthly leadership team meetings, school level meetings for instructional improvement, project leads meetings and teacher advisory meetings. These inclusions provide thoughtful processes to ensure that all parties who are responsible for implementation of the plan are allowed opportunities to give feedback for additional planning and realizations of ongoing implementation when needed.

The plan calls for individual school leadership accountability along with teachers and staff of these school sites. Student success teams along with school improvement teams advise school leaders while the school improvement teams have authority to design curriculum and advise on areas such as scheduling and school budgets. This is a highly effective practice that promotes ownership and creates an atmosphere of collaboration. Another example of autonomy at the school level relates to enrichment and remediation practices. Each school has flexibility to design these programs to meet the needs of their student population. Autonomy at the school level is clearly evident and is favorable for sustainability to the implementation of the plan and for increased student achievement.

The plan demonstrates existing ways the applicant allows students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards. For example block scheduling allows for students to increase their course load, student portfolios provide students documentation of on activities, advanced and online or virtual courses as well as IB course availability. However, the plan does not include additional or new opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of standards.

The applicant's plan articulates preparations and implementation of use of Common Core Standards in L.A. and Mathematics for the 2012-2013 SY with inclusions to use Universal Design Learning (UDL) to implement differentiated learning and teaching. The inclusion of UDL learning and teaching strategies can make an impact of student engagement, instructional practices and test performances. It also allows for students to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times in

differentiated ways. But the applicant's plan for inclusion of UDL is minimally on the surface. As stated by the applicant, "Generally speaking, teachers are doing more project-based leaning and increasing the focus on individual interests through approaches such as graduation projects". There are gaps in the applicant's plan of usage of UDL and what is actually taking place in the classroom.

The applicant has minimum resources accessible to all demographics. In response to (D)(1)(e) the applicant does not delineate the extent of which students with disabilities, English Language Learners/ESL or advance/gifted students have opportunity to work with at level or use advanced curriculum. The plan does not succinctly address intentions to implement goals which include these populations.

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

Medium points were awarded in section (D)(2) because the applicant has measures in place to ensure all stakeholders access to content, tools and other learning resources. However, there is no evidence in this section that the applicant has plans to increase access to learning tools in and out of the school setting.

The applicant has evidence of having assisted teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders using various strategies and opportunities. Students and parents are able to apply for FASFA at their local school on college night, attend college planning sessions, student books are online and can be viewed on any internet exchange, teachers have attended Accelerated Reading PD, Students take tests on the computer along with plans to partner with the local library. These are strong indicators of future success to meeting the needs of students and assisting parents with college enrollment.

Schools have access to various state sites for data mining opportunities. Including: Instructional Improvement System, North Carolina Common Education Data Analysis and Reporting System (CEDARS) Educational Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS), Power school, and The NCEducation Cloud (NCEdCloud). These systems are supportive to the success of implementing the plan and positively impacts infrastructure capabilities.

The plan lacks evidence of technology systems that allow parents and students to export information in an open data format as defined by the criteria. However, the state in which the applicant is located is in the process of overhauling its data networking capabilities which will directly impact the applicant's capabilities to make data available. These plans are aggressive to the extent that parent, teachers and students will be able to access data more quickly. Including teacher evaluation data, class assignments, enrichment activities and communicate with classroom teachers and administrators.

The applicant has full support of the state which is in the process of implementing several technology systems. These systems are positive upgrades that will directly impact the applicant by allowing information to be viewed and disseminated more quickly. As well as provide PD tracking for school and district administrators.

What is lacking in the plan is the extent to which the applicant intends or plans to disseminate information and delineation as to how stakeholders can access various information sites and when these sites or technology will be operable. However, because the applicant's overall plan consistently includes stakeholder involvement with multiple opportunities for engagement with the school district and personnel to meet the needs of students its score ranges in the high category.

### E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	12

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

High points were awarded to (E)(1) because the applicant has a strategy for implementing rigorous continues improvement and is well positioned for assessing successes and challenges of implementation in an ongoing manner, with the superintendent and RTT-D team monitoring progress towards achieving specific outcomes. The applicant's organization of tiered committees to meet, discuss and provide feedback is well designed. Specifically, its RTT-D project team which will

identify and implement activities for effective and ongoing improvements.

The plans affect on students and teachers is a major indicator of the success of the plan. The applicant has plans " to analyze return on investment" which will compare expenditures being made in the grant project with changes to teachers, staff, students, and stakeholder outputs and outcomes coming to past." The applicant's goal is to close feedback loopholes. This warrants quick action and turnaround time for solving problems and access data. This strategy may potentially eliminate the time it takes to access student benchmark scores which can positively impact instructional strategies and behaviors. This is an aggressive attempt to change how data is used and how often it is used.

Formative and summative assessment evaluation process meetings to evaluate test data is another example of how the applicant will evaluate progress of the goals. Tracking student progress on core strategies through generated reports on student learning is a practice that gives stakeholders a visual mark of student progress. This is a highly favorable practice to ensure success.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Medium points were awarded to (E)(2) because the applicant has existing forms of communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. The plan includes adding additional communication outlets to provide ongoing communications and expand its realm of reach to include local businesses, local political figures and County offices. For example, the applicants sends regular email "blasts" to personnel at the school and district level to increase communications between educator stakeholders, bi-directional updates from RTT-D project strategy level staff with strategy leads. Also, periodic reports to the board of education, County Commissioners, city mayors, and presentations at the school level hosted for community leaders and parents. The applicant intends to disseminate information through presentations to each school. However, the plan does not include continuous ongoing communications with parents and community members.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Medium points were awarded because the applicant has selected to monitor the entire set of the performance measures listed in the RTT-D. The applicant has selected attendance as an on track indicator for their RTT-D grant project. After reviewing literature, the applicant believes that attendance tracking can be used as an early warning indicator; with attendance data being easy to collect, monitor, comprehensible and straightforward. Challenges of using attendance as a performance measurement include fidelity to data collection as well as independent variables related to individual student achievement patterns. However, the selection of tracking attendance as an on track indicator is an effective strategy. Research collected by the applicant aligns tracking attendance to issues associated with other indicators such as behaviors/and or course failure which increase the risk for students dropping out of high school. Also, selecting to track attendance allows the applicant to put interventions in place before students become in serious danger of failing or dropping out of school.

Another on track indicator which the applicant will monitor is out of school suspensions (OSS). OSS's directly correlate to student behaviors and at-risk behaviors. Using OSS data in conjunction with attendance will be effective with identifying students who will need additional interventions to stay on track to college or career readiness. However, the plan does not include the rationale for selecting this indicator or how they plan to use this data to improve outcomes over time.

Monitoring of these critical indicators will be completed across grade levels by the applicant and is positive to illuminating students who may be at-risk of failing. The applicant admits that these two variables will not identify every at-risk student, however teachers and support staff will also identify students who may fall into this group. This is a progressive strategy which will yield effective data for implementing student interventions but the plan does not provided evidence of how this data will be used to develop strategies for improvement..

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Medium points were awarded because the applicant has provided evidence to continuously evaluate and improve the plan. The applicants use of RTT-D funds will be leveraged with existing federal, state and local funds over the course of the grant funding period. The applicant has built in cost saving strategies, program and structures also. For example, initially, technology

specialists will be hired with their numbers being reduced over subsequent years in a specific elementary, middle school and high school academies project strategies. According to the applicant, the logic behind this cost saving strategy centers on educators increased facility and proficiency with RTT-D technology resources after year-one PD and training. This is a positive strategy to increase teacher capacity to meet project goals.

Effectiveness evaluations of RTT-D investments to be completed by the applicant aims to track an overall impact of increased livability and quality of life for citizens of the applicants county over the long term and according to the applicant will be "self-evident". Key indicators include but are not limited to: Improved recruitment and retention of high quality educators, continuation of graduation rates, monitoring migration of students into local community colleges and state universities and increased population to county based on increased businesses opportunities and the high quality of schools. These statements are for long-term evaluations over time. There is no evidence in the plan that the applicant will collect short-term data to support continuous improvement of the plan.

The applicant has succinctly developed a reform plan to leverage available funds with clear intent to implement personalized learning environments by expanding teaching and learning practices through professional development, making decisions based on data, increasing the use of technology for all stakeholders, partnering with businesses and community leaders and by focusing on outcomes. Evidence from the plan supports that the applicant's goal are achievable but not ambitious.

### F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>High points were awarded because the applicant's budget plan clearly identifies numerous options for funding support for a comprehensive approach to reform. Areas where grant funds will support the plan have been delineated with specifics over a four year period are included. Action items in the budget plan intrinsically support the outline of the plan with identified sub-categories as defined by the criteria of RTT-D.</p> <p>The applicant's budget plans are reasonable and will sufficiently support the development of the application proposal by allowing the applicant to implement strategies to support students in personal learning environments. For example, the expansion of its Universal Early Childhood Preparation initiative requires additional instructors and classroom materials, its Worldview Elementary School Education Initiative requires the hiring of foreign-language instructors and technology specialist, its STEM initiative will require expansions to technology and services as well as the hiring of key support personnel, its Career- and College- Ready High School requires additional staff for technology expansion and support. According to the applicant, "The nine project strategies have been designed to require minimal continued funding for ongoing operational expenses after the grant performance period." This demonstrates a plan for sustainable outcomes for future success. The applicant's main source of funds is through the state and county which have been strained due to the economy. No other significant streams of revenue were mentioned.</p> <p>Specific costs related to "Other" in the budget plan are not delineated in the narrative or actual budget. However, expenditures over time versus one time expenditure costs are clearly represented with a detailed description of operational costs and long-term sustainability of personalized learning environments. For example, the applicant's Sustainability Plan calls for charging its unrestricted Indirect Cost rate to the grant (17.449%) to bank half of these funds to sustain initiatives. The applicant anticipates doing this over the four years of the grant continuing initiatives beyond the grant cycle. This strategy provides a clear structure for the applicant to continue implementation of personalized learning environments.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	2
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A Low score has been awarded because of the applicant's reliance on the state, its largest source of funding, is threatened by the state's current economic condition. As a result, the applicant will not be able to sustain the exact level of implementation after grant expiration. However, the applicant noted research for sustainability and best practices along with a sustainability plan, data gathering for sustainability support, stakeholder engagement, and promoting the plan. There is no evidence of how the sustainability plan will be implemented and at what point, during or after the performance period.</p>		

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

A Medium score has been awarded because the applicant has a cohesive plan to partner with many community entities to support students in high-needs school in the district. Several letters of support have been submitted from city officials and businesses establishing a high level of cooperation and collaboration with the applicant. Some relationships exist that are not contingent on RTT-D but have been included and according to the applicant will expand and continue long after performance years. For example, developing further technical training pathways with industry partners and employment for students who complete training.

The applicant has identified nine population-level desired results for the students it serves. The plan calls for data driven decision making project strategies which include these nine desired results. Examples of the desired outcomes are: Ready to succeed in kindergarten based on Pre-K participation, percentage of kindergarten students enrolled prepared to succeed, data on short-term suspensions, county juvenile delinquent rate per 1,000, Students with Disabilities (SWD) at or above proficiency in reading, data on workKeys exam, ACT data and the number of graduates enrolled at state institutions of higher learning taking at least one remedial course. However, there is no evidence of how these strategies will translate into meaningful student outcomes.

The applicant plans for technology expansion which include additions to technology which measures benchmarks and trends for EOG and EOC for grades 3rd-12th. Data tracking for selected indicators in the plan specifically for SWD and aggregate grade level data trends for this high-needs subgroup. Intervention plans are encompassing and overarching with specific measures being implemented for identifying high risk students.

Increased technology PD for teachers as well as reform model PD will increase teacher capacity to meet the needs of students providing teacher training and implementation of initiatives are clearly presented to stakeholders. The plan does not articulate how information will be presented to parents. Program inventory yielded valuable information on needs to promote and sustain the teen mother daycare program which was located at one school but needed to be expanded to all high schools. Decision making processes and infrastructure were unclear. Plans to increase online parent engagement would expand current parent participation, but the state has specific stipulations related to parent involvement. The applicant's plan is minimally encompassing with no explanation as to how the plan will be disseminated to parents. Feedback loops are intentional to the point of initiating opportunities for status updates.

The applicant has identified eight population groups for Competitive Preference Priority with desired results. The type of results include family and community health and safety, educational targets for high-needs groups along with high school college-career readiness. These goals are achievable but not clearly ambitious. The applicant's plan has the potential to improve results over time. Its data mining procedures, PD, increased communications with stakeholders and college/career path initiatives will provide some results over time.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has Met Absolute Priority 1 because it addresses the need to create personalized learning environments throughout the district as well as the specific details to achieve this goal. A comprehensive and coherent plan has been designed by the applicant for implementation of the following:

- The applicant has designed a district wide reform model entitled "The New LCPS: Connecting Every Child to a Prosperous Future"
- The model is scaled upward through 5 critical key stages starting from: Universal Early Childhood Preparation, moves students to World View Elementary School Education, students then attend Explore and Focus Middle School Education, afterwards students progress to Career- and College- READY High School Academies with an additional fifth tier of Seamless Connections to Post-Secondary Opportunities and Careers.

- The plan has tiered four processes which need to be in place in order to support the 5 critical stages: Leadership, Coordination & Sustainability, Data Driven Decision Making, Highly Effective Teaching, and High Quality Schools
- The plan identifies goals and outcomes to meet and/or exceed state benchmarks while implementing individual school reform models which includes personalized learning environments for its three lowest performing schools
- The plans provides a course for tracking progression of individual student performance along with specific subgroups
- The plan provides evidence of closing loops in feedback to include all stakeholders
- The plan has specific goals for PD and recruiting and retaining highly effective teachers
- Specific goals to allow student input into goals related to college or career.

Total	210	119
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