



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0824TX-1 for Lubbock-Cooper Independent School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has set forth a reform vision that includes irrelevant (tobacco) and unclear goals. The applicant states that the consortium aims to use the RTT-D as "just a part of larger plan to raise the academic rigor of the member schools while raising the expectations for what our communities can achieve if we work together along with building the knowledge base that we will freely share to allow our consortium to be a "lighthouse" to other wishing to develop similar programs". The grant applicant highlights several other initiatives the school is participating in, while not clearly articulating the new initiatives which will be implemented as a result of the RTT-D funds. Personalized student support is sparse within the narrative.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	3
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The evidence given is insufficient in establishing a relationship with the current improvement plan and the proposed RTTD proposal. The application lacks sufficient evidence of a process used to ensure that the participating schools collectively meet the competition's eligibility requirements. The number of students to be served is not provided. Based upon the selection criteria and evidence provided, a score of 3 is given.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	4
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A lack of evidence is provided by the applicant to clearly support a plan with new innovations and initiatives. The narrative describes current programs in the district which are funded through grant resources previously awarded to the district. Clear distinct between what currently exists and new plans is not evidenced. A score of 4 on a 10 point scale is earned based upon the plan presented.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The consortium plans to develop an Individualized Education Plan to improve student learning and performance. The applicant outlines goals that are measurable and attainable over a five-year time period. Graduation rates are already strong running between 97% and 99% at all three school systems in the consortium. College enrollment for all three school districts is low. Goals for each academic year from 2012 - 2013 to 2016 - 2017 are given. A clear description regarding how these goals were developed is not given. The applicant plans to create a social media network to allow access to graduates from the three high schools. The social media network created by the district will allow access to the post-secondary information from graduates. The idea of staying connected via social media is logical, however, the purpose outlined by the district is to use it to gather data regarding post-secondary goals attained and/or pursuing. Gathering data via social media would lack the reliability necessary for data reporting. The social media plan is unclear regarding what can be used when students do not participate in the social media.</p> <p>The logic model will be used by the school system is to determine each student's academic gains which will allow consortium members to increase the educational outcomes of all of their our students whatever sub-group they are a member. The applicant explains that the sub-group goals for closing the gap will initially focus on any measured sub-group whose scores are below the state average.</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	7
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The data presented ranges from 2009 to 2011, which is only three of the past four years. The TAKS (Texas.....) (over and over the applicant refers to "so" many acronyms it becomes very confusing) Table begins with a breakdown by sub-groups. LCISD (independent school district) had a rating of R (Recognized) for 2009, which rose to an "E" (Exemplary) during 2010, only to drop back to R (Recognized) which shows a record of success in advancing student learning and achievement with a one year (2011) slight drop. There is insufficient evidence in the document for increasing high school graduation rates or even more important in this districts case, increasing college enrollment.</p> <p>Definitive data is not given to support ambitious and significant reforms in the lowest-achieving schools. The school district in the middle in terms of overall student performance showed the largest change in terms of the TTIPS (improvement) grant for all students at all grade levels. The application states that the culture has changed at the school district and all grade levels. The TTIPS evaluation for LISD would "seem" to confirm their rationale. Evidence is needed which is definitive.</p> <p>All campus/districts have a system to provide yearly school report cards to all community stakeholders. The application does not establish how the student performance data will be made available and communicated to students, educators and parents, only stakeholders.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>There is no evidence regarding the required salary schedule. Due to the lack of evidence to support each element needed for a high-quality plan the applicant is awarded a 3 on a 5 point scale.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	3
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application is difficult to understand. It is unclear to see how each element fits together within the plan. A clear coherent plan is missing due to the use of numerous acronyms, spelling and /typing errors. The narrative provided by the applicant lacks evidence of a high-quality plan; therefore a score of 3 is awarded.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	5
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant uses numerous acronyms, spelling/typing errors which add to the confusion and takes away from the applicant presenting a high-quality plan; therefore a score of 5 is awarded based upon the application.</p> <p>As evidenced in this narrative taken from the grant submission:</p> <p>"Since Texas is a "Right to Work" state, we do not have teacher unions only associations. To allow for every teaching in the three districts to be aware of the grant, vote on seeking the funds, and providing input into the development of the program an "All Staff" e-mail was sent to everyone that worked at each of the districts. As of 10/24/12 the vote has been 100% in favor of seeking the RTT-D grant (approximately 18% of the staff did not vote)."</p> <p>This narrative does provide evidence regarding collective bargaining representation. The narrative provides evidence that a high-quality plan is not presented as part of the grant application due to grammar and spelling errors which adds confusion.</p> <p>The grant application is unclear of how students, families, teachers, and principals participated and engaged in the development of the proposal. Community input was sought at school board and city council meetings which did not generate meaningful stakeholder engagement. The students were given surveys to take home to their parents to gain their input. Over 2000 family surveys were returned at a 25% response rate. The school district consortium involvement of stakeholders in the actual development is sparse.</p> <p>The district sent an email to all staff to allow them to vote on seeking the funds and providing input into the development of the</p>		

program. Feedback was not received by 18% of the staff on the vote. The teacher feedback included a request for a small stipend and childcare in order to attend professional development when they are off contract, however, there is inadequate information regarding how this will be included in the grant.

The application lacks letters of support from key stakeholders. No evidence of support from parent organizations, student organizations, early learning programs, tribes, business community, civil rights organizations, advocacy groups, local civic and community-based organizations and institutions of higher education.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3
--	---	---

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Based upon the plan presented a score of 3 is awarded. The plan is not a high-quality plan due to the insufficient details of the plans goals, activities for those goals, timelines and with the deliverables.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents examples which bring real-world examples of how student learning at all public schools is related to what they will do in life. The narrative is limited in regards to the specific plan for improving learning and teaching. The specific goals/objectives of the plan are lacking. The Texas College and Career Readiness Standards referenced detail a link with postsecondary education and career activities. Clearly defined goals for students are lacking. Evidence of how a framework for students to learn the "how to" structure for achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals is undocumented.

Project Based Learning is described as an approach which will involve students in deep learning experiences in areas of interest. The students will have access and exposure to the Hispanic engineer's society. The narrative does not include a description of diverse cultures other than Hispanic, context and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning. The school consortium seeks mentors and tutors that have similar backgrounds at the student they are serving; however, insufficient information is given in relationship as to how the mentors and tutors will be used to meet the students learning goals.

SREB, UDL/BYOD and PBL will be focused on IEP leading to PGP demands that the students acquire skills in goal setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity and problem-solving. The initiatives are within the narrative as acronyms which make it confusing. Specific goals for goal setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creatively and problem-solving does not exist.

TCTW will frame the program in terms of nationally accepted reform/restructuring model as noted in the narrative. A lack of sufficient information is shared in regards to the TCTW model. Confusing statement, "The various locally and other grant provided instructional aides will allow the students to have multi-methods of gain the TEKS (acronyms given without description) that will allow them to have their learning extended and regardless of sub-group membership have materials that challenge them to learn more. High-quality instructional strategies are inadequate.

The SREB system will be used to promote IEP and PGP that focus the instructional staff on each student's academic needs in terms of the weekly staffing on each student. Weekly staffing allows teachers to make formative changes in a student's instruction that allows UDL principles to be met. The UDL principles mentioned are limited. Educator support through weekly staffing is provided, however, the parent and student component of the personalized learning is not evidenced.

The three districts within the consortium have been using "other" resources to increase rigor of the general education programs; no evidence is given in regards to the "other" resources. Developmental Assets will be used with the students. The outcomes/goals of developmental assets description are vague. No evidence of digital learning content or alignment with college and career-ready standards is given. A reasonable plan for updating student data in order to determine progress toward mastering college and career ready standards is lacking. The narrative describes a standard progress report and grade card system which will provide details to students and parents.

Accommodations for high-need students are supported in the narrative for meeting their academic needs. College and career ready standards are undocumented. "The technologist and the content area coaches will give the instructional staff the professional development" - giving is confusing in regards to professional development.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	10
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant fails to address essential elements needed for a high-quality plan. Based upon the plan presented, the applicant is awarded a 10. The applicant mentions programs and initiatives which they plan to use, however, specifics regarding goals, activities, timelines and personnel to be involved with the initiatives is not fully addressed. The applicant fails to explain how the educators will be introduced to all resources planned for implementing personalized learning environments (C)(2)(a)(i). Teachers need to be able to see the big picture and understand the vital role they play in assuring the success of each students individualized learning plan. A training opportunity included in the narrative is a "boot camp" which is explained within the application as a program which will begin at the start of the school year and meet throughout the academic year. Teachers are on the front-line and engaged with these students each and every day. Creating a "boot-camp", for the professional development steers away from establishing a school culture and climate (C)(2)(c)(i) which improves the individual educators effectiveness. The plan does not address how it will frequently measure student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards. (C)(2)(a)(iii). The plan does not adequately address the frequent feedback teachers will receive on an individual basis in order to improve practice. (C)(2)(a)(iv)</p>		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	8
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A high-quality plan is not provided, a score of 8 is awarded. The applicant failed to communicate a comprehensive plan. The plan presented is vague regarding the organization of the LEA central office and the governance structure. Evidence is unclear as to the deliverables of services to all schools within the consortium. The proposal includes confusing references to programs and services with the use of acronyms without descriptors.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	7
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant fails to provide a high-quality plan to support the project, therefore a score of 7 is awarded. No evidence of parental involvement is provided. The system plans to use their funded 21 learning grant for the after school program. It is unclear as to how the 21 learning grant will provide stakeholders training for the new technology being implemented. The applicant states that they will use a specific data management system in all three school districts. A description of this data management system is missing. Evidence is not sufficient in regards to goals and outcomes this management system will address.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	8
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not clearly outline a high-quality approach for continuous improvement, therefore a score of 8 is awarded. The proposal does not detail a rigorous continuous improvement process. The applicant provides acronyms of programs that will assist in this effort, however, the connection is not made. The appendix provides documents with with duplicated pages of best practices to be implemented without the connection and explanation needed to clearly articulate a high-quality plan. The applicant continues to confuse the reader with typos, spelling and grammatical errors.</p>		

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A high-quality plan for continuous improvement includes a communication plan and an engagement plan with internal and external stakeholders. The applicant provides social media, web-pages, 3 to 6 week progress reports, report cards and task force meeting as their avenue to communicate and engage internal and external stakeholders. The applicant fails to provide representation of a high-quality plan; a minimal communication plan is included. Internal stakeholders given in the plan include staff and students only and fails to include essential internal stakeholders (board members, school administrators, support staff, instructional staff, custodial staff, bus drivers, coaches) that all need to be able to support and communicate. External stakeholders addressed include community, parents (which could be internal as well), missing are external stakeholders (government/civic leaders, vendors, chamber of commerce). The plan refers to stakeholders and various medias which will be used for communication, without addressing internal and external. A high-quality plan must address each group, both internal and external. In addition, the specific media/communication outlets must be connected with specific stakeholders in a high-quality plan. The plan does not fully address a comprehensive communication and engagement plan with stakeholders, therefore a score of 2 is awarded.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A clear-high quality approach for addressing performance measures is not evidenced, therefore a score of 3 is awarded. The applicant fails to provide essential details regarding closing achievement gaps. Goals in a high-quality plan need to be set high and this is not evidenced. The plan include goals with very low expectations which clearly are not as ambitious as those required in a high-quality plan. .</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The plan is confusing and includes numerous spelling errors. The plan proposed does not include a clear rationale for the benefits which the applicant states will occur after plan implementation. Activities are not clearly defined, with timetables and personnel responsible for the implementation. The applicant articulates that the effectiveness of their plan will be determined by the overall benefits to the three communities within the Consortium. The plan proposed that as a result of the plan implementation, the general employment opportunities will increase, the tax-base will increase and the return on investment will rise in the community. The applicants fails to provide evidence to measure the plans effectiveness, therefore the applicant is awarded a 2 out of 5.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	7
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant is awarded a score of 7 on a 10 point scale due to the plan presented. A high-quality plan must include specifics that are clearly available to support the project. One avenue for funds identified by the applicant to support the project, is their Tobacco Prevention Community Coalition Grant. The applicant states that the TTIPS (Texas Tobacco Prevention) grant is a program related to 40 Developmental Assets. The applicant does not detail the 40 Developmental Assets, therefore, it is unclear as to the relationship of this grant project with the RTT proposal. The applicant states it may have funds; which evokes reservations regarding the tangibles which will be available. Each of these, coupled with the additional spelling, typo and grammatical errors demonstrates the inability to put forth a comprehensive high-quality</p>		

plan. The description of all available funds to support the implementation of the proposal is insufficient.

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

10

5

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a plan for sustainability, however, letters of support from state and local government leaders with specific financial support is lacking. The applicant earned a 5 for this criteria based upon the applicants inability to articulate a plan to sustain the project goals after the term of the grant.

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant is awarded a score of 6 on a 10 point scale, with 10 being a high-quality plan.

The applicant refers to partnerships with organizations and communities, however, a description of each partnership is not given nor details regarding program sustainability. (1)

The applicant describes improvements made as a result of various grants, but does not articulate how this specific plan will improve results over time. (3)(d)

A description of educational services provided by Communities in Schools and Catholic Charities is provided. Two service providers does not represent the involvement needed from these organizations. There is not a clear plan demonstrating evidence that the services provided are related to the goals, activities, deliverables and a connection established. Evidence of specific gaps that exist within these schools would allow the Consortium to link service providers to a school with that particular gap. (4)

The use of spelling errors, grammatical errors and excessive acronyms is confusing.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant outlines a plan which addresses personalized learning environments, therefore, the applicant "meets" absolute priority 1. The plan addresses address improving learning and teaching through the implementation of the programs and goals outlined in the application. The plan, however, is not presented in a way which makes everything clear. There is a constant distraction from the details provided due to the extraordinary inclusion of spelling and grammatical errors.

Total	210	107
-------	-----	-----

### Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	10

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a strong rationale for funding the Compass Learning System in order to facilitate the RTT grant proposal.

Purchasing this system as an additional tool to expand and carry forth prescribed learning paths is a solid approach. The continuous improvement of personalized learning experiences for all students will be supported by this program. The Compassing Learning System is not, however, innovative. Based upon the evidence presented, the applicant is awarded a score of 10 on a 15 point scale.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	5
--	----	---

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

The applicant is awarded 5 points for the optional budget supplement. The optional budget supplement supports funding for SREB to expand the program across the three independent school districts in the consortium.(2) According to the narrative the SREB reform focuses school improvement at the high school and middle school level. The applicant wishes to include elementary students in the reform. The provider of services lacks a research-based plan to support the activities outlined in this budget supplement.

Goals for this request do not encompass skills which are difficult to measure (goal setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creative thinking and problem-solving).(1)

The applicant fails to provide a high-quality plan to contribute to the continuous improvement of personalized learning experiences and the tool and resources that will support implementation across all grade-levels. (3) Contracting with an outside agency, however, no concrete evidence is provided to support funding of the optional budget, therefore a score of 5 is awarded.



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0824TX-2 for Lubbock-Cooper Independent School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant, a consortium of three Texas school districts – Lubbock-Cooper Independent School District (LCISD), Wilson Independent School District (WISD), and Lamesa Independent School District (LISD) – describes a comprehensive and coherent reform vision based on three core components:

- the Southern Regional Education Board's (SREB) models, High Schools That Work (HSTW) and Making Middle Grades Work (MMGW), centered on 10 key practices;
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles; and
- technology integration through Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) principles.

The vision is coherent and integrates all three of these core components into a model that, according to the applicant, has already been applied in their Title I schools. In addition, according to the applicant, the SREB models have been applied to

schools in various districts across the SREB states, and has been proven to be a clear and credible approach to improving student learning. Finally, the applicant indicates that UDL principles are grounded in increasing equity of access and personalized learning support, and that BYOD principles enhance technology integration in the classroom.

The applicant includes a high-quality plan for its proposal in Appendix A of its proposal. The applicant organizes the plan around seven goals: Improve Academic Performance; Increase Use of Quality Data; Increase Learning Time; Increase Teacher Quality; Increase Leadership Effectiveness; Increase Parent/Community Involvement; and Improve School Climate. This plan includes multiple activities linked explicitly to the seven goal areas, and lists deliverables and responsible parties for individual activities. However, no timeline is specified by the applicant in this section or anywhere in the application.

The applicant mentions ten key practices that will be implemented in all district schools: high expectations, program of study, academic studies, career/technical studies, work-based learning, teachers working together, students actively engaged, guidance, extra help, and culture of continuous improvement. In Section C, the applicant indicates, and illustrates with examples, that students will be engaged in tasks that will bring together their real-world experiences, academic learning, and career exploration to allow students to make clear connections between their academic work and future careers. Further, in Section C, the applicant indicates that students will work collaboratively with teachers to choose areas of interest within the TEKS standards to go more deeply into the content, through both PBL projects and portfolio development.

The applicant describes, in Section C of the proposal, how this plan will build on its current work in the four core assurance areas, as follows:

- Standards and Assessments – the applicant indicates that over the past five years, the state’s prior standards and assessments system, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), have been aligned with new state College and Career Ready (CCR) standards; the CCR standards have also been integrated with the school curriculum;
- Teacher and School Leader Effectiveness – the applicant indicates that teachers in the Title I schools, who have already begun implementation of the SREB models, receive coaching in the SREB models that allows them to provide personalized learning for their students and guide students to high levels of achievement; teachers and school leaders are currently evaluated for effectiveness through district-wide systems; the applicant provides sample forms in Appendix A used for continuous progress evaluation
- Data Use – The applicant describes a system where teachers perform weekly data analysis and instructional adjustment for each individual student, and provides examples of the forms used to collect and act on this data in Appendix A of the application
- Turning Around Low-Performing Schools – the applicant indicates that the principles and practices mentioned above have already been used in its lowest-performing schools through the use of Title I grants to make improvements in teaching and learning

Despite the strong plan laid out in the application, however, it is unclear that the approach presented is credible for the districts and schools in the consortium. While the applicant references prior success of the SREB models in other schools, the data provided in Section B of the application is equivocal at best about the effects that these interventions have had on the consortium districts’ Title I schools, which leaves doubt about the future success of implementing these models in other district schools. A letter from SREB included in Appendix B describes SREB’s engagement with LCISD, LISD, and WISD in prior grants; however, while increased rigor in the schools and increased student numbers in the district(s) are both mentioned in this letter, these are not measures of improved student performance.

In summary, the applicant presents a strong vision based in coherent principles, ties this vision to the core assurance areas, and explains how this vision will personalize learning and tie educational achievement to student interests. However, despite assurances from SREB of the applicant’s capacity to implement these changes, the credibility of the plan is limited by the mixed results on student performance presented in the application, as evidenced by the data in Section B. Thus application is awarded high-range, but not full, points for this section.

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

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant explains the logic behind the formation of the consortium – the three districts forming the consortium are geographically co-located; the lead district has experience with grant-writing and implementation; the other two districts have received Title I grants; all three districts wish to work together to comprehensively implement the SREB models, universal design principles, and BYOD across all of their schools. The applicant makes a strong case for including all schools, explaining that this will allow vertical and horizontal alignment of high impact practices for students.

All schools in the three participating consortium districts will participate in grant activities. All schools are listed, and the numbers of participating students are provided. The three districts collectively meet the competition’s eligibility requirement of

40% low-income (the total low-income population of the three districts combined is 48.1% of the total student population).

However, the applicant makes two significant errors in filling out the chart for this section. First, column E is presented as a percentage, not a number (it appears that column E is simply a duplication of column H in this application); second, column I does not represent the percent of low-income population for each school, but only the total percent of low-income population for the district.

As the applicant makes a strong case for the inclusion of specific LEAs in the consortium, and includes all schools in all three LEAs in the grant, but makes some errors on the evidence chart, the application is awarded high-range, but not full, points for this section.

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

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The consortium has collectively planned to include and engage all students in all schools in the three LEAs in the project. Since all students will be included from the inception, no plan is presented for expansion, as none is needed.

The applicant explains the logic behind the formation of the consortium – the three districts forming the consortium are geographically co-located; the lead district has experience with grant-writing and implementation; the other two districts have received Title I grants; all three districts wish to work together to comprehensively implement the SREB models, universal design principles, and BYOD across all of their schools. The applicant makes a strong case for including all schools, explaining that this will allow vertical and horizontal alignment of high impact practices for students.

All schools (12), educators (647), and students (6635), including all 3189 low-income students, in the three participating consortium districts will participate in grant activities. All schools are listed, and the numbers of participating students are provided, including numbers broken out by low-income and high-need.

Since all schools in the three districts are engaged in the consortium, and all students in all schools in the three districts will be included in the implementation, the application is awarded full points for this section.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	2
---	----	---

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant sets goals for criteria (A)(4)(a-e); however, each set of goals leaves significant concerns. These are detailed below.

(a) Performance - While the applicant goes into some depth describing its performance and growth measures, when the chart of goals is presented, no performance or growth measures are indicated, only achievement gaps and the rate at which they might be closed. This is particularly disturbing in light of information presented in Appendix G, "Examples of TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills), STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness), and EOC (End of Course) Data that will be available", which clearly indicates that the applicant has the ability to collect and report both performance and growth measures, as a whole and broken out by various subgroups, including ethnic minorities, high need, and low income. In addition, since the applicant does not identify any state targets for performance or growth, the goals specified by the applicant cannot be compared to state targets.

(b) Gaps - Instead of providing consistent comparisons with the "highest achieving subgroup" for the state, as directed in the RTTT-D application, the applicant provides gap measures between its subgroups and the state average. In addition, the gap measures provided in this chart do not match those presented by the application in part (a) of this section, and the method (gap number instead of percent reduction) used to indicate change is different from that presented in part (a). Finally, since the applicant does not identify state targets for the district(s) for gap closure across subgroups, the goals specified by the applicant cannot be compared to state targets.

(c) Graduation – The applicant does not identify any subgroups in this chart; there is also no mention of why subgroups are not provided (it may be because there are too few students in the groups, or because numbers are not collected in this way by the district, but this is not indicated). In addition, the high school graduation numbers are very high; given the low levels of achievement described elsewhere in the application, this is surprising and contradictory.

(d) Enrollment – While the high school graduation numbers provided by the applicant are extremely high, the college enrollment numbers are very low. This does not intuitively make sense, and the applicant does not explain this discrepancy in the chart or in the narrative, except to mention that this is a problem. Also, the applicant again does not provide a breakdown of numbers by subgroup, and does not explain why this breakdown is not provided.

(e) Attainment – The applicant indicates that this information is not currently collected, and that baseline numbers are

“anecdotal in nature” – but does not explain how they are derived. Like the charts for graduation and enrollment, the attainment chart does not include a breakdown by subgroup. Finally, it is unclear how the method proposed by the applicant to track these number in the future – a “social media network” that is not adequately described in the chart or narrative – will allow for consistent and accurate data tracking of postsecondary attainment.

Due to the large number of significant issues outlined above, the application is awarded low-range points for this section.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	3
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant presents only three years of data for district schools, not four years of data as requested. In addition, this data does not indicate a “clear record of success”. Details for each subsection are provided below.</p> <p>(a) The applicant provides summative data for each school and grade band on the percentage of students, total and by subgroup, passing the Texas state test, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), as well as the largest gap across groups for each test. However, no information is provided on high school graduation rates or postsecondary enrollment rates. This is particularly disturbing given that in Appendix G, “Examples of TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills), STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness), and EOC (End of Course) Data that will be available”, the applicant clearly indicates that all districts in the consortium have the ability to collect and report both high school graduation rates and postsecondary enrollment rates (though not broken out by subgroups in either case).</p> <p>Also, the data that is provided is presented in a format that makes it difficult to compare results across years. When the data is sorted to compare results, the trends are very mixed – in each school, at each grade level, in each subgroup, the performance and gap measures move up and down over the three year period for which data is provided. Certainly no clear upward trend in performance or gap closure emerges from such an analysis. The applicant does not explain or clarify these findings in the narrative. Instead, the applicant’s narrative focuses on future goals, not on past record of performance.</p> <p>(b) The narrative and data provided by the applicant is insufficient to demonstrate the achievement of ambitious and significant reforms in its low-achieving schools. The available data, as mentioned above, is equivocal – there are no clear trends, with measures going down as often as they go up. The information presented by the applicant in this section regarding the evaluation of Title I schools in the district is qualitative; it is impossible to determine whether student perceptions of improved outcomes actually translates to academic achievement, and the data presented seem to contradict this. This is particularly distressing because the applicant bases its theory of change on the improvements made in its Title I schools. A letter from SREB included in Appendix B describes SREB’s engagement with LCISD, LISD, and WISD in prior grants; however, while increased rigor in the schools and increased student numbers in the district(s) are both mentioned in this letter, these are not measures of improved student performance. Given the equivocal results shown by the data, there is little basis for the applicant to argue for all schools to be moved to the same models utilized to ‘transform’ its Title I schools.</p> <p>(c) The applicant addresses the need to share data with parents, students, and educators by describing the cross-district data collection, reporting, and sharing system, Skyward (the consortia’s Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS)), in Section C of the application. The applicant indicates that all districts will use Skyward as their data management system, which allows students to be connected to specific teachers throughout K-12. Through Skyward, student data is examined weekly by the teacher and student, and individual plans are drawn up for next week based on the previous week’s data on student achievement in order to keep students on track to graduating College and Career Ready (CCR).</p> <p>In section D, the applicant indicates that individual student data can be downloaded by parents with individual student codes. The applicant also describes multiple methods that will be used to provide tech support to all. Afterschool programs on technology literacy will be provided for all students and parents, staffed with technologists, instructional coaches, and mentors from area IHEs. Technology literacy staff development for teachers will be provided through intensive work with school-based technologists and coaches; teachers will also be able to provide and access peer-to-peer technology support through their Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).</p> <p>The applicant is unable to demonstrate a clear record of success or a clear record of reform in its low-performing schools. However, through sections C and D of the application, the applicant provides a clear description of the distribution of data to parents, students, and educators, and training in data use for informed decision-making. Thus, the application is awarded low-range points for this section.</p>		

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

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant indicates that some expenditures are reported in the consortia's Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), while some are reported in the yearly project budgets of each district. It is unclear how the public has access to either of these resources.

- The applicant mentions a yearly “community report card” based on data in the AEIS, but it is unclear whether the public is able to access the AEIS system directly outside of the report card. In addition, the method of distribution for the report card is not mentioned by the applicant.
- The applicant mentions yearly budget proposal meetings at the district level, and that anyone can “attend the meetings” or “request the information” discussed there, including the line-item budget. However, it is unclear from the applicant's description how the public would find out about the time and place of the meeting, go about requesting this information, or know whether this information is made available anywhere else, such as a public website.

More concerning, however, is that the applicant describes data elements that do not get down to the level of actual individual personnel salaries. Even if a member of the public were able to get to the yearly district budget reports or the AEIS system data, all that is available in terms of personnel salaries, according to the applicant, is the average teacher salaries, salary schedules, and customary hourly wages. None of these provide actual personnel salaries in the way that the criterion requests. Regardless of whether this information is available currently, the applicant also does not mention any plans to make this type of transparency available in the future.

Since the applicant does provide some information publicly, but does not fully address the requirements of the criterion for expenditure transparency, the application is awarded low points (rather than no points) for this section.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	0
---	----	---

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not demonstrate any evidence of sufficient district or consortia autonomy or flexibility to implement any initiatives. Only one sentence about the fact of SREB program implementation is presented as evidence of autonomy; there is no data presented to back up this assertion. The letter from SREB, included in Appendix D, does not address district autonomy to implement changes in the schools. The letter from the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the state's K-12 education agency, included in Appendix E, indicates only that the TEA declined to comment on the proposal. The applicant makes no mention, in this section or elsewhere in the application, of the districts' or consortia's work with state government or the state education agency. The applicant does not describe what it means to be an independent school district in Texas, nor whether this provides the type of autonomy required by the criterion.

The applicant provides quite a bit of information about community partnerships, as well as references to research about why partnerships help districts achieve their goals, but this is irrelevant to this criterion – how the applicant and its districts have sufficient autonomy under state statutory, legal, and regulatory requirements to implement personalized learning environments. Since the criterion is never addressed in the applicant's narrative, the application is awarded no points for this section.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	2
---	----	---

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states that the state education agency (Texas Education Agency, TEA) and the Governor have declined to make comments on any RTTT-D applications. A letter from TEA, included in Appendix E, confirms that the agency declined to comment.

The applicant states that all elected officials were “in favor of the plan” for the proposal. However, the applicant does not list specific elected officials either by name or title, so it is impossible to know who might be referenced in this category. A letter of support from the mayor of the City of Wilson, Donald Klaus, is included in Appendix D, and indicates that he and the City Council of Wilson support the application. However, no evidence is included that city officials from the other cities of the consortium, Lubbock-Cooper and Lamesa, support the application.

The applicant indicates that the consortium engaged in community outreach about the proposal through school board meetings, city council meetings, and student surveys. Yet the applicant then states that community members “did not attend” the specific school board or city council meetings where this proposal was to be discussed. This begs the question of how well these meetings were advertised, how much lead time community members had to make plans to attend the meetings, etc.; in

brief, it is difficult to determine how hard the applicant actually tried to engage the community in this application. The applicant mentions in Section D the development of Taskforce Teams to provide ongoing community feedback on the application, but while the applicant indicates that some parents have volunteered to be on such teams, there is no indication provided that any individuals have actually been invited to participate yet.

The applicant indicates that a survey was distributed to all students in all schools of the consortium to gather parental input for the proposal. The applicant further indicates that only ¼ of the student surveys distributed to district students and families were returned, yet the applicant indicates that most families were strongly supportive of the application; ¼ of surveys returned is not a strong showing. The applicant does include a sample of the survey, as well as a few sample individual responses from parents, in Appendix E; these responses do provide evidence that the parents that did respond were supportive of the proposal. However, the applicant indicates that the few parent suggestions collected through the survey would be “examined in future” – thus despite the small number of responses, these suggestions were not, in fact, integrated into current proposal. In Appendix E, “Letters of Support”, no letters are included from students, parents, or any student or parent organizations.

The applicant indicates that 80% of staff voted “in favor” of the proposal. This “vote” was conducted through an “all staff email”; neither the email nor any data about the timeline of the email and response time is provided. Staff may very well support the proposal, but the applicant provides no documentation of this support. In Appendix E, “Letters of Support”, no letters are included from individual educators or school leaders, from teachers’ unions, or from any other educator or school leader organization.

The applicant includes only seven letters of support in their application – all but one from partner organizations that will participate directly in grant activities: SREB, Catholic Diocese of Lubbock, Lubbock Community Theatre, Lubbock Christian University, Communities in Schools, Compass Learning, and the Northwest Evaluation Association. Specifically, no letters are included from educators, educator organizations, students, student organizations, parents, or parent organizations. Therefore, while the applicant demonstrates that there is some support for the application, this support is mostly limited to the partner organizations that will participate directly in (and benefit financially from) the implementation of the proposal. Therefore, the application is awarded low-level points for this section.

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

5

0

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The RTTT-D Application clearly indicates that a high-quality plan should include, at a minimum, Goals, Activities, Timeline, Deliverables, and Responsible Parties. As relates to assessing the current status of the implementation or the logic model behind the proposal, the applicant has not included any elements of such a plan in this section or elsewhere in the application.

The applicant provides no plan at all for assessing the current status of implementation. In Appendix A, the applicant includes a questionnaire for evaluating the schools’ and districts’ teacher and principal evaluation system, and a few pages from the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality that describes the strengths and weaknesses of several types of evaluation methods, products, and artifacts, which by itself is wholly inadequate to serve as a comprehensive high quality plan for the assessment of the current status of implementation. This section is titled “Guide for Data to be Collected for the Evaluation”, but the applicant provides no narrative to describe which products will be utilized, nor whether these products are to be used for an assessment of the current status of implementation, or an evaluation to be conducted at the end of the project. In addition, other than the presence of these pages in Appendix A, the applicant makes no mention of the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality in any other part of the application. In the Budget Narrative provided in Appendix F, there is a short mention of evaluation services to be provided by the project Co-PI. No other mentions or description of project evaluation are provided anywhere in the application.

The applicant identifies gaps in academic achievement between subgroups, indicating that Special Education (SpED), low-income, English language learner (ELL), and minority students are disproportionately represented among the low-achieving students in all three districts. The applicant goes on to propose using technology, extra time in school, and family social supports as methods to close these gaps. However the applicant does not provide any evidence or rationale for the selection of this set of interventions. In addition, no plan is presented on how the applicant would assess the effectiveness of these interventions – either for their current status, or upon implementation of the reforms outlined in the proposal.

The applicant provides no high quality plan for analysis of its current status or the logic model behind the reform proposal, nor are any elements of a high quality plan for these activities provided by the applicant in any part of the application. It is impossible to determine from the information provided by the applicant whether any such analysis will be conducted at all; thus the application is awarded no points for this section.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	13

## (C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The RTTT-D Application clearly indicates that a high-quality plan should include, at a minimum, Goals, Activities, Timeline, Deliverables, and Responsible Parties. The applicant includes a high-quality plan for the proposal in Appendix A of the application. The applicant organizes the plan around seven goals: Improve Academic Performance; Increase Use of Quality Data; Increase Learning Time; Increase Teacher Quality; Increase Leadership Effectiveness; Increase Parent/Community Involvement; and Improve School Climate. This plan includes multiple activities linked explicitly to the seven goals, and lists deliverables and responsible parties for individual activities. Of these areas, the first three (Improve Academic Performance; Increase Use of Quality Data; Increase Learning Time) together form the high-quality plan for improving learning. No timeline is specified by the applicant in this section or anywhere in the application.

In contrast to the clear logic model presented in Appendix A, the applicant's narrative is extremely incoherent. Within the narrative, the applicant presents a confusing jumble of ideas that are difficult to parse or decipher. In addition, the application as a whole, and this section in particular, is so poorly written (including the presence of fragmented sentences, paragraphs that are not coherent, and multiple spelling errors including many that change the meaning of the idea being presented) that it is hard to read, much less understand. Finally, though the applicant subdivides the presentation of content in the narrative of this section by criterion, information for each criterion is not necessarily located in the narrative area specified by the applicant for that criterion.

Reviewer comments for each specific area and how they were addressed by the applicant follows below:

## (C)(1)(a)

(i) The applicant indicates that blending academic content with career courses will allow students to understand the real-world relevance of their education.

(ii) The applicant indicates that the state's College and Career Ready (CCR) standards have been integrated with the school curriculum over the past five years. In addition to academic content, the applicant describes how students learn in age-appropriate manner how to use their academic career to build a way to their desired profession. The applicant indicates that students work with teachers to measure progress toward their goals, and course-correct as necessary, through Project-Based Learning (PBL) and state (TEKS) assessments.

(iii) The applicant indicates that students work collaboratively with teachers to choose areas of interest within the TEKS standards to go more deeply into the content, through both PBL projects and portfolio development.

(iv) While the applicant mentions using technology resources in the future to introduce cultural diversity in the classroom, the examples provided are both US-centric and focused on matching students with like mentors, rather than providing diversity of cultural experience. It is unclear that the methods described by the applicant will actually result in "access and exposure to diverse perspectives."

(v) The applicant describes the implementation of PBL as the vehicle that allows students to develop the listed skills, though how PBL leads to this type of skill development is not addressed in any detail in the narrative.

## (C)(1)(b)

(i) The applicant indicates that instruction is personalized through a weekly assessment for each student, and consequent adjustment of individual education plans to keep students on track.

(ii) The applicant indicates that multiple approaches to content are made available to teachers, including multiple ways of presenting the same content, so that students can be introduced or re-introduced to necessary CCR-aligned content in multiple ways.

(iii) The applicant indicates that students will have access to a state CCR standards-aligned curriculum, whose rigor will be increased with RTTT-D funds. The applicant also indicates that supporting technology tools and online curriculum will be available.

(iv) The applicant describes a system wherein student data is examined weekly by the teacher and student, and individual plans are drawn up for next week based on the previous week's data on student achievement in order to keep students on track to graduating CCR. The applicant also indicates that multiple approaches to content are made available to teachers, including multiple ways of presenting the same content, so that students can be introduced or re-introduced to necessary CCR-aligned content in multiple ways.

(v) The applicant indicates that accessibility is addressed in multiple ways, such as: designing curriculum using universal design principles, providing high-need students with additional time on task, providing all students the opportunity to participate in extended school days, making available software programs of accelerated curriculum via school-provided hardware that students can use at home.

(C)(1)(c)

In section D, the applicant describes a set of activities designed specifically to provide training to students and parents on the use of technology tools introduced as part of this project. These supports will include after-school programs with instructional coaches and technology coaches, as well as work with mentors from local IHEs. However, it remains unclear how students will be taught to use project-based-learning or hands-on-opportunities effectively, or otherwise take full advantage of the myriad non-technology-dependent ideas presented for student enrichment.

Points for this section are awarded thus: since there are 10 criteria and 20 points, each criteria is assigned 2 points. Since the accounting provided above indicates that 8 out of 10 criteria are fully addressed, one criterion is partly addresses, and one criterion is not addressed adequately, the application can be awarded a maximum of  $(8 \times 2) + (1 \times 1) + (1 \times 0) = 17$  points for this section. However, due to the severe incoherence of the narrative and the lack of a timeline, the application is awarded only 13 points for this section.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	14
---	----	----

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The RTTT-D Application clearly indicates that a high-quality plan should include, at a minimum, Goals, Activities, Timeline, Deliverables, and Responsible Parties. The applicant includes a high-quality plan for the proposal in Appendix A of the application. The applicant organizes the plan around seven goals: Improve Academic Performance; Increase Use of Quality Data; Increase Learning Time; Increase Teacher Quality; Increase Leadership Effectiveness; Increase Parent/Community Involvement; and Improve School Climate. This plan includes multiple activities linked explicitly to the seven goals, and lists deliverables and responsible parties for individual activities. Of these areas, the fourth and fifth (Increase Teacher Quality; Increase Leadership Effectiveness) together form the high-quality plan for improving teaching and leading. No timeline is specified by the applicant in this section or anywhere in the application.

In contrast to the clear logic model presented in Appendix A, the applicant's narrative is extremely incoherent. Within the narrative, the applicant presents a confusing jumble of ideas that are difficult to parse or decipher. In addition, the application as a whole, and this section in particular, is so poorly written (including the presence of fragmented sentences, paragraphs that are not coherent, and multiple spelling errors including many that change the meaning of the idea being presented) that it is hard to read, much less understand. Finally, though the applicant subdivides the presentation of content in the narrative of this section by criterion, information for each criterion is not necessarily located in the narrative area specified by the applicant for that criterion.

Reviewer comments for each specific area and how they were addressed by the applicant follows below:

(C)(2)(a)

(i) The applicant describes a series of "boot camps" for teachers that will be used to provide them with their initial training on using the three major components of the proposed model to individualize and personalize student learning: SREB models, using UDL/BYOD, and using PBL.

(ii) The applicant indicates that teachers will be supported in their efforts to adapt content to individual student needs through their participation in cross-district, discipline-specific Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) of peers. In addition, the applicant explains that content area instructional coaches will be available at each school to provide direct guidance to teachers on adapting content and instruction to the individual needs of students.

(iii) The applicant describes a structure of weekly testing and resulting adaptation of curriculum for each student; the results of these tests and student PBLs and portfolios will be used by teachers to develop Individual Education Plans (IEP) for all students, and Personal Graduation Plans (PGP) for high school students.

(iv) The applicant describes a blended evaluation system that will be used by school leaders to identify teachers in need of professional development. Teachers will then be "assigned" to the necessary coaching by their school principal to address their needs.

(C)(2)(b)

(i) The applicant describes a process by which teachers use weekly tests and student projects to determine student needs and interests.

(ii) The applicant indicates that all schools will have both on- and off-line curriculum resources, including multiple ways to approach each academic concept, aligned to the state's College and Career Ready (CCR) standards, available for use by all teachers in the school.

(iii) The applicant identifies three resources that would help teachers match available resources to student needs: content area coaches, technology coaches, and peer-to-peer Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).

(C)(2)(c)

(i) The applicant indicates that all districts will use "Skyward" as their data management system, which allows students to be connected to specific teachers throughout K-12. Teachers are evaluated through a district teacher evaluation system; their effectiveness is tracked, and where gaps in effectiveness are identified, teachers are assigned to appropriate staff development activities by their principal.

(ii) In Appendix A, the applicant provides a plan to "Increase Leadership Effectiveness" through on-going, job-embedded professional development, operational flexibility, and training in resource and data utilization. While it is unclear from the information provided whether leaders will actually have the operational flexibility they require, the applicant does indicate clearly that school leaders will be assisted in improving their effectiveness through job-embedded professional development with technology specialists, curriculum specialists, external consultants, central office staff, and other trainers as needed. The applicant also indicates that school leaders will be encouraged to become the instructional leaders of their schools, and develop the necessary ownership of the existing problems and available solutions for their schools, through the development of vision and mission statements in collaboration with faculty, students, parents, and other community members.

(C)(2)(d)

From the description provided in the narrative, it appears that the applicant uses an erroneous method for determining levels of teacher and principal effectiveness. The applicant indicates that almost all teachers (97%) and all principals (100%) in the districts are considered highly effective already, but this effectiveness rating is based on TEA certifications. Later in the application, the applicant mentions that this percentage is based on highly qualified number, not highly effective numbers. The RTTT-D application defines a highly effective teacher or principal, not as highly qualified, but as one who is able to promote "one and a half years of student academic growth in one year", and an effective teacher or principle as one who is able to promote "one year of student academic growth in one year"; these measures are never mentioned by the applicant. Due to this erroneous definition, the applicant's summative conclusion – that the need to increase these numbers does not exist in the district – is unsupported by the data provided by the applicant.

The applicant does mention multiple coaches (instructional, content area, technology), boot camps, staff development, and PLCs as the plan for improving the number of teachers who are effective or highly effective. In addition to the "Increase Leadership Effectiveness" plan referenced above, "Grow your own" is mentioned as a method of helping highly effective teachers become highly effective school leaders.

Points for this section are awarded thus: since there are 10 criteria and 20 points, each criteria is assigned 2 points. Since the accounting provided above indicates that 9 out of 10 criteria are fully addressed, but one is not addressed adequately, the application can be awarded a maximum of  $9 \times 2 = 18$  points for this section. However, due to the severe incoherence of the narrative and the lack of a timeline, the application is awarded only 14 points for this section.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	6

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The RTTT-D Application clearly indicates that a high-quality plan should include, at a minimum, Goals, Activities, Timeline, Deliverables, and Responsible Parties. The applicant does not present a coherent plan, much less a high-quality plan, in this section or anywhere else in the application, to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure at the LEA level. Instead, the applicant presents an incoherent jumble of ideas that are difficult to parse or decipher. In addition, the application as a whole, and this section in particular, is so poorly written (including the presence of fragmented sentences, paragraphs that are not coherent, and multiple spelling errors including many that change the meaning of the idea being presented) that it is hard to read, much less understand.

The applicant does not specify any timelines or deliverables. Goals and activities are included in the narrative; however, the applicant does not clearly identify either. Where goals and activities are mentioned, detail is provided without context: the

applicant goes deeply into each sub-area without ever providing an overarching plan that ties all the pieces together. Also, though the applicant subdivides the presentation of content by criterion, information for each criterion is not necessarily located in the narrative area specified by the applicant for that criterion. Finally, the specific criteria have been variably addressed by the applicant.

The reviewer's best attempt at comments for each specific area and how these areas were addressed by the applicant, given that the applicant never presents a coherent plan, follows below:

(D)(1) LEA Practices, Policies, and Rules

(a) The applicant provides no information about the governance of the consortia. However, SREB systems, PLCs, taskforce system, and ongoing improvement programs are mentioned as ways that districts are tied to each other. In the budget narrative presented in Appendix F, three staff positions to be funded through the RTTT-D grant are mentioned as centralized support positions: the Project Coordinator, the Consortium Curriculum Coordinator, and the Lead Data Services Coordinator. From the job descriptions for these three positions provided in Appendix C, it appears that they will provide centralized support in the following ways:

- the Project Coordinator will work with all three school districts' staff to assure that campuses are linking the RTTT-D work with their individual campus and district improvement plans;
- the Consortium Curriculum Coordinator will provide general coordination across the three districts in the core content areas aligned to the common core standards;
- the Lead Data Services Coordinator will coordinate the gathering of various data elements from each of the three districts.

(b) From the applicant's narrative, it is unclear that school leadership teams will have sufficient flexibility and autonomy over schedules, personnel, roles, and budgets. Budgets are not mentioned at all. While the logic models presented in Appendix A indicate that flexibility and autonomy will be part of the plan to increase school leader effectiveness, the information provided in the logic model is inadequate to provide the necessary evidence for this. Further, the narrative indicates that decisions about schedules, personnel, and staff roles will depend at least partially on a taskforce system of community partners, on school board requests and approval, and the on the restrictions laid out in the Texas administrative codes. It is unclear from the narrative how restrictive this system will be.

(c) The applicant indicates that the state TEKS unit tests, weekly assessments, and web-based programs all allow students to earn credits for completing work and achieving competency, not based on seat time or time on task. In addition, the applicant describes how students can self-accelerate through web-based curricular programs as they achieve each academic competency, allowing them to "catch up with" or "move ahead of" the rest of the class.

(d) The applicant indicates that while the districts are obligated to continue state-wide testing through traditional assessments, the consortia districts plan to augment this regiment with PBL, online learning, UDL, and locally developed items to allow students to demonstrate mastery at multiple times and in multiple ways.

(e) The applicant proposes the implementation of 1:1 computing, software to accommodate different learning styles, extra time for students with special needs, and the use of universal design for learning (UDL) principles to provide adaptable and fully accessible instruction for all students.

Points for this section are awarded thus: since there are 5 criteria and 15 points, each criteria is assigned 3 points. Since the applicant provides no clear high-quality plan, half the points are not awarded, leaving approximately 8 potential points available. Next, points are awarded for each criterion that is fully and sufficiently addressed through the narrative despite the missing plan. Since the accounting provided above indicates that 3 out of 5 criteria are fully addressed, and the remaining two are partially addressed, the application is awarded 6 points for this section.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	4
--	----	---

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The RTTT-D Application clearly indicates that a high-quality plan should include, at a minimum, Goals, Activities, Timeline, Deliverables, and Responsible Parties. The applicant does not present a coherent plan, much less a high-quality plan, in this section or anywhere else in the application, to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure at the LEA level. Instead, the applicant presents an incoherent jumble of ideas that are difficult to parse or decipher. In addition, the application as a whole, and this section in particular, is so poorly written (including the presence of fragmented sentences, paragraphs that are not coherent, and multiple spelling errors including many that change the meaning of the idea being presented) that it is hard to read, much less understand.

The applicant does not specify any timelines or deliverables. Goals and activities are included in the narrative; however, the applicant does not clearly identify either. Where goals and activities are mentioned, detail is provided without context: the applicant goes deeply into each sub-area without ever providing an overarching plan that ties all the pieces together. Also, though the applicant subdivides the presentation of content by criterion, information for each criterion is not necessarily located in the narrative area specified by the applicant for that criterion. Finally, the specific criteria have been variably addressed by the applicant.

The reviewer's best attempt at comments for each specific area and how these areas were addressed by the applicant, given that the applicant never presents a coherent plan, follows below:

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure

(a) The applicant indicates that scholarships are made available at all schools so that all students are able to participate in all activities, including off-campus activities. The applicant describes a 1:1 computing model where each student has access to equal technology hardware resources in school; in addition, for those students without home computers, hardware can be checked out for home use. The applicant details how donated computers are refurbished by students and staff and made available for home use to students without home computers. Finally, the applicant indicates that all school software and curriculum are made freely available to all students through the web.

(b) The applicant describes multiple methods that will be used to provide tech support to all. Afterschool programs on technology literacy will be provided for all students and parents, staffed with technologists, instructional coaches, and mentors from area IHEs. Technology literacy staff development for teachers will be provided through intensive work with school-based technologists and coaches; teachers will also be able to provide and access peer-to-peer technology support through their Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).

(c) The applicant indicates that individual student data can be downloaded by parents with individual student codes. However, the narrative remains unclear about whether these data downloads will be in an "open data format" that will allow parents and students to import and analyze the data through software systems other than the one used by the school.

(d) The applicant indicates that the Skyward data system will be implemented in all districts and all schools of the consortium. Since the data will be collected and reported through the same system for all schools, it will be fully interoperable. The applicant mentions specifically that the data gathered and distributed through the Skyward system will include HR information, student information, budget information, and instructional improvement data.

Points for this section are awarded thus: since there are 4 criteria and 10 points, each criteria is assigned 2.5 points. Since the applicant provides no clear high-quality plan, half the points are not awarded, leaving 5 potential points available. Next, points are awarded for each criterion that is fully and sufficiently addressed through the narrative despite the missing plan. Since the accounting provided above indicates that 3 out of 4 criteria are fully addressed, and the remaining criterion is partially addressed, the application is awarded 4 points for this section.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes the following plan for a continuous improvement process:

- Weekly updates on student progress from instructional staff will be aggregated into monthly reports for taskforce teams (including parents, teachers, students, principals and community partners).
- In their monthly meetings, the taskforce teams will review these updates and identify additional needs for students and staff.
- Instructional coaches and technologists will then use the taskforce team recommendations to identify appropriate staff development strategies, which will be implemented in the schools.

The whole process will be repeated each month.

The applicant's theory is that the quality of grant investments can be assessed through the examination of the quality of student outcomes. If student outcomes do not improve as planned, the monthly improvement process described above will be used to identify needed changes, which will be implemented in the schools through various professional development venues

for the teachers, including boot camps, coaching, etc. School leadership will also engage with coaches to improve their ability to serve as the school's instructional leader(s).

This seems like a solid continuous improvement process for leading, teaching and learning; however, the applicant does not mention how ineffective school teachers and ineffective school leaders would be removed or replaced. Also, the applicant does not address how the consortium and the individual districts will respond if they end up hiring ineffective coaches, and what methods will be employed to terminate or replace those coaches. Finally, the applicant presents no plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the software, hardware, or data systems it proposes to use. These limitations indicate that this plan is not comprehensive in its ability to provide systemic continuous improvement to grant-funded initiatives. The application is thus awarded mid-range points for this section.

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

5

5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes multiple strategies that will be used by the consortia to engage external stakeholders, including monthly taskforce team meetings; weekly, monthly, and yearly progress and report cards for schools and districts; individual student data available to students and parents through the districts' data system, Skyward; information provided through teacher, school, district, and consortia websites; a newly developed social media network; and student-written newsletters and articles in local paper. This multi-pronged approach is robust and is likely to reach all stakeholders in a continuous way.

In addition to the venues described above, the applicant explains that internal stakeholders (educators and school leaders) will be further engaged through boot camps, PLC's, staff development programs, work with technology and instructional coaches, and regular meetings with taskforce groups, other school and district leaders, and parents. The applicant's plan to reach both internal and external stakeholders is robust and multi-faceted, thus the application is awarded full points for this section.

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

5

2

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant identifies five overarching goals with related measures selected:

- 1) Goal: close gaps among subgroups – Measure: size of gap
- 2) Goal: more students achieve at higher than average levels – Measure: student performance on state tests
- 3) Goal: 100% high school graduation – Measure: graduation rates
- 4) Goal: increased postsecondary attainment – Measure: social media surveys
- 5) Goal: meet non-academic needs of families – Measure: number of families linked to social services and resources

The applicant defines both academic and non-cognitive measures for each grade band in the application narrative; however, these measures are not all borne out in the tables provided. There are several issues with the targets specified in the applicant's tables:

- The applicant uses highly qualified definitions and numbers, not highly effective definitions and numbers, for teachers and principals in its specified growth measures;
- The five "goal" measures identified by the applicant are not stratified by grade band in the tables, which is a particular problem for the high school graduation and postsecondary completion targets;
- In the pK-3 grade band, the applicant proposes tracking the number of students in programs, not the success of the students who are in those programs, which is not really a measure of academic growth; also, the applicant does not specify any non-cognitive measures in this grade band;
- In the 4-8 grade band, the applicant proposes tracking the number of students that use the school's UDL system, not the success of the students who use the system, which is not really an academic leading indicator; also, the applicant does not specify any social-emotional indicators in this grade band;
- In the 9-12 grade band, the applicant does not specify any social-emotional indicators.

The applicant also does not address how any of these measures will be reviewed and improved over time.

Since the applicant describes multiple measures, and in some cases provides ambitious yet achievable targets, but does not address all required measures, and also leaves unanswered the issues identified above, the application is awarded the low end of mid-range of points for this section.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant presents no plans to evaluate the effectiveness of its grant activities within its narrative. While the applicant uses the narrative to describe the costs and benefits of their plan, and presents a brief return on investment (ROI) analysis, no description is ever provided of how the identified benefits will be tracked or how the effectiveness of the implementation will be evaluated.</p> <p>In terms of evidence for an evaluation plan, in Appendix A, the applicant includes a questionnaire for evaluating the schools' and districts' teacher and principal evaluation system, and a few pages from the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality that describes the strengths and weaknesses of several types of evaluation methods, products, and artifacts. While this section is titled "Guide for Data to be Collected for the Evaluation", the applicant provides no narrative to describe which products will be utilized, nor whether these products are to be used for an assessment of the current status of implementation, or an evaluation to be conducted at the end of the project. In addition, other than the presence of these pages in Appendix A, the applicant makes no mention of the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality in any other part of the application. In the Budget Narrative provided in Appendix F, there is a short mention of evaluation services to be provided by the project Co-PI. Even taken together, this information is insufficient to be considered a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of all of the applicant's proposed RTTT-D funded activities.</p> <p>Other than these items in Appendix A and Appendix F, no other mentions or description of project evaluation are provided anywhere in the application. Since the applicant never provides a clear plan for evaluation, but does mention project evaluation, albeit obscurely, a few times in the appendices, the application is awarded low, rather than no, points for this section.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a short description of the project funds and expenses in the narrative; in Appendix F, the applicant provides budget tables and budget narratives for the application as a whole, and for each of five sub-projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consortium and LCISD staff positions, with related programs and other services</li> <li>• Wilson ISD Local programs and staff</li> <li>• Lamesa ISD local programs and staff</li> <li>• SREB training and related services</li> <li>• Related program, administrative, and other services</li> </ul> <p>The individual criteria are addressed by the applicant, as indicated below:</p> <p>(a) The applicant mentions five types of funds that will be supporting the project: RTTT-D, TTIPS (Title I funds), 21CCLC (funds for afterschool programs), TPCC (community support funds), and local district (tax-based) funds.</p> <p>(b) Through the budget narratives presented in Appendix F, the applicant provides a breakdown of project expenses and rationale for each category of expenses in each sub-project. The two largest categories of expenses indicated by the applicant are personnel and equipment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant provides specific year-by-year costs for each personnel position that will be included in the grant for each of the districts, including the percent FTE that staff will devote to project activities; job descriptions for each of the project staff to be hired; travel costs; contractual service provider costs; and costs related to translation and evaluation services. Amounts budgeted for personnel costs are reasonable.</li> <li>• The applicant specifies the exact equipment that will be purchased to support its goal of 1:1 computing in all district schools, including costs for both hardware and software; unit costs are provided as well as total costs; all costs are reasonable for what is proposed.</li> </ul> <p>(c)(i) The applicant identifies the following fund amounts will be used to support the project: RTTT-D (\$20 million requested), TTIPS (Title I programs, \$800K expected), 21CCLC (afterschool, \$2.74M expected), and TPCC (community support, \$197K</p>		

expected), as well as “other local funds and tax funds” (amount not specified).

(c)(ii) The applicant specifies that the equipment purchases will be one-time purchases, while the staff costs will be ongoing. Further, the applicant plans for ongoing costs even with “one time purchases” – the applicant’s description indicates all funds will be set up for “ongoing” expenses, even those for technology purchases, since these resources will need periodic upgrading.

The applicant provides a clear and full accounting of all funds expected as well as a thoughtful rationale for all investments and priorities through its budget tables and budget narrative, thus the application is awarded full points for this criterion.

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

10

6

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The RTTT-D Application clearly indicates that a high-quality plan should include, at a minimum, Goals, Activities, Timeline, Deliverables, and Responsible Parties. The applicant does not present a clear high-quality plan, in this section or anywhere else in the application, for the sustainability of the project’s goals after the term of the grant, though some elements of a high-quality plan – some goals, activities, deliverables, and responsible parties – are identified in the narrative.

The applicant does narratively present a threefold plan for sustainability of the project’s goals. First, the applicant discusses the expected continuation of current funding streams: already-awarded non-RTTT-D funds in the district – Title I, afterschool, and community support grants; school district tax-based funding; other local funds; and leveraged services. Second, the applicant describes the PI’s prior success in securing grant funding for the districts as supportive evidence for future success in securing similar grant funding. Third, the applicant discusses the creation of resources – trained teachers, school technology, community support, strong partnerships – through the RTTT-D grant that are expected to continue beyond the life cycle of the grant.

The investment in staff development and technology resources certainly seem like good investments that will assist the applicant in sustaining momentum after the RTTT-D grant period is concluded. While it is laudable that the districts can identify many sources of funding outside of RTTT-D that are expected to continue throughout the RTTT-D grant period and beyond, these resources were already available to the applicant, and thus do not present a strong source of sustainability resources for grant activities. The applicant does not mention how support from state and local government leaders would be secured, other than the continuing resources of local and grant funding already available. Finally, while it is reasonable to expect that a PI that has had a successful history of securing grant funding will be able to continue to do so in the future, this is not a guarantee of fiscal sustainability.

In various parts of the application, the applicant indicates that the consortia has spent the last few years developing several strong community partnerships that will aid in the sustainability of project initiatives. Several partners have provided letters of support in Appendix D that lend credence to the ongoing nature of these partnerships. While not fiscally sustaining, certainly the continuity of strong community partnerships will assist the applicant in continuing to provide services to the students and families in its three districts.

In summary, the applicant proposes multiple methods of sustaining the momentum created through the RTTT-D project that address the continuation of grant activities – if funding can be secured. However, a strong plan for continued fiscal sustainability does not emerge from the evidence presented. Also, while the applicant does provide elements of a high-quality plan – some goals and activities, a timeline, some deliverables and a list of some of the responsible parties, the plan as a whole is not clearly laid out or explained in the narrative as required for the RTTT-D competition. As a result, the application earns a mid-range score for this section.

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	2

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

(1) The applicant indicates that it has formed many individual partnerships with community organizations and other school districts, but does not provide a description of a coherent and sustainable partnership either for a single partner or for the multiple partnerships as a whole. The applicant has included letters of support from partner organizations in Appendix D, but these letters do not describe the nature of the partnerships, nor do they explain how the partnerships are coherent or sustainable.

(2) The applicant identifies the same five overarching goals that were identified in Section (E)(3):

- 1) Goal: close gaps among subgroups – Measure: size of gap
- 2) Goal: more students achieve at higher than average levels – Measure: student performance on state tests
- 3) Goal: 100% high school graduation – Measure: graduation rates
- 4) Goal: increased postsecondary attainment – Measure: social media surveys
- 5) Goal: meet non-academic needs of families – Measure: number of families linked to social services and resources

Since these goals are not further elaborated by the applicant in this section, it must be concluded that these goals and measures will suffer from the same drawbacks that were identified in the comments for Section E.

(3)(a) The applicant states that the indicators would be tracked using the Skyward data system. While this will allow tracking of goals 1-4, the applicant never explains how the Skyward system of student data will be used to track goal 5, which is a family support goal and not a student educational outcome goal.

(3)(b) The applicant states that the indicators tracked using the Skyward data system would be used to target academic resources to the highest-need students. Again, since the applicant never explains how the Skyward system of student data will be used to track goal 5, it is unclear how that initiative will be targeted to families.

(3)(c) The applicant describes a scaling strategy that involves information dissemination to other districts through report cards, websites, and social media, as described in the comments for Section (E)(2). In addition, the applicant mentions that a framework will be created for obtaining non-traditional funds to assist other schools in funding similar programs.

(3)(d) While the applicant mentions evaluation results from prior grants and program sustainability, there is no mention of how the partnership would improve results over time, either for academic outcomes or social outcomes.

(4) The applicant provides two examples of partners that provide academic and social support services to families: Communities in Schools (CIS) and Catholic Charities (CC). However, the applicant does not explain the nature of the consortium's partnership with these organizations, nor how the districts or schools will integrate the supports provided by these organizations with the educational services provided by the LEAs.

(5) The applicant restates information from other parts of the application that describes how the consortia districts and schools will approach each of these areas; however, none of the sections describe how the partnership and consortium together will work to build the capacity of staff to do the following things. Specifically,

(a) Student surveys and grant evaluations are mentioned as ways that needs are identified in the schools; however, the applicant does not address how the consortium or its partners will build staff capacity to assess student needs;

(b) Closing performance gaps and increasing teacher effectiveness are identified as needs, while grants, community partners, and universal design for learning are identified as assets, however, the applicant does not address how the consortium or its partners will build staff capacity to identify and inventory school and community needs and assets;

(c) Prior grant evaluation results and the SREB system are identified as frameworks to drive improvement; however, the applicant does not address how the consortium or its partners will build staff capacity to create decision-making processes or infrastructure to select, implement, and evaluate supports;

(d) Home surveys, taskforce groups, social media systems, and newsletters are identified as ways to engage parents and families; however, the applicant does not address how the consortium or its partners will build staff capacity to engage parents and families;

(e) Academic performance reports, ongoing grant evaluation, social media systems, and taskforce meetings are listed as methods to routinely assess progress; however, the applicant does not address how the consortium or its partners will build staff capacity to assess the consortia's progress on its stated goals.

(6) The applicant does not identify annual performance measures for the proposed results; however, the applicant has addressed this criteria in Section (E)(3). In that section, the applicant defines both academic and non-cognitive measures for each grade band in the application narrative; however, these measures are not all borne out in the tables provided. There are several issues with the targets specified in the applicant's tables:

- The applicant uses highly qualified definitions and numbers, not highly effective definitions and numbers, for teachers and principals in its specified growth measures;
- The five "goal" measures identified by the applicant are not stratified by grade band in the tables, which is a particular problem for the high school graduation and postsecondary completion targets;

In the pK-3 grade band, the applicant proposes tracking the number of students in programs, not the success of the students who are in those programs, which is not really a measure of academic growth; also, the applicant does not specify any non-cognitive measures in this grade band;

- In the 4-8 grade band, the applicant proposes tracking the number of students that use the school's UDL system, not the success of the students who use the system, which is not really an academic leading indicator; also, the applicant does not specify any social-emotional indicators in this grade band;
- In the 9-12 grade band, the applicant does not specify any social-emotional indicators.

The applicant also does not address how any of these measures will be reviewed and improved over time.

In summary, the applicant provides evidence that it has formed partnerships with several community organizations; these partnerships have assisted the constituent LEAs in providing wraparound social services to students, parents, and families in the past, and it is likely that they will continue to do so in the future. However, the applicant does not fully address any of the criteria in this section, whether through the narrative of this section or anywhere else in the application. Therefore, the application is awarded low-range points for this section.

## Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

### Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Two persistent issues plague this application:

- First, the applicant's narrative is extremely incoherent. Within the narrative, the applicant often presents a confusing jumble of ideas that are difficult to parse or decipher. In addition, the application as a whole is so poorly written (including the presence of fragmented sentences, paragraphs that are not coherent, and multiple spelling errors including many that change the meaning of the idea being presented) that it is hard to read, much less understand.
- Second, the applicant does not demonstrate a clear record of past success. The narrative and data provided by the applicant is insufficient to demonstrate the achievement of ambitious and significant reforms in its low-achieving schools. The available data, as mentioned above, is equivocal – there are no clear trends, with measures going down as often as they go up. Given these results, it is unclear whether it is appropriate for the applicant to base its future reforms on those already being conducted in its Title I schools.

However, the applicant does meet absolute priority 1, as the applicant has coherently and comprehensively addressed how it will:

1) build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards. Specifically, the applicant presents a plan that:

- builds on its current work in standards and assessments, educator quality, data use, and improving low-achieving schools;
- provides personalized learning for all students through the SREB models of HSTW and MMGW combined with UDL and BYOD combined with intensive data use; and
- is aligned with the state's college and career ready standards (CCR-adapted TEKS).

2) accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student. Specifically, the applicant describes a system of intensive data use by students, parents, and educators to meet the specific academic needs of each student week by week.

3) increase the effectiveness of educators. Specifically, the applicant presents a plan that encompasses instructional and technology coaches, boot camps, and professional learning communities that will allow continuous improvement in educator effectiveness.

4) expand student access to the most effective educators. Specifically, the applicant describes a plan to increase the

effectiveness of all educators, thereby expanding access to more effective educators for all students.

5) decrease achievement gaps across student groups. Specifically, the applicant explains that the weekly data analysis and targeting of resources will be weighted towards assistance of those students with the lowest achievement scores and highest needs, so that all students will progress toward achieving at a high level.

6) increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers. Specifically, the applicant presents a plan to develop individual Personalized Graduation Plans for all students in collaboration with parents and teachers as early as the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and to combine this with career exposure through community partnerships and academic performance tracking through data use in a way that will allow students to take charge of their own academic and professional careers, and to become lifelong learners.

Thus, despite the concerns around past success and narrative incoherence, overall the applicant does meet absolute priority 1.

Total	210	108
-------	-----	-----

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

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

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Optional Budget Supplement 1: CompassLearning and NWEA (Increase personalization of student learning and use of Universal Design for Learning)

(1) In the first budget supplement for this application, "CompassLearning and NWEA", the applicant proposes a project to bring a fully online system of curriculum and assessment to all the students in all three of its LEAs. The Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) would provide its MAP Assessment to all students, an online assessment system that can identify student proficiencies and needs based on the Texas standards, TEKS. The CompassLearning system dovetails with the NWEA MAP Assessment system to provide instruction to students based on their identified needs. Through this twofold system, all students would be able to work at their own pace to achieve all of the TEKS standards, with the opportunity to accelerate their learning. The rationale provided by the applicant for this project is that it will allow students to take charge of their own learning, to work at their own pace while accelerating the achievement of performance benchmarks, and to begin the journey of becoming lifelong learners.

(2) The RTTT-D Application clearly indicates that a high-quality plan should include, at a minimum, Goals, Activities, Timeline, Deliverables, and Responsible Parties. The applicant does not present a clear high-quality plan, in this section or anywhere else in the application, for the CompassLearning and NWEA supplemental project. While the overarching goals of accelerating student learning and building student ownership of academic progress are clearly stated in the applicant's narrative, the specific activities that would be carried out by the districts to implement the software solution are not described. The applicant also does not address how these activities would be developed or carried out, only that these activities would be evaluated as part of a research project that would inform similar implementations in other districts.

(3) The applicant proposes a significant budget – a total of \$2,000,000 – that appears to cover the nuts and bolts of the proposed system. The parts of the budget include purchasing the software, contracting for evaluation, hardware costs for technology, graduate assistants to conduct the research evaluations, and travel costs to present the results of the research. Yet no funds are budgeted for student, parent, or staff training on the use of the hardware or software that will be the core of this project. Without this type of training, it is hard to imagine that this project will be successful. Additionally, no timeline is specified and no activities are described, so it is difficult to understand how the proposed budget will allow the applicant to implement the described program.

In summary, though the applicant describes an interesting project to supplement its RTTT-D proposal in this request, and the requested funds seems appropriate to implementing some parts of the proposed project, no high-quality plan is put forth by the applicant – there are no timelines, activities, or deliverables specified. While the idea for the project is intriguing, without a clear plan, it is unlikely that the applicant will have a successful implementation. Thus the application is awarded low-level points for this section.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	3
Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:		
Optional Budget Supplement 2: SREB (extend SREB models to elementary grades)		
<p>(1) In the second budget supplement for this application, "SREB", the applicant proposes a project to bring the Southern Regional Education Board's (SREB) programs for high school (High Schools that Work, HSTW) and middle school (Making Middle Grades Work, MMGW) to the elementary school level. The applicant would contract with SREB to develop and pilot a K-3 program that would be based on the principles of their MMGW and HSTW programs. The rationale provided by the applicant for this project is that it will allow students to seamlessly transition from pK-3 into MMGW and then HSTW, resulting in more students that are on-track to achieving college and career ready standards and that graduate with their peers.</p> <p>(2) The RTTT-D Application clearly indicates that a high-quality plan should include, at a minimum, Goals, Activities, Timeline, Deliverables, and Responsible Parties. The applicant does not present a clear high-quality plan, in this section or anywhere else in the application, for the SREB supplemental project. While the overarching goal of aligning student expectations by implementing the same best practice principles throughout elementary, middle, and high schools is clearly stated in the applicant's narrative, the specific activities that would be carried out by the districts to implement the new SREB program are not described. The applicant provides a brief timeline, indicating that the programs would be "established" in the first two school years and "assessed and modified" in the next two years. However, the applicant does not clearly address which specific activities would be developed, how they would be carried out, or how teachers and school leaders would be trained to assure effective implementation of the program.</p> <p>(3) The applicant proposes a significant budget – a total of \$2,000,000 – that appears to cover the nuts and bolts of the proposed system. The parts of the budget include contracting with SREB to develop the program, equipment and supplies for the elementary schools, and salaries and travel costs for graduate assistance. Yet no funds are budgeted for teacher or school leader training on the implementation of the newly developed SREB model for elementary schools. Without this type of training, it is hard to imagine that this project will be successful. Additionally, the activities that will be undertaken are not clearly described, so it is difficult to understand how the proposed budget will allow the applicant to implement the program.</p> <p>In summary, though the applicant describes an interesting project to supplement its RTTT-D proposal in this request, and the requested funds seems appropriate to implementing some parts of the proposed project, no high-quality plan is put forth by the applicant – the timeline and activities are vague, and there are no deliverables specified. While the idea for the project is intriguing, without a clear plan, it is unlikely that the applicant will have a successful implementation. Thus the application is awarded low-level points for this section.</p>		



## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

Application #0824TX-3 for Lubbock-Cooper Independent School District

#### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	3

#### (A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant earned a score of 3 because because the vision provides more background knowledge related to other grants that were secured by the applicants in the past rather than focusing on the vision that is needed to provide a clear picture of what the applicants hope to attain with the funding received as part of the Race to the Top grant. The applicant does provide information about programs that the consortium plans to purchase as part of the grant program, such as: HSTW/MMGW. The vision that the applicant presents are the goals set forth by the commercial companies who produced the products that are described, rather than the vision that the applicants would personally hope to attain in order to truly personalize student learning. It is difficult to to comprehend a clear vision of what the applicant hopes to accomplish because the vision is described using an overabundance of acronyms or letter titles to refer to the appliccants, grants, and programs currently in

use as well as those projected for further use as part of the Race to the Top project, for example; SREB, LISD, 21CCLC grant; UDL/BYOD web sites, (High Schools That Work/ Middle Schools that Work) HSTW/MMGW, Texas Title 1 Improvement Program Schools (TTIPS )grants, etc. The interjection of the overabundance of the acronyms obscures the clarity of the applicants vision.

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

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:  
 The applicant received the highest score possible because they did provide a description of all the participating schools, grade bands, and subject areas. The charts display a clear picture of the participating schools and the number of participating students. The applicant demonstrated through the organized display of data that the consortium collectively meets the eligibility requirements for number of students participating with an overall poverty level of 48%.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	2
---	----	---

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:  
 The applicant received 2 points for providing a chart describing overall data gaps at the high school and sub group gaps at the elementary schools. Also, high school graduation goals are clearly represented as percentages. Other chart representation for the "gap" goals is confusing. Using consistent percentage performance score indicators would provide a clearer picture and more meaningful vision of current student achievement and projection of increased learning for all the students participating in the grant. Relative to a high quality plan, It is unclear as to how closing the gap will improve student learning outcomes for all students who would be served by the applicant. Data showing goals for improving student learning is vague. Sometimes the applicant is closing the gap by percentages and sometimes the applicant documents that the gaps will be closed by points. The applicant provides annual goals. It is unclear as to who will be responsible for assuring that each of the schools for monitoring implementation and delivery of programs aimed at meeting the goals set forth. If only the technologist and/or superintendent are responsible that will be an overwhelming task. More details are needed for timelines and documented evidence for who will be responsible at each of the participating schools for the plan to have convincing credibility. The applicant addresses the issue of scaling up through web page strategies. The documentation does not describe what the scaled up activities will look like, what timelines will be set to do this, how many schools will be used for the scaled up reform, and what changes will result for the district and other districts that utilize the web sites, the persons who will be responsible for maintaining the web sites. There is limited detail for clearly understanding how this plan will result in successful support and changes for the applicant and other districts wanting to use the same strategies for reform.

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

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:  
 The applicant earned a score of 1 for providing comprehensive data that was presented on clearly delineated charts. The performance data provides credible evidence of achievable goals for increasing student achievement earning the applicant 1 point. The applicant provided a comprehensive listing by grade level and content area for decreasing achievement gaps earning the candidate 1 point. Data for increasing student learning and decreasing student achievement gaps are aligned with the expected averages provided by summative state assessments and summative curriculum content assessments. The applicant's extensive listing of baseline data and future predictions for improving student learning demonstrates that the applicant has a clear understanding of the need to use data to account for credible student learning gains. The goals addressing "closing the gaps" and increasing student learning are achievable. There is no evidence to support how the applicant determines that the goals described based upon results from the summative assessments are deemed ambitious. The applicant adequately presents baseline graduation rates and projected goals for graduation rates, earning 1 point. The applicant earned 1 point for the College enrollment data being well presented. The applicant does not provide detailed explanations as to how the goals set in all areas are deemed to be ambitious. The applicant added value to this category by presenting learning and performance data for postsecondary degree attainment earning the applicant 1 point. There is limited credible documented evidence to support the reason why this goal for postsecondary degree attainment is set at the rate as was determined to be ambitious by the applicant. In summary, the applicant earns 1 point for the well presented narrative and charts that outlined achievable goals in all areas in this category. Because of limited explanations for how the goals can be justified as being ambitious, no points were earned in the ambitious related category.

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	2
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant earned two point for providing charts with data indicating increases and decreases in student achievement and for providing limited information for reporting performance data to parents.</p> <p>The documented decreases relative to student gains make it difficult to maintain credibility as to an overall truly consistent record of success with conditions for reform. The charted data does not demonstrate past long term consistent substantive increases in student achievement across areas or in any one specific content area. There is no evidence to support that the applicant has achieved ambitious and significant reforms demonstrating increased student learning in the persistently lowest-achieving schools.</p> <p>The applicant does state that annual school report cards are made available to all community stakeholders. There is no evidence to support that this annual reporting tool has improved participation, instruction, and services. There is a lack of detailed examples of activities and timelines to support a comprehensive credible plan of action related to meeting the requirement for showing a past record of consistent documented successes. As a result, no points were earned for this criteria.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	1
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant earned one point for providing the minimum information related to making personnel salaries available for instructional staff, teachers, and non-personnel expenditures at the school level on an annual basis. No further documentation was provided to demonstrate that the applicant has created any plan for increasing the level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	1
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has earned one point for providing a generalized plan for creating personalized learning environments such as: utilization of web-based software, development of student IEPs (Individualized Education Plan), after school tutoring, and implementation of an RTI (Response To Intervention) program. However, there is no evidence to support that the applicant has the authority to exercise sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement any personalized learning environments described in the applicant's proposal.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	2
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does state that annual school report cards are made available to all community stakeholders. There is no evidence to support that this annual reporting tool has improved participation, instruction, and services. There is a lack of detailed examples of activities and timelines to support a comprehensive credible plan of action related to meeting the requirement for showing a past record of consistent documented successes.. The applicant stated that the topic was placed on school board agendas and no community members expressed opinions related to the program. The applicant made 8,000 surveys available to stakeholders and received a 25% return rate. There is limited documentation that community and business members were truly engaged in helping to design activities and provide feedback for the proposal. Therefore a high score could not be earned in this category. There is no evidence documenting at least 70% of teachers provided support for the proposal. The applicant provided letters of support from community-based organizations, and institutions of higher education. The applicant earned 2 points for the documentation provided in this category.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	1
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has earned one point for addressing needs and gaps. The plan for addressing these gaps is inadequate. The goals are not clear. There is mention of training and professional development, but there is no evidence of timelines, whether teachers, parents and/or administrators will be trained. There is minimal mention of technology integration, but there is no evidence of a plan or timeline for how to integrate technology to successfully provide personalized student learning. Rationales and reasons for implementing personalized learning environments are vague. For example, the applicant mentions after school</p>		

programs frequently throughout the grant. There is no mention of who will provide the after school instruction. There is no highly qualified teachers connected to this part of the plan or who conducts the tutoring sessions. There is no mention if all students attend after school programs or summer school programs. There is no mention as to the equitability for whether gifted students will have access to these tutoring programs. There is no mention if after school programs take place during the school year or summer. One section of the proposal minimally describes the after school and summer school sessions. Throughout the other areas of the proposal the intervention is not mentioned. In this portion of the plan, there is limited evidence of clear-cut plans aligned to implement a high- quality plan that provides detailed information for implementing high quality personalized learning environments.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	3
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: The goals that were initially identified addressed gaps. Throughout the proposal general interventions are mentioned that are not aligned with the key goals. The applicant refers to activities that took place in the TTIPS and 21CCLC grants. These activities are minimally described, such as: "real-world examples of how student learning at all public school grades is related to what they will do later in life" This is an example of the applicant's descriptor of explaining how students will understand that what they are learning is key. There are limited descriptors for detailed plans and programs that provide personalized learning recommendations based on the student's within this consortium's current knowledge and skills relative to college-and career-ready graduation requirements. The applicant mentions that in 2007 the state of Texas adopted Texas College and Career Readiness Standards that were operationalized and implemented in the district. There is no evidence of a plan to update the standards for current modern day use with students aligning these standards with the Common Core standards. Training and support to teachers and students are vaguely mentioned or detailed in the proposal. The applicant has earned three points for providing general points and a basic plan for addressing college and career ready interventions with students and the state organizations throughout the proposal. The proposal lacks detail and a consistent quality flow throughout the document.		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	5
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant earned 5 points for addressing a need for a new teacher academy, the existence of a teacher, principal and superintendent evaluation program, use of technology to personalize learning environments, and describing a weekly assessment process for measuring student progress. The description provided for how the teacher evaluation program will be used to increase student learning is minimal. There is mention of securing highly effective teachers. There is no evidence of a focused plan for recruiting teachers in hard-to-staff school, specialty areas, and subjects. The applicant describes efforts to form school leadership teams, but there is minimal explanation connected to how these teams would help reach stated goals. Detailed processes and tools for matching student needs to specific programs is lacking throughout the proposal. Digital resources are generalized to meet the overall needs of subgroups but not detailed as to successfully meeting the needs of individual students. The applicant frequently refers to programs such as SREB and HSTW/MMGW/TCTW but detailed alignment to key goals are limited.		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	5
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant earned 5 points for addressing a need for a new teacher academy, the existence of a teacher, principal and superintendent evaluation program, use of technology to personalize learning environments, and describing a weekly assessment process for measuring student progress. The description provided for how the teacher evaluation program will be used to increase student learning is minimal. There is mention of securing highly effective teachers. There is no evidence of a focused plan for recruiting teachers in hard-to-staff school, specialty areas, and subjects. The applicant describes efforts to form school leadership teams, but there is minimal explanations connected to how these teams would help reach stated goals.		

Detailed processes and tools for matching student needs to specific programs is lacking throughout the proposal. Digital resources are generalized to meet the overall needs of subgroups but not detailed as to successfully meeting the needs of individual students. The applicant frequently refers to programs such as SREB and HSTW/MMGW/TCTW but detailed alignment to key goals are limited.

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

10

5

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has earned 5 points in this category as a result of providing descriptions of the items listed below:

- The applicant provides minimal statements addressing the category that requires all parents, educators and stakeholders will have access to all learning resources.
- The applicant provided details for hiring instructional coaches who will provide technical support and training to educators and stakeholders for all resources addressed in the grant proposal.
- The applicant provides a detailed narrative referring to the use of an interoperable data system that all members of the consortium have available to exchange demographic, human resource data, budget data, and academic information with educators and parents.
- The applicant provides minimal information related to an achievable future plan that will be used to provide access to this program for parents.
- The applicant justifies evidence related to personalized student learning for implementing other electronic tutoring programs such as the Compass Learning system.

The applicant does not detail documentation for aligning the use of this data system to instructional improvements. In addition detailed information as to how parents access the system and how many parents access the system is lacking, therefore the applicant did not earn the highest possible score in this category.

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

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes how technology will be used to measure student progress and supply weekly updates for student achievement. The technologist will work with coaches and staff to assure that the continuous progress reporting will occur.

The applicant lists social media and web pages as means of providing ongoing communication, staff and community engagement.

The applicant has earned one point for providing the generalized concept listed above for monitoring continuous improvement. There is not a detailed action plan outlining rigorous specific measures for outcomes of the Race to the Top program to be continually monitored. There is no detailed documentation of timelines and regular frequent reporting cycles on the progress of the program. There is minimal connection to the key goals set forth and reporting measures assuring continuous progress.

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

5

1

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant lists social media and linked web pages as means of providing ongoing communication. The applicant also incorporated the use of Professional Learning Communities as a strategy to provide ongoing communication. The applicant describes these strategies but there is no evidence or support provided to link these strategies to the key goals or key points aligned in the original description of the vision or as part of a high-quality plan. These strategies appear as interventions independent of decreasing gaps and providing personalized student learning, the applicant earned one point for utilization of social media and web pages to provide ongoing communication and engagement.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant earned the highest number of points in this category. The proposal contains a detailed credible rationale for each performance measurement listed. In the narrative format the applicant demonstrates a strong plan for providing rigorous, timely, and formative leading information aligned to the proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant's implementation success and also addresses areas of concern for each performance measure. The applicant documents a backup plan for each performance measure should the measure be insufficient to gauge implementation process. The applicant lists 12 performance measures in a charted table thus meeting the numeric requirement of this category.</p> <p>For all students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant provides detailed charted information and performance measures that demonstrate the number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup whose teacher of record and principal are a highly effective teacher and a highly effective principal.</li> <li>• In an organized table format the applicant clearly presents the number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup whose teacher of record and principal are an effective teacher and an effective principal.</li> </ul> <p>In the PreK-3 category the applicant provides detailed information addressing literacy performance measures.</p> <p>In the PreK-3 category the applicant details a focused performance measure for addressing the social emotional needs of at risk students.</p> <p>In the 4-8 category, the applicant provides extensive data in clearly organized charts to report the number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup, who are on track to college- and career-readiness based on the applicant's on-track indicator.</p> <p>for grades 4-8The applicant justifies proposing a performance measure to provide students with an online learning system related to becoming self directed learners and preparing students to master college and career ready standards.</p> <p>The applicant does provide evidence that accounts for a health or social emotional performance measure for students in the grade 4-8 band.</p> <p>In the 9-12 category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant clearly list in chart format the number and percentage of participating students who complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form;</li> <li>• The applicant clearly lists in chart format the number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup, who are on track to college- and career-readiness based on the applicant's on-track indicator.</li> <li>• The applicant provides evidence by charting two measures related to career-readiness in order to assess the number and percentage of participating students who are or are on track to being career-ready.</li> </ul>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant earned a total of 3 points for providing supporting documentation to meet the requirements in this category for the following reasons: The applicant addresses technology, community partners, staffing and student improvement throughout the proposal. There are letters of support, signatures from central office and community leaders to provide credibility to the implementation of the plan. There is at least a start among the consortium to make an effort to assess what will work as a result of the benefits acquired with the interventions currently in the infancy stages of starting a plan towards increasing student achievement.</p> <p>The applicant did not earn the highest amount of points in this category for the following reasons:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">At times the interventions are</p> <p>not connected to the goals as they are stated in the original vision. The quality of the proposal varies from section to section. There is no evidence of sufficient personnel named to be involved in the implementation of the Race to the Top project. For example: The applicant did not detail who will be in charge of leading the PLCs. Only one technologist is named to assist with technology training. There are minimal details provided for a plan for involving parents, university personnel, business and community members. The applicant did not supply details of a guarantee that individuals from each of these stakeholder groups will participate in the plan to assure the successful implementation of the plan.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant clearly defines all funds that will support the project. There is a comprehensive listing of all federal, private and state grants. The applicant provides convincing documentation that the funding the district currently has listed in the budges is sufficient to support the devellopment and implmentation of the applicant's proposal.</p> <p>The applicant provides detailed tables describing all of the funds that will be used to implement the proposal. One time investments are appropriately accounted for; operational costs are clearly delineated. The budget narrative in conjunction with the charts and tables provide detaied documentation focusing on strategies long-term sustainblitiy of the personalized learning environments. It is not clear to me that the proposed funding tied to long-term sustainability was guaranteed to be avaiable to ensure the money would be there to continue all the proposed strategies in the application. The applicant earned 9 points for a score in this category.</p> <p>The applicant did not earn the highest number of points for this category because the long-term sustainability afte the grant criterion was lacking sound documentation.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant outlined a generalized plan for sustainability. The applicant does include minimal budget assumptions for three years after the term of the grant and possible potential sources and uses of funds. The assumptions are based upon current funding the applicant receives in hopes that this funding and other funding will be available after the term of the Race to the Top funding. Since this information was accounted for in the proposal the applicant earned 5 points. Evidence is not clear as to whether this funding is guaranteed to be available for future uses.</p> <p>The applicant did not provide documented support for sustainability from state and local government leader after the term of the Race to the Top project ends</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	4
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has earned 4 points for minimally meeting the some of the requirements in the Competitive Preference Priority category as listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant provided documentation that they would use the Skyward SREB system to track data and identify needy students.</li> <li>• The applicant clearly described other organizations such as Catholic Charities, United Grocery Stores Dieticians, and Communities in School for extending school partnerships. The applicant does provide evidence that partnerships have been formed with businesses and local universities.</li> <li>• The applicant does explain why the goals set forth for each of the subgroups in the project are ambitious from the perspective of the consortium.</li> <li>• The applicant provides a well organized table defining the populations the competitive priority will serve which meets the criteria for this category.</li> <li>• There is evidence provided that the applicant assesses the needs of the participating students and the applicant explains how the student needs are aligned with the services offered by the partners. The applicant has described a way for using surveys to assess student and community needs.</li> <li>• The applicant does provide information in the narratives to address progress and challenges for the sake of improving in order to maximize ways to successfully implement the plans in the project.</li> <li>• In the plan the applicant does highlight focusing on students graduating from schools with college and career ready standards.</li> <li>• The plan does provide limited information for scaling up the project for use by districts beyond the participating schools.</li> </ul>		

It is not clearly evident that the applicant has provided documented examples of how the applicant currently and in the future provides plans to create a decision-making process and infrastructure to select, implement, and evaluate supports that address the individual needs of participating students (as defined in this notice) and support improved results. Additionally, there is evidence of top down decision making, but it is not evident that the applicant provides concrete examples of activities for engaging parents and families of participating students in both decision-making about solutions to improve results over time and in addressing student, family, and school needs.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant has provided interventions and programs throughout the proposal that are designed to decrease achievement gaps across student groups and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers. The applicant has stressed the use of technology to achieve its goals. Throughout the proposal the applicant proposes to increase and personalize student learning through the purchase of research-based programs that have shown student gains in other districts with student demographics similar to the applicants' districts. In each of the plans that the applicant proposes there is evidence of adhering to college and career ready standards. The applicant provides coherent consistent use of Professional Learning Communities to provide training for school staff members in areas related to providing personalized student learning environments. The applicant provides achievable current and proposed future decreases for achievement gaps across student groups, and provides charted data demonstrating proposed increased high school graduation rates.

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>75</b>
--------------	------------	-----------

### Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	4

**Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant earned 4 points for this category based upon the following documentation:

The applicant provides information in the narrative to support enhancing critical thinking skills and problem solving skills at all levels across all academic areas. The applicant provides a rationale for tying the use of this program to the key goal set forth in Absolute Priority 1, connecting the benefits of the online learning to all students, with students identified with IEPs being the examples highlighted in the applicant's proposal. The applicant proposes utilizing the successes from data gathered as a result of students utilizing the Compass program. The applicant addresses the criteria related to gathering research information that will provide a research-based model for other schools to utilize. The applicant proposes hiring two graduate students from the local university to manage the research project. There is mention of the research results of the student learning being shared with other LEAs. The applicant does propose using the online program across multiple districts as part of the proposed consortium involved with the project. The applicant is proposing the purchase of the Compass learning program which the applicant feels will help meet the goal to bring each sub group within the consortium to the state average. This program would be utilized by all participating students at the designated grade band within the consortium. The cost covers equipment, travel, contractual, training costs and services paid to the software program providers. The total cost of the supplement project is \$2,000,000. The applicant proposes purchasing the online programs to address critical thinking skills across all content areas. The applicant targets the appropriate sub groups for increasing student achievement.

The applicant did not earn the highest possible score for this category for the following reasons:

The budget provides some documentation for using a commercially prepared online learning system. There is not detailed

information accounting for the innovativeness of the online learning systems. The applicant provides detailed information as to how the personnel they propose to hire will conduct research that will benefit other schools for determining effectiveness of using similar programs in their learning environments. The applicant does explain in the optional budget how the personnel will conduct and use the research to benefit schools within the consortium and learning environments beyond the consortium. The applicant does not provide detailed reasons for how costs for personnel will be aligned with increasing student achievement. The applicant explains that one ipad cart will be provided for each elementary school for the SREB optional project budget. Relative to number of students being served, there is no documentation describing how many students in each school will be able to use the ipads and/or the software at any given time during the proposed 24/7/365 timeframe. The applicant has not provided details as to the timelines for providing training for school building personnel, parents.

There is no mention of who will be responsible for managing the training of parents and students for how to use the program. There is also no mention of who will assist with monitoring student concerns, students who may need additional assistance while using the software, students who may want to use the program and not have access to computers, and computer failures involving the large number of students the plan proposes to reach and affect. There is limited evidence providing details and parties responsible for the academic, internal, external, and technical management of the online program which the applicant proposes to be available 24/7/365.

The reasonableness of the cost becomes distorted with real world costs for replacing computers used by students, network updating, increased personnel costs if large numbers of students choose to participate using the program, accounting for increased costs that Compass may pass onto the district each year as a result of inflation and operational costs to them.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

15

4

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has earned 4 points in this category for the following reasons:

The budget provides adequate documentation for using a commercially prepared online learning system. There is not detailed information accounting for the innovativeness of the online learning systems. The applicant provides detailed information as to how the personnel they propose to hire will conduct research that will benefit other schools for determining effectiveness of using similar programs in their learning environments. The applicant does explain in the optional budget how the personnel will conduct and use the research to benefit schools within the consortium and learning environments beyond the consortium. The applicant provides information in the narrative to support enhancing critical thinking skills and problem solving skills at all levels across all academic areas.

The applicant is proposing the purchase of the SREB learning program which the applicant feels will help meet the goal to bring each sub group within the consortium to the state average. This program would be utilized by all participating students at the designated grade band within the consortium. The cost covers equipment, travel, contractual, training costs and services paid to the software program providers. The total cost of the supplement project is \$2,000,000. The applicant proposes purchasing the online programs to address critical thinking skills across all content areas. The applicant targets the appropriate sub groups for increasing student achievement. The applicant provides a rationale for tying the use of this program to the key goal set forth in Absolute Priority 1 connecting the benefits of the online learning to all students, with students identified with IEPS being the examples highlighted in the applicant's proposal.

The applicant proposes utilizing the successes from data gathered as a result of students utilizing the SREB program. The applicant addresses the criteria related to gathering research information that will provide a research-based model for other schools to utilize. The applicant proposes hiring two graduate students from the local university to manage the research project. There is mention of the research results of the student learning being shared with other LEAs.

The applicant does propose using the online program across multiple districts as part of the proposed consortium involved with the project.

The applicant did not earn the highest possible score for this category for the following reasons:

There is no mention of who will be responsible for managing the training of parents and students for how to use the program. There is also no mention of who will assist with monitoring student concerns, students who may need additional assistance while using the software, students who may want to use the program and not have access to computers, and computer failures involving the large number of students the plan proposes to reach and affect. There is limited evidence providing details and parties responsible for the academic, internal, external, and technical management of the online program which the applicant proposes to be available 24/7/365.

The applicant does not provide detailed reasons for how costs for personnel will be aligned with increasing student achievement. The applicant explains that one ipad cart will be provided for each elementary school for the SREB optional project budget. Relative to number of students being served: There is no documentation describing how many students in

each school will be able to use the ipads and/or the software at any given time during the proposed 24/7/365 timeframe. The applicant has not provided details as to the timelines for providing training for school building personnel, parents.

The reasonableness of the cost becomes distorted with real world costs for replacing computers used by students, network updating, increased personnel costs if large numbers of students choose to participate using the program, accounting for increased costs that Compass may pass onto the district each year as a result of inflation and operational costs to them.