



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0754AL-1 for Mobile County Public School System

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Mobile County Public Schools System (MCPSS) set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that builds on its work in the four core educational assurance areas to serve students in elementary, middle and high schools. MCPSS articulated a clear and credible approach for accelerating student achievement in their district through signature academies as well as deepening their students learning and increasing equity through personalized student support by proposing professional learning opportunities for teachers and embracing a continuous improvement approach to meeting the needs of students in MCPSS. Furthermore, the supports proposed for teachers through academic academic coaches supports proposed for students through career and graduation coaches will support student academic interest and achievement in MCPSS.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Mobile County Public School System (MCPSS) provided a description for the process selecting participating schools. All schools selected meet the eligibility requirements and a list of the schools was provided. Furthermore, MCPSS provided the total number of participating schools (13,774), total number of participating students from low income families (12,195), total participating students who are high need (12,195), and participating educators (813). Also, MCPSS disaggregated these numbers by participating schools and included percentages for these participating schools.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Mobile County Public School System provided evidence of a high quality plan that described how the district will support schools to attain outcome goals. MCPSS will use continuous improvement model to drive instructional and systemic change within the school district. Furthermore, MCPSS plans to expand their high school reform efforts by building upon their successes and implementing these efforts in the elementary and middle schools to ensure systemic change. This is evidence of a meaningful reform to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools. MCPSS plan included goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and parties responsible to provide clear expectations and action steps for reaching their goals which supported how MCPSS will scale up their reform efforts.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Mobile County Public School System used past performance on the summative assessments to determine proficiency status and growth. Specifically, MCPSS used End of Course test, Alabama High School Graduation Exam, PLAN, EXPLORE, and the Alabama Reading and Math Exam. The summative assessments used determined proficiency status and growth for elementary, middle, and high school grades. The expected growth on most of the summative assessments ranged from 3-5% for high school levels which were ambitious yet achievable; however, the expected growth on most assessments for middle and elementary levels were 2% which are not statistically ambitious for annual growth. The goal areas for decreasing achievement gaps are ambiguous. Also, the achievement gap between African American and Caucasian students does not decrease in most areas between 2012-17 which is not ambitious and does not meet the decreasing achievement gap requirement. The graduation rates for MCPSS proposes a growth of 4-5% which is ambitious and achievable. Furthermore, college enrollment projections are 3-8% which are very ambitious; however, achievable with sufficient supports and structures proposed. MCPSS did not provide postsecondary degree attainment data.</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	11
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Mobile County Public School System provided a 9 year overview of performance on the Alabama Reading and Math Test Plus for elementary and middle school levels. There is evidence of growth in the elementary and middle school levels for math and reading. There is no evidence of closing the achievement gaps in these content areas for elementary and middle level students for the past four years. Also, MCPSS did not provide the student performance data disaggregated by each school and subgroup for the past 4 years. MCPSS provided evidence for implementing ambitious and significant reforms in its low performing schools as well as plans to focus on the feeder model to expand their success in lower grades to their high schools. MCPSS shares data with parents and stakeholders; however, there is no evidence of how making this information available to parants and other stakeholders improves participation, instruction, and services.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	0
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Mobile County Public School System provides the community with a printed publication outlining the composition of the district staff, programs offered within the division, academic curriculum and instruction, federal programs within the district, special services available, assessment results for school and student performance, funding sources, annual expenditures per pupil, and outline of captial improvements. However, MCPSS did not demonstrate evidence to support a high level of transparency for LEA processes, practices, and investments for actual school level expenditures from state and local funds including actual personnel salareis at school level for all school level instructional and support staff; school level for instructional staff only; school level for teachers only; and non-personnel expenditures at the school level.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Mobile County Public School System demonstrated evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements for current transformational efforts to implement personalized learning environments. MCPSS' proposal is to expand these efforts that have already been supported by the state of Alabama.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	9
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Mobile County Public School System demonstrated evidence of meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal. MCPSS parents and community stakeholders have been heavily involved in the establishment of previous transformation efforts through committees and community partnerships. MCPSS established the proposed plan using outcomes from previous transformational meetings and feedback. MCPSS provided evidence of at least 70% of teachers who support the proposal as well as letter of support from the Alabama governor, Mobile Chamber of Commerce, President of local community college, CEO of Education Foundation, Dean of local college, workforce development council, and Mobile Mayor. However, there was no evidence of student support.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Mobile County Public School System demonstrated evidence of a high quality plan with the logic behind the reform proposal. MCPSS plans to address their needs and gaps through a feeder model to ensure all students in elementary, middle, and high achieve their fullest academic achievement levels. This approach will provide district wide reform and enhance academic achievement for students at all levels. Furthermore, personalized learning environments sustained from K-12 will eliminate achievement gaps.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	20
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Mobile County Public School System provided evidence of a high quality plan for improving learning and teaching with career and college goals through a personalized learning environment. MCPSS provided evidence of students being able to identify and pursue learning goals of their choice through signature academies with a focus on 21st century skills. MCPSS students will be involved in deep learning experiences through community and business partnerships that have been established by MCPSS for students to pursue real life experiences in workforce and postsecondary learning environments. MCPSS provided evidence of personalized sequence of content by having learning resources and instructional practices accessible to all students including students with disabilities and Limited English Proficient students. MCPSS supports professional learning opportunities for teachers by learning a variety of instructional practices to meet the needs of all students through PD 360, a web based professional development program. MCPSS has established a process to provide ongoing and regular feedback to parents, students, teachers, and administrators through such tools as Information Now (INow) - a computer-based student information system, MCPSS data warehouse, TestTrax - a web based data management system that stores summative state data, AセスTrax - a web based data management system that stores local assessment data, and Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) website - a web based management system that disaggregates state assessment data. Furthermore, MCPSS provided evidence of other methods of communication for all school and community stakeholders as well as mechanisms to ensure all students, teachers, and administrators are trained/supported to track and manage student learning.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	20
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Mobile County Public School System provided a high quality plan that supported teaching and leading efforts. MCPSS established structures to support teacher training and development to ensure the needs of all students are met. There is evidence of data and assessments that measure student progress towards college and career ready graduation requirements such as end of quarter assessments, universal screening, and MCPSS common assessments. Also, there is evidence of training, systems, and practices to continuously improve school progress toward the goals of increasing performance and closing the achievement gap through continuous improvement planning meetings. MCPSS has provided evidence for matching student needs to specific resources using the three tiered approach, Response to Intervention. MCPSS has a high quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals through professional learning opportunities for teachers and principals.</p>		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Mobile County Public School System provided evidence for practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning. MCPSS central offices is organized to provide support to schools in order to meet the needs of all students. MCPSS school leadership has the autonomy and flexibility to establish school master schedules, school personnel staffing and school level budgets. There is evidence of MCPSS having the autonomy to currently provide students with alternative and accelerated learning opportunities to earn credit hours toward graduation including evening option schools, Star Academy, Pathways Alternative School, Continuous Learning Center, and Twilight Schools. Also, MCPSS provided evidence to support opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times including a fifth learning block. extended day programs, Saturday school, and Advanced Placement Exam preparation sessions. All learning resources and instructional practices outlined in MCPSS proposal are accessible to students with disabilities and English learners.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	10
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Mobile Public School System has a quality plan with LEA and school infrastructure supports for personalized learning. MCPSS demonstrate evidence of ensuring all participating students and educators have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources such as MCPSS Messenger, Inside Education, Digital Media System, Twitter, You Tube,</p>		

Facebook, Notify Me, and other communication tools. Also, there is evidence of technical support for students and other stakeholders. MCPSS demonstrates evidence of using information technology that allows parents, students, and teachers to export their information such as the Information Now (INow) - a state mandated student information system that forms the central core of the data collection system. Furthermore, MCPSS provided evidence to ensure that the LEA and schools use interoperable data systems to make informed instructional decisions.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: Mobile County Public School System provided evidence to measure the achievement through a plan including goals, activities, timeline, deliverables, and responsible parties. MCPSS will monitor the progress toward meeting project goals through continuous improvement planning meetings that will occur at least quarterly. MCPSS already has structures to publicly share information through communications tools such as MCPSS Messenger, MCPSS This Week, School Messenger, and other communications. These efforts provide evidence for a strategy to implement a rigorous continuous improvement process with timely feedback on the progress of project goals.		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: The Mobile County Public School System demonstrates evidence of ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders through community partnerships and committees. Furthermore, there is evidence of ongoing engagement of school stakeholders through continuous improvement planning meetings and surveys.		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	0
(E)(3) Reviewer Comments: The Mobile County Public School System provided performance measures; however, MCPSS did not provide 12-14 performance measures to support the effectiveness of the plan as required.		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
(E)(4) Reviewer Comments: The Mobile County Public School System provided a high quality plan that will evaluate the effectiveness of investments. MCPSS plans to evaluate effectiveness of Race to The Top - District funded activities through data-tracking and data-informed professional development. Also, MCPSS has evidence of school leadership teams referred to as CIP teams for decision making and progress monitoring. Furthermore, MCPSS has provided evidence of community partnerships to assist with meeting the needs of students in MCPSS.		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The Mobile County Public School System identified all funds that will support the proposed project including Race to the Top - District grant, LEA, State, and other funds. MCPSS provided a description of all the funds as well as identification of the funds that will be used for one-time investments. Furthermore, MCPSS identified funds to sustain personalized learning environments after the grant period through federal and local funds. MCPSS budget proposal is reasonably and sufficiently support the development and implementation of MCPSS' project goals.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The Mobile County Public School System provides funding sources to sustain project goals after the term of the grant by annually setting aside Title I funds and allocating Title II funds as well as Career and Technical funds to support specific goals in the proposal. Accumulation of these funds over the next four years will be adequate to sustain expenditures after the term of the grant.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The Mobile County Public School System did not provide evidence of a partnership to obtain private or public resources. MCPSS does not receive competitive preference priority.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The Mobile County Public School District has met the Absolute Priority 1 through its plan to address the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve teaching and learning. The goals outlined in the MCPSS plan provided evidence for accelerating student achievement by providing extended learning time such as Advanced Placement sessions, summer enrichment, and Saturday school. MCPSS provided evidence for decreasing achievement gaps using instructional practices to address all students needs as well as a three tiered approach, Response to Intervention. Furthermore, MCPSS provided evidence for increasing graduation rates through alternative pathways to meet graduation requirements such as evening school, Star Academy and Pathways Alternative Schools.

Total	210	183
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Application #0754AL-2 for Mobile County Public School System

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has effectively articulated a comprehensive and cohesive reform vision.

The vision is truly comprehensive in that it fully encompasses the spirit of RTT-D's *Absolute Priority 1*, and thoughtfully

addresses the *Core Educational Assurance Areas*. The applicant has articulated a clear and credible approach.

Some of the key elements that contribute to the comprehensive nature of the applicant's vision are:

- College and career ready standards and assessments that are enhancements of the *Common Core Standards, and have been* adopted by the State;
- Focused core reform areas: instruction, continuous improvement process, strategic planning and leadership development
- A portfolio of services for four highest need high schools as focus, with implementing reforms and structures in elementary and middle schools that feed into each HS
- Traditional academics interwoven with strong career and technical offerings multiple continued development graduation pathways, with personalized learning environments

Some of the key elements that gives cohesiveness to the applicant's stated vision are:

- SLC/Signature academies piloted in 20111, based on Southern Regional Education Boards Signature school model;
- Focus on student achievement through continuous improvement and data driven decision making at all levels.
- Different academies, different themes, traditional academics interwoven with strong career and technical offerings multiple continued development graduation pathways, with personalized learning environments

A clear and credible approach is evident in that:

- The visionaries of the LEA base their path to achieving the vision based on theory, research, and successful models for improving educational program and turning around low performing schools, leading to student learning;
- Extensive screenings, assessments, and interventions including a data driven continuous improvement process through a team oriented approach

Consequently, a perfect/maximum allowable score is assigned for this criterion.

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

Applicant's approach to implementing its reform proposal will support high quality LEA level and school level implementation of the proposal. A clear-cut description of the process for selecting the participating schools is provided. The process ensures that the participating schools collectively meet the eligibility requirements.

Applicant focuses on reforms necessary to assure that college and career ready graduates are produced from four of its high schools with the lowest graduation rates. Elementary and middle schools that feed into the individual high schools are identified and will receive support for reforming their structures and systems. The numbers (and percentages when applicable) of total participating students from each school, low-income students, as well as high school graduation rates are provided. Numbers of educators to be included in the project are provided in the standard tables associated with this section.

Consequently, a perfect/maximum allowable score is assigned for this criterion.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	0
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

There are 12 high schools in the LEA and thus has 12 feeder patterns that include elementary and middle schools. The proposed project has selected four high schools (and the feeder schools) with the lowest graduation rate and which meet the high needs eligibility criterion.

Applicant failed to provide a high-quality plan and not even a simple plan for scaling up the RTT-D reform proposal to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools and help the applicant reach the district level outcome goals.

Thus, a low perfect minimum score is assigned for this criterion.

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

The primary focus of the application is college and career ready graduates from the four participating lowest performing high schools. However, the applicant has enabling/supporting interventions in the associated elementary and middle feeder schools.

LEA's application includes ambitious yet achievable annual goals for student outcomes in the areas of reading, mathematics and science, at all three grade levels. Both district level and school level goals are included. Applicant has demonstrated that the applicant's vision has potential to result in improved student learning and performance, and increased equity.

Elementary level intervention is designed to build capacity, and as such there is no academic annual goals are set, except for the State required annual performance expectations. Middle school interventions are designed to prepare students to be ready for the *Signature Academies* in the high schools. The applicant sets a definite annual academic performance improvement goal of four (4) percent for participating middle and high schools. This is in addition to the State required performance expectations. Additionally, goals for graduation and attendance rates as well as college and career readiness, and post secondary enrollment.

There is no evidence to suggest that the applicant has set sub-group targets (high need student groups) for academic performance, decreasing achievement gaps, graduation rates, and college enrollment. Rating points are deducted for this lack of evidence.

A low High-level rating is given for this criterion.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The historic student performance data for the nine years, graphically presented, tend to indicate a clear record of success in advancing student learning and achievement. No data/evidence is provided with reference to increasing equity in learning and reducing achievement gaps between subgroups.

Applicant provides a list of successful programs, systemic initiatives, and data-driven strategies being implemented in the district. No evidence of effectiveness or success of implementation of these is presented.

[Note: Applicant has indicated elsewhere (section B3) that there are substantial percentages of students in high-need subgroups.]

Consequently, a mid Mid-level score is assigned for this criterion.

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

The proposal includes evidence of district level transparency in LEA processes, practices and investments. Relevant evidence is presented in the appendices.

Some of the evidences included in the appendices are:

- *A Citizen's Guide - Fiscal year 2012-2013* of Mobile County Public School System - An annula publication distributed at the start of each school year and available on the district's Website. This publication contains current information on the district's academic, financial, and budgetary status, progress and future direction. Serves as one mechanism of transparency.
- *2011 - 2012 Salary Schedule* - Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County - An annual publication of the Department of Human Resources. Nature of distribution mechanism is not specified. Includes information on salaries of each position title, including teachers, principals, etc. Does not specify school level salary information.
- Letters of support from the Governor of the State of Alabama, the mayor of the City of Mobile, the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, Dean of the College of Education - University of South Alabama, Southwest Alabama

Workforce Development Council, and other significant agencies.

- Letters from school principals indicating the level of support from teachers employed in their respective schools.

Applicant has made statements regarding presence of such transparencies at the school level. No evidence is provided to substantiate statements regarding school level transparencies.

A low-mid score is assigned for this sub-criterion.

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

Applicant has successful conditions, sufficient autonomy, and adequate flexibility under State, legal, statutory and regulatory requirements. The district has already implemented significant reforms autonomously with support from the State and partnering institutions. A number of Intervention programs and multi-pathway graduation opportunities have been implemented in the district. Some evidence presented in the appendices show that the LEA has effectively benefited from this autonomy and flexibility.

A perfect score is assigned for this criterion

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

There is evidence of meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal, as demonstrated by letters of support and feedback from multiple sources, including the required State and City officials. The applicant has included evidence supporting the claim that State, county and community organizations have been involved in a number of school improvement efforts. High school principals have reported the percentages of teachers who support the RTT-D proposal. LEA has met the 70% threshold of teacher approval, required of districts without collective bargaining.

There is minimal demonstrated evidence of meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal. For example, letters from the school principals indicate high levels of teacher support for the project. Yet, there is no narrative explaining what level of teacher involvement was there at the school level in the proposal development process, and the method used by school principals to determine the level of teacher support for the project was used.

Thus an upper mid Mid-level score is assigned.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Parts of the application have demonstrated that the applicant has performed an analysis of its current status in implementing personalized learning environments. The applicant has demonstrated evidence of the logic behind the reform proposal, including the identified needs and gaps that the plan will address. In response to selection criterion (B)(5), the applicant has identified a number of gaps and what measures it is already implementing and those the LEA plans to initiate.

Applicant did not identify or (does it have a high-quality plan to address) educational performance gaps among subgroups, including the high needs groups.

Thus a high Mid-level score is assigned for this sub-criterion.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	18

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has presented a comprehensive *High-quality plan*, for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment and seeing that the students who enter the LEA's elementary school receives an individual focused program of educational services that take them through graduation and post-secondary placement. The plan presented in response to criterion (C)(1) includes an approach to implementing instructional strategies that enable participating students to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to college and career ready graduation requirements, and accelerate the student's learning through support of that individual's needs.

There is evidence in the application showing that the emphasis is on college and career ready graduation goals, educational programs and partnerships that support this goal, instructional strategies implemented in a personalized environment, progress monitored continuously, and aligned with the Common Core Standards of the State for college and career goals. Student progress is promoted with scaffold or accelerated ass needed.

The plan included in the narrative, together with the supporting documents provided in the appendices makes the proposed plan credible. The evidence presented in the appendices include the entire 2010 Alabama Courses of study in English language arts and mathematics for college and career readiness. The standards of the State are aligned with the Common Core Standards and are of High quality. The district is implementing education programs that address these standards.

Only generic responsibilities and timelines are provided.

A mid High-level score is assigned for this criterion.

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

Applicant has a high-quality plan for improving teaching and learning by personalizing teaching and learning. LEA has provided detailed description of activities designed to deliver personalized instruction with building level and district level support. Thus, the district proposed activities contribute to possible full implementation of personalized learning and teaching for all students.

Included professional development activities will ensure that all participating educators and leadership will engage in training and in professional teams or communities which in turn can enable them to:

- Apply continuous improvement process developed by a committee at the school level;
- Effectively implement personalized learning environments and strategies;
- Adapt content and instruction;
- Measure student progress frequently and end of quarter;
- Improve teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness using feedback;
- Be involved partners in professional development communities and online professional development through *PD-360* Website.
- Use information from teacher and principal evaluation systems;
- Assess and act on the basis of collective educator effectiveness and school culture;
- Implement training systems and practices for increasing student performance;
- Use data and assessments that measure student progress toward college and career-ready graduation requirements;

These and other personnel related activities ensure that applicant's plan ensures that there is a continual increase in the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals.

There is no major weaknesses in LEA's response to the criterion (C)(2):

Thus a perfect score is assigned for this cub-criterion.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The practices, policies and rules of the LEA provide for flexibility and autonomy needed for designing programs that foster personalized learning environments. Students progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery. Students are given multiple opportunities and multiple ways to demonstrate mastery. Learning resources are adaptable and fully accessible to all students.

LEA has provided a general description of the roles of entities within the organization including, the Board of Education, the Division of Learning Services, Finance Department, and Pueblo Education Association. These organizational entities provide support within the context of existing practices, policies and rules. They are structured in such a way that the central office provides support and services to all participating schools. A team-based management and operational structure within each school manages the continuous improvement processes. District support team provides all needed support and resources, when and where they are needed.

Proposed policies are disseminated to various stakeholders for review through email and are posted on the MCPSS website as a draft policy, along with relevant legal references by the board's legal secretary. Generally, at least one public hearing is held soliciting input on proposed policies prior to recommending the final version to the Board of School Commissioners. Once the final version

of the policy is approved by the Board of School Commissioners, it is posted on the system website along with the official approval data. Local school administrators are informed of the policy change at regular principals' or assistant principals' meetings and are directed to inform their faculty and staff of the policy changes.

A perfect score is assigned for this criterion.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	6
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

LEA has provided a general description of the technological capabilities (and lack of it) which are used for within school/district technological applications necessary for data/information management and support. The current level of technological infrastructure provides school and LEA staff and other stakeholders in the community with necessary information about programs, schools and the district.

However, LEA's description does not includes current availability or plans for ensuring that all stakeholders, regardless of income, have access to necessary content, tools and other learning resources both in and out of school. There is no assurance that information technology will use interoperable and open data systems which will permit ease of resource and data use by stakeholders (parents and students in and out of school).

Thus a mid Mid-level score is assigned.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant has presented a clear and high-quality approach to continuously improve its plan. Application contains in it a strategy for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process which ensures timely and regular feedback. The LEA will monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of its investments.

Throughout the application LEA has incorporated details of data usage and its continuous improvement process, which drive decision-making and evaluation with real-time data regarding all aspects of reform including student performance, professional development, the employment of technology, community partnerships, and the use of staff, time, money and other resources.

Thus, a Perfect score is assigned.

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

LEA's application outlines strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders.

Ideas relevant to monitoring, measuring and publicly sharing information on the quality of the LEA's project-funded investment along with outline of strategies for ongoing communication and engagement are provided throughout the application, and briefly within this section in response to this criterion.

Thus, a Perfect score is assigned.

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

Ambitious and achievable performance measures with annual targets are specified for qualified and highly qualified instructional and administrative staff.

Ambitious and achievable performance targets are set for student outcomes.

State required growth targets are presented as rationale for selecting the specific performance measures and targets. The capacity of the selected performance measures to provide rigorous, timely and formative leading information is described throughout the application as part of the continuous improvement process of the district. Because the selected performance measures are annual measures, their capacity to provide rigorous, timely and formative leading information is limited to that extent.

Issues like performance measures appropriate for high need students, including language/accessibility supports mentioned in passing, but there is no demonstrated evidence of using data from these assessments. Student subgroup level performance indicators and targets (disaggregated performance targets) are not provided.

Thus a Mid-level score is assigned for this criterion.

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

A plan of moderate quality to evaluate the effectiveness of significant RTT-D funded activities is presented. A structured plan that includes all the elements of a high quality plan is provided. The focus of the evaluation in section (E) (4) is limited to student outcome goals and evaluated by principals. Evaluation of other goals is spelled out as part of continuous improvement process and is presented in various parts of the application.

College- and career- readiness as well as professional development is the primary focus of the evaluation. The focus of overall program evaluation will be based on the annual report.

It is not clear as to who will be responsible for the overall evaluation of program investments and effectiveness and what methods will be used for this purpose. No detail is provided.

Thus an upper Mid-level score is assigned for this criterion.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	6

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The project budget presented by the applicant is reasonable and sufficient. The applicant has provided thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities.

The applicant has provided limited or no description of total revenues from other sources that the applicant will use to support implementation of specific elements of the proposal.

In the *Overall Budget Summary* and associated narrative the applicant has:

- a. identified all funds that will support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal;
- b. Provided a sufficient description of all other the funds that the applicant will use to support the implementation of the proposal,
- c. Identified funds for sign-in bonuses and contractual services as one time investments. Although not identified as such, the expenses to acquire technology, excluding annual maintenance, can also considered one time investments. Technology maintenance expenses will be borne through career/technical funds. It is logically implied that all other expenses are operational costs that will be incurred during and after the grant period (if there is a focus on long term sustainability) of the personalized learning environments.
- d. All additional personal included in the grant will be hired through a third party contractor. The third party contractor will provide highly qualified applicants for the advertised positions. Additionally, personnel hired through the third party contractor will not gain tenure after three years of service. Any additional personnel over the State Teacher Allocation must be paid through the LEA General funds. At the expiration of the grant the district will determine the number of units each school will maintain. The district will use Federal, State, and Local dollars to continue the efforts of the grant.

There are some observations on the sufficiency/reasonableness of the budget from the overall budget summary:

- 1. There is no allocation of funds for travel. This could be positive or negative form the point of view of frugality, lack of planning, or restrictions;
- 2. There is no annual cost of living increase applied to the Personnel - salaries line. Again, This could be positive or negative form the point of view of frugality, lack of planning or restrictions;
- 3. Approximately 7% of the total project budget comes from other sources.

Project level budget summary forms are provided for three projects: Elementary, Middle, and HS Academies projects.

However, a review of the project level budget summaries and associated budget narratives lend to conclude that the project budgets are reasonable and sufficient.

Based on these observations, a mid Mid-level score is assigned for this criterion.

[Note: There is an error in the calculation of total direct cost budget for the Middle School budget.]

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

Essentially, the plan for sustenance of the project services beyond the RTT-D funding period depends on Title-I and Title-II funds. Additionally, State and local funds will be used. The district will allocate the number of *units* (meaning number of positions), and leaves the responsibility of allocating sufficient funds from these sources to the local schools, at their choice.

One-time and ongoing expenses are identified in the overall budget summary. A plan that includes financial support from local and State government entities for project years is provided.

LEA has only given a limited commitment for long-term sustainability of project practices and successes. The language in the text, elsewhere in the proposal, states that a number of project support personnel will be hired through a contract service provider so that these personnel need not be kept in the payroll at the conclusion of the project period. The strategy is in place to circumvent contractual obligations. "The partnership with a third party will ensure MPCSS (the district) has full flexibility to hire and release (fire) new staff to ensure all personnel are effective." No mention is made as to what will happen to the vital services provided by these personnel.

The budget shows approximately 91.0 Full-time equivalent (FTE) personnel will be hired through project funds. It is possible that the services provided by these FTEs will not be maintained by funds from other sources, and the likelihood of sustenance of project practices and successes is limited.

The suggested three year plan for the post grant period is not provided.

Based on these observations, a low Mid-level score is assigned for this criterion.

[Note: In the reviewer's opinion, it appears that the present RTT-D application itself is a move to sustain the reforms and

progress made in college- and career- ready graduation of students and continuous monitoring of progress through data systems. Approximately, 91 full-time academic staff and leadership positions are budgeted. There is no indication as to whether these are new/added positions or existing ones, and will these positions and the services provided by them continue beyond the project period.]

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: NOT ADDRESSED		
Thus a null point is assigned.		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant's vision is truly comprehensive in that it fully encompasses the spirit of RTT-D's <i>Absolute Priority 1</i>, and thoughtfully addresses the <i>Core Educational Assurance Areas</i>. The applicant has articulated a clear and credible approach, and plans of action throughout the proposal. Key elements relevant to <i>Absolute Priority 1</i> addressed by the plans are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice) or college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice); • Accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student; • Increase the effectiveness of educators; • Expand student access to the most effective educators; • Decrease achievement gaps across student groups; and • Increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers. <p>The application also addresses the four key areas originally identified in the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) to support comprehensive education reform: adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy; building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals with data about how they can improve instruction; recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and turning around lowest-achieving schools.</p> <p>As a result, the applicant has MET the Absolute Priority 1 criterion.</p>		

Total	210	151
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Race to the Top - District



Technical Review Form

Application #0754AL-3 for Mobile County Public School System

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant clearly articulates a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that builds upon current efforts in the district. The district has identified four core reform areas which align with the reform areas stated within the RttT-D application. The district's reform areas are instruction, continuous improvement process, strategic planning, and leadership development.</p> <p>The applicant details the importance of not only procedural skills, but also conceptual understanding of all students. This supports the deepening of student learning and not just settling for passing test scores.</p> <p>Several strategies are explained that will support reform efforts in creating a personalized learning environment for students through data collection and evaluation – extensive screenings, assessments and interventions to gage student effectiveness against state standards, and a complex continuous improvement process design which holds school leaders and teachers responsible for reviewing data and formulating a plan for school improvement.</p> <p>Equity in student learning will be increased at the school level with the district's plan to implement a portfolio of services and interventions at the four highest need high schools. Structures will also be put in place at the elementary and middle schools which feed into the four identified high schools.</p> <p>Strategies described included signature academies, academic coaches, career coaches, graduation coaches, data-driven decision making, academic and instructional coaches, professional development, and signing bonuses. Collectively, these strategies will support college and career readiness standards, data systems to improve student learning, highly effective teachers and principals, and turning around the lowest achieving schools.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant selected the four lowest achieving schools in the district, which were high schools. Rationale is provided to also include the feeder elementary and middle schools for the four targeted schools. Data supports the high school choices with the district's graduation rate being 64% but the four selected schools' rates are 51%, 55%, 57%, and 58%. The free/reduced lunch percentages for all participating schools are significantly high across the board. The only exception (although still high) is Davidson High School which has a free/reduced lunch rate of 61%, however, the rates at the feeder elementary and middle schools range from 76% to 96%. This is evidence that the high school students are not completing the paperwork to determine free/reduced lunch eligibility.</p> <p>This response meets all criterion requirements.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	3
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a rationale for expanding a pilot project, RAMP to Graduation Initiative, to two additional high schools. The applicant also proposes to unite reform efforts at the feeder schools for all four high schools targeted. The initiative has increased graduation rates and improved behavior and attendance rates. The data for these improvements is not provided so it is unclear how successful the first two years of the pilot program have been. The initiative also included the development of a systemic dropout prevention, intervention, and recovery plan as well as a coordinated focus on community collaboration.</p> <p>The applicant does not include a timeline, identify persons responsible for the LEA-wide reform and change, or detail any specific tactics. This information is needed to determine evidence of a high-quality plan.</p>		

The applicant makes the assumption that if reform efforts are successful in the lowest performing schools, then the model can be replicated in higher performing schools successfully. With the majority of strategies of the four-year proposal focusing on additional staff at the targeted schools, it is unclear how these staff will have an impact on schools not served by the grant. Therefore, this assumption needs more details to make it achievable.

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

The applicant's plan to reform is likely to result in improved student learning. The additional teachers district-wide are significant additions -- elementary schools: one academic coach; middle schools: two math teachers, one reading teacher, and one career coach; high schools: three math teachers, two reading teachers, two science teachers, one counselor, one chief academic officer, and three career technical teachers. Each additional position is responsible for deliverables which support improved performance on summative assessments.

Each grade level includes a full-day summer academy for participants. One day is not enough time to achieve the deliverables described and show academic gains that are tied to the day academy, specifically differentiation of instruction.

Also at the middle school level it is not clear who is responsible for teaching the two additional career technical courses or what the courses will be.

Performance on summative assessments increase and are equal to or exceed the state targets. This includes graduation rates increasing to 80% or higher.

The applicant provides detailed performance expectations within A(4) charts. All goals are achievable. However, the goals that are broken down by subgroups are not decreasing achievement gaps. For example, the middle school math performance scores increase for all subgroups, but the achievement gaps remain the same. Special education students achieve thirty-six percentage points less than all students in 2013 and also in 2017. African-American students achieve eight percentage points less in 2013 and nine less in 2017.

Overall the applicant provides strategies that are likely to achieve the stated improvements. The only criterion not met within this section is the overall decrease of student achievement gaps.

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	13

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates a clear track record of need by detailing grants received including: E-rate, School Improvement grant, High School Graduation Initiative grant, and CORRE-Mayor's grant. These grant totaled over \$34 million. The applicant stated success was achieved. Two charts detailing the percentage of proficient students in grades three through eight on reading and math end-of-year tests showed impressive gains since 2005 in all grades.

The applicant stated data is shared with parents and all stakeholders, however, how the data is shared was not detailed.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	0
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant stated an annual publication, A Citizen's Guide, is publicly available and online. Salary schedules for the district are available on the district's website as well. However, the criterion specifically states "actual personnel salaries at the school level." No actual salaries were provided based on the applicant's response. And one annual publication and an annual salary schedule posted online is not evidence of a high level of transparency.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	8
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The district is the largest school system in Alabama with almost 100 schools, 7,400 employees, and serves approximately 63,000 students. The applicant provides several successful strategies already in place as part of the district's current reform

efforts, all of which are supported by the state. Reforms at the high school level include: Career Cruising, 8th Grade Program Planning, 9th Grade Academies, At-Risk Student Identification, Multiple Pathways to Graduation, Intervention, five Alternative School Programs, and Extended Learning Opportunities. No details are provided of successful elementary or middle school reform efforts which represent the majority of students served and employees. Because the applicant proposes reform efforts in elementary and middle schools, examples of sufficient autonomy should be stated.

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

10

4

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states stakeholder engagement is evidenced in previous processes and program development including: strategic plan, continuous improvement plan, parental involvement program, and federal program advisory committee. Also parent input is collected annually as part of Title I's evaluation.

The applicant provides evidence to demonstrate successful business and industry partnerships as well.

However, there are no strategies specific to the development of the applicant's RttT-D application other than the required teachers' support at the four high schools and letters of support from various community partners. There are no letters of support from the feeder schools to be included in the grant. And there appears to be no students involved in current processes or the application development.

It is evident the school district has established partnerships with parents and business partners, however, no evidence supports the engagement of parents, businesses, and students in the development of the RttT-D application.

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

5

3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides an analysis of the current reform efforts including chart A(4). Significant reforms at the elementary level has resulted in 95% of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals being met in the third-fifth grades in 2012. Middle school boasts 97%, while the high school average is 86%. The applicant also states only 25% of schools made AYP in 2002-2003, compared to 76% in 2011-2012.

The identified needs and gaps are stated to occur between middle and high school. In addition to the AYP decrease previously mentioned, only 64% of the class of 2011 graduated on-time (within four years).

The applicant provided an analysis of the district's current status in implementing personalized learning environments. Needs and gaps are also detailed. The rationale for current reform efforts was detailed in section A3. However, components of a high-quality plan are missing – timeline, persons responsible, and deliverables. Overall, most of the criterion were evidenced by the applicant.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	16

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes to serve 24 schools totaling four feeder patterns. While the goals are specific to primarily high school measures (ACT, graduation rates) there are support systems described to be implemented in elementary and middle schools to support the goals stated. College and career readiness will begin with career awareness in grades preschool through five, career explorations in grades six through eight, and career preparation in grades nine through twelve. Middle schools will also benefit from the addition of a Career Coach and two career technical elective teachers. High school students will also earn at least seven credits each year and have a graduation rate of at least 80%. These goals will also be supported beginning in elementary schools with the addition of two math teachers per school. Middle school will hire three additional math teachers and one additional reading teacher in each grade. High schools will have four additional math teachers, four additional math paraprofessionals, and three additional reading teachers.

The Summer Academy is mentioned again by the applicant, but with the academy only lasting one day the long-term affects

will be minimal.

The applicant also stated the signature academies will incorporate 21st century skills such as critical thinking, communication, goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, creativity, problem-solving, and technology literacy. There is no plan as to which skills will be part of the district's plan, who will be responsible for teaching them, and how they will be assessed.

The support needed for improving learning and teaching will be the additional positions. Elementary schools will receive three. Middle schools will receive nine. High schools will receive seventeen. The additional positions will also serve as a mechanism to provide training and support to students throughout the reform.

With regards to digital learning content, the only mention of this in the applicant's response is the addition of three science teachers (STEM). There is no evidence of additional technology access.

Frequently updated student data and support will occur for the high school students who are assigned a graduation coach (40 students per coach, two coaches per high school). However, there are no other details provided to support student data will be frequently updated and monitored.

The applicant states accommodations for high-need students will occur.

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

The applicant proposes a data-driven approach to professional development. Currently, all schools have a Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) team in place comprised of all stakeholders. The CIP team is responsible for reviewing data, school culture, and other variables; all of this is the basis for professional learning communities and reform discussions. A strong, supportive component for district-wide reform is how the CIP teams work with each of their feeder schools. Also, the CIP teams' number of meetings annually is dependent upon the school's AYP status meeting anywhere from two to seven times.

The applicant describes several professional development strategies utilized throughout the district including: online professional development, professional learning communities, Response to Instruction, common formative assessments, mentor training for new teachers and new principals, CIP, book study collections, technology training, online tutorial technology training, district literacy training, Talents Unlimited, Alabama Reading Initiative training, and Southern Regional Education Board. The extensive list of professional development opportunities supports the applicant's proposal that all academy teachers, professional staff, and administrators will have professional learning plans based on their needs assessment and a common core of academy-related competencies.

The district plans to hire a contractor to implement and enrich professional development opportunities to further ensure each student is taught by an effective teacher and each school is led by an effective leader. The position seems reasonable, however, there were previously mentioned positions to be added at all levels that were also responsible in part for professional development. The relationship between these positions and the contractor are not clear.

The applicant uses several different data tools including: a district data warehouse, TestTrax, AccessTrax, Information Now, and Data Recognition Corporation. These include academic, cultural, summative, local assessment, and state assessment data. Information Now is a computer-based grading system which can be accessed by parents and Data Recognition Corporation is a web-based data system that disaggregates state assessment data.

Overall the applicant provided a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by implementing strategies to help teachers and principals to improve their instruction through professional development and participating in professional teams.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning in the following ways: the superintendent runs the school system and while each school is given support from the district office, the district allows each school's CIP team to develop student achievement goals and the strategies for achieving them. Schools also have flexibility and autonomy over schedules, personnel decisions, roles and responsibilities, and school-level budgets.

The district utilizes both summative and formative assessments. These assessments determine student's mastery or proficiency, not the amount of seat time according to the applicant.

Accommodations are provided as needed for students with disabilities and English Language Learners.

The applicant met all components of this criterion.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	9
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides details regarding two previous long-range planning efforts and the intent to repeat the same process with regards to providing stakeholders information. The strategies listed are important to the reform effort, however, they do not address criterion (D)(2)(a). Providing information is a one-way communication tool, which is not the same as providing all stakeholders with the necessary tools and learning resources. However, the applicant's primary reform strategies detailed to this point are directly tied to teachers and the school day. Therefore it is necessary to provide additional support during non-school hours to ensure the effectiveness of professional development. Also, there are new positions being added to each school which will impact the school day and will not require additional supports during non-school hours.

The information technology used is interoperable and Information NOW will provide parents with student achievement data in real time.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	13

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides several goals to ensure the evaluation of the project's effectiveness including the significant reform efforts -- professional development, employment of technology, community partnerships, and the use of resources. The seven goals provided include activities, timeline, deliverables, and responsible parties. However, the goals are not measurable as written because no timeline is provided other than the duration of the grant. This criterion specifically states the project needs to be regularly evaluated on its progress. Without providing annual performance targets, it is impossible to effectively gage the success of the grant measures. The applicant does not state any means of evaluating the grant's success after the grant or how the information will be publicly shared.

While this response did not meet the criterion objectives, evidence to support this criterion was provided in section (A)(1) and therefore received a high score.

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

The applicant provides one strategy for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders, an annual progress report. There are no details about this report -- the information it will provide, how it will be distributed, and who is responsible for its development. Also, the report is a one-way communication tactic. The applicant has however provided evidence of other communication strategies in section (A)(1) resulting in a score of 3.

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

The applicant provided thirteen performance measures. All were achievable. The subgroups provides varied between feeder pattern and grade level. There were no subgroups for gender, race, or high-need students. The rationale for each academic measure was provided - to ensure all students are college and career ready. The annual targets for increasing the number of highly effective teachers and principals is not ambitious. This also applies to the targets for effective teachers and principals.

It is unclear why the applicant did not provide percentages for the number of student suspensions, however the reduction of almost 50% is ambitious.

The targets for number of students in grades four through eight on track to college and career readiness based on the applicant's on-track indicator are achievable, but not ambitious with 4 percentage point gains each year at each feeder

pattern.

The applicant stated it was unable to access FAFSA data and did not offer a plan to do so in the future. This is pertinent data to ensure students are not college-ready, but that they have a plan to pay for college, especially in a district with such high poverty statistics.

The applicant did not provide information on how it would review and improve the measure over time if is insufficient to gauge implementation progress.

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

The applicant state student achievement will drive the evaluation of the project's effectiveness. In section (E)(3) the applicant provided performance measures and annual targets for all participating students in grades kindergarten through twelve. The applicant describes several activities to accomplish the project's major goals and achievements. These activities are credible and support the Absolute Priority.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a budget narrative and tables that identify all funds to support their RttT-D project. Other funds include Title I, Title II, and Career and Technical. The signing bonuses and contractual services are designated as one-time expenses.

The budget chart reflects the applicant's significant reform focused on professional development and the addition of teachers in all participating schools. Approximately \$27 million of the \$32.5 million grant will support personnel and fringe benefits. The applicant states the district hopes that the professional culture, leadership, and professional development foster a climate of excellence and collegiality. The district is lacking a plan to assess this "hope" and did not focus on strategies to foster this hoped for climate. While the project may support student achievement gains, it is unlikely that they will continue once the additional staff can no longer be funded at the conclusion of the grant.

Overall the applicant met the objectives for this criterion, but there is limited focus on strategies to ensure the long-term sustainability.

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

The applicant states that Title I funds will be used to continue the summer enrichment program, professional development, and provide materials and supplies. Title II funds will be used to provide class-size reduction units in schools that have overcrowding in core content classes. Career and Technical funds will be used to purchase equipment and maintain a replacement cycle. However, the applicant does not provide a high-quality plan for sustainability. With 83% of the budget going towards personnel and fringe benefits, it can not be assumed the project's goals will continue without a plan in place.

The applicant does not address how it will handle disgruntled employees who don't benefit from a signing bonus or are selected for one of the several higher-paying roles to be added. Also, after the grant period, the additional math, reading, and science teachers hired would be tenured. The applicant does not address how the eliminated grant positions will affect staff and how the district will reduce staff without losing highly effective teachers.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not attempt to receive competitive preference priority points.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant meets absolute priority 1. The proposal will build upon core educational assurance areas to create learning environments in the identified schools that are designed to improve student learning and teaching through supports for students and educators that are aligned with college and career readiness standards.

Total	210	155
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