



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0421CT-1 for New Haven, City of

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The vision builds on existing initiatives and capabilities in the four core educational assurance areas, and is therefore grounded in the current state of the district, making it a credible approach. It sufficiently describes how data will be used to form individual Success Profiles for each child, which are likely to provide the information needed for more personalized instruction. It adequately addresses social-emotional wellness with a plan for wraparound services. It articulates a practical approach in which the greatest technology support will be given to the schools that need it most. Of the four components of the vision, the approach to mastery learning is the least well described. It is not clear how mastery learning will be implemented beyond assessments, nor how the plans for the portfolios will fit in with the rest of the vision and with the move toward Common Core standards. Overall the vision is clear and credible.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's decision to involve all district schools in the reform proposal, rather than selecting some schools, is logical as all schools have greater than 40% high-needs students and students from low-income families. This assertion is substantiated by school-level data provided in the proposal. The application included the total number of participating students, participating students from low-income families, participating students who are high-need students, and participating educators</p> <p>The district has acknowledged the difficulty of involving all schools in the reform effort by proposing a gradual rollout of program activities across the schools in the district, and has provided a plausible timeline for the rollout by reform effort component. Therefore the claim of being able to reach all schools with RTT-D activities is credible, and the applicant has provided enough detail about the gradual rollout to support a high-quality school-level implementation.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	3
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>In this section, the applicant does not directly address the issue of scaling up to district-wide change in an environment in which all schools are participating. Nevertheless, as requested the theory of change shows how the five points of their plan (of which the applicant is seeking funding for four) plausibly link between the current state of the district and the goals. Some information that would make the plan more comprehensible, such a description of the Portfolio of Schools model (not really explained, just mentioned), is missing. In addition, other elements of a high-quality plan (as defined in the notice) for scale-up are missing, such as the timeline, specific deliverables, and responsible parties. Therefore this section scores in the lower range.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's tables of goals are responsive to the notice because they include all of the areas (summative assessments, achievement gaps, etc.) and subgroups requested in (A)(4). The goals therefore are evidence that the applicant has already set and intends to achieve specific results through this plan. However, the applicant does not describe how the annual goals in the tables were derived from the overall goals. This makes it difficult to determine how realistic they are as yearly targets. Nor does the applicant compare these goals to the state's ESEA targets, making it difficult to judge how ambitious they are. This section therefore has a complete set of yearly goals by area (a-e) and subgroup but not information on how ambitious and achievable they are.</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	14
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has provided extensive data in Figures B1-B7 to substantiate that it has improved student learning outcomes and closed achievement gaps, raised student achievement and graduation rates, and improved postsecondary enrollment. Data that show greater improvement as compared to other urban districts such as Bridgeport and Hartford, and data that show improvement as compared to the state as a whole (including affluent suburban districts) are particularly persuasive as they show that New Haven has already begun to close achievement gaps.</p> <p>The applicant has also described exactly how identified low-achieving schools were transformed and reopened. It is commendable that they worked with the teachers' federation on the turnaround plans to achieve a working environment that permitted the changes to take place. The applicant provides credible evidence that their turnarounds have been successful (e.g., an achievement score increase in a turnaround school that was double the district average).</p> <p>In addition, the proposal describes how the applicant has made performance data available to educators, although in a manner that was not completely satisfactory to them, which led to the planned implementation of a new system. However, the applicant has not yet made data available to parents, although there is a plan to do so in 2013. Therefore, the applicant has fulfilled almost all of the requirements of this section.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has substantiated through information presented in the appendix that the LEA makes available online all of the data requested in this section. The appendix includes a district report that breaks down the overall budget into personnel and non-personnel categories, and also includes an impressively detailed sample school-level report that has information down to individual personnel salaries, by name and years of experience and degree. This section is fully responsive to the notice.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application demonstrates that the state has a track record of policy support and flexibility to support education reforms, and that it permits local control that enables innovation. The proposal also gives an example of how one of the schools in the LEA was able to apply for and get flexibility to demonstrate learning through competencies as opposed to seat time. Therefore, the application presents evidence of conditions that are likely to support the changes the LEA wants to make. However, the application does not specifically link the LEA's proposed reforms to evidence that the state will allow them to enact them.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The information presented in the application, which includes a description of stakeholder involvement strategies, a PowerPoint outlining the RTTD approach and input-gathering plan, a PowerPoint used in a student brainstorming session, and memos to gather input from teachers and parents substantiates that the applicant engaged multiple stakeholders in proposal development. The proposal also describes how the New Haven Federation of Teachers and the administrators' union were involved in the proposal, and includes support letters from representatives of both groups. In addition, the proposal provides a description of key community stakeholders and includes support letters from them. Therefore this section of the proposal was fully responsive to the notice.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	4
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>In this section the proposal describes not a high-quality plan for analyzing their current status in implementing personalized learning environments, but rather a description of the process they used during the proposal development phase to assess</p>		

their current status and identify areas for improvement. The process had several elements of a high-quality plan for identifying needs and gaps, including goals, activities and rationale, and deliverables (gap analysis and goals). The applicant has provided sufficient information to support the credibility of the needs and gaps they are trying to address. The plan, however, did not describe who conducted this analysis. Therefore this section is mostly responsive to the notice.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	14
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant presents a high-quality plan that is substantially responsive to the notice. The plan links elements of their current approach (individual Student Success Plans, capstone experiences, etc.) to what they would do with RTTD funding, which indicates that the LEA has some experience already with personalized learning and is building on that experience. The plan seems likely to promote student goals that are linked to interests and to standards because it includes strengthening learning goals across the district, focusing more on performance tasks, developing more robust student data profiles, and expanding mastery-based assessments. The wraparound component of the plan would provide social-emotional and wellness supports to high-needs students who need them. The technology upgrades would make the plans for assessment and data provision possible, and the passthrough grants for school pilot programs on personalization and technology are likely to prompt innovation (but realistic innovation) in instructional approaches. As required, the plan also includes a timeline with deliverables and responsible parties that appears realistic given the tasks that need to be performed.</p> <p>In the plan, it is not clear when educators and guidance counselors would provide all of the planned individual feedback to students and to train them to use the new tools and resources. The proposal does not mention how class size limits, counselor caseload limits, or other academic structures would provide support and time for the one-on-one meetings with students that are a prominent feature of this plan. If these meetings cannot happen, the plan could fail to achieve its goals. It also does not mention how the LEA would offer support to parents so that they can understand and take advantage of this new learning/assessment approach, particularly parents who may have demanding work schedules, lack technology in the home, or speak a language other than English. Finally, the proposal does not specifically address how the approach would support traits such as goal-setting and teamwork, or would expose students to cultures and perspectives.</p> <p>Because the proposal has most of the elements of a high-quality plan, it scores in the high range.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	14
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant presents a plan for professional development that is substantially responsive to the notice. The plan links elements of their current approach (educator evaluation systems, focus on student data, professional development platform, school environment surveys, human capital management system) to their goals for RTTD funding, providing evidence that they will build on their experience. Because the plans include creating a teacher portal with vetted resources and curriculum/assessments, training a cadre of Teacher Leaders in each building to provide professional development, and have district-wide professional development days to get teachers ready for the changes a personalized learning environment would bring, it is likely that teachers would develop additional capacity to use data to match resources to student needs and to assess the results. As required, the plan also includes a timeline with deliverables and responsible parties. The plan also integrates with the teacher and principal evaluation system in the district so that educators would be accountable for the results of the personalized learning environments. However, the partnerships with the Schlecty Center and the Comer Center are not identified or explained. It is not clear what preparation the responsible parties have to engage in the kind of professional development planned, or who would choose the Teacher Leaders and how. Much of the responsibility for professional development falls upon one person, the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, which may make it difficult to achieve across this large district.</p> <p>The plan describes how the district is attracting effective teachers to its turnaround schools by differentiating compensation. They plan to continue the effort with funding from the Teacher Incentive Fund. However, the proposal does not include a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from highly effective teachers, as the plan does not include a specific timeline, goals, deliverables, and responsible parties.</p> <p>Because the proposal has many of the elements of the high-quality plans requested, it scores in the medium range.</p>		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	14
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has described a central office structure in which several individuals will be substantially dedicated to supporting grant activities and has therefore substantiated that the LEA will support the participating schools. The proposal also demonstrates that teams in schools have had the flexibility to make changes at the school level (for example, in personnel, schedules, budgets, and calendars). The applicant's experience with mastery learning environments thus far has been more limited, but the example of the High School in the Community demonstrates that it has obtained and used flexibility to award credit based on mastery demonstrated in multiple ways. The proposal also describes the supports available to students with disabilities and English learners. The example of the career readiness programs for students with disabilities who are 18-21 demonstrate that the LEA has been able to prepare these students for careers. Because of all of the elements this section scored in the high range.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	6
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal has several elements of a high-quality plan to support project implementation. The district intends to upgrade and achieve equity in technology access for schools during the grant period by upgrading those schools who lack adequate resources. It has a partnership with the public library system to provide technology access and training to parents, and is providing for training through district-sponsored professional development and by site-based teachers who provide training and peer support. The LEA will begin to provide data access to parents in 2013.</p> <p>Other aspects of a high-quality plan are missing or not well-specified. The partnership with the library to provide technology access to parents is not described. Parents can not yet access student data. The district has several data systems that are not currently interoperable, although the district has the intention to achieve this. A high-quality plan would also have greater detail about activities, timeline, deliverables, and responsible parties. Because this section had some elements and lacked others it scores in the medium range.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	11
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has outlined a responsive plan in which data will be monitored at the classroom, school, and district level. The classroom level is up to teachers, while the school and district levels will have data teams that will meet three or four times a year. The district data team will be augmented by committees such as the Reform Committee of the New Haven Federation of Teachers. All of these data collection efforts will be coordinated by a program manager who is to be determined. Because the plan has all of these elements working at different levels, it seems likely to provide sufficient feedback on progress. However, the plan lacks focus and specificity, and leaves the program manager the large task of coordinating a lot of stakeholders and a lot of data at many levels across all schools, which may make it difficult to carry out with fidelity.</p> <p>Likewise the plan for publicly sharing the information has elements that would make data available, such as a plan for publishing a public dashboard of progress on the district web site. However, according to the proposal the dashboard would only be updated once a year despite the availability of data more often (according to the continuous improvement process description). The plan also includes a "read-out" to the Board of Education, but since this term is not explained, it is difficult to gauge the extent to which this activity would help with public awareness of progress.</p> <p>Overall, the continuous improvement and information sharing section includes several elements that are responsive to the notice, but lack some clarity and specificity, resulting in a score in the medium range.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

In presenting their strategies, the applicant focused on an extensive list of stakeholders (parents, community members, school personnel, union members, etc.) and has proposed some approached for each. For example, the unions would be contacted through their project management team representatives, while students would be involved through Learning Environment Surveys and forums. However, the plan lacks specifics in many areas (for example, the proposal states that teachers would receive "broad communications on initiative progress and status" and that the LEA "will continue to request periodic input." Except in one instance it is not mentioned who would be responsible for these communications, and how often. Therefore the section scores in the medium range.

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

5

2

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The plan for measuring academic indicators is extensive and has appropriate measures at different grade levels (state science test for upper grades, district oral language assessment for early childhood, etc.). The proposal also includes goals for elements such as completing the FAFSA and being career-ready, with rationales for each measure. There are annual goal established by measure for each subgroup, although the proposal does not state how the goals were set nor give information on how realistic they are, nor how the results will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information on the success of the plan. The indicators of non-cognitive growth and health/social-emotional indicators seem to represent a limited view of these constructs, especially for a plan that has a major wellness component. Number of absences and suspensions (an indicator chosen across the grade span) plus the results of a physical fitness test do not appear to fully cover this domain of health and social-emotional well-being; the rational for choosing these as the outcomes of interest is not fully developed. There was also not a well-described plan to review the selected measures over time and improve them if they do not give sufficient information. Therefore, this section fulfills some requirements and not others, and scores in the medium range.

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

5

2

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

In this section the proposal reiterates the data gathering efforts it has already mentioned (school and district data days, Learning Environment Survey, etc.) but does not describe further how they are part of an evaluation plan. The proposal mentions indicators that will be examined on data days to judge the performance of the grant, but states only that the indicators will be developed through outside support with TIF funding. The section does not mention strategies to improve results (such as altering compensation or working with partners). Because the plan has some information but lacks specificity, it scores in the medium range.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	4
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The budget does identify all funds to support the project. However, the budget is weighted heavily (44%) toward one-time technology investments (not specified), with only 31% going toward personalized learning structures, of which according to F(2) a substantial portion is also to buy software and multimedia equipment, in addition to the other technology spending. Technology is only one of four main goals of the grant, so it is puzzling that it gets almost half the budget.</p> <p>Personalized learning structures are the main focus of the grant program, and one of the things that makes it unique (which cannot be said of buying classroom technology), so it is reasonable to expect that it should be better supported in a budget than other priorities. In addition, because the investment of money in technology is a one-time event, it seems unlikely to have impact in the district once the technology purchased in the grant become obsolete, as opposed to greater investments in mastery learning and personalized learning environments. Finally, it is not substantiated in the proposal that technology is so essential to the personalized learning environment that it should have more funding than the personalized learning environments themselves, so its greater emphasis in the budget is not supported by a rationale. The budget therefore has priorities at odds with those of the program to some extent, and does not appear to create a sustainable situation. Therefore it scores in the low medium range.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	6

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The plan for sustaining the project's goals breaks everything down by project element and sub-element and gives estimates for one-time and ongoing costs. The detailed information is responsive to the notice in that it provides some elements of a high-quality plan. However, some plans, such as the projection that it would take only \$20k/year to maintain all of the technology upgraded through the resource equity effort, seem unrealistically low. For many there is no source of funds stated. Other elements of a high-quality plan such as responsible parties, a timeline, and deliverables were absent. Therefore the sustainability plan was scored in the medium range.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	9

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The application includes a comprehensive plan for partnering with United Way of Greater New Haven to provide the Boost! Initiative. The plan is responsive to the notice because it:

- Focuses on data for needs assessment, selecting resources for students, and tracking results
- Is congruent with goals of the RTTD plan (student achievement, social-emotional well being, etc.)
- Has coordinators who are part of school leadership teams and who work with those who provide wraparound services, making it likely that there will be a close connection between the school and United Way
- Includes training for school staff and coaches at school level so that the partnership will have support at the schools
- Will help other community partners join the service delivery model so that additional resources can be brought in and targeted
- Will roll out services gradually to reach all the schools in the district.

On the issue of parent involvement the plan is vague; parent involvement appears to be left to Parent Teams but it is unclear what they are. The desired results in Table X-1 do not have timelines, and given data presented by the district would appear to be unrealistic (the process of choosing the goals was not stated).

Because of the otherwise comprehensive nature of the plan this section scored in the high range.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has met Absolute Priority 1 because there is a plan to create personalized learning environments that is sufficiently detailed and planned so as to appear realistic. Its use of data to create student success profiles and measure students' progress against a mastery-based system of college- and career-ready standards, and its inclusion of supports for social-emotional well-being, could provide the kind of support needed to increase student achievement and decrease learning gaps. Its inclusion of supports to build the capacity of educators through professional development is important to supporting the kind of change the district hopes to achieve. The LEA's plan builds on existing capacity, expands at a reasonable pace, and addresses the needs of students and educators.

Total	210	153
-------	-----	-----



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0421CT-2 for New Haven, City of

### 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 thoroughly demonstrates its current work and describes its successful past history. The applicant states that success has been achieved with a traditionally low performing student body. The applicant's achievements are clearly described by depicting the growth it has achieved toward its prior five-year goals. The results are remarkable. The applicant's prior vision that has lead to the high rate of success are centered around students, schools, and the district. The vision goals are clearly articulated and provide a model for collaboration among the stakeholders. The three strategies that support this vision are explicitly stated, and all of the strategies are supported by a foundational framework that is connected to and in support of all strategies. These building blocks are identified as standards, curriculum, and assessments.</p> <p>The applicant documents a coherent vision in this proposal that is a continuation and deepening of its current goals. Having proven successes that can be linked to successes in the four core educational assurance areas is a recipe for success.</p> <p>The well articulated vision includes a number of core values that are integrated into the proposal. The vision's objectives are described with great detail and is supported by strategies that will transform this credible vision into reality.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant convincingly demonstrates that it will built upon its proven track record of continuous improvement. The applicant's approach to implementing this grant is through a logic conception of the initiatives that need to be in place, and through the identification of strategies are needed to achieve its goals. The applicant took a comprehensive inventory of what initiatives are already in place and where grade levels can be added and programs be expanded to aim for the best outcomes this proposal can product. A clearly outlined chart depicts the timelines for each initiative proposed by the applicant. The applicant implies that the entire proposal will require a team effort to be successful which supports that shared leadership is going to be applied. As a result, the applicant is highly likely to implement the proposal with great success at the district as well as the school-level.</p> <p>The applicant appropriately identified all schools in its district to participate in this grant proposal. Raw student demographic data is provided in rubric form and includes the student subgroups as required in this section demonstrating extensive evidence of a detailed plan. The applicant demonstrates that it collectively meets the requirement of students who are considered low income.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant identifies current barriers that have prevented students from being even more successful than they currently are. The applicant describes how those barriers will be overcome and translated into action that increases students' capacity for learning and the schools' goal of creating personalized learning environments for all students. The strategies that are used are directly related to this proposal's goals. The applicant demonstrates how it seeks innovation from its stakeholders and those innovations are incorporated into its models of theory of action and theory of change. The applicant seeks to promote meaningful learning for all its students past their compulsory school years and this effort can be realized with the vision for this proposal and the systems already has in place. The proposal is scaled-up from its previous initiatives by expanding the capacity for learning even further.</p> <p>The applicant comprehensively depicts a model showing its current status, the changes that will be undertaken, and the</p>		

outcomes that are expected. This model combined with the detailed narratives that describe each measure, form a high-quality plan that addresses student achievement, teacher development, increased college enrollment, and career and college-readiness. The measures addressed by the applicant demonstrate that they are intended to provide scale-up and meaningful reform. For example, the proposal states that the applicant will create a mastery-based learning culture and systems that ensure student learning is more deeply personalized and students are prepared for college and careers. The creation of a learning culture and learning systems that ensure student learning are by definition scale-up and reform efforts that will produce change in participating schools and district-wide.

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

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's expectations for its students exceed those that are identified in this grant application. The applicant appropriately details the particular attention that is paid to lowering the achievement gap. Precise data shows all students and subgroups' achievement data relative to state-mandated assessments and supports the proposal's likely hood of resulting in improved student learning. The applicant's proven record of data-based decision making, and the precision with which data is reported in this proposal are sound indicators for achievable results. The applicant added additional goals to the existing four required for this proposal, thus providing strong evidence of likely increases in student performance. Added are the goals of attainment of a college degree and students graduating from high school on time. The targets set for all of the goals are ambitious, but are certainly within the reach of this proposal. This is evident through goals and objectives that are stated in measurable terms and are direct and concise. The proposal also states that there is a strong component of accountability where teachers are expected to prepare students not only for success while at school, but for years following high school graduation. Holding teachers accountable for student success is a sound strategy that will contribute to the success of this project.

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	15

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates effective leadership and knowledge of school reform. This is evident through the way in which it transitioned from one set of standards to the next, namely, by staggering the grade levels that implemented the new standards. Evidence for successful improvement of student learning outcomes is the applicant's cycle of teaching and assessment in identified subject areas at consistent intervals. By evaluating students' progress toward mastery of their learning goals, help teachers to make changes that will increase learning. The applicant demonstrates the use of an innovative data system that helps teachers to access formative student data and possibly make changes to the delivery of instruction. Other examples demonstrate how technology is used to improve educator effectiveness and provide access of student data.

Bar graphs support the applicant's claim that it has a proven track record of improving learning outcomes and closing the achievement gap. For example, the applicant outperformed the state in reducing the achievement in all measured subject areas, namely, math, reading, writing, and science. Another example demonstrates how the district increased its graduation rates from 58% to 69% in three years. Similar results are demonstrated for college enrollment.

The approaches used to turn around lowest-achieving schools are unique and do not follow a one size fits all model. Each school's unique circumstances are considered when making systemic changes to improve learning. The applicant demonstrates that autonomy must be granted to some schools so that more drastic changes can be made.

Innovative strategies are documented throughout this proposal that demonstrate ways in which student data is shared with parents. One example is making assessment data available to parents, and student led parent-teacher conferences where students offer suggestions on how to improve their learning.

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

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates a high level of transparency by making available to the public all of the school-level expenditures required in this section. This level of transparency supports a high-quality plan that undergoes scrutiny by stakeholders.

This scrutiny, which supports an efficient management of resources, is evident through stakeholders' requests to have access to performance and spending data as per applicant. The existing budget as well as the proposed budget for the district is exhaustive as demonstrated by supporting documents in the appendix.

In addition to making public expenditures, the applicant also makes public student outcomes and results of school reform which add evidence of high-level transparency.

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

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant discusses that its state is actively promoting school reform. It describes for instance the challenge of implementing a new set of standards with state assessment tools lagging. The state has already implemented the requirement of personalized learning and has therefore begun building the infrastructure that is needed for this applicant to realize its goals. The education reform initiated by the state created conditions that are ideal for student learning. Specifically addressed by the applicant are those parts of the reform bill that relates directly to establishing personalized learning for its students. The district received a waiver from the state's department of education to allow for a mastery-based approach to learning.

The applicant extensively and explicitly demonstrated that there are no state-level barriers in implementing personalized learning environments.

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

10

10

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates exceptional stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal. This is supported through the detail and care with which a mixed group of stakeholders was assembled to engage a diverse group of stakeholders. In addition, the effort with which student groups were involved in the development of providing input in what they thought personalized learning meant, is exemplary. Creating buy-in with the students not only promotes their eventual participation, but also supports one of the proposed goals in promoting college and career readiness by increasing students' ownership of their learning. The district initiated face-to-face meetings with select stakeholders to discuss their support to the students. This measure demonstrates a genuine interest by the district in soliciting meaningful engagement. The district strategically chose those stakeholders that would best support its students in achieving the goals tied to this proposal. The proposal demonstrates that the applicant's focus is on a valuable process in the development of the project.

The applicant appropriately demonstrates that at least one teacher-leader who is represented by the local teachers union and one administrator who is represented by the administrators union were engaged in the development of the proposal.

Letters of support provided in this proposal are from institutions of higher education, specifically Yale University, community organizations like the New Haven Promise that is a partnership of several community stakeholders, as well as others that show strong support for the proposal. The letters mention the strong partnership that already exists between the applicant and key stakeholders. In addition, they demonstrate support for this proposal as a result of the applicant's prior successes.

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

5

5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

To the greatest extent possible, the applicant demonstrates how it systematically and carefully conducted an analysis of its current status. The analysis involved logical steps and detailed each course of action in this step. The rationales for choosing the steps in this analysis were provided, and the results are needs and gaps that are purposefully integrated in its high-quality plan. For example, the applicant determined from previous analysis that there were areas of weaknesses. Those weaknesses underwent further investigation to determine appropriate goals for improvement, thus providing the logic behind the proposal. The applicant very carefully identified the district's needs and determined that improvements are needed which form the basis for this proposal. The comprehensive plan to conduct an analysis by the applicant strongly supports the likely hood of success of this project.

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



	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	19
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant proposes an overarching goal of preparing students for college and career. This approach is innovative as it provides a clear direction for all stakeholders, while instructional strategies and other resources are employed to support this goal. Starting with a clear goal establishes a direction that can be followed and measured. Stakeholders can feasibly position themselves to support the applicant in meeting this goal. Examples of innovative ways to engage students are explaining to students how what they are learning has relevance to their lives, that what they are learning are transferrable skills they get to apply in college or in a career, offer students non-traditional learning environments that reflect their interests and provide the context in which deep learning can occur.</p> <p>The applicant demonstrates an innovative model of engaging students in the learning experience by making the learning environment highly personal and supported by rich and relevant learning opportunities that prepare students for college and/or career.</p> <p>This comprehensive and detailed plan includes professional development strategies for teachers based on students' needs. This relevance for both student learning and staff development provides for high-quality personalized learning that will increase student learning through high teacher effectiveness.</p> <p>Student profiles aid in providing a personalized learning environment for all student to include high need student sub groups.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	20
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The same appropriate philosophy that is applied to personalize student learning is applied to teaching. The applicant describes four key initiatives that will provide the framework to improve learning and teaching. The detailed initiatives are focused on such issues as improving learner engagement. Having identified initiatives will allow the applicant to monitor its progress and allocate resources in targeted fashion; enabling leadership teams to make decisions based on data such as rates of improvement.</p> <p>The applicant convincingly describes its current approaches in regard to increasing the effectiveness of educators and provides specific adaptations to those approaches to address the goals contained in this proposal. The applicant, for example, states that it will focus on an embedded training and support model that resembles a school-level coaching model. School-level coaching is an effective professional development strategy that provides teachers with timely and relevant resources.</p> <p>One way the applicant is identifying teachers' professional development needs is by getting to know the teachers so that it can provide the appropriate staff development opportunities to maximize each teacher's potential and to provide personalized training opportunities. The proposal details that teachers are transformed to facilitators and teacher leaders who affect learning. Teachers serving as facilitators strongly supports the objective of providing and improving personalized learning for students as they will innovatively transition into the role of supporting students individually rather than collectively. Teachers are engaged in learning about student success plans and how to consult those to optimize the personalized learning experience for the students. Teachers are empowered to learn how to engage the whole student, and they receive the training to accomplish that. Teachers learn how to read student data and how to adapt instruction accordingly. For example, teachers are asked to bring supporting data to student review meetings where they discuss individual students and how instruction can be adapted to increase the student's success. The applicant provides extensive examples on how it will realize its goals. None of the outcomes are left to chance and all aspects of the proposal involve teacher training.</p> <p>The applicant provides a chart that clearly demonstrates a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals. It demonstrates the goals, activities, time-line, and the persons responsible for implementation. In addition, the applicant documents its partnership with the Teach for America teacher preparation program to recruit teachers in minority and shortage areas. The proposal states that a teacher reward system based on student performance will increase teacher effectiveness with high-need populations and the general population. Reaching out to partnership organizations to hire minority teachers and teachers in shortage areas demonstrates the applicant's commitment to quality instruction.</p>		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score

(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	14
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant describes a high-quality plan that contains a portfolio of schools approach among others, to provide personalized learning. This strategy will help to effectively build a culture of learning that is based on individual schools' demographic make-up, learning needs and community needs. To provide effective leadership to schools, individual campuses are classified into one of three categories that allows for efficient provision of interventions for students. Further, a clearly outlined tiered approach to providing strategies that are increasing student achievement is especially helpful with students who are struggling. A list of research-based resources that are in place is provided. The interventions and resources will be timely and relevant as a result of this strategy. The district provides the leadership and training to schools that in turn encourage leadership among teachers who in turn encourage leadership in their students. The applicant states that because of this distributed model of leadership, it is in a position where it can optimize the implementation of this grant. The approach to leadership fosters professional growth within the organization and will allow teachers to grow into leadership roles, making teaching and learning more effective. A clear picture of the organization is provided through its organizational chart, and personnel in various positions are described in short narratives. Students not only have the opportunity to earn credit by demonstrating mastery but have several choices on how to do that. The proposal is not explicit about the provision of learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	9
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides evidence of a high-quality plan as evident by the infrastructure that supports learning. The proposal contains strong evidence of tools that are available in the form of two portals that allow access to student info such as attendance and assessment scores, but also to personalized learning plans and career course planning sections, for instance. The proposal contains a feasible plan that reminds parents that the information is available and provides training to all new families to the district on how to access that information. Data is readily available to teachers, and the applicant provides sufficient detail that supports the applicant's ability to implement the project.</p> <p>The applicant does not demonstrate how stakeholders other than parents and students can access student data where appropriate.</p> <p>Sound district-wide leadership systems and infrastructure supporting the implementation of this project are documented throughout this proposal and in the appendix. An example is the tiered system described in Section C of this proposal that addresses how schools' needs for resources are appropriately identified and expended to where they provide the necessary support to improve the school as a whole and students individually.</p> <p>The applicant appropriately identified that varying levels of expertise exist among staff and students. To address this, levels of training are offered to curb a one-size fits all approach. This effective training approach will result in the development of experts in certain areas who can then in turn provide technical support to their peers. This is an example of using resources efficiently and effectively.</p> <p>The proposal contains appropriate documentation that the applicant has in place an electronic data system that allows students, parents and teachers to export data. The applicant states that teachers, for example, access the electronic grade book, export student data and import it onto a spreadsheet where it can be analyzed in more detail.</p> <p>The applicant describes several independent data systems that it plans to integrate as part of this proposal. The existing systems provide convincing evidence that a large-scale data systems infrastructure is in place that will be expanded to more efficiently address the goals in this proposal.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	14
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant depicts a chart of continuous improvement that contains student, school, and district improvements. A system is in place that places great emphasis on data that is derived from multiple sources. The data is evaluated and organized to show successes and needs for improvement. Placing emphasis on data and using data to make decisions is an effective</p>		

strategy to improve current practices. The improvements are examined with a team approach, and solutions are conceived that are crafted into carefully developed goals that guide a new path to improvement. Using the team approach to examine data and make recommendations for improvements fosters a sense of community and risk taking that supports a high-quality continuous improvement cycle. The district's record shows that it has a proven record in making changes that have led to improved learning for students.

The applicant is effectively focusing its continuous improvement process on classroom outcomes, school-wide outcomes, and system-wide outcomes. This strategy allows for teams at the various levels/locations to evaluate progress and make corrections. This model of distributive leadership is very effective in building an infrastructure for contiguous improvement.

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

5

5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal documents throughout this application, that communication and engagement are part of this applicant's plan to continually improve its plan. The applicant provides examples of how groups of external stakeholders such as union members and city groups as well as individual stakeholders such as teachers and principals are engaged with the district in meaningful, ongoing communication to improve its plan.

Specifically, the applicant appropriately lists all major internal and external stakeholders and clearly describes what type of information is being communicated and in what setting it is communicated. For example, students and parents are informed and engaged through in-person conferences, surveys and forums. Informing and engaging this stakeholder group through various means increases the likelihood of continued participation. The applicant also provides evidence that it provides ongoing communication through the leadership of its external stakeholders. This is an effective strategy for communication and engagement with external stakeholders.

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

5

5

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates a masterfully developed schedule of performance measures. Most notable is that performance data is captured for grade levels prior to and in addition to the performance measures required by the state. This is very helpful in gauging student success and providing students in a pro-active fashion with timely interventions to maximize their learning. The rubrics are clear and describe how the measure is being developed, what the rationale for using the measure is, and how it informs instruction and students in monitoring their progress toward their learning goals.

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

5

4

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states that it will utilize the same proven plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the RTT-D activities. For example, contract staff is going to be hired to evaluate the RTT-D expenditures that will help to determine how funds can be re-allocated so that the use of funds is efficient and sustainable. Another example of how the effectiveness of activities is evaluated is by utilizing surveys that will provide data regarding the productive use of time. Utilizing proven strategies will ensure a high quality product. It saves the applicant time and resources by not having to create a new system with which to evaluate effectiveness.

The applicant states that a comprehensive evaluation is going to be provided by the Rand Corporation that currently evaluates another district initiative. The applicant's use of a corporation that has satisfactorily performed prior evaluations adds credibility to the evaluation proposal. In addition, the applicant has extensively demonstrated its success in evaluating the effectiveness of prior school-based initiatives throughout this proposal. Also, an outside evaluator may be less biased and conduct on objective evaluation.

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

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a comprehensive list of all funds that will support this proposal. This list includes contributions from the applicant, from a partnership through the United Way, Federal Funds, and the RTT-D funds. The contribution of funds from partnering agencies suggest a high-level of commitment to the success of this proposal. The budget is reasonable, sufficient and justifiable for the implementation of the proposal which is evident as a substantial part of the budget is directly supporting the clearly described goals. The budget is sectioned into the various initiatives it supports. This practice demonstrates how each expenditure directly supports the initiatives in this proposal. The budget has been very well thought through, and it is remarkable that only 2% of the proposed budget is allocated for the management of the project. Effective leadership practices are already in place and therefore do not require substantial financial investments as would be expected if those were not in place. Other initiatives, such as the technology needed to implement personalized learning portfolios, require more financial support. The budget appropriately supports these expenditures. The applicant describes clearly which funds are used for one-time investments and which ones will contribute to operational costs.

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

10

10

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has appropriately identified the cost per initiative and has established the costs associated with each of the components of the proposal. This practice supports effective leadership that has been demonstrated throughout this proposal that emphasizes that decisions are based on data. Examining each budget item with detail allows the applicant to effectively project and calculate costs after the term of the grant. The applicant is committed to sustaining the proposal and has developed a high-quality plan that will be supported, in part, by district funds after the term of the grant. The applicant demonstrates how the proposed goals were revised to match the funding that will be available after the grant period and thus provides a clear and realistic picture of how this proposal can be sustained. In addition, the applicant demonstrates that some of the proposal goals will require minimal funding in order to continue. Some of these include processes of building teacher leadership and sustaining the role of teachers as facilitators.

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant thoroughly demonstrates that the partnership will support the goals outlined in this proposal. The applicant proposes to use the same effective leadership strategies that are documented throughout this proposal to manage the partnership. For example, school leadership teams will decide what services will support their students' needs. Housing the partnership director within the school district's central office is an effective way of demonstrating the district's commitment to the partnership. Domains that the partnership will support have been clearly identified and the applicant has specified that the support services provided through the partnership affect student learning and teacher effectiveness.

The proposal lists ten appropriate goals that include educational outcomes such as increased achievement scores and increased family involvement that thoroughly support the overall goals of the proposal.

Results regarding the effectiveness of interventions are reasonably calculated using a software program. The applicant is attempting a unique data-collecting system through a two-way data feed between community organizations and the district.

The applicant soundly describes the process through which high need populations are identified and how services are provided based on their status. The program described by the applicant personalizes this process.

Convincing evidence supports the scale-up efforts of the applicant. The proposal contains appropriate examples of how many schools are going to be added to program annually, how funding has been secured and non-profit organizations are contacted and their rates of responses.

The applicant presents steps that will increase improvement over time. Supporting this argument are examples of the use of results-based accountability (RBA) and the contracting of personnel such as a program director and a project management team. In addition, a comprehensive model for resource coordination as depicted in the appendix will contribute to the scale-up efforts.

The proposal describes how the two coordinating teams that manage educational and non-academic areas are going to be combined to execute an integrated system of support.

The applicant specifically describes what it needs to do to build the capacity of its staff. Convincing components are the

addition of staff as program coaches and coordinators, the training of teachers and administrators on wraparound services and in the coordination of duties with partnering agencies for example. To assess the needs of the students and match them to the partners' services, the Resource Coordination system described in the appendix supports strong evidence of success. In addition, the applicant proposes to form a community-based organization resource center that seems feasible in accomplishing the applicant's goals. Evidence is documented in the form of a matrix that clearly describes the district's wraparound service model along with the services that already exist in the district. Plans such as the resource coordination system provide sound evidence of how staff will have the tools needed to meet the goals in this proposal. Parent and family engagement is extensively described and depicted as an important component of the proposed plan. A clear rubric containing timelines is providing evidence of a comprehensive progress evaluation.

The performance measures are completely detailed in a rubric that describes progressive outcomes for the duration of the grant and beyond.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has demonstrated through its prior and current successes that it will provide personalized learning environments to all of its students in all core educational assurances. The applicant has developed a proven system of leadership that applies effective principles and strategies in a well-coordinated fashion to achieve the results it sets out to achieve. The applicant established that it will provide students with the skills and knowledge to be college and career-ready. Every strategy and every effort is geared toward meeting this goal. Teacher training, data systems, engagement of stakeholders and continual evaluation of progress toward its goal, are all indicators that this applicant meets Absolute Priority 1.

Total	210	204
-------	-----	-----



## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

Application #0421CT-3 for New Haven, City of

#### 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 has been awarded High points because the plan includes evidence to build on its work in the four core educational assurances by expanding existing programs and initiatives.

The applicant has developed a program which will be a continuation of existing initiatives. These initiatives have provided the applicant with increases in student performance. For example, in 2009 the applicant created a five year plan focusing on closing the achievement gap, cutting the drop out rate in half, achieving a 75.5% graduation rate, and ensuring that graduating student have the ability and financial resources to attend and succeed in college. To date, across all subjects the applicant has improved outcomes at twice the rate as the state with gains 10% vs.4% in 3rd-8th grade and 2% vs.-1 (decline) in 10th grade with the greatest progress in reading and writing with the gap closed by 20-25% across all grades. The drop out rate has improved 7 percent for the last two years, increasing the graduation rate to 64% and strengthening college readiness indicators while also providing full scholarships to qualifying students. These are strong statements and provide evidence of progress towards future successes.

The applicant has adopted the Common Core Standards and is in the process of implementing them through a grade-staggered approach across content areas but also has aligned a rigorous curriculum to the state standards in all subject areas, college readiness and has a periodic district assessments system in place to measure student progress toward annual learning goals. Additionally, the applicant has begun to implement a STEM through interdisciplinary units. Students will have opportunities to expand their strengths through Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math across content areas. This is positive and progressive and is a strong indicator of future success.

The applicant has existing data systems in place such as SchoolNet for learning management, TalentEd to manage talent, and PowerSchool which includes a parent and student interface. These investments allow the applicant to manage various data such as warehousing holistic student data, student growth data, and teacher evaluations. They also coach teachers on how to access and use available data. These data systems are inclusive and provide up to date data for stakeholders which is a strong indicator of data mining capabilities.

The applicant has been recognized as a leader in the area of recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining highly effective teachers and leaders. Evaluations tools consider multiple measures of student growth for teachers, define clear instructional and leader competencies and keep PD at the center by identifying areas of improvement. Based on past performance, the applicant has been awarded a teacher incentive grant which will support personalized training for teachers. These statements are strong and provide evidence of continued improvement and success in the area of teacher development.

The applicant has established a tiering framework and SIP process to differentiate accountability and support every school. This is a very powerful statement and supports the idea of autonomy within the district for schools to provide the best change model for its specific population of students. The turn-around model includes a "no fault" environment, promoting collaboration allowing the district to rehire teachers and provide work rule flexibility and extra compensation for teachers who work in turnaround schools. These statements provide strong evidence of mutual collaboration which focuses on students. The implementation of the *Boost! Initiative* provides partnerships with three entities: The District, The United Way, and The City and is fully implemented in 10 schools in the district with plans to expand into all schools. This initiative is a wrap around initiative which supports students in the school, community and city. This initiative has strong indications and supports the plan by giving students the additional help they may need after school hours.

The applicant delineates a plan to implement a program to build upon existing programs but to accelerate or "turbocharge" progress towards the vision of personalized learning experiences while setting every student on the path to college, career, and life readiness. The plan is well thought out and comprehensive and gives relevance to teaching and learning. Incorporating technology into student activities is also included in the plan. The applicant plans on defining and then facilitating a systematic process through which teachers and principals develop plans for ways to use technology to drive greater personalization. This is a strong statement to support the plan and has positive indications for the appropriate use of technology. However, there are weaknesses in the plan. For example, details related to how teachers will implement personal learning environments for students is missing as well as details of how data expansions will provide students and stakeholders opportunities to access meaningful information.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
---	----	---

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has been awarded High points for its implementation approach for all schools and all students because the plan is clearly delineated and includes specifics as to how it will build from its existing capacity and encourage pilot innovations with its educator teams and leaders as well as build underlying structures and systems that will enable all schools to transition to more personalized and accelerated learning for students.

A table is included in the plan which provides data for participating schools, 47. 46 of the schools enroll 40 percent of student who qualify for free and reduced lunch support; on average 79 percent of the applicant's schools qualify for this subsidy. The applicant has provided additional aggregate data on district populations and subgroups including: Minority students 79% (46%

Black and 33% Hispanic), 10% ELL, and 10% SE. A table is included in the plan which provides the total number of participating students and the number is each of its sub-group categories.

The applicant plans to design strategies in which students are engaged in learning through mastery-based culture and systems. By doing this the applicant is setting the ground work for their plan to be implemented to fidelity and therefore produce its intended results which has strong implications for teaching and learning. The initial planning integrates standards and learning goals and 21st Century Competency rubrics already in place, develop learning goals, establish provisions for adjusting time for student mastery create interim assessment and develop a resource bank of on demand materials. These provisions are good indicators of a successful plan. The applicant expects for this foundational design work to be done in the first year and a half (SY 2013-2014) with provisions to make changes to the plan as needed. Building off capstone project pilots in all 9th grades to all high school students developing capstone projects by SY 2013-2014. Provisions for PD will be included. These are a positive statements to support implementation of the plan. However, only 12,000-15,000 students out of 22,000 students in the district will be impacted initially by the implementation of the plan.

The applicant has provisions in the plan to engage students, families, teachers, leaders and community partners in understanding student needs through a multidimensional (academic and social-emotional) dynamic Student Success Plans for every child beginning immediately for students in 6th -12th grade students (10,074). *Naviance* is are in place to begin this process. After a needs assessment is completed, interfacing capabilities will be determined to interface this system with *SchoolNet*. This is positive because the applicant will be poised to begin tracking academic and social-emotional data. Training and support will be implemented to engage all users allowing for feedback for continuous upgrades..

The applicant is already employing wrap-around services for students in 10 schools. The plan includes provisions to scale the implementation of *Boost!* to 10 schools each year until all schools have these services. Staffing will be provided by service corps and *Boost!* coordinators by the end of the grant period. The plan also calls for a cycle of continuous improvement to engage community partners, schools, and teachers to engage in training *Boost!* personnel how to collect and mange data integration in the wrap-around programs. These statements are strong indicators for successful engagement of the community in the wrap-around services.

The applicant has provided evidence to support how they will leverage their technology plan to confirm technology needs and invest technology in the schools with the highest needs. However, 15 school will need upgraded technology which will take place by year end 2012-2013. Grant competitions will allow the most innovative district educators to be awarded innovation grants to support and sustain best practices. This is positive and creates opportunities for teachers to be creative with the use of technology. The plan does not provide evidence of how the 15 schools were selected and what specific updates are needed versus other schools in the district.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	6
---	----	---

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant was awarded points in the Medium range because the plan outlines where the district is with respect to accelerating student achievement, a plan of action to improve student achievement and college and career readiness as well as increase graduation rates.

The applicant acknowledges gaps in proficiency and graduation even though they have made gains in both areas (20-30 percent proficiency gap between the district's minority and white students across all subject), over one-third of its students do not graduate and college and career readiness has not been closely monitored. These statements provide strong evidence of the district's internal assessment of existing shortcomings which is necessary for effective plan implementations.

The applicants Theory of action seeks to build a culture and capacity (including systems and tools) to enable coherent and meaningful experiences for all students. The applicant believes that action is needs to be taken against five leverage points:

- Leverage of exceptional talent and development systems to enable educators effectively deliver purposeful, supportive and meaningful instructions for each student (Not directly supported by RTT-D grant funds): and
- The creation of a mastery -based learning culture and systems, that ensure student learning is more deeply-personalized and students are prepared for college and careers;
- Provide all stakeholders with a deep understanding of student needs through relevant, timely, and comprehensive learning information; and
- Provide students access to wraparound services and support that ensure that every child is supported by both school and community to be ready to engage in learning;
- Encourage technology-forward innovations within portfolios of schools to access digital learning tools and generate

breakthrough learning modalities and outcomes for students.

These leveraging points are strong statements in the plan to effectively transform district practices for student successes.

The applicant's Theory of change skillfully fits the Theory of action which involves scaffolding of existing efforts to transform culture, systems, and capacity across the district. School portfolios will be developed as examples of innovation to generate best practices. These are positive statements to support the district's Theory of change plan. However, there is no evidence in the plan to scale up the model.

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

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has been awarded points in the High range for this section because achievable goals have been clearly set with a plan of action for achieving these goals.

Goals:

- Students will be prepared to persist and succeed in college. 43 percent of high school graduates will receive a college degree in six years. The applicant will measure student progress towards this goal by ensuring 65 percent of students enroll in college for their second year. Second year retention rate is a strong indicator and the district believes they should be held accountable for preparing students to meet this standard.
- 80 percent of the district's high school graduates will enroll in college. Currently 64 percent of graduates enroll in college. To increase the percentage, the district has already introduced several academic and financial programs focused on college culture and readiness.
- students will graduate high school with four years of starting high school, with a targeted 79 percent district wide graduation rate. In SY 2010-2012 64 percent of the four year cohort graduated, a six point increase from 2009.
- Students in the district will achieve high rates of mastery to close the achievement gap with the state: 72 percent of the students in the city where the applicant is located, 3rd-8th graders, will perform at goals or above on the state Mastery Test - 46 percent at goal in SY 2011-2012, up from 37 percentage in SY 2008-2009. 46 percent of 10th graders will perform at goals on the state aptitude test in mathematics, and 44 percent in reading.
- Students across all the subgroups will close the achievement gap against the highest performing state sub-groups on state achievement tests with the goal of closing the achievement gap by SY 2018-2019.
- Students in the district demonstrate median 70 th percentile growth across all grades, subgroups, and subjects.

These goals are ambitious yet achievable based on current trend data and progressive increases in student achievement the applicant has a plan to decrease gaps in achievement. The plan is a good plan because the applicant has tailored goals for overall implementation. However, specific goals for increasing the number of students who achieve mastery and the percent of students who enrollment in college is not delineated.

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	12

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has been awarded points in the High range for providing strong evidence of its record of prior success over the past four years and its effort to increase equity in learning and teaching.

- The applicant has exposed students to rigorous standards and assessments. Common Core standards have been adopted and Next Generation Science Standards have been implemented in specific schools. 21 Century Competencies have been introduced to students along with Student Success Plans for grades 6th - 12th.
- The applicant has made significant investments in its data infrastructure and now has the following data systems in place:

Learning Management systems

*SchoolNet* in use for 6+ years

*Powerschool* a Student Information System

TalentEd an educator system tied to teacher and administrator evaluations systems

*Naviance* Student Success and College Plans

- Union supported teacher and administrator evaluation system has been implemented
- A focus on turning around low performing schools

These data systems are useful tools to provide data needed to successfully implement a quality plan. Student data systems provides quick access to performance data as well as creates a visualization for areas where improvement is needed. However, these data systems are not linked to provide meaningful reports for efficient use of data. There is an over abundance of systems without evidence of how data is disaggregated and who uses specific systems.

(B)(1)(a) Students in the applicant's district have out performed peer districts over the past four years. 70% of students in the applicant's district are low-income; 80% are traditionally underserved minorities, compared to 23% state-wide. 66.5% of students scored at or above proficient and 42.35 scoring at goal and above vs. an average of 59.0% and 35.7% for two neighboring school districts. Graduation rates have increased from 58 percent in 2009 to 60 percent in 2012. The applicant has a partnership with a local university, the city and a community foundation to support graduates with full scholarships to in-state schools. The graduating class of 2011 was the first class to benefit from this program with increased college enrollments to in-state schools from 4 5 percent to 48 percent for the 2011 class. These statements provide strong evidence of improved student achievement over time as well as increased graduation and college enrollment rates over the past four years..

(B)(1)(b) By using a tiered framework of differentiated assessment based on performance and learning environment as measured by annual surveys, the applicant has been able to identify its lowest performing schools. Each school develops a SIP with the lowest performing schools following a more comprehensive planning process along with provisions for structured exemptions for flexibility to drive change. Over the past three years the applicant has focused on improving outcomes for its nine lowest performing schools. The applicant lists the schools targeted for turn around. The applicant approach to identifying and restructuring low performing schools is strong evidence for implementation of a high quality plan.

(B)(1)(c) Students in the district have regular face-to-face conferences with teachers to discuss individual performance as well as set performance goals. High school student participate in an advisory program piloted at the district's Magnet School and expanded to all schools in the district over the past three years. Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year with student led conferences have been piloted and have been implemented in three other schools in the district. Parents can also request meetings throughout the school year. These practices foster building home-school connections and provide good opportunities for teacher, parent, and student collaboration of goal setting assessing how best to improve teaching and learning.

Technology is an avenue for parents, teachers and student to access data as well. Learning Management Systems provided summative and formative assessment data for teachers. PowerSchool provides demographic, aggregate performance and state data for students, parents and teachers. SchoolNet was rolled out for parents and its use and satisfaction has been uneven. These are effective tools to share data with stakeholders allowing access to pertinent information on an ongoing basis.

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

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:  
 The applicant's plan was awarded maximum points because the plan includes evidence of implemented transparent practices. The applicant already makes district data available to the public. Data such as: Resources and staffing, student outcomes, and policy and practice.  
 Annual budgets for each school, breakdowns for instructions, operations and full- and part-time personnel and staffing. School data is also available along with ranking , demographic data and performance results including state assessments The student handbook is distributed to families which is positive and provides yearly information regarding district policies.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	8
---	----	---

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has been awarded points in the High range because there is evidence in the plan that the district has support from the state but the state regulates how the applicant delivers instruction to students which will not provide for autonomous conditions .

The state has adopted Common Core Standards (2010) and is leading reform to implement personalized learning environments. Assessments have been aligned to support implementation of new standards by pushing schools towards a mastery-based curriculum. The state is working with districts to determine how best to support them but has some regulatory control over how districts, including the applicant, delivers instruction. A state reform bill has outlined district reform requirements by implementing the following:

- Linking teacher evaluations to student achievement
- Requiring identification and monitoring of individual student needs
- Authorizing parents to have decision making rights
- Requiring student intervention in early learning
- Low performing school have to provide a turn around model
- Strengthening of teacher evaluations
- Expand wraparound services

The applicant has regulatory requirements from the state which can impede autonomy to implement personalized learning environments, therefore points were deducted.

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

10

10

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has been awarded Maximum points because they have provided strong evidence of including stakeholders in the development of the plan.

The applicant has demonstrated stakeholder engagement:

- Engaging a diverse team in the proposal design which met twice weekly to generate ideas from teachers and administrators
- Providing opportunities for input through "open call" asking for input through the distinct website
- In-person out reach strategies through public presentations, focus groups, one-on-one interviews and discussion forums
- Teachers and administrators participated in the developing of the plan including Union support
- Students representatives engaged in the development of the plan through Citywide Council Meetings, the Mayor's Youth Council and citywide Coalition
- Families were invited to provide feedback through Citywide Parent Leadership

Letters of support are in the Appendix. These are strong statements regarding the development of the plan.

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

5

5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant was awarded Maximum points because they have provided strong evidence of analyzing needs and gaps. The applicant organized data to support in steps.

- Step 1: Collect data and results of current state of initiatives and programs
- Step 2: Analyze strengths and challenges
- Step 3: Set goals for future state
- Step 4: Define strategies and seek engagement throughout
- Step 5: Assess results and share and replicate best practices

These are strong statements in support of the applicant's plan to conduct needs and gap assessments.

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

	Available	Score

(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	10
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant was awarded points in the Medium range because the plan has provisions to engage and empower learners but it does not clearly articulate how they will achieve this plan and is missing elements of a high quality plan.</p> <p>The plan has provisions to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage learners through a mastery based culture and systems</li> <li>• Engage the school system and broader community in understanding and reacting to student needs through a multi-dimensional( academic, physical, and social emotional) dynamic profile</li> <li>• Engaging the community to support students through the use of wraparound services</li> </ul> <p>The applicant also plans to make learning meaningful by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using competency performance based learning to connect what students are learning and success in college</li> <li>• Providing students with access to actionable information to set and pursue goals linked to rigorous standards (Common Core Standards)</li> <li>• Provide students with the opportunity to create a Student Success Plan</li> </ul> <p>What is not evidenced in the plan is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the applicant will implement a variety of instructional approaches. For example, students will create a student success plan but this plan excludes how teachers will provide different strategies during instruction or how the student success plans will overlap lessons to specifically meet the individual needs of students.</li> <li>• How the student success plan will be linked to career and college readiness</li> <li>• How students will be involved in deep learning experiences</li> <li>• How students will have access to diverse cultures and perspectives</li> <li>• How students will master critical academic content and skills such as team-work, perseverance, critical thinking communication and creativity</li> <li>• How schools will implement a personalized sequence of instruction and</li> <li>• How a high-quality of instructional approaches and environments will be implemented</li> <li>• Evidence of students having training in and support on how to use tools and resources for tracking and managing their learning.</li> </ul> <p>These exclusions make the plan weak.</p>		

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	12
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant was awarded points in the Medium range because the plan has evidence of implementing instructional strategies which allows all student the opportunity to pursue a rigorous course of study for college and career readiness and includes goals, activities, timelines deliverables and responsible parties for implementation of two cycles: the Multi-dimensional cycle and the Technology Cycle. However the plan does not coherently provide evidence of who will provide PD as well as the specific focus of PD. The plan is lacking specific details of strategies to implement PD to effectively implement personalized learning environments.</p> <p>The foundations for this initiative are: Mastery-based learning; multi-dimensional, dynamic student profiles; wraparound services; and cycle of technology-forward school and classroom innovations. These are strong statements to support the plan's focus on increased levels of PD.</p> <p>Currently the applicant has five approaches to build teacher capacity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect, interpret and analyze student data</li> <li>• Student focused success plans</li> <li>• The Boost!</li> <li>• Teacher developed PD plan</li> <li>• Capstones for the adaptation of instructional content</li> <li>• Embedded PD</li> <li>• Leaders training</li> </ul>		

However, there is no evidence in the plan of the following:

- Teachers having opportunity to frequently measure students's progress towards college or career readiness
- Teachers using data to access on track graduation for students or accelerating student progress for high school completion
- A plan to increase the number of highly effective teachers available to all students including hard to staff schools
- High quality learning resources being available or provisions to make these resources available for sharing
- Implementation of training, system, and practices toward increasing student performances

The applicant has several programs in place with additional programs in the plan, but there is no cohesiveness in the plan to overlap program implementations to meet specific student outcome for college an/or career readiness.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	12
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has been awarded points in the High range because strong evidence has been provided to support its LEA has the infrastructure to support of implementation of the plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The district has adopted a Portfolio of Schools approach</li> <li>• Has a robust support system</li> <li>• Conducts in-house surveys for continues improvement</li> <li>• Has plans to expand wraparound services</li> </ul> <p>These are clear and strong indicators that provide evidence of central office support.</p> <p>(D)(1)(b) School leadership teams are in each school and are comprised of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Data team</li> <li>• School Planing and Management Team</li> <li>• Student and Staff Support Team and</li> <li>• Parent Team</li> </ul> <p>What is not evident is how these school teams function cohesively to support school level implementations.</p> <p>(D)(1)(c) The applicant has obtained a waiver from the state to implement Mastery-Based Learning. They also use Common Core skills along with G-string Century Competencies. Mastery based learning allows student to have individualized programs and experiences to bridge the gap between high school and college. This is positive evidence of the student opportunities to progress based on mastery.</p> <p>(D)(1)(d) The applicant states that "Students in the district are allowed to demonstrate mastery at multiple times through the year, through quarterly interim assessments and end-of-course formative assessments." These opportunities are not varied to allow students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards in multiple ways continuously throughout the year, only at benchmark assessments.</p> <p>(D)(1)(e) The applicant's has an inclusion model for making student accessibility to instructional content. This is a positive practice and can be effective. Goals and objectives are adjusted to fit student needs. Special Education teachers partner with regular education teachers and literacy coaches to effectively plan for instruction.</p> <p>The plan also includes the School Tiering Framework: Tier I - Schools with consistently high student performance on achievement and growth, Tier II - Schools with mixed or average performance on achievement and growth, Tier III - Schools with consistently low performances over multiple years on both achievement and growth and Tier IV - Turnaround - Schools that demonstrate consistently low performance and growth and low progression towards graduation. The applicant's central office. guides in the development of thee school's SIP which parallels the DIP. These are positive statements in support of a cohesive plan.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	7
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

The applicant was awarded points in the Medium range because the plan has evidence of school infrastructure capabilities to support personalized learning. (D)(2)(a)

- Technology learning tools will be available to all students
- Parents and students will have access to SIS and Parent Portal web-based interface.
- Teachers and administrators will have access to learning content and PowerTeacher, a web-based classroom management system

Ensuring stakeholder technology access will be done through partnerships in the community. For example, the public library will offer hands on technology training sessions. However, there is no evidence of when these sessions will take place or who is responsible for training stakeholders.

(D)(2)(b) The applicant has provisions for parent and family technology usage through its partner, the local library. This is no evidence of additional opportunities for technical support for stakeholders. This is weak plan.

(D)(2)(c) The applicant has provisions for parents to use PowerSchool. It is not evident as to how parents without computer access can access student data. This is a weak plan.

(D)(2)(d) The applicant has several systems which the district and schools use for data mining. However, there is no plan to interface these systems for easy access for stakeholders.

These statements support provisions of infrastructure but the applicant is lacking evidence to support how technology will be interfaced with existing systems for stakeholder usage.

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

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant was awarded points in the High range because the plan includes a continuous improvement process but there are gaps in providing feedback on progress toward project goals. .

- Classroom Continuous Improvement: Student assessment data has a real-time interface enabling teachers the capabilities to modify instruction strategies quickly. This is a positive practice which allows teachers to adjust instruction immediately to meet the needs of students.
- School Continuous Improvement: Data teams will review and analyze student-level data to identify standards and learning objectives that need instructional focus. This practice is positive in that it provides data for grade level teams to identify gaps in learning.
- District Continuous Improvement: District Data Teams will monitor outcomes for schools across the district, prioritizing actions required to meet goals. Analyzing district data provides an overall picture of how each school fairs with state goals and is a good approach to targeting school wide gaps in learning.

These statements provide some evidence in the plan to monitor and provide feedback but lacks evidence of how data will be publicly shared with stakeholders and how ongoing corrections will be implemented.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
--	---	---

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has been awarded points in the Medium range because the plan has evidence of ongoing communication and engagement strategies for stakeholders.

The plan has provisions to engage the following stakeholders in ongoing communications:

- Union members will have the opportunity to provide feedback through bargaining units
- The Citywide Reform Committee will be involved with measuring progress but there is no evidence of how this will be done.
- Individual Teachers will be members of the project team and allowed period input on initiative design, development and launch
- Student and families will have various formats to provide feedback including surveys and conferences. This is a weak

statement.

- Other community organizations will be provided regular status updates and feedback on progress. This is a general statement and does not include which community organizations will be in the communication loop.

The applicant's plan for ongoing communications is not consistent with all stakeholders nor is the plan inclusive of community members for consistent ongoing communication.

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

5

2

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has been awarded points in the Medium range because the plan includes aggregate data for participating students along with targets for subgroups. The applicant has also provided evidence of the subgroups are taught by effective teachers and lead by effective administrators.

(E)(3)(a) The applicant has provided a rationale for each performance measure.

(E)(3)(b) Assessment of rigor is vague. For example, 2nd grade reading skills has been selected. The measure of rigor is the winter assessment and DRA given three times yearly. This is a weak statement for assessing rigor. Another performance measure is school suspensions. This is positive because this data can be accessed by school staff other than teachers.

(E)(3)(c) The applicant has not provided evidence of assessing how it will review and improve performance over time.

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

5

2

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has been awarded points in the Medium range because it has provided a plan for evaluating effectiveness of investments but the plan lacks specific outcomes for measuring effectiveness.

The applicant has provided a design for effectiveness plan. Through the use of aggregated student profiles teachers will be able to locate multiple data and view student data over time. Also, the applicant plans to launch a PD portal where teacher can access tailored PD content at anytime. However, there is no evidence in the plan of how teachers will be provided PD through this portal or for evaluating the effectiveness of this portal.

Learning Environment Surveys will provide feedback on the effectiveness of PD and whether the teacher feels that implemented initiatives are making an impact on student academic outcomes. This is a weak statement because "teacher's feeling" is subjective.

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

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant was awarded points in the Medium range because they have delineated a plan for RTT-D expenditure projects. However, the rationale for investments is weak. The applicant stated that "prioritizing investments in technology and PD will ensure equity of access all school" but provide no evidence of how this will be implemented.

(F)(1)(a)

- District Funds - Existing district positions will be funded by the district (\$2.6 MM)
- United Way partnership will continue to fund Boost! (\$2.3MM)
- Federal Funds (Grant) will finance Teacher Incentive Fund (\$0.7MM)
- RTT-D Funds (\$30MM) will fund new initiatives

These statements provides evidence of other funds available to support implementation of personal learning environments.

(F)(2)(b)

There is evidence that the budget is zealous in the area of technology and unreasonable. For example, there is a line

item to replace 8,000 computers. This is not a good plan and does not align specifically with any particular section of the plan and does not include a plan for assessing how current technology will be identified for replacement.

(F)(2)(c)(i)

The applicant has not provided a clear description of State Funds available to them, but has provided evidence of one-time fund categories. This is a weak plan because information regarding state aid support is not evident in the plan.

(F)(2)(ii)

Four projects have been identified for on-time operational cost: Transforming district goals (Teacher stipends), Refining & transforming the role of assessments (Assessment bank software), Expanding gateway (Capstone portfolios), Mastery based learning PD (Stipends for leaders and teachers). All other operational costs listed are over the grant cycle. The applicant has a plan that is budgeted for each project but there are gaps in how funds for each initiative in the plan was calculated for implementation which is not positive.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	4
--	----	---

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a sustainability plan and was awarded points in the Medium range. The plan delineates one-time and on-going operational costs by project as well as how funds will be used to update infrastructure. However, the plan does not provide evidence of how the technology will be included in the sustainability plan or how ongoing support of teachers over time will be implemented. There is no evidence of in the plan to obtain support from State and local leaders.

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant was awarded Medium points because it succinctly provides evidence to support implementation of the plan but is missing specific details for stakeholder involvement implementations.

The applicant lists four domain areas it will target for teachers to be able to support students to achieve their potential:

- Physical health and wellness
- Social, emotional and behavioral health
- Student engagement and enrichment and
- Parent engagement (including outreach to support families)

(1) The applicant has identified 10 results for students in the LEA or consortium of LEAs that align with and support the applicant's broader Race to the Top – District proposal. For example, all students will have a 95 percent attendance rate or above and 85 percent of student in 4th-8th will be proficient in reading.

(2)The applicant also will provide Boost! training and toolkits for school leadership teams which is a partnership with United Way.This is a good plan. Desired results have been identified by population groups, type of results, and desired results. Tracking indicators have been selected and a plan for monitoring has been identified.

(3)(a) The plan delineates how the Boost! program coordinator and coaches will track attendance, activity and goals of student participants. However there is no provision for student who do not attend Boost!.

(3)(b) The applicant's plan for conducting needs assessments focused more on technology and school services. The plan is an expansion of services already provided for students.

(3)(c) The applicant does not have a plan to scale the model beyond the participating students over time.

(3)(d) The applicant does not have evidence in the plan of how it will improve Boost! over time.

4. The applicant has a plan to form a team of school auxiliary staff member to meet with a newly formed Boost! team to make suggestions on how students can be better served in the wraparound program. This is a weak plan because students will not

benefit from these meetings if they are not included in the process. Also, the plan calls for the Boost! staff to coordinate and monitor school implementation of domains related to wraparound services. This plan can cause conflict between the school staff and the Boost! staff.

5. (a) (b) The applicant's plan is to provide additional support to teachers by adding a Boost! team member to each school. There are no specific details to how the plan will access the needs and assets of students. Also, the applicant's plan to add a community based resource center does not delineate how the community will be provided with improved support.

(c) The applicant's plan to create a decision-making process is to implement the Boost!model and have partners sign an agreement. This is not a good plan because there is not enough information as t how this will translate into addressing the individual needs of students.

(d) The plan is absent of details of how parents will engaged in decision making and solutions as well as addressing student and family needs over time.

(e) The plan focuses on training personnel for wraparound services but does not describe how progress will be assessed routinely.

6. The applicant's performance measures and goals are clearly presented. However, the desired results for specific performance measures are not achievable. For example, 100 percent of students will post-secondary plans for SY 2012-2013. This is ambitious yet unachievable.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

#### Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has Met Absolute Priority 1 because the plan is clear and comprehensive to provide success for students in the implementing personalized learning environments. The plan has ....provided how students will be assisted to continue to accelerate and improve their learning goals and outcomes. Students and parents will have continuous support from school and community stakeholders. PD to support of continued improvement of teacher capacity to improve is included in the plan. PD content will be tailored to teacher and student needs. This is a strong plan with powerful implications. Community support is a consistent theme in the plan. Community partnerships provide resources for students and families providing the ability for students to be successful overall. This is specifically a strong statement because students spend more time in the community than they do schools.

Total	210	146
-------	-----	-----