



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0344OH-1 for Parma City School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	5

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The Parma City School District and Brockton Public Schools have taken a multi-faceted approach in their Race to the Top grant. The grant outlines the processes that will be followed to identify the most successful researched based practices that if implemented in the LEA's, could have a significant effect on six identified focus areas. The grant is open ended in this regard, as the two districts will be engaged initially in researching best practices, followed by piloting these best practices, and lastly, implementing only those most successful practices that are most likely to succeed in their LEA's. As such, it is not determined what specifically the grant funds will be used for. The proposal is innovative in that it brings together two LEA's that cross state lines. It is also innovative in that only those research based practices and those that are the best match for the districts will be initially implemented. What is unclear in the vision and may be further elaborated later, is how the LEA's will select the innovations to pilot from the list of research based best practices. The applicant states that a clear process for identifying areas of educational research will be in place, but the specific process is not described in the application.

Without understanding what the LEA's are trying to effect with the grant, it is unclear why these initial focus areas were selected. It is unclear which specific needs or problems the grant is attempting to resolve.

The vision specifies six focus areas that will be researched and acted upon: School as Community Hub, Individualized Student Learning, Holistic Student Learning, College and career Readiness, 21st Century Learning and Teacher and Administrator capacity.

Each focus area includes a list of potential avenues or subtopics that would possibly be explored. The potential avenues under each focus area are diverse and disparate. It is not clear how many of the avenues will be selected for each focus area nor how the different avenues are weighted. For example, under individualized student learning, there are 10 subtopics, but some would appear to be more significant or rigorous than others. The list includes a selection including academy periods and advisors to student led conferences and implementing instructional data management systems.

All of the avenues listed are commonly known to be supported to some degree by research. It is unclear then how further study of the research will help to differentiate which avenues to select to pilot.

Additionally all of the avenues listed under each Focus Area are of uneven weight or importance. Some are easy to implement while others will require significant education and restructuring. Not knowing which avenue will ultimately be selected as the focus by the LEA's, and knowing that only two avenues will ultimately be selected overall by the LEA's, makes it difficult to ascertain how the grant funds will be used to leverage significant change and innovation in the areas of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support grounded in common and individual tasks that are based on student academic interests.

The vision outlines an innovative approach by ensuring that whatever innovations are finally implemented have withstood the test of time, been informed by the latest educational research, and been proven effective following successful field testing. The vision lacks identification of the key needs or problems the grant is attempting to remedy. The vision does not meet the criteria in this section requiring it to be comprehensive and coherent reform vision. For these reasons this section is scored in the low medium range.

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

Criteria for building and classroom selection is outlined and a list of participating schools is included in the Appendices meeting component b of this section. All K-12 Parma Schools will participate in at least one of the pilots while only Brockton's elementary schools will participate in at least one of the pilots. The total number of participating students is not printed correctly-it should say 20,000 instead of 20,00 but component (c) is addressed.

The criteria for selection is comprehensive and well thought out increasing the likelihood of a successful match between the school and the innovation to be piloted as required in component a of this section. The criteria includes expected factors such as demographics, alignment to existing initiatives, willingness to participate and capacity of the staff to implement the innovation. Most importantly, the criteria includes **which** schools would most benefit or are in the greatest need for the innovation. The criteria states that all designated schools in both districts will participate in an innovation of some kind.

The signature on the assurance pages indicates the support of the teachers for this grant proposal.

This section was rated high and received full points. This is also the first of future sections that emphasizes an unbalance between what evidence is provided between the two school districts. Typically much detail and documentation is provided by the Parma District and limited detail and documentation is provided by the Brockton School District. The grant application is written to include both LEA's yet the application does not provide balanced coverage of both districts. This complicates the scoring because both LEA's are scored as a single entity. If one LEA provides a minimal answer to a question, the resulting score reflects equally on both LEA's.

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

The application specifies a clinical model will be followed in which areas of research guide the final selection of the innovation, pilots are designed, pilots are reviewed and tweaked based on data and feedback. Successful models will be expanded and scaled up culminating in a minimum of two pilots being implemented across all participating buildings and in both districts. The rational behind this is sound: that the innovations will have been piloted and scaled up in two distinctly different school districts so successful replication outside of the two LEA's will be more likely. A minimum of two pilots will be selected to bring to scale across the two districts by the completion of the grant.

The application did not include an understandable, high quality plan as required in this section. The application directs the reader to Appendix 15 which contains a detailed, complicated and confusing implementation timeline for the grant. "By January 2014 Parma will select a minimum of four Phase 2 pilots. By October 2014 a minimum of four Phase 2 pilots will be implemented in Parma, with all K-12 buildings participating in at least one Phase 2 pilot." The timeline is too complex and lacks understandability, resulting in a lowered score for this section.

The Phase 1 pilots have already been researched and identified for implementation prior to this application enabling them to be implemented the spring of the first grant year. It is not clear if these pilots underwent the same rigorous review the subsequent pilots will undergo.

Appendix 16 contained Phase I implementation specifics on the predetermined pilots (shovel ready). The pilots listed in Appendix 16 include two pilots not included in the narrative section of (A)(3): Science curriculum and class schedule revision. This omission lends doubt to whether the two LEA's coordinating the writing of the grant and and the ability of the two LEA's to implement their vision if two grant sections are not in agreement.

In this section, the applicant has not matched improvement of student learning outcomes with their theory of change, resulting in a lowered score. The application does not link **how** the pilots will culminate in improved student outcomes. Both districts have set a goal of closing their achievement gaps and improving student performance. Parma specified it will measure these through their state required report card. Parma identifies the state required report card as their intended measure of student outcomes yet these are intended to be broad brush assessments lacking the specificity required to measure the innovations listed under the focus areas. How will a student's score on a state assessment measure the effectiveness of innovations such as grading and it's relationship to college and career readiness, student led conferences, models for providing quality enrichment to staff, etc). Additionally, the Brockton School District does not specify the measures they will use. It is stated that the pilots will provide research based practices that will enhance student performance, but how success will be determined does not match or measure the innovations selected.

The application did not include a high quality plan. The applicant did not clearly define measures matched to innovations that would result in improved student learning. Sections of the grant were not in agreement. There is no assurance included in the grant that pre-selected pilots underwent the same rigorous selection process as subsequent pilots will undergo with successful funding this grant. For these reasons, this section received a score in the upper end of the low range.

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

Both districts have achieved recognition for past student success and are presently performing above the state expected levels. This increases the likelihood that the proposed vision will indeed result in improved student outcomes. Both districts are already working towards closing the achievement gaps utilizing the state required formulas. The applicants hope to continue to close the achievement gaps, boost academic achievement and better prepare students for their next level of education through achieving the vision described in this grant.

Parma District performance goals in reading and mathematics on summative assessment appear to be reasonable, realistic and attainable over the four year grant period and beyond. These were reported using value added projections over the four year grant period and beyond. Parma also included their performance goals as a number indicating their progress in closing the achievement gap between subgroups using a state prescribed gap reduction formula. There was no data provided for the Brockton District resulting in component a of this section not being met, and resulting in a score in the low medium range.

The applicant stated that growth would further be measured in non-tested areas using student learning objectives, common vendor assessments and end of course exams. Acknowledgement of the need to set goals for areas other than the state tested disciplines is noteworthy however the additional list of measures does not match the diversity of innovations included in section (A)(4).

For components c and d, the applicant stated that Brockton Schools will not address graduation rates since only elementary schools are participating in this competition. Parma District listed multiple goals to be effected by this grant: total graduation rates and by subgroup, as well as their overall goal for increasing graduation rates.

Neither District has a method for tracking college enrollment data presently but is anticipating developing this tool and have figures available by the 2012-2013 school year. Component e is an optional criteria for this selection so no points were lost in the overall scoring.

No data was provided for the Brockton District resulting in component a of this section not being fully met, and resulting in a score in the low medium range.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	8
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Both Districts are congratulated for their proven track record of recent academic success.</p> <p>The applicant builds the case for why Brockton School District is only including their elementary schools in this application, "having went from being the top scoring district at this level in the state to now hovering near the bottom." Brockton's lowest performing elementary school, Huntington, has demonstrated significant improvement in a short amount of time (two years) by implementing common planning time for the faculty. As a result, one of the middle schools, East Middle School, the lowest performing middle school in the district for years, has also implemented Professional Learning Community's and has seen significant improvement in the state student performance measure. As a result of these successes, the applicant builds the case that Brockton is poised to benefit from the grant as they have demonstrated a recent track record of systematic reform efforts targeting lowest performing schools. Brockton District continues to experience exemplary performance at the high school level. The applicant has demonstrated improved student learning as well as closing the achievement gaps as required in component (a).</p> <p>Parma District has seen exceptional overall progress in advancing student achievement and growth over the past four years. Parma attributes their successes to a numerous initiatives: building level PLC's, a District leadership team, careful attention to the Response To Intervention process, individualized programs such as credit recovery, gifted and talented, positive behavior support. They focus on building capacity through leadership academies and academic coaches. They have addressed non-cognitive areas through home liaisons, parent mentors, community-based school partnerships, after school programs, anti-bullying programs.</p> <p>High school graduation rates and college enrollment were not addressed by either district in the application as required in component a of this section.</p> <p>Making student performance data available to a variety of stakeholders was not addressed in component (c) of this section. Parma addressed student data but only in regard to how teachers are using the data to inform decisions. There was no evidence how either District presently makes student performance data available to audiences other than the teachers.</p> <p>High school and college enrollment were not addressed as required in component a. making data available to a variety of stakeholders was not addressed as required in section (c). These two omissions resulted in this section receiving a medium scoring response .</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant differentiate their answer in this section by district.</p> <p>Appendix 17, Brockton's Position Control Book, lists all employees and their salaries. The applicant states that this "Book" makes district finances and expenditures transparent though the inclusion in Appendix 17 only lists employee positions and salaries, no non-personnel expenditures as required in component d of this section.</p> <p>Brockton has an extensive strategic plan process so that all departments contribute deliverables and action steps informed by data. The strategic plan is widely communicated across faculties, the School Committee and the union. All fiscal decisions are made at open School Committee meetings which follow the open meetings law. Appendix 30 was cited by the applicant as evidence of the work of the School Committee but the Appendix was actually a letter of support from the</p>		

Valley Forge High School Student Union. This cited evidence could not support the applicant's claim of a high level of transparency as required in this section.

Parma District listed their Financial Advisory Committee which meets monthly and publishes their minutes on the District website. Appendix 31 listed the budget timeline for 2014. The District Treasurer maintains a website that provides actual salaries of employees and a screen shot of this site is included in Appendix 32. Board meetings are another vehicle for transparency and are video recorded, posted on the district website, and advertised throughout the community. Appendix 33 provides the five year forecast found at the Treasurer website. Appendix 34 provides a screenshot of the audit reports available on this website.. Lastly, Appendix 35 lists all financial reports by year that are available on the website. The evidence provided by Parma in this section met all of the required components as well as the overall assurance of transparency.

Brockton School District did not provide evidence to demonstrate meeting component d of this section, non-personnel expenditures. Brockton did not provide evidence of providing a high level of transparency in their processes, practices and investments as required in this section. For these two reasons, this section was scored in the medium range.

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

It would appear from the application that Parma School District has created successful conditions and has sufficient autonomy to implement personalized learning environments. Parma District has taken the state mandated components and made them their own: The Ohio Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan contains the parameters within which Districts must function. Parma has implemented Teacher Based Team, and implemented a "Restructuring the School Day" Committee who has risen to the challenge of finding time within the school day for the Teacher Based Teams to meet. Now Teacher Based Teams meet regularly to review data and are the single most significant vehicle for implementing the District's Response To Intervention model. Through RTI, individualized student learning is designed and implemented.

Additionally, the Instructional Improvement Data System, required by the Race to the Top, is being rolled out this year in Parma. Appendix 36 included a couple of slides from the PPT used at the introductory teacher meetings this fall.

Appendix 39 includes all the courses and programs available to high school students attending Parma Schools, illustrating that alternative school models are being offered to assist at risk students in credit recovery, graduating on time and decreasing drop outs.

Lastly, Parma references using student led conferences to enlist students in being more accountable for their long term progress and goal setting.

It would also appear from the application, that Brockton has demonstrated evidence of how they have leveraged state requirements to support personalized learning environments. As part of the Massachusetts' System of Support, Brockton District has implemented and uses data meeting protocols, has built teacher capacity to utilize data, and has defined the data to be used through prescribed data reports which are available through their data warehouse. All students not making sufficient progress are referred to and monitored by school-based Instructional Support Teams.

PBIS, Positive Behavioral Supports, are in place in 9 of the 11 Brockton schools and the data collected as part of this initiative is evidence that more time is being spent in learning and less time in discipline. Brockton also addresses non-academic supports by providing Second Step curriculum in all schools.

The criteria in this section was thoroughly and adequately addressed by the applicant and earned full points.

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

Mayors from both LEA's did provide letters of support which is a significant endorsement especially considering this grant involves two LEA's from separate states. There was no evidence that Parma solicited a letter of support from a state

official but Brockton received a letter of support from MA Congressman Lynch. The absence of a state letter of support is significant since this application involves two LEA's from separate states.

Some of the Appendices were missing so not all of the university and student council letters were included in the application.

Parma provided a letter of support from their union and the assurance page was signed by their union president. There was no specific evidence that 70% of the teachers from Brockton District support this grant application or if a union is in existence, there was no evidence of union support for the Brockton LEA. This is a significant absence as the teachers are the vehicle by which a significant amount of the the innovations proposed in the grant will be implemented.

Parma provided evidence of their school board meeting agenda and minutes (Appendix 19) in which the grant was addressed and deemed worthy of support. Parma's school board president signed the assurance page. There was no evidence of support or involvement from the Brockton Board of Trustees. This omission is significant as this section of the grant intends to determine if the grantee involved key stakeholders in the development of the proposal. As the fiscal agent for the grant, a school board's endorsement and involvement in the proposal development is critical.

Parma provided evidence through letters of support from both their middle and high school principal's but not their elementary principals. Appendix 11 contained the signatures of all Brockton District's principal, s but the letter specifically addresses their commitment to the development of the STEM curriculum only. It does not indicate support for the overall RttT-D grant. The STEM curriculum is identified as one of the shovel ready pilots that is already in motion. This omission is significant as this section of the grant intends to determine if the grantee involved key, stakeholders in the development of the proposal and of those key stakeholders, administrators are tasked with overseeing or actually implementing some of the innovations.

Stakeholders letters were included in the application from the Parma PTA, the three separate Mayor's of the Parma communities, the Parma Chamber of Commerce, Parma high school student bodies (although the appendices were out of order and mislabeled). Parma School District provided a variety of letters demonstrating a diverse group of stakeholders' support. Of this support, it was noteworthy that Parma had evidence of student support.

The applicant states that both LEA's conducted meetings with groups consisting of teachers, administrators and central office administration to create awareness. A Q and A period was included in the meetings. Feedback was incorporated into the proposal and examples were given I.E a parent group and a student council. The applicant stated that the proposal was jointly written by classified staff, union leadership, treasurer's staff, and administration. Additionally, the applicant indicated using superintendent conference calls, grant coordinators, regular communication vehicles and an initial inventory survey.

The applicant met a significant amount of the requirements of (B)(4) involving stakeholder involvement. Parma District met all of the (B)(4) requirements whereas Brockton district met a minimal amount of the (B)(4) requirements. Beacusecause there was not a balance of stakeholder support from both LEA's this section was scored in the low medium range.

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

5

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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes the conditions for reform as utilizing PLC's, developing individualized student learning labs, and implementing at least one other pilot that focuses on individualized student learning environments. When implemented, these three innovations will result in both LEA's seeing a significant improvement (at least 5%) on student growth measures included in their teacher evaluation protocol.

The applicant outlined the current status of how they are providing and supporting personalized learning environments for students in both districts. The application indicates that a more concerted effort using PLC's effectively (Parma), and having more than just student learning labs as options for individualizing student learning (Brockton), will result in improvement on the growth measures included on teacher evaluations. The ineffectiveness or gap in PLC's will be addressed through training. Beginning training is being provided in Performance Plus, a data warehouse that will enable teachers to pinpoint specific learning needs of students.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided a detailed answer on how Parma School District will address the multiple components in (C)(1). The applicant provided **one** reference to the Brockton District in this section. The particular reference addressed how both districts will implement the STEM curriculum.

Of the detailed answers Parma District has provided, sound evidence has been provided to support all the areas requested in (C)(1) except for two areas: providing all students opportunities to accelerate their learning, and how parents will be involved in these areas of student support.

For Parma District,

Engaging all learners was addressed by the four in service days that are being devoted to understanding and writing student learning targets. Appendix 41 included the Power Point used during these in services and based on Marzano's work. "Students who identify what they are learning significantly outscore those who cannot." This is one of the districts' strategies for better engagement and empowerment of learners.

Students have access to diverse cultures, contexts and perspectives through World languages that are offered at the middle school level and foreign language classes at the high school level. At the high school, a variety of clubs are offered: Diversity Club, Girl Power, Key club and Rachel's Challenge. At the middle school, anti-bullying efforts include lessons, assessments and monitoring and intervention with at-risk students.

All K-5 teachers will have completed 18 hours of professional development by the end of the year in the Common Core State Standards lead by district's instructional coaches. These sessions were by design spread over two years to allow teachers to try out what they learn in their classrooms. Coaches provide ongoing support to the teachers through Lunch Bunch and Math Support days. The series is called "Committing to the Core." Appendix 40 includes the course descriptions.

Each student has access to accommodations and high-quality strategies through RTI, Response to Intervention. This has been in place in Parma for a number of years but as of the 2011-2012 school year, it is now implemented district wide. Appendix 43 contains the Parma RTI Manual. Appendix 44 includes an RTI lesson plan template. Parma uses RTI Data Days to group Tier II students for interventions during a designated intervention time at both the elementary and middle schools. Appendix 45 contains the RTI pyramid of interventions.

In Parma, students with disabilities are being returned to their home schools and added supports are enabling students to receive services in their general education classrooms as appropriate. This year at the high school, students with disabilities are taught daily in their general education classroom by pairs of co-teachers special education and regular education).

College and Career Learning is accomplished by Parma middle schools offering exploratory courses so students are more prepared to pursue areas of interest at HS including electives, courses of study and career tech programs.

Tracking and managing their learning Parma high schools are investigating implementing academy periods which are a dedicated period for goal setting under the guidance of a mentor. Career assessments are conducted for students with disabilities by two career assessors at the high schools. This data drives the development of student transition plans. A series of tests will be added to the high school such as PSAT, ASVAB and PLAN that will provide better data to guide decisions related to future career paths and curriculum choices.

Personalized learning is addressed through credit recovery which is offered after school two days a week at the high schools through digital learning venues. Through an alternative education grant, Parma fifth and sixth year seniors and third time ninth graders dedicate their afternoons to focused credit recovery using the digital learning labs.

As of this school year in Parma middle schools, services are provided for enrichment through a co-teaching model as well as targeted instruction in smaller groups. And lastly, Parma offers a comprehensive high school career and technical program, including internship experiences and licensing.

Both LEA's offer STEM curricula at all levels which could be classified as evidence for meeting a portion of (b)(iii) "high quality content," of this section. While this is commendable, implementing STEM curriculum is not sufficient evidence to illustrate how Brockton is meeting the components of this section. All components were addressed by Parma, and only one mention was made of Brockton regarding the implementation of the STEM curriculum across both LEA's.

This section scored in the low medium range reflecting the unbalanced coverage from the LEA's and the two components not addressed by Parma.

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

20

18

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

In this section, (C)(2) detail is provided on how each district is addressing this criteria and although each district is employing different methods of implementation, all but one criteria in this section is met. What follows is a categorization process to indicate how each district has addressed the criteria.

Professional Learning Community's: Parma and Brockton are both implementing PLC's to differing degrees. Parma is further along in the implementation process of their Teacher Based Teams enabling Brockton to learn from their efforts. Brockton has incorporated data meeting protocols and prescribed lists of data reports that can be accessed through their data warehouse and which maintains both formative and summative assessment data. Students not making progress are discussed through their Instructional Support Team. Brockton is transitioning from their present model, Instructional Support Teams to the Parma model, of Teacher Based Teams.

Professional development is job imbedded in Parma schools through the Teacher Based Team structure. The Teacher Based Teams report to school level and district level teams to coordinate resources, data, and professional development needs. Appendix 48 included a copy of the district level team meeting minutes. The teacher based team agenda and minutes template is included in Appendix 50. Future Professional Development is planned in Parma for the areas of formative and summative assessments, learning targets, 21st Century Skills. Appendix 51 outlines the extensive Professional Learning opportunities provided for Parma staff this school year. Additionally, 3 hour blocks for professional learning are provided at the end of each marking period, etc. Professional development is delivered at the elementary level by content coaches.

Brockton implements individual school improvement plans to drive professional development. The plan is reviewed and must include data to support its provisions. District teams lead walkthroughs at each school three times a year to monitor the plan and in particular, the quality of instruction. Feedback is then provided.

Effective implementation of personalized strategies Parma uses the RTI approach to individualizing and personalizing instruction. At the elementary level, the teams meet with the content coaches to review data and determine instructional strategies to use in the classroom. RTI provides one way that teachers **adapt content and instruction**.

Brockton has incorporated data meeting protocols and prescribed lists of data reports that can be accessed through their data warehouse and which maintains both formative and summative assessment data. Students not making progress are discussed through the Instructional Support Team.

Frequent measuring of student progress Parma conducts data pulls every three weeks at the high schools. A system wide grade book is accessible by all parents, students and staff. Content coaches work with elementary teacher to differentiate instruction from Dibels data and utilizing the Response To Intervention process. Although Brockton does measure progress, there was no evidence as to the frequency of this process.

Improving teachers and principals effectiveness and practice was addressed generally through the professional learning opportunities offered to Parma teachers. Additionally, Parma is implementing a Peer Assistance Review to

provide even more in depth professional development to small groups of volunteer teachers. A new evaluation tool is being developed in Brockton that is designed to measure teacher and principal effectiveness in addressing student growth.

All educators have tools and understanding of how to accelerate student progress Parma has embarked on a two year Common Core standards curriculum for staff which they expressed would lead to a more rigorous course of study for students. Parma teachers have access to digital learning tools through Odysseyware. Parma teachers also are learning to utilize the Instructional Improvement Data System to monitor student progress.

Brockton has embarked on a course of curriculum revision and alignment to the Common Core State Standards including pacing guides. Through a collaboration with Lesley University, they are learning and implementing Marzano's understanding by design principles. They are also designing performance tasks. In 2012, Brockton also developed and began implementing a 7 step writing process including professional development focused on how to use the rubric across content areas.

Plan for increasing students' access to teachers who are effective and or highly effective HQ Parma received a grant to begin implementation of a Peer Assistance Review program to increase teacher effectiveness and student achievement. Appendix 54 is a brochure about PAR. Appendix 53 is the evaluation matrix for Ohio. Additionally, Parma's Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan specifically addresses ensuring a HQ teacher in every classroom. Parma also has a district policy to only hire HQ teachers.

Brockton is implementing a new teacher and administrator evaluation system which will then require 100% of Brockton's teachers to demonstrate effectiveness.

Neither LEA fully addressed what specific high quality resources they would provide to teachers and students, to ensure accelerated student progress. Parma has eLearning software that addresses high quality digital resources, but that was the only mention of resources found in this section.

Both LEA's have training, policies, tools, and data, that if used with fidelity and implemented fully, will enable them to continually evaluate and structure effective learning environments for students. Both LEA's are moving to a growth oriented teacher evaluation system which provides the accountability required in this section to assure students are matched with highly effective teachers and that teachers are evaluated to some degree, based on their student results. Neither LEA addressed what high quality resources they would use to target accelerated student progress. The thoroughness of the applicants' responses to the multiple components in this section supported a score in the high range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	12

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Equity of services is a large focus of recent Parma District policies and practices as defined in the Consolidation and Restructuring Program (referenced in Appendix 59). The district maintains a standing equity committee to monitor areas such as staffing, access to services for students with disabilities including the continuum of services available within their home school. This committee has been instrumental in recent changes in Parma such as the number of students with disabilities receiving services in their general education environment. ELL students are being better served through a partnership with University of Akron's Project Achieve which is providing teachers opportunities to acquire TESOL endorsement. This meets the requirement of (e).

Parma District has matched building administrators with a central office curriculum director for ongoing support, assessment and coaching. Appendix 61 outlines the required Ohio Principal Evaluation Model as additional evidence of the central office/ building administrator support system. This meets the requirements of both (a) and (b).

Parma District has a dedicated Office of Professional Learning and a Professional Learning Center offering a variety of in person and on-demand video learning opportunities. The district employs 8 curriculum content coaches who work within the Teacher Based Teams (PLC) structure. This meets the requirements of (a).

Parma Teacher Based Teams, Building Leadership Teams and District Leadership Teams provide the instructional governance in the district. Teacher Based Teams are the primary vehicle for personalizing student learning environments. Building Leadership Teams coordinate data collection and decision making across grade levels in a school. The District Leadership Team coordinates data collection and decision making across buildings in the district. Requirements (a) and (b) are met through these leadership structures at both the building and district levels.

The Performance Plus Software Suite enables teachers to track student progress on core curriculum benchmarks.

Parma has some practices in place to enable students to be assessed on mastery of standards not on amount of time spent on a topic as required in (c) and (d): Credit Flex, online learning for credit recovery, course acceleration and individual option plans.

Brockton District has created performance measures in the core subjects at all grade levels, affording their students the ability to show mastery of concepts.

All Brockton schools implement a school improvement plan which is reviewed and justified through central office administrators conducting walkthroughs. Needs for specific school supports are identified during the Walkthroughs and these supports can be obtained at the school level or through central office resources. (a)

Brockton District provides personalized learning environments within the classrooms through strategies such as student centered activities and flexible groupings. Everyone is expected to master the curriculum but through variable paths as required in. Brockton did not specifically address the requirements in (c) and (d), requiring credits to be earned based on mastery and providing numbers of ways and times for students to demonstrate mastery. This was not specifically addressed in Brockton's answer.

The Brockton District attributes the success of two low performing schools to their implementation of PLC's as required in (b). As such, the district is trying to take these practices to scale throughout the district. Their PLC's utilize observing and analyzing student work as the main data source for adjusting teaching to meet student needs.

Brockton did not address their policies, practices rules focusing learning resources and instructional practices being appropriate for all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities as required in (e). Additionally they did not address (c) and (d) regarding mastery and earning credits. These omissions are significant because there is no assurance that Brockton can or will meet the needs of **all** students, not allow students to demonstrated mastery and earn credit in multiple ways and times. The score for this section is in the lower end of the high range though points were subtracted due to this omission.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant listed how specific components will be addressed in this section, but an overall plan of comprehensive policies and infrastructure to provide every student, educator (as defined in this notice), and level of the education system (classroom, school, and LEA) with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed was not addressed.

Both districts have focused on improvement of their public websites for parents and students addressing the component that parents and students have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources as needed. All students can access course information, progress reporting and online learning resources at the websites. All website content can be translated into numerous languages (Appendix 64). With successful funding of this application, both districts have future plans to create a more robust search function on both of their websites.

The School As Community Hub section of the grant will allow low cost or free broadband services to both districts' students and families, not currently available.

One to one computing is also a feature of this grant to further personalize learning opportunities for students in both LEA's. This technology will require more technical staff to facilitate. At present, the Parma District maintains a help desk (email, phone and website) for tech support. Brockton is proposing additional technology resources and staffing with specific technology expertise (Appendix 16). This additional support will benefit all stakeholders.

At present, Parma District supports export in an open format and maintains and both districts maintain an inter-operable data system.

Brockton District has recently reorganized their district office to create an Office of Performance Management to better coordinate student data, human resource data and instructional improvement data to benefit instructional staff.

The districts provided limited evidence of the technical support that would be available to students, parents and teachers. Although individual components were addressed by the applicant, an overall plan including policies and infrastructure to provide teachers, students and parents with the support and resources they need was not evident. As such, this section was scored in the low portion of the high range .

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	14
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A reasonable and realistic continuous improvement process is outlined by the LEA's in this section. Common work teams function to design, implement and monitor the grant goals and are comprised of community, teacher leadership and administrators ensuring that a variety of internal and external stakeholders are monitoring the progress of the grant.</p> <p>Monitoring and revising of project goals will be accomplished using the Decision Making for Results protocol developed by Dr. Reeves. Quarterly updates will be provided by these work teams to the Oversight Committee. Independent reviewers beginning in year two will utilize this protocol for their bi-annual reports to evaluate pilot implementation.</p> <p>Common performance measures across LEA's will be used focusing on achievement and engagement. Lastly an ambitious but difficult to understand timeline is included in Appendix 15.</p> <p>How information would be shared publicly by the LEA's on the quality of its investments, was not addressed sufficiently by the applicant in this section. The provided timeline addresses how information will be provided in-house and at state and national conferences. This section was scored in the high range because of the thoroughness of the applicants' answers.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant included strategies for how they will communicate with the general public, the stakeholder groups and like minded organizations. The applicant has identified an oversight team who will be responsible for communicating the progress and adjustments of the grant. The applicant includes a variety of vehicles to foster communication publicly about the progress of the plan including Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, and both internal and external publications and media.</p> <p>In Year 1, the LEA's will inventory what other organizations are already doing in addressing some of the grant focus areas to ensure services are not duplicated and efforts are built upon collaboratively. Letters of support were provided as evidence of these initial partnerships. The applicant also stated that outside organizations will be invited to participate on the research committees, enlarging the stakeholder group. Adequate strategies were outlined in this section for stakeholder communication and engagement earning full points.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Thirteen performance measures are identified for both LEA's to measure student achievement and engagement. The applicant provided measures in all but one of the required areas-desegregated data of students by subgroup (e). But although the application narrative did not address this criteria, the attached tables do have desegregated data by subgroups.

The applicant selected attendance as a measure of student engagement though attendance does not necessarily indicate or guarantee students are engaged in their learning and so is not a strong measure of this indicator and does not meet the requirements in (a), (b) and (c).

The performance measures to be utilized included:

The number and amount of students being served by highly effective teachers and principals measured through teacher evaluations, teacher feedback and student growth measures. (teacher effectiveness)

The number and amount of students being served by effective teachers and principals measured through teacher evaluations, teacher feedback and student growth measures. (teacher effectiveness)

Overall student proficiency on all tested subjects and grades. (achievement)

Reading achievement for Grades 1-3 using the Dibels program. (achievement)

Attendance of students in grades 1-3. (engagement).

Number and percentage of students on track to graduate in grades 4-8 as measured by proficiency on the SEA end of year assessments (achievement).

Number and percentage of students in grades 4-8 who are proficient on all SEA end of year assessments (achievement).

Attendance rate of students in grades 4-8 (engagement).

Number and percent of students who submit the FAFSA form (engagement).

Number and percentage of students proficient on all SEA end of course and/or graduation required assessments after their first attempt (achievement).

Number and percentage of students creating career-based portfolios compared to the number of students enrolled in career and technical programs (achievement and engagement).

Number and percentage of students who do not move to 10th grade after their 9th grade year (achievement and engagement).

Attendance rate of students in grades 9-12 (engagement).

The applicant did not identify measures for the required grade appropriate health or social emotional indicators specified for grades 4-8 and 9-12, although these are required not optional indicators for this section 4-8 (c) and 9-12 (e). This omission compromised the applicants overall score in this section.

Additionally, there was no clear evidence of why these measures were selected (as required in (a) nor how these measures would be modified over time as required in (c). Because of these omissions and the omission of health and social emotional indicators as required in (e), this section earned points in the medium range.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant outlines numerous structures to enhance communication and decision making contained in the Appendix 15. Different teams of staff, such as research teams and pilot teams, have been designated to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of innovations. They provide periodic progress reports and recommendations using the data collected from the specific innovation. Progress will also be measured utilizing student performance results as appropriate.</p> <p>The applicant mentions anonymous electronic surveys that the teams will use to collect anonymous feedback from participants. Parma uses this format for evaluating the effectiveness of professional development. This has not been mentioned in any previous sections of this grant. The applicant does not clarify who these "participants" are, students, teachers, parents, or what and how the feedback will be utilized in the overall project evaluation process.</p> <p>A streamlined decision making structure to facilitate information sharing and adaptability is outlined in Appendix 15. A single dedicated administrative position will oversee the grant. Both of these components will ensure overall project accountability and facilitate continuous improvement.</p> <p>Although the timeline in Appendix 15 provides details of who is responsible for measuring the effectiveness of the specific innovations selected for the pilots, it does not include how overall grant infrastructure such as use of time, resources, funds and staff will be assessed over the life of this grant. This omission lessens the assurance that the LEA's will adequately assess the effectiveness of the grants investments, resulting in the score for this section being in the medium range.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	7
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provided clear and detailed budget narratives in this section. The applicant also clearly identified which projects would be one time investments and which would be ongoing. Both of these were requirements of this section.</p> <p>The budget did not address what additional funds would be used to leverage the Race to the Top Funds.</p> <p>Half of the total budget is being expended on the three first year shovel ready pilots. It is not clear in the grant application if these projects underwent the same scrutiny as the new pilots will undergo. Additionally, the applicant is proposing expending a significant amount of the budget only to benefit one LEA. This expenditure is not justified sufficiently in the information provided in the narrative or Appendices.</p> <p>The Science Teams and Personalized Student Learning Software Implementation both involve hiring full time positions. The applicant has not adequately addressed how these can possibly be sustained following the conclusion of the grant.</p> <p>The applicants projected budgets for pilots 2 and 3 are reasonable and thoughtful especially considering the applicant is not able to identify any of the projected costs due to the fact the pilots they are funding are undetermined. The attempts to anticipate the worst case scenarios are realistic.</p> <p>The questions raised above were not sufficiently addressed by the applicant (sustainability, a large portion of the grant being spent on projects that might not have underwent the same scrutiny of the two shovel ready projects, a large portion of the budget is being spent on one LEA, the two shovel ready projects are personnel dependent).</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	2

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not address sustainability sufficiently as required in this section. The applicant outlines the additional partnerships and grants they are receiving to supplement or enhance the initiatives described in the grant. These are present grants that the applicant is already receiving. The applicant does not provide any details on the amounts of these partnership grants. But most importantly, these partnerships are described as occurring now, not as future partnerships to assist with the future sustainability of the pilots. As such, this does not address the intent of this section which is to indicated how support from the State and local government will assist in the future sustainability of this grant.

Additionally, and this was addressed previously, the applicant indicates that when the additional pilots in year 2 and 3 are identified, they will be selected partly on how **sustainable** they are in the future. This criteria was not applied to the first "shovel ready" pilots the applicant indicates are to be implemented in year 1.

This section received lower points as the applicant did not sufficiently address how the projects would be sustainable following the end of the grant period and through additional support from State and local governments.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided a narrative describing all of the partnerships that exist within the two districts presently, which is indeed substantial. The applicant included the desired results they would like to realize through these existing partnerships but these desired results are not ambitious. More parents attending open houses, more businesses represented at career fairs, etc, are not ambitious goals. There is no detail provided on how these desired results will be tracked as required by this priority. There is no discussion of how these desired results would effect high need students or improve results over time. This priority was not sufficiently addressed by the applicant to be able to give credit to more than a recognition of the diversity of partnerships that exist in both LEA's. This section received a minimum score.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

This application has addressed all of the criteria under this absolute priority through an innovative collaboration across two diverse LEA's and spanning two states. The applicant has articulated a comprehensive approach to selecting specific reforms to be piloted in two LEA's and then brought to scale district-wide across both districts.

Although the final pilot projects will not be identified until year two and three of this grant, the applicant has presented adequate assurance that they will address the absolute priorities of this Race to the Top grant.

Total	210	133
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	0
<p>Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>In the Budget Subpart 4, the applicant proposed the development of a STEM elementary school in the Parma District. All core subjects will be integrated including the arts and PE with the sciences. This section requires the applicant to provide a "clear, discrete, and innovative solution that can be replicated in schools across the Nation." The applicant did not provide clear rational for why this idea is innovative. STEM schools do exist. it would appear the applicant is proposing to duplicate a model that is already well established rather than developing a new solution that can be taken to scale as required in this section.</p> <p>The applicant selected this project to better teach the STEM content to elementary students in the Parma district, which provides the rationale for why this project is selected as required in (1.) The budget appears to be reasonable as required in (3). The applicant did not indicate how this STEM school would benefit other schools and or other LEA's nor how other schools or LEA's would be involved directly, as required in section (2).</p> <p>Although component (3) of this section was addressed by the applicant and a reasonable budget was proposed, sections (2) and (3) were not addressed as required. Additionally, the overarching intent of this section was not met by the applicant, which was to provide an "innovative" solution that can be replicated across schools. As a result, this section did not earn any points.</p>		
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	0
<p>Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The supplemental project proposed by the applicant is for a Summer Scholars program providing a summer school program to the Parma students.</p> <p>This section requires the applicant to provide a "clear, discrete, and innovative solution that can be replicated in schools across the Nation." The applicant did not provide clear rational for why this idea is innovative. Summer school programs are commonly offered in US schools to both remediate and provide enrichment to students. It would appear the applicant is proposing to duplicate a model that is already well established rather than developing a new solution that can be taken to scale as required in this section.</p> <p>The applicant selected this project to effect student achievement in the Parma district, which provides the rationale for why this project is selected as required in (1.) The budget appears to be reasonable as required in (3). The applicant did not indicate how this Summer School project would benefit other schools and or other LEA's, nor how other schools or LEA's would be involved directly, as required in section (2).</p> <p>Although component (3) of this section was addressed by the applicant and a reasonable budget was proposed, sections (2) and (3) were not addressed as required. Additionally, the overarching intent of this section was not met by the applicant, which was to provide an "innovative" solution that can be replicated across schools. As a result, this section did not earn any points.</p>		
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	0
<p>Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The supplemental project described by the applicant involves an Arts and Culture program that will bring performance groups to the Parma middle and high schools. It will also fund the hiring of 6 artists in residence for each Parma middle and high school.</p> <p>This section requires the applicant to provide a "clear, discrete, and innovative solution that can be replicated in schools across the Nation." The applicant did not provide clear rational for why this idea is innovative. It would appear that these kinds of cultural programs have been provided to students in the past but due to the economic downturn, these programs have not continued to be funded at the community level. It would appear the applicant is proposing to duplicate a model that has already been in place in the community but is not presently being funded. The intent of this supplemental project was for the applicant to develop a new solution that can be taken to scale as required in this section.</p>		

The applicant selected this project to infuse arts and culture in the Parma district which provides the rationale for why this project is selected as required in (1.) The budget appears to be reasonable as required in (3). The applicant did not indicate how this project would benefit other LEA's nor how other LEA's would be involved directly, as required in section (2).

Although component (3) of this section was addressed by the applicant and a reasonable budget was proposed, sections (2) and (3) were not addressed as required. Additionally, the overarching intent of this section was not met by the applicant, which was to provide an "innovative" solution that can be replicated across schools. As a result, this section did not earn any points.



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0344OH-2 for Parma City School District

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 plans to form a partnership between two districts to focus on six areas: school as community hub, individualized student learning, holistic student learning, college and career readiness, 21st century learning, and teacher and administrator capacity. The potential avenues that the applicant plans to explore to address these areas of focus have a high potential to be successful at accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through tasks based on student interests.</p> <p>No weaknesses were noted in this section. The applicant successfully articulates a comprehensive and coherent reform vision.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides substantial evidence that their approach to implementing the reform proposal will support high-quality implementation of that proposal.</p> <p>Parma City Schools and Brockton Public Schools both provide a list of the schools in their districts that will participate in grant activities. All K-12 schools in Parma will participate. Because of the structure already in place with committees and leadership teams, Parma will implement the program K-12. Brockton indicates that they intend to implement the program in their elementary schools only because it would be inefficient to implement in its entirety. They feel that educational reform implemented at the elementary level will have a long-lasting impact on the secondary buildings as well.</p> <p>The size of Brockton Public Schools is smaller than Parma City Schools (8,000 and 11,300 respectively). It is a little confusing that the application states that implementing the process throughout the entirety of the Brockton Public Schools would be inefficient, while Parma (the larger of the two districts) proposes implementation throughout the entire district. Sufficient detail is not included to explain why the different approaches would help each district in the successful implementation of the proposed program.</p>		

The applicant has provided a list of the total number of participating students, participating students from low-income families, participating students who are high-need students, and participating educators. The lists are divided by each participating site.

These examples demonstrate that the applicant has provided a significant amount of evidence to support the likelihood that the applicant will be able to successfully implement the proposed program.

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

The proposed project will take a clinical approach to developing pilots which have the potential to be implemented in any school district nationwide.

The applicant provides a plan describing the benchmarks that will be met each semester of implementation. The benchmarks are specific tasks that will be completed by certain months. This level of information shows that there is a reasonable chance that the applicant could achieve the proposed benchmarks as a means to addressing the six areas of focus that are a part of the proposed program.

The application does not provide a clear description of what is included in the "pilots" that are repeatedly referenced. It is not clear if it is curriculum related, personnel related, data related, student focused, teacher focused, administration focused, or a combination of components. Because the pilots are such a vital component to the proposed program, and because they have not been sufficiently defined, it is difficult to determine the extent to which the proposed program will help the applicant address the six areas of focus.

The applicant does not identify specific activities that will occur as a part of the proposed program to improve performance in their six areas of focus.

Because of the lack of detail provided in what activities will occur at what sites, it is not clear to what extent the applicant would be successful at scaling up and translating meaningful reform and achieving its outcome goals.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	3
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not provide complete information for this criterion. The applicant provides data for performance on summative assessments for students in Parma, but only selective data for Brockton. Parma City's summative assessment goals for the final two funding years and the first year post grant are identical. This is not ambitious, nor does it show a quantitative measure of how much the applicant would like to improve student learning and performance. No annual goals are included for Brockton Public Schools.

Parma City has set the goal of reducing the achievement gap on all summative measures to 0%. Goals for Brockton Schools are not included in the application. By not including ambitious yet achievable goals for each participating LEA, the applicant makes it difficult to fully determine the extent to which the applicant's vision is likely to be successful in decreasing achievement gaps across all students participating.

Parma City School district gives the current graduation rate for each of the subgroups and the overall student population. They also give a post-grant goal. However, they do not provide ambitious yet achievable annual goals. Brockton did not give graduation rates because their participating buildings are elementary schools.

Neither school district provided college enrollment data citing no method to effectively track. They anticipate having a reliable tracking system in place for the 2012-2013 school year, but no details are provided about the structure or function of that system.

Based on the lack of requested information provided, the applicant demonstrates to a low degree the extent to which their vision will result in improved student outcomes.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	7
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Brockton has improved student achievement at the high school level as demonstrated through higher performances in ELA and in Math. Brockton Public Schools has turned around two low performing schools - Huntington Elementary and East Middle School. Huntington Elementary accomplished this through the use of common planning time. East Middle School was successful implementing Professional Learning Teams during common planning time.</p> <p>This applicant does not provide evidence that supports a clear record of success in all areas mentioned in the criterion. High school graduation rates and college enrollment rates are not addressed. In addition, no description is provided regarding how Brockton has made student performance data available to students, educators, and parents in the past four years.</p> <p>Parma City Schools has demonstrated previous success by raising their rating on the Ohio Local Report card from Effective to Excellent and maintaining the Excellent rating for the past three years. High school graduation rates have increased. Trends in college enrollment are not addressed by Parma City Schools. They also do not describe how the lowest performing schools have demonstrated success in achieving ambitious and significant reforms. The Parma City Schools have successfully used data to increase their value added scores through benchmarking and progress monitoring to individualize student learning, but not how that data has been made available to students or parents.</p> <p>While some of the components of this criterion are addressed in the application, the lack of a complete picture results in the determination that the application has shown to a moderate extent a clear record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Brockton Public Schools use a "Position Control Book" online system to make all expenditures transparent. The screen shots included in the appendices show that the Position Control Book lists personnel salaries for all school-level instructional and support staff by school. No evidence is included about the transparency of school-level non-personnel expenditures.</p> <p>The Parma City School District lists some ways that information is shared with the community. However, not enough information is included about the processes and practices to know what information is shared with the community. The Ohio Department of Education website shows information about instructional personnel salaries. Beyond that, it is not clear how any of the other information listed in the subcriteria are made public.</p> <p>While some of the components of this criterion are addressed in the application, the lack of a complete picture results in the determination that the application has shown to a moderate extent their level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	4
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Parma City School District has implemented Teacher Based Teams as part of the Ohio Department of Education's Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan. In addition, the data system that is being developed in Parma will help the district individualize instruction for students.</p>		

Brockton Public Schools have been funding teacher capacity to examine and discuss student data so that the Instructional Support Team can determine intervention strategies.

While these strategies can help students be more successful, there is not sufficient description of how specific strategies to be implemented as a part of the proposed program fit within State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements. The proposal explains to a minimal extent the degree to which each LEA has successful conditions and sufficient autonomy to implement the personalized learning environments described in the proposal.

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

Both districts formed committees of district teachers, building administration, and central office administration to present RttT-D information to meetings of stakeholders. It is not clear who was invited to these meetings, the number and composition of attendees, the frequency of meetings, or how (or if) stakeholder input at these meetings was incorporated into the grant.

The application states that meetings were held with stakeholder groups. It is not stated if this occurred in both districts. One example of feedback incorporation is that a parent group suggested including good nutrition into the Holistic Student Learning focus, so that was added to the list of avenues to explore.

Classified staff, union leadership, treasurer's staff, and administration met several times to write collaboratively. It is not clear if these writing groups included individuals from both districts.

The districts communicated during the writing process via superintendent conference calls and grant coordinators' regular communication.

Parma provides letters of support from public officials, community business partners, local higher education institutions, parents, students, teachers (union), and administration. No letters of support are included from Brockton.

The applicant describes to a moderate extent the degree to which meaningful stakeholder engagement was a part of the development of the proposal and to which there is meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal.

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

Parma City Schools uses Teacher Based Teams to track individual student growth data so teachers can plan instruction and intervention that meets individual student needs. This program is at a basic implementation level. The plan is to move this project toward full implementation. They will also work toward full implementation of their Performance Plus software suite which helps personalize instruction.

Brockton plans to form a research committee to identify and examine instructional strategies to promote individualized student learning. Brockton also plans to boost teacher performance on the student growth measure by utilizing Teacher Based Teams, Professional Learning Communities, and individualized student learning lab settings. Brockton also plans to implement at least one other project to boost teacher performance, however, the application does not provide information about which strategy will be used or even if the same strategy will be used at all grades or at all participating schools.

The applicant does a reasonable job demonstrating evidence of the logic behind the reform proposal.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	0

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes programs and strategies currently in place, but does not provide a detailed description of what programs and/or strategies will be implemented to address this criterion. The application does not describe specific activities that will be implemented to achieve program goals; a detailed timeline for implementation and integration of the activities; deliverables that will demonstrate results of the activities; or identification of the individuals responsible for the completion of activities and deliverables.

The application does not describe specific strategies, related deliverables, or responsible individuals that will be implemented to develop a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable the student to achieve his or her individual learning goals and ensure he or she can graduate on time and college- and career-ready.

There is no description of what high-quality content will be included at the various sites.

A feedback plan with specific activities which support program goals, deliverables, and responsible individuals is not included as part fo the application.

The proposal does not describe specific accommodations or high-quality strategies directed specifically toward high-needs students Stating that continuing job-embedded professional learning opportunities are planned is not enough information.

The application does not include a description of mechanisms that are in place to provide training and support to students that will ensure that they understand how to use the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning,

The applicant does not demonstrate that they have a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready.

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

The application states that teachers will receive professional development training on formative instructional strategies that include information on effective learning targets, formative assessments, summative assessments, and utilizing effective instructional practices to meet the needs of all students. However, there are no details about which teachers will attend which trainings. It is also not indicated if these trainings will be held in both participating districts. There is no information about who will conduct the training.

The application does not describe a high-quality plan for assuring that all participating educators will have access to, and know how to use, tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress toward meting college- and career-ready graduation requirements.

The application indicates that the Parma City School District's Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan will increase the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly-effective teachers and principals. However, without significant detail about the Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan, it is not possible to determine the likelihood that the plan will result in achievement of the stated goals.

The applicant's plan for the proposed program does not demonstrate that the proposed program will result in a successful approach to teaching and leading that helps educators improve instruction and increase their capacity to support student progress by enabling the full implementation of personalized learning and teaching for all students.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	5

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Evidence is provided to support the criterion that school leadership teams in participating schools will have sufficient flexibility and autonomy over school personnel decisions and staffing models as well as roles and responsibilities for educators and noneducators. In Parma, Building Leadership Teams identify building level supports needed to provide personalized learning opportunities. In Brockton, each school site is required to complete a school improvement plan. This plan outlines the schools goals and the methods that the school will use to accomplish those goals.

The applicant does not address the school leadership teams flexibility and autonomy over school schedules and calendars or the school-level budgets.

Parma provides a copy of their Acceleration Policy as well as the district Credit Flexibility Application. Both of these documents are evidence that the district gives students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery.

No mention is made of how Brockton Public Schools students may progress based on demonstrated mastery.

Parma City School District's Credit Flexibility option allows students to select a method through which mastery will be demonstrated. This can range from independent learning to an internship to an online course to testing out. These multiple options allow students to demonstrate mastery of standards in multiple comparable ways.

No information is provided regarding the systems in place in Brockton Public Schools that would allow students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways.

Parma City School District recently restructured their classrooms so that students with disabilities have access to the general curriculum in the least restrictive environment. Approximately 80% of students with disabilities were reassigned to their home schools which required the district to commit additional resources. Intervention specialists were reassigned to the role of co-teacher within the general education setting. Although the application states that intervention specialists and STEM teachers will have the opportunity to gain TESOL endorsement through enhanced opportunities with the University of Akron, no details are provided about what the "enhanced opportunities" are. In addition, there is no information provided about how learning resources will be made adaptable and fully accessible to English learners.

Brockton Public Schools does not provide information about their plans for providing learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to students with disabilities and English learners.

The application does not comprehensively describe the structure and organization of the partnership in sufficient detail. As a result, there is a low demonstration of the extent to which the participating LEAs will be able to provide support and services to all participating schools.

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

Both districts have school websites which provide access course information, progress reporting, and online learning resources. The applicant states that as a part of the School as Community Hub aspect of the grant proposal, they will investigate options of establishing community partnerships with one or more internet service providers to link low cost or free broadband services to the homes of economically disadvantaged students. A plan to investigate partnerships with internet providers does not ensure that all stakeholders will have internet access. Parma plans to initiate a one-to-one computing effort to allow students increased accessibility to resources in and out of school. Brockton states that "all of the proposed programs occur during the school day and do not require equipment supplied by students or their families, nor access outside the school day".

Parma City School provide technical support through a help desk accessible to staff, students, and parents. Access is available by email, phone, and through the district website. Technical support for Brockton Public Schools is not addressed in the application.

Parma City School District's online learning resources support export in an open format. Students can capture progress reporting data and export to other systems. Teachers can integrate data from various systems into a single report. No information is provided about the exportability of data or the interoperability of data systems of Brockton's online resources.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	5
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has a vision for how the two LEAs can successfully work together to implement a rigorous continuous improvement process. Four protocols will guide the implementation, communication, and evaluation of determined goals: 1. common work teams across the consortia; 2. common processes to evaluate and communicate initiatives and progress; 3. common performance measures to evaluate effectiveness and guide revisions; and 4. a common and aggressive timeline for obtaining goals.</p> <p>Ongoing corrections and improvements during the term of the grant will be addressed by work teams who will provide quarterly updates to the consortia's oversight committee and independent reviewers who will evaluate quality and implementation of pilot designs on a bi-annual basis. There is no information about opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements after the term of the grant.</p> <p>No mention is made of how the consortia will measure the quality of investments.</p> <p>This is not a high-quality plan addressing how the applicant will monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of its investments funded by Race to the Top – District, such as investments in professional development, technology, and staff.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>All work teams will publish their minutes on a public webpage hosted by the Oversight Committee. Social media outlets will also be used to communicate information to stakeholders. Board of Education updates, LEA newsletters, media outlets, and internal publications will also be sources of communication to stakeholder groups. Communication will be provided to stakeholder groups on at least a monthly basis.</p> <p>No specific individuals are identified as being responsible for conducting the communication activities listed in the proposal. No schedule is included indicating the frequency with which each of the identified communications will occur.</p> <p>The application does not describe how students, parents, and external stakeholders will be engaged, merely that information will be disseminated to them.</p> <p>The applicant presents a plan of moderate quality to continuously improve its plan through strategies for ongoing communication with internal and external stakeholders.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant includes thirteen performance measures that will be addressed as a part of the proposed reform.</p> <p>The two selected measures of teacher effectiveness include a rationale and describe how the measure will provide information related to the proposed plan. The annual targets for the performance measures are listed overall but not by subgroup. The target goals seem achievable, but not particularly ambitious. In addition, the numbers for effective and highly effective teachers and principals are only provided for Parma. No information on these measures is provided for Brockton.</p> <p>The applicant listed two performance measures related to proficiency (relating to grades PreK-3) which will be measured using Overall Performance Index and student performance on DIBELS. A rationale is included for the use of DIBELS. The applicant lists achievable annual targets for the OPI. However, all targets do not seem ambitious, particularly reflective of this is the lack of increase from the final year of funding to first year post grant - the same range of scores is provided as a target for both academic years. The subgroup targets do indicate a plan to reduce the academic gap that exists in the</p>		

Parma schools. The annual targets for student performance on DIBELS are likely achievable but are not particularly ambitious. The kindergarten scores are not targeted to increase throughout the duration of the grant. Third grade scores are only targeted to increase 4.4%. Data for Brockton is not provided for this performance measure even though they will have students in this grade range participating in the proposed program. No explanation is included as to why the data for Brockton for this measure is not included in the application.

Three performance measures address attendance, one for each grade range (K-3, 4-8, 9-12). A rationale is provided for using attendance as a performance measure. Parma provides attendance information for all three ranges. Brockton provides attendance information for the 4-8 range, but not K-3. (Range of grades 9-12 is not applicable to Brockton.) The goals seem achievable. The lack of increase from final funded year to first post grant year in several subcategories makes the targets less than ambitious.

Two performance measures address proficiency in grades 4-8. Both will be measured by student performance on SEA end of year assessments. The ambitious and achievable targets set for all participating students as well as the identified subgroups of IEP, African American, or Economically Disadvantaged indicate an intent to reduce the achievement gap between each of the subgroups and the overall student population.

College and career readiness of students grades 9-12 will be addressed by four performance measures. The number of students completing the FAFSA will increase each year towards ambitious yet achievable annual targets. The proposed program hopes to increase the number of 9-12 grade students passing SEA end of course or graduation required assessment at each high school in the district. Data is not provided for identified subgroups. The annual targets are achievable. The annual targets for students creating career-based portfolios is achievable, but not ambitious. The annual targets are the same throughout the funding period and first year post grant. No data is provided for identified subgroups of IEP, African American, or Economically Disadvantaged. Parma also plans to measure the number of students who do not move to tenth grade after their first year in ninth grade. A rationale was included for this performance measure. Data is provided for the identified subgroups of IEP, African American, or Economically Disadvantaged. The annual targets are ambitious yet achievable and are set with the intent of decreasing the achievement gap among the subgroups and the overall population.

The majority of the schools will not be participating in efforts that are a part of the program proposed in this application, yet annual targets for all groups and subgroups show an increase. It seems that the applicant believes students performance will increase even without implementation of the proposed program.

The applicant does not describe a plan for how the consortia will review and improve any of the thirteen measures over time if they are insufficient to gauge implementation progress.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not describe a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of professional development that will be provided to staff. There is no mention of evaluation of the use and/or effectiveness of Acceleration Policy or Credit Flexibility Program.

The applicant states that data based decisions will be made to determine if the projects are producing intended student performance results. No details are provided about the individuals responsible for conducting the analysis and/or evaluation of the data collected as part of the proposal. No methodology is described that would demonstrate whether or not a funded activity is a productive use of resources. It is not clear how the determination will be made if a project is an effective use of funds.

The applicant does not describe measures that will be used to evaluate effectiveness of any specific strategy to be implemented as a part of the proposed program. Strategies described are ones that are already in place in Parma City School District. The applicant does not address if any changes may need to be made as the program deepens and expands throughout the funding term.

The application describes to a minimal extent a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of investments.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	6
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The budget narrative and table identify all funds that will support the proposed program.</p> <p>Several components of the budget seem not completely thought out. Costs for personnel and fringe benefits do not increase throughout the duration of the funding term. Much of the equipment and personnel listed in the budget narratives and budget summary tables is not addressed in the remainder of the application so it is not clear how these resources will be used to help the proposed reform be successful. The applicant does not include these resources in a high-quality plan for implementation so justification for the expense is lacking. The applicant does not explain why some projects list indirect costs while others do not. It is not clear which budget items apply to Parma, which budget items apply to Brockton, or how the allocated resources will be distributed between the participating districts. The applicant does not explain where the "Local funds" listed to be used as a part of the proposed project will come from - Parma, Brockton, or a combination.. The Research Committee is listed as 6 teams of 8 people - 54 total. (A math error in a budget presents some concern to this reviewer.) The lack of a well-defined plan describing how the resources will be utilized as a part of the proposed program make it difficult to determine the extent to which the applicant's budget is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal.</p> <p>The applicant provides a description in the budget summary for each line of requested funds.</p> <p>The applicant does not provide a thoughtful rationale for why such a significant portion of the funding will be spent on training and so little on resources to be directly used by the participating students.</p> <p>The applicant's budget does not identify funds that will be used for one time investments versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs. Strategies for sustainability beyond the funding term are not developed in sufficient detail.</p> <p>The budget provides adequate information about the requested funds for the funding term.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	3
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant states that they have partnerships with non-profit foundations seeking research-based and data-driven educational reform efforts to support. However, no details are provided about these partnerships. It is not clear if these are in Parma, Brockton, or both. The level of support is not identified. The letters of support from community partnerships do not address the additional support that they may provide to ensure the sustainability of the proposed program.</p> <p>The applicant states that two Parma staff members will seek additional funds beginning in year one. A list of grants and foundations that will be contacted are included. However, the proposal does not include a high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

Examples of partnerships include the following: Parma City Schools is part of the Community/Business/Schools Partners. The mission is to match community resources with student needs. Brockton Public Schools partners with Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care to fund their Coordinated Family and Care Initiative to improve student environments outside of school.

The applicant identifies five population-level desired results that align with and support the proposal. Results are geared toward family, educational, and community outcomes.

The applicant lists annual target goals related to each population-level desired result. They are likely achievable, but not particularly ambitious. The applicant does not describe how the measures will be tracked or if these measures are for Parma, Brockton, or the consortia. Only student education lists measures for tracking at the student level.

The applicant does not describe how the partnership would use the data to target its resources in order to improve results for participating students, with special emphasis on students facing significant challenges, such as students with disabilities, English learners, and students affected by poverty, family instability, or other child welfare issues.

The applicant does not describe how the partnership will develop a strategy to scale the model beyond the participating students to at least other high-need students and communities in the LEA or consortium over time.

The applicant does not describe how the partnership will result in improved results over time.

The application does not describe how the partnership would, within participating schools, integrate education and other services.

The application does not describe how the partnership and consortium would build the capacity of staff in participating schools by providing them with tools and supports to assess the needs and assets of participating students that are aligned with the partnership's goals for improving the education and family and community supports identified by the partnership.

The application does not describe how the partnership and consortium would identify and inventory the needs and assets of the school and community that are aligned with those goals for improving the education and family and community supports identified by the applicant.

The application does not describe how the partnership and consortium would create a decision-making process and infrastructure to select, implement, and evaluate supports that address the individual needs of participating students and support improved results.

The application does not describe how the partnership and consortium would engage parents and families of participating students in both decision-making about solutions to improve results over time and in addressing student, family, and school needs.

The application does not describe how the partnership and consortium would routinely assess the applicant's progress in implementing its plan to maximize impact and resolve challenges and problems.

The applicant demonstrates to a minimal extent the degree to which the proposed program will integrate public or private resources in a partnership designed to augment the schools' resources by providing additional student and family supports to schools that address the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of the participating students.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

While the applicant does provide about various strategies that are currently in place in the Parma City Schools, the applicant does not coherently and comprehensively address how it will build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements; accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student; increase the effectiveness of educators; expand student access to the most effective educators; decrease achievement gaps across student groups; and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers. Little information was provided about the strategies and/or programs currently in place in Brockton schools. More detail was needed about what projects would be implemented, where those projects would be implemented, and how the project resources would be divided between the two LEAs.

Total	210	86
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

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

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

The rationale for the Summer Scholars project that would be implemented in Parma is that the program could provide opportunities that those students might not otherwise be exposed to due to poverty. This includes enrichment opportunities as well as a chance to minimize the loss of academic gains.

The applicant includes a list of benchmarks for the Summer Scholars project. Included in the benchmarks are some indicators of how the two LEAs will work together to discuss the Summer Scholars project. However, a high-quality plan is not included for this component. The application does not include specific, quantified objectives; goals correlated to the objectives; deliverables that will demonstrate results of the activities; or identification of the individuals responsible for the completion of activities and deliverables.

The applicant includes a budget for the Summer Scholars project that provides some information about each requested funding line. The personnel costs seem reasonable, except the applicant has not accounted for increases in salary or fringe benefits over the course of the funding term. Not enough detail is provided about travel and supplies to determine if those resources support the objectives well enough to be considered a reasonable expense. The budget lists contractual expenses with community organizations and contractors to provide specialized programming, but there is no description of what the specialized programming is or who the organizations and contractors are.

The Summer Scholars project has demonstrated to a low extent a clear, discrete, and innovative solution that can be replicated in schools across the Nation. Without significantly more detail, this project could not be replicated. A summer program is not innovative.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	3
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Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes an Arts and Culture project to increase student exposure to theatrical productions and/or concerts.

The application does not include a high-quality plan for how the applicant would carry out activities that would be co-developed and implemented across two or more LEAs. A detailed plan is not included. The proposed project does not mention the inclusion of any additional LEA beyond Parma City Public Schools.

The proposed budget and accompanying narrative do not provide enough information about how the resources will be used. No specific activities are identified. Several of the requested items do not include adequate explanation as to why it

is needed to meet program goals. For example, \$20,000 is requested to "purchase necessary equipment that an artist in residence needs for their subject area". No identification of artists or their areas of specialty is included in the description of the proposed project. There are no objectives included for this project, so it is not possible for the proposed budget to be reasonable in relation to those objectives. In addition, there is no indication of how many students will be served by the proposed project, so it is not possible to determine if the funding requested is reasonable in relation to the number of students to be served.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	8
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Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

The Parma Schools want to establish a STEM-focused elementary school that uses a project-based curriculum. The applicant's rationale in targeting this program at the elementary level is that this age group's innate curiosity as well as interest and enthusiasm for STEM subjects should be built upon. The applicant believes that the STEM-focused elementary will provide an opportunity to connect science, learning, and literacy. This initiative will also address the low scores in mathematics and science on the Parma City Schools State Report Card

Parents of K-4 students will have the option to enroll their students in the initial STEM elementary school. The applicant does not describe the selection process for students. Without addressing a selection process, it is not clear how the applicant can guarantee that the initiative will serve a diverse population as stated.

Some information is included about the quality of the teachers who will be a part of this initiative. It is stated that the school will start with two STEM trained teachers per grade, K-4. The application also says that six elementary teachers have been trained in project-based learning. Teachers have been provided release time to visit STEM elementary schools and collaborate on the development of project-based units.

The first generation of STEM educators will train future STEM elementary teachers. The goal is to expand the program to a second elementary in four years. The applicant also wants to offer professional development for all elementary teachers in project-based learning pedagogy.

The applicant states that students will be recruited, but does not provide a plan describing strategies to ensure that students from diverse backgrounds are recruited to the program.

Benchmarks with deadlines are included as a part of the application. These are an outline of how the project is designed, but they are not a high-quality plan for how the activities will be co-developed and implemented across Parma and Brockton. The components of a high-quality plan, as described by the USDE, are not included in the description of this initiative.

The application includes a budget for the identified initiative. Because no objectives were included and a detailed design was not fully developed, the proposed budget does not seem reasonable in relation to the initiative as described in the application.



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0344OH-3 for Parma City School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
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(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	3
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has created six areas of focus:school as community hub, individualized learning, holistic student learning, college and career readiness, 21st century learning, and teacher and administrator capacity. Each of these has potential areas to explore, which the applicant intends to do using the research and pilot teams later described. Although listing potential areas to explore allows the applicant flexibility, it limits the clarity of the reform vision, and fails to specifically address goals of deepening student learning and accelerating student achievement. The applicant addresses the goal of increasing equity through the Response to Intervention model.</p> <p>The areas of work are too fluid to be considered coherent and comprehensive, and as a result this criterion was scored medium.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a list of the schools that will participate from both LEAs. All schools in Parma will participate, while Brockton's elementaries will be part of the grant because of their academic need. The applicant provides a convincing rationale why it has chosen the selected schools. The use of schools from two LEAs ensures that the eligibility requirements are met (minimum size of participating students, etc.). More than twenty thousand students will be affected, of whom more than eleven thousand are economically disadvantaged, which meets the minimum grant requirements. Almost fourteen hundred educators will benefit from the grant. The large numbers of educators affected makes a strong case for the proposal.</p> <p>Because the applicant meets all of this criteria, this was ranked high.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Both LEAs are currently making progress on their goals as set in their respective district plans.</p> <p>The application's theory of change is to emulate, in years four and five of the grant, the interventions that are successful, based on the findings of its research teams and pilot study teams in grant years one to three. Teams from Parma will visit Brockton so that all of the school in both districts will benefit from lessons learned. The delay of full implementation to year four also creates a delay in scaling up and achieving the goal of positively affecting the Brockton secondary schools, which will not be impacted until many years later.</p> <p>The applicant plans to publish findings from its research and pilot teams so that other LEAs can benefit from their work.</p> <p>The application has components of a high quality plan, as it includes goals, activities, and timelines in sections E2 and E4. The responsible parties for each activity are given in the budget narratives.</p> <p>The applicant meets each section of this criterion, but delays full implementation of the project, resulting in a rating in the high range.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	2
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Demographics are given for each school included in the proposal. Performance on Parma summative assessments, as well as growth indices, for all grades bands are given, for all students and by subgroup. The goals listed in the table adequately address decreasing achievement gaps. The graduation rate is given for the Parma district, but not by school. No evidence is provided that the goals related to achievement gaps and graduation rates equal of exceed the state's targets.</p> <p>No data is provided for Brockton students.</p>		

The applicant does not have information related to college enrollment or postsecondary degree attainment.

Because of the lack of data provided on Brockton summative assessments, Brockton achievement gaps, and Parma college enrollment, this criterion was scored low.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	6

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Both Parma City and Brockton submitted data related to past student achievement in narrative form, without providing charts, graphs, or raw student data. Information regarding closing gaps in student performance was not provided. Because of these omissions, there was only partial evidence for a clear track record.

The Parma City LEA has made improvements in its overall state rating over the past four years. High school graduation rates are relevant only to the Parma City school, which were at 85.6% overall for 2011-12. Some demographic groups have graduation rates in the 70-75% range. The district goal is to have a 95% graduation rate for all groups by 2017. There is only sparse evidence that high school graduation rates are improving. No data is given regarding success in closing achievement gaps.

The Brockton LEA has improved its district Composite Performance Index over the last several years in both reading and mathematics.

Baseline college enrollment data is missing for the LEAs, but both intend to address this need with a tracking mechanism in 2012-13. This fails to meet the criterion related to college enrollment.

Brockton has made strides toward improving persistently low elementary performance, as its lowest performing school, Huntington Elementary, has increased its Composite Performance Index in both reading and mathematics. Evidence of specific scores from Brockton are lacking, which are needed to demonstrate a clear track record of success. Reform efforts and outcomes at Parma low performing schools are unreported. More details are needed to determine the extent to which Parma has a clear track record of improvement.

Student performance data from Parma has been integrated into professional learning so that academic coaches, teachers, and principals work together to use the same data, which include value added scores that exceed one year's worth of growth over the past few years. The applicant does not address how parents or students in either LEA are informed of student performance data. The criterion related to data has only been partially met.

The applicant has not made a compelling case for a clear track record of improvement over the past four years. Because extensive evidence is provided that the applicant has improved learning, while achievement gap, college enrollment and school reform details needed to provide a clear track record were lacking, this section was rated medium.

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

Appendices 30 to 36 illustrate that Parma has a high degree of transparency in its practices and budget processes. Audit reports and the CAFR are placed directly on the district website. Salaries at the school level are reported using a link to a state website.

Brockton also demonstrates a high level of transparency in its budget. Appendix 17 demonstrates that Brockton has lists personnel salaries for teachers, instructional staff, as well as other expenditures at the school level through its Position Control Book, which is publically available on its website.

The current practice of both LEAs demonstrate a high level of transparency in expenditures and so merit full marks in this section.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	4
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Parma district has begun to personalize learning through its Response to Intervention model and its Restructuring the School Day initiative. It provides evidence that it has some autonomy from the State by adopting a comparable plan to that of Ohio's Comprehensive Improvement Plan. In particular, its RTI model is an adaptation of the state's plan.</p> <p>Brockton has created supportive environments through its Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports and Second Steps programs. No evidence is given that it enjoys autonomy from its state's regulatory, legal or statutory requirements.</p> <p>This area was ranked in the medium range because although both districts have initiated personalized learning, evidence is not provided for both LEAs to demonstrate that they have sufficient autonomy from state requirements.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	7
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Parma district provides ample evidence for stakeholder engagement in the proposal process, including groups such as students, teachers, union leaders, parents, businesses, and local higher education institutions. Mention is made in the proposal about the underlying committee work in both towns. Included in the appendices are letters of support for the Parma LEA from city officials, the Parma education association, the Parent Teacher Association, School Board, student councils, and a local university. Support from the Brockton area is indicated by letters from the mayor and school principals.</p> <p>Because there is ample evidence of support for the proposal in the Parma district, but little specific evidence for the Brockton district, this area was ranked medium.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	1
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Parma has made strides in utilizing Ohio's five step plan to analyze data for student success. Teacher Based Teams look at individual student data in order to personalize learning in the classroom. Teachers will be trained in specific software (Performance Plus) to measure student progress.</p> <p>Brockton has implemented personalized learning through computer adaptive software. Both districts will create a research committee to identify promising instructional strategies and create a pilot initiative.</p> <p>A goal has been set that student growth will increase by five percent each year, but no justification is provided for this goal, nor are gaps addressed in the analysis plan</p> <p>Because the districts have not yet identified strategies that would be part of a high quality plan, nor are goals grounded in needs analysis, this area was ranked low.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	9

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The application has six areas of focus, including individualized student learning, holistic student learning, college and career readiness, and 21st century skills. These are supported by professional development provided to educators.

The Parma LEA has implemented a model of using learning targets and formative assessments. This allows all students to be involved in their own learning processes. In addition, middle school students are given an opportunity to explore areas of interest through Encore classes. A variety of clubs allow students to have exposure to diverse contexts and perspectives. The Response to Intervention program includes a variety of instructional methods, such as guided reading, differentiated instruction, and enrichment. Teachers participate in professional development to focus on the Common Core Standards. High school students will learn goal setting strategies through academy periods, where each student is assigned a teacher mentor and provided frequent feedback.

STEM classes in middle (Parma) and elementary (Brockton) schools provide varied and high quality offerings.

The application does not address the role of parental support in the area of learning.

No evidence is given how Brockton will personalize learning or provide student data or digital learning to students.

The applicant does not provide evidence that all students will have access to student data and digital learning. Because the focus in these two categories is only on high school students, the score in this area is in the medium range.

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

Both LEAs use professional learning communities as opportunities for the staff development of teachers. Parma uses Teacher Based Teams to analyze student level data and to individualize instruction. The software tools in the district allow the teachers to frequently assess student performance. In high schools, a formal process of examining data every three weeks has been put in place. Parma has implemented a Peer assistance Review program so that teachers can mentor their peers to improve instruction. Teacher evaluation includes classroom performance as well as student assessment, resulting in a professional development plan created for each teacher. An assessment database, Performance Plus, is used in Parma to individualize instruction.

The applicant intends to share the lessons learned from the Parma LEA with the Brockton LEA staff.

Brockton has emphasized increasing teacher capacity to examine student data. It uses Understanding by Design to examine the teaching standards of the Common core and create optimal instructional practices. Brockton uses Test Wiz to allow teachers to receive immediate feedback on student performance.

The application does not include specific details on how it will increase the number of students who receive instruction from highly effective teachers. Training for principals in the use of data is not addressed, nor is the role of student data in the evaluation of principals.

The application focuses on the active use of student data by teachers and instructional coaches, but does not address principal training or targets for increasing the number of students who will benefit from highly effective teachers, with the result that this component was rated in the medium range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	11

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Parma LEA has assigned a central office administrator to each building administrator in order to provide support to each school. The central office is committed to high quality professional development for all district staff. School leadership is split into several teams to allow for more flexibility and to better track individual student growth.

The Parma LEA provides evidence that it is using computer based instruction so that students can receive credit in multiple ways, including Credit Flex, credit recovery, and course acceleration.

It has partnered with the University of Akron to provide professional development for teacher of English language learners. It has also re-examined its policy of the instruction of students with special needs through its standing equity committee. The use of IEPs provide for personalized learning.

The Brockton LEA also provides professional development opportunities for its staff through its professional learning teams, which are supported at the district level.

Evidence for autonomy in the area of school personnel decisions, school schedules, roles of non-educators and school budgets is not given.

The applicant has demonstrated that the central office provides support to campuses, the LEAs give students multiple paths to show mastery, and has tried to make learning resources available to all students. However, no evidence is provided that the districts have given schools sufficient autonomy in many areas so that they are able to focus on personalizing learning, which limits this section to a medium ranking.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Both LEAs use web-based technologies to provide stakeholders with learning resources, course information, and student progress reports. These resources are available in multiple languages. The formats of the data are interoperable so that information from multiple sources can be integrated into a single report in Excel.</p> <p>In addition, the LEAs will establish community partnerships to allow more uses to access these electronic resources by providing internet access for economically disadvantaged stakeholders.</p> <p>The Parma district also maintains a help desk available to students, teachers, and parents via e-mail or phone.</p> <p>The applicant has not addressed learning resources in school.</p> <p>The emphasis on access of all stakeholders to learning resources via web-based technologies merits a rating in the high range.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant has divided up its continuous improvement process into four common protocols. These include work teams that will review each of the proposed goals, investigate effective strategies, and communicate with internal and external stakeholders. Each team is comprised of teachers, administrators and community members, and will meet regularly for approval in each step of the process. Decisions will be made using a process from the Decision Making for Results model. Progress toward thirteen goals will be evaluated internally but also using external reviewers. The implementation timeline in Appendix 15 does not include frequency of reports to external stakeholders.</p> <p>The applicant has described a rigorous continuous improvement process which places this category in the high range.</p>		

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
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The applicant plans to communicate with stakeholders on a monthly basis, using a dedicated webpage, social media, and LEA newsletters.

It will reach out to other agencies to create partnerships with those working in the same core areas.

The community will be invited to be part of the research committees formed as part of the continuous improvement process.

However, it is not clear how feedback of project communication from stakeholders will be collected and utilized.

Although the applicant fails to describe a feedback mechanism, because it will leverage technology to inform the community in many ways, the applicant meets this criterion in the high range.

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

The applicant addresses each performance measure for every population and subgroup in the Parma district. Each of the measures has a rationale in the narrative, and increases in rigor over time.

The LEA's response if the target is not met is delineated for only a few of the performance measures, such as College Readiness.

The applicant does not address the all student category for Brockton (effective teacher and principal).

The applicant has adequately addressed the rationale for each measure, but not how it will review and improve each measure, which results in a score in the medium range.

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

Appendix 15 provides evidence that the applicant has met this criterion in general, including timelines where the applicant will review interventions using work teams. This process will include feedback via electronic surveys of all stakeholders. Efficiencies will be gained by working with community partners with similar goals, as well as use of software to create individualized instruction. The decision-making structure will be streamlined using a single Race to the Top Coordinator to focus on effective communication. However, the applicant does not clearly measure ways that it will use staff, money or other resources more productively.

Because the applicant addresses most of the criterion, but does not clearly describe measurement of its improvement plan, it is scored in the high range.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant adequately provides evidence in Table 3-1 for the oversight, training, and research teams portion of the budget, which are reasonable and sufficient. The applicant does not provide evidence that stipends of \$10,000 for 940 teachers are reasonable in the pilot teams portion of the budget.

The applicant has provided a description of all funds used to support the proposal, which include \$59.6 million is Race to the Top monies and \$3.2 million local LEA funds.

Years 1 to 3 fund small pilot programs. The majority of the expenditures happen in years 4 and 5 of the project (\$50.1 of \$59.6 million). Evidence is not provided that the program will be sustainable long term as the majority of the intervention is made in the final years of the grant. The applicant addresses sustainability in Table 3-1 based on private funds, but the only non-Race to the Top funds connected to this proposal are less than \$400,000 per year for years 1 to 4, and are LEA funds used for the software project.

Because the applicant does not provide a sufficient rationale for a major portion of its budget, and there is no evidence given that the LEAs can sustain the work beyond the life of the grant, this area was rated low.

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

10

1

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not adequately address financial support for the proposal beyond the life of the grant. Funds from sources other than Race to the Top are a small portion of the project budget, relate mostly to the software project, and only come from the LEA local funds. Letters of support from government leaders do not include details about financial support beyond the life of the grant. The applicant notes that it has received grants in the past from diverse organizations, but does not provide the size of these financial contributions. No future budget beyond the life of the grant is included.

Because there is little evidence for sustainability, this area was scored low.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant lists several community partners for both Parma and Brockton, with a description of potential and current services to be integrated with the schools. The level of commitment of the partners to the grant proposal is unknown. No letters of support, funds, or services in-kind from these groups were included in the grant proposal. It is unclear how these partnerships will build capacity of LEA staff.

Goals for the partnerships are given and increase over time, but information is not provided on how these will be tracked at the campus level.

Although a benchmark in this section, it is unclear how the partnerships will help students achieve academic goals listed in E3. Specific attention to academic goals in this portion of the application is missing.

Because the application does not make a compelling argument for the success of its current partnerships to impact academic success or capacity building this criteria was ranked low.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant will focus on Response to Intervention and Teacher Data Teams to create personalized learning environments that are aligned with the Common Core standards (college- and career-ready standards).

Its use of data will accelerate student achievement by monitoring each student's academic needs, as well as pay attention to achievement gaps across student groups. This increased use of personalized data will raise the rates at which students graduate from high school.

The applicant addresses the effectiveness of educators by providing for extensive professional development based on research and local best practice.

The applicant fails to demonstrate how it will expand student access to the most effective educators.

Overall, the application addresses the majority of the criteria of Absolute Priority 1, and so meets the criteria.

Total	210	116
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	12

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

The application includes three optional areas: STEM elementary initiative, Summer Scholars, and Arts and Culture. The applicant's rationale for working in the STEM area is given and well-supported. The applicant makes a strong case for the need for STEM at the elementary level, including evidence of the need, benchmarks, timelines, and an evaluation plan.

The costs are reasonable, but it is not stated how many students will be served.

The STEM program was ranked high because of it met most of the elements of a high quality plan.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	12
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Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

The application includes three optional areas: STEM elementary initiative, Summer Scholars, and Arts and Culture. The applicant's rationale for the Summer Scholars program is given and well-supported. The applicant presents a compelling case for a summer program for high risk students. This plan includes benchmarks, timelines, and an evaluation plan for the extended activities of children in grades K-7. The budget is reasonable, but it is not clear how many students will be served.

The Summer Scholars program was ranked high because it meets most of the elements of a high quality plan.

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	3
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Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's rationale for the Arts and Culture program is given but not well-supported. No details regarding the selection of artists are given. To ensure that students are exposed to diversity, the choice of artist by geographic specialization or discipline will be important.

The applicant asks for support for 6 artists in residence to give low SES students an opportunity to experience diverse cultures. These artists would rotate across the districts. The costs are reasonable, but no measurement, timelines, or number of students served are given that are indicative of a high quality plan.

The arts and culture program was ranked low because it lacked many elements of a high quality plan.

