



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0267AZ-1 for Payson Unified School District #10

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Payson Unified School District (PUSD) is proposing the creation of "personalized leaning neighborhoods" which build on the four core educational assurance areas. PUSD is on track to meet AZ timelines for implementation of standards and assessments and has baseline data in most areas. They have initiated efforts regarding evaluation of professional personnel. There is no mention of how evaluation results will be used going forward.</p> <p>The goal to create "differentiated leaning plans" (DEPs) for each student is aspirational, as are the goals of increased professional development, use of technology and parental engagement.</p> <p>While small, personalized learning communities are discussed widely in the research the application does not clearly describe what a "personalized learning neighborhood" in PUSD will look like. Nor is there sufficient discussion of teachers level of experience with this type of individualization and collaboration.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>All PUSD students (2,485) will be participating in the activities documented in the proposal. There are clear statements as to schools involved, student numbers per school, low-income families represented, high needs students and participating educators. Quality implementation of personalized learning neighborhoods, as articulated in the proposal, has the potential for improving student outcomes.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>As all schools and students will be involved in the plan from its inception "scale-up" may not be an appropriate term here. However, there is recognition that creating and maintaining "intimate" learning environments ("neighborhoods") at the secondary level will require more effort than at the elementary.</p> <p>The theory of change/logic model is delineated in a 4+ year flow chart but details about what constitutes a "neighborhood" are sparse.</p> <p>The proposal writer(s) recognizes that parental involvement at the secondary level must be a focus as should deeper engagement of the students themselves in their own progress. For this reviewer the proposal, in this section, appears to be articulating the well established requirements of an "Individualized Education Plan" (IEP) for each student in the district. In this small LEA with limited numbers of personnel this should be considered ambitious.</p> <p>Much research concerning the successes and challenges of IEP delivery should be accessed and utilized so as to learn from the experts and avoid repeating the failures of others. It is less than optimal that these individualized plans, for those above Grade 2, will not be completed until 2015, more than half way through the grant period.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	7

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's vision for improved student learning and increased equity are clearly documented and in several instances appear to be very ambitious. Given that 2012-2013 marks the earliest stages of the grant funded activities, the expectations for achievement gains in that year alone, appear aspirational but potentially not achievable.

At this time PUSD has no data on postsecondary degree attainment and proposes to create a tracking system beginning with 2013 high school graduates.

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	5
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant delineates a tiered intervention process that has been in place in PUSD for the past five years. This system, which appears to be in effect at the elementary and middle level, begins with the screening of student achievement three times a year with intervention teams responding to students whose learning challenges suggest they "do not respond to the classroom instruction as expected." If all else fails to improve academic performance an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is designed for the student. The district will use grant funds to add tiered intervention resources at the secondary level. It is unclear if <u>all</u> students or only those with academic learning needs will be supported by this system.</p> <p>An expansion of the current system of sharing performance data includes further use of technology for timely communication of student performance data although there is no mention of ensuring care-givers have either the technological skills or equipment necessary for utilizing this system. College enrollment is not mentioned in this section of the response.</p> <p>Evidence of the effectiveness of the current system appears limited to anecdotal evidence. A graphic detailing past progress for students in the Intervention system would provide needed objective data to encourage this reviewer to support the expansion of this system as proposed.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal describes various processes for making available school-level expenditures from State and local funds inclusive of utilizing established public websites, routine news reporting and multiple outreach efforts by superintendent and his staff to communicate fiscal particulars to various publics.</p> <p>The State requires a level of sharing concerning finances which PUSD adheres to. A link is provided in the proposal, potentially to document the narrative statements. RTTT protocol does not encourage reviewers to peruse these links.</p> <p>The score given is based solely on the narrative as no attachments are referenced in this section. The narrative, which is nonspecific for all categories, does not mention (d) non-personnel expenditures.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	9
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Payson does not anticipate any barriers from the State to establishing the personalized learning environments however, they do plan on requesting waivers from the state in at least one significant area, the requirement around the Carnegie Unit seat time requirement. No explanation of the State's preferences in this arena are provided. A perfect score was not given due to this unknown.</p>		

PUSD notes that they do have "the capacity and autonomy to manage the RTTT- District grant."

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

10

9

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

In July 2012, prior to receipt of the RTTT-D RFP, the Superintendent convened a Student Achievement Committee (SAC) to address continuous improvement of student achievement. "Teacher leaders from all PUSD schools, appointed by their principal, other key district personnel, community members and parents" attended. It is this SAC committee which decided to pursue the RTTT grant. The narrative suggests that efforts were made to communicate broadly with all stakeholders and to get their feedback on the proposal particulars.

PUSD does not have a collective bargaining unit. On October 16, 2012, an e-mail went to all teachers in the district soliciting their support for the RTTT - District grant application. The results showed that 78% of PUSD teachers support the RTTT-District grant application and proposals. "The District has 130 teachers; 109 voted; 102 supported the application and proposals". Their comments are included in the appendix as are letters of support from a broad group of constituents.

Approaches for engaging a portion of the uncommitted 22% is not discussed. A plan will need to be determined that will bring a majority of the reluctant participants into these activities.

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

5

3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

According to analysis of State assessment data trends PUSD student performance has fallen or remained stagnant in all content areas in all schools."There is no specific summative assessment for 11th and 12th graders to measure mastery of college and career-readiness or standards."

Currently PUSD has:

- has several years' worth of nationally-normed student performance data on reading and computation fluency which inform instructional programming decisions
- many data points and several storage systems and no comprehensive system
- scarce remediation and tutoring services
- limited internet access in outlying areas

Going forward PUSD proposes

- a comprehensive assessment of student needs with a diagnostic tool that will drill to the specific skill a student needs to master
- Utilizing technology and grant-funds to hire Testing Lab Monitors to gather and score the assessment data
- designing and utilizing a comprehensive data warehouse system
- after-school programs to provide homework help and emotional/social support for students in after school centers which provide transportation home

There is no reference to timelines, persons responsible, etc. There is reference to Table E4. Table 4 under section E presents performance data and targets for improvement but does not include the aforementioned particulars.

This section focuses primarily on a current description of district conditions regarding student achievement and insufficiently on a plan for improvement beyond identifying gaps and targeting areas for core intervention.

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

	Available	Score
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(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	15
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Common Core Standards will guide the curriculum development in every school in the district. Learning for each student will be focused through a "learning neighborhood" structure which will assist students in specific areas of academic interest and will develop projects and experiences "that will be both deep and specific to learning goals." Several specific activities noted to engage and empower all learners are included.</p> <p>The challenges inherent in motivating students beyond their level of interest are well known to practiced educators. This narrative does not articulate how a balance between student interests and necessary learning is to be addressed. The how to of motivating students needs to be part of the planned PD.</p> <p>Students will have access to a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development primarily through restructuring learning into "small learning communities," focused individualized instruction, which will be routinely assessed and adjusted, and an upgraded use of technology . This approach to teaching and learning, especially at the secondary level, represents a significant change for the district.</p> <p>The need for parental support is noted throughout and a Parent Coordinator will be hired, but there is no attention given to methods of garnering family support (e.g.. utilizing established community institutions to facilitate communication) which leaves in question both the depth of parental understanding that will be supported and the role that care-givers will actually play.</p> <p>Small Learning Communities have a fairly significant tradition in education reform and many lessons may be gained from review of several of these more "successful" efforts. This reviewer does not see reference to lessons learned by these earlier innovators of small learning communities and is not convinced that the multiplicity of challenges inherent in developing communities of this sort have been addressed in the plan presented.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	11
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>C (a - d).</p> <p>As noted in the proposal "Payson Unified School District will implement a professional development schedule that is utilized for strategic training and professional development district-wide for implementation of the initiatives described throughout this narrative." They will "seek out partnerships with other districts, the local community college, county education agency, and universities to help provide these professional development opportunities." Instruction will be driven by the data collected at several strategic points, digital portfolios and curriculum built around Common Core Standards. Secondary teachers will design online classrooms.</p> <p>There is no specific mention of how the LEA's teacher and principal evaluation system will be utilized to improve teaching and learning as called for in C (a) (iv). Absent too in the narrative discussion of professional development is mention of enhancing educator knowledge of student development, specifically emotional and social needs as they relate to learning. The Danielson Framework (as example) is a recognized, highly regarded and widely adopted/adapted model for teacher preparation, evaluation and professional development. It is unclear if the applicant has researched and or considered this or other proven models of teacher/educator evaluation and development as they "convene a team to work collaboratively to determine what the evaluation piece will include, how each party will be evaluated and what the common practices will be district-wide."</p> <p>While the applicant is commended for planning to create "a teacher neighborhood to support collaborative planning that allows teachers and other school stakeholders to effectively implement the personalized learning environment" a significant challenge to this effort is that "Payson Schools has not had a Director of Curriculum and Instruction since 2009-10 due to budget cuts." This position will be reinstated with grant funds and the stated intention is to ensure the position continues post-grant. The applicant clearly understands that this hopeful goal will require substantial support from stakeholders.</p>		

PUSD's proposal suggests that educators currently have access to tools, data and resources to accelerate student learning and educators have or will have "instant access to student data as well as previously enumerated opportunities to become more skilled and knowledgeable in the use of these tools and resources.

The number of administrators in the LEA is minimal and while there is brief mention of seeking out partnerships to help provide professional development opportunities there is no indication that this training will in any way be differentiated for leaders. Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards for School Leaders (ISLLC), developed in 1996 and widely adopted by States, may be a starting place for considering the unique challenges and developmental options for those in leadership positions. This section was scored in the medium range due in part to the lack of focus on the evaluation system and the special requirements of education leaders.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	8
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant states that the LEA has a "site-based culture," that sites have flexibility and autonomy and that students have opportunity and resources to progress and demonstrate mastery of standards multiple times and in multiple ways. Additionally the narratives notes that this environment is inclusive of all students including EL students and students with disabilities.</p> <p>This reviewer scores this in the middle range due to the absence of clarifying documentation (e.g. board policies, administrative processes, meeting minutes) or an explanation for the lack of such documentation. There is little information provided, beyond a restatement of the criteria, concerning (D) (1) (a, c-e).</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	10
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>PUSD's application recognizes current limitations in technology infrastructure " The mainrouter is nearly 18 years old and most site routers and switches providing network and Internet accessibility throughout the district are 15 years old or older and are at their maximum speeds of providing connection to the computers and hardware attached to them." Access to technology is also problematic: "at Payson High School, we have a computer for parent use to access their Edline (Blackboard Engage) account and gather information about their student(s)... as part of our RTTT proposal, once we can take a similar product district-wide, we will provide the same type of parent connection at each school." This is a critical need and the applicant has plans and, as discussed in an earlier section, skill building opportunities for remediating this reality. These are aspirational but achievable goals which the budget appears to support as well.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	9
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Payson's proposal notes that they have a "strategy for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback on progress toward our project goals." The application suggests that a state request</p>		

to establish a protocol to identify students with leaning disabilities who are not progressing on level was the impetus for creation of the "Response to Instruction/Intervention program" at all sites. This reviewer was unable to discern from the narrative if "all students" referred to all "identified" students or all 2,485 students in the district.

The narrative proposes various processes for communicating with stakeholders and gathering feedback.

This section was scored in the medium point range given the absence of clarity as to how, beyond multiple meetings for input, the activities and goals will be adapted as needed.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:
 The proposal notes that "PUSD currently supports information dissemination through regular district meetings, school site activities (including newsletters), Governing Board presentations, press releases and by website notices. The applicant states that: "Using our grant we will expand on these activities with a uniform electronic platform for stakeholder" access. The "neighborhood teams"/ learning communities will bring digital edutainment to the community." Making data entertaining (as well as educational) is an ambitious goal that is potentially achievable and I gave this section of the proposal a high score for a creative approach.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:
 The applicants stressors are clear and involve the complexity of new and frequently changing policies/mandates that are unfunded or underfunded and the challenges of meeting these in a rural, remote locale with limited numbers of personnel. The absence of baseline data on educator effectiveness suggests that initial steps must include the development of an instrument to measure teacher and principal effectiveness. This is only briefly addressed here and in other sections of the proposal.
 The State is changing its student assessment protocols which presents another challenge to the LEA regarding measurement of student progress. That is, projections on well delineated charts are made to, as the application suggests "expected performance in a new, unknown assessment." As all District students are participating in the RTTT activities the Performance Measures apply to all students. These are ambitious measures in an uncertain environment and thus it is challenging to assess whether they are in fact achievable. This reviewer gives a high score on this section understanding that reality.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:
 The commitment to this effort is clear. Clearer still the need described in this section and throughout the proposal. The effectiveness of the RTTT activities will be evaluated in standard ways with, for this LEA, advanced data collection methods and technological supports which are accounted for in the budget section of the proposal. However, professional development, as one example, is primarily assessed based on attendee surveys. Another valuable assessment in this area could be student progress and/or teacher evaluation against individual growth plans correlated to training opportunities. This of course requires an adopted evaluation tool and processes to use it effectively.
 Development of an evaluation instrument and other components might be outsourced to ensure efficiency, validity and reliability.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	7

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Overall the budget appears adequate for the activities, personnel and contractual relationships proposed. While twelve days are set aside for professional development, given the extensive training that needs to occur, this may be inadequate. Missing for this reviewer is any sense of expenditures anticipated for development, implementation and refinement of the educator evaluation system.

The proposal notes that in addition to RTTT support funding from various sources has been included in the projected budget. These are specifically intended to maintain and sustain the Internet connections and communications networks and to provide STEM education through the virtual classroom. The Overall Budget notes \$653,320 in revenue from sources external to the grant. The narrative notes that "locating and finding other funding sources and other grant opportunities" will occur as needed. This vague statement would be enhanced by noting potential sources of future funding or creative means for determining new sources. Projected costs post grant for long term sustainability.

A mid-range score was given due to gaps in information.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	4
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant is abundantly hopeful that several positions initiated through the grant (e.g.. Curriculum Director, Webmaster, etc.) will be retained and supported by the district after the term of the grant . Where positions are not continued their responsibilities, the proposal suggests, will be shifted to other personnel in the district. There are no funds allocated for sustainability although each of the strands of the RTTT project are expected to generate long-term, on going positive results. The consequences of this are not addressed.

This reviewer finds the plans for sustainability somewhat unrealistic given the current context. The absence of a specific sustainability plan, and the applicants recurring suggestion that State funding is persistently being reduced are discomfiting.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

PUSD has dealt with a "burgeoning homeless population." In 2011-2012 homeless students represented 20% of the LEA population. Therefore the focus of this Competitive Preference Priority (CPP) is on "displaced and disadvantaged" students. Currently the district has, as stated, a "network of donors, volunteers and district employees" as well as "meaningful and productive partnerships with many organizations, individuals and businesses." These relationships and partnerships are clearly described in the narrative for this CPP section, as are the outcomes to date and anticipated future benefits. Removing barriers for homeless and disadvantaged students by providing education supports as well as social and emotional supports is threaded throughout this section of the proposal. As example, current partnerships enable the LEA to ensure these students have, among other things, gently used clothing, foster family placement services, mentoring, tutoring and credit recovery to enhance graduation outcomes . Implementation and outcome progress will be tracked through quarterly meetings.

It is anticipated that the partners will reach "mutually-agreed-upon solutions (to persistent challenges) starting in August 2014."

Although baseline data is mostly unavailable, performance measures have been determined and are presented in chart format. These are aspirational. Multiple letters of support from partnering organizations extend the possibility that these goals are achievable.

A more specific delineation of the processes for parental engagement are needed. The work of the Institute for Education Leadership, as one example, around strengthening school, family and community relations might prove helpful in this area.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The goal of this project is to transform classrooms and empower teachers, primarily with expanded data usage and digital content, for purposes of increasing the effectiveness of educators efforts to create personalized learning environments which accelerate student achievement and deepen their learning. This goal is woven throughout the proposal. Activities as stated focus on this goal. Students will be assessed based against Common Core Standards (college and career ready standards) and there is a district proposed College and Career K-12 checklist that once implemented will put these goals center stage for district students.

The applicant has addressed Absolute Priority 1.

Total	210	145
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	9

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Students in the LEA currently have opportunities for virtual learning. The district plans to expand on learning through technology and is proposing, through this budget supplement to greatly enhance these opportunities thereby further meeting students learning needs. The supplemental budget will introduce :

- "video production' as a way to capture students who have trouble learning in a more traditional setting by "tapping into engagement, critical thinking and achievement"
- a production studio in all libraries
- video based on line curriculum for students and parents
- a "mobile classroom" to engage the full community

This has the potential for engaging both students and community, in this rural and remote context, in positive ways. There is no mention of co-development or engagement with another LEA. The proposed budget appears adequate to meet the goals as presented.





Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

A. Vision (40 total points) Application #0267AZ-2 for Payson Unified School District #10

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Payson described what has been accomplished with the Four Core Assurances. Here are some examples of their efforts to date:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Standards</u>: The current and future plan includes the state adopted College and Career Ready standards of the Common Core and the shift to the Common Core has set the curricular foundation. <u>Data Systems</u>: The SAIS will generate the data necessary for this reform application as it collects a variety of academic, SWD, LEP. <u>Teacher/Leader Effectiveness</u>: Payson implements a evaluation system of continual improvement for 3 performance levels. <u>TurnAround Lowest Achieving Schools</u>: The visioning did not adequately address this assurance. <p>The Plan describes the intention to create personalized learning environment and provides examples of the necessary organizational shift, but did not adequately discuss how personalized learning environments would be developed in order to accelerate achievement and deepen learning</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Payson concluded that comprehensive reform could not be accomplished in their district without including all schools. However, that did not appropriately explain a rationale for implementing a reform model that would institute a personalized learning environment model of learning that was not currently present. A list of schools was provided that would participate in the grant activities. All schools would be targeted. A table provided the data on high needs and low income students. 		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Payson's description of how they intend to enact LEA-wide reform and change describes instruction that will be based on common core standards and other current state initiatives.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The narrative provides generalized statements of their intent to create personalized learning "neighborhoods." The district's perception of "personalizing" learning environments is reflected in their statement that they would be easy to establish in K-6, without first explaining what are the elements of a personalized learning environment. It does not examine the common and individual nature of tasks that are part of the process, the facilitative, self-enacted dimension and the requisite retraining of teachers to modify their more directive approach to one that is facilitative. 		

- 3. The development or "logic" model that they used to design change to their system is not adequately developed.
- 4. The structure, process, resource acquisition/development, timeline need to be more definitive. Explicit elaboration of reform model was essential.

Payson did not adequately address all the elements of a high quality plan, nor could they explain adequately any scaling up of their project.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	5
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Payson's focus on the District goal of "Continuous Improvement of student achievement" appears to be reasonable given the student performance data.

It cannot be reasonably be determined, through the narrative and tables, that the District' vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity.

- 1. The inclusion of Goals 2 and 3 have some relationship to the purposes of this application which is seek ambitious yet achievable goals particularly for students with high needs.
- 2. The plan's discussion of its goals relative to personalized learning is stated with partial understanding of nature of personalized learning (structures and processes)
- 3. There is insufficient elaboration on goals, including ESEA targets, to decrease achievement gaps or graduation rates.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	4

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

In this section, Payson was required to provide and discuss evidence of a clear record of success in the past four years. Payson pointed out some of the noteworthy scholastic achievements of students.

.However, the evidence and related discussion was insufficient:

- 1. Payson did not adequately describe their record of success which would have been evident with a statistical presentation of data for the past four years.
- 2. A discussion of achievement gaps and current efforts to close them were not discussed. There was an absence of four years of past academic history
- 3. Payson could not elaborate on reforms undertaken with low achieving schools.

Payson did not demonstrate a clear and complete four year record of achievement as required

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	4
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

A high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments was required, but there was insufficient information to determine transparency:

- 1. The information provided here was quite general. Payson outlines the basic information that appears to be required for transparency by the Arizona Department of Education. The District states that financial information is publicly available on its website. However it could not be verified the scope of the information as required.

2. The narrative provided limited assistance in judging transparency in not only finance, but in the practices, or investments.

Payson provided a partial description of its transparency.

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

10

7

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Payson has statutory autonomy to address the reforms implementation requirements:

1. They can develop the personalized aspect of the Project.
2. The outcomes will be based on the adopted Common Core standards
3. Waivers will be acquired to make the transformation and that is uncertain.
4. They were limited in the reference to the mastery based credit acquisition.

While the applicable described statutory autonomy, they also acknowledged certain conditions regarding waivers and mastery credit acquisition. It cannot be determined if the conditions of autonomy would be met due to the uncertainty of waivers and credit acquisition.

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

10

7

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The District documented a variety of stakeholder engagements, events, etc that are part of the Districts ongoing community involvement responsibilities.

The District reviewed some of the pre-existing efforts to engage the stakeholders. A summary of the stakeholder activity related to this application was also described, There were support letters from a wide range of stakeholders.

However, there was limited information on how proposal was revised based on their feedback.

Payson obtained sufficient evidence of support but there was insufficient explanation of meaningful engagement in development.

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

5

4

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Payson documents the current acquisition of relevant educational data and serve as a sensible foundation for this Plan:

1. Current assessment will provide the information for discerning gaps and to identify the targeted population.
2. Payson provides current profile achievement status indicating their awareness of the flattening of performance and gaps revealed.
3. Payson provided limited evidence of its current status in implementing personalized learning environments, and related academic needs and gaps.

Payson provided an analysis of its needs and the presence of gaps, but did not describe adequately current efforts with PLEs.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	12
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Payson centers its efforts around the newly adopted Common Core Standards. The plan is a good representation of the current status of learning and the efforts to connect with a personalized approach.</p> <p>However, a comprehensive explanation of how personalized learning will be fully developed is not discussed, nor how it is to implemented once its characteristics are known.</p> <p>A description of learning activities and goals based on the Depth and Complexity framework was not explained. Development of deep learning experiences in the plan was stated as an intention but not explained how it could be full developed. The discussion regarding diversity was vague and not relevant. Regarding content mastery, skills and habit development, the Plan did not detail how that was to be done.</p> <p>(a)The Plan speaks to parent and educator involvement in personalized learning, but has an incomplete interpretation of what a personalized learning environment is.</p> <p>(b)ThePlan does not explain how the fluid and creative scheduling of small learning communities represents a personalized learning environment. Nor is there a substantive discussion of appropriate instructional strategies. The Plan is linked to the District's adoption of the College and Career Ready standards.</p> <p>(c)The expansion of technology with the use of RTT funds is allowable, but a more complete explanation of how digital resources can facilitate personalized learning was not sufficiently explained. Student mastery of technology which is essential for personalized learning was not explained.</p> <p>The discussion of learning did not reach the high quality level necessary for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	10
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) (i) Payson did not provide a comprehensive explanation of how it would develop the a personalized learning environment</p> <p>(ii) The content and instruction were geared towards curriculum alignment and modifying instructional time. But the explanation of how Payson would transform content and instruction into the optimal approaches for a personalized learning environment was insufficient.</p> <p>(iii) Payson proposed digital portfolios to compile and access student data and provide benchmark measures. However a personalized learning model would require a more extensive explanation of what and how this would be accomplished. It did not adequately explain how the individual and collective practice of teachers would result from this effort measure progress.</p> <p>(iv)Payson would provide access to a secondary online verstion of the master classroom. However it did not explain how the teacher and principal evaluation system would be utilized to improve instruction for a personalized learning environment that transformed instructional strategies.</p> <p>(b) Payson stressed that it provide electronic access of educators to tools and actionable information. Questions were posed that required answers. The CTE program was an example of a resource. However it did not explain in depth what tools were to be utilized and how they were to be accessed. The breadth of the resources was not fully explained.</p> <p>(c) (Professional development was considered important to Payson and that the teacher evaluation system would be used to help improve instruction. It would have the system refined to meet the purposes of the</p>		

application with portal access. However, it did not adequately detail how that system would be evolved to incorporate effective implementation of a personalized learning environment and related instructional strategies.

(d) Payson would continue to seek high quality teachers and would seek to recruit and retain effective teachers. However they did not adequately describe Paysons plan for recruitment and assignment of teachers for difficult assignments. They also did not explain adequately how to differentiate between effective and highly effective teachers

Payson did not provide a high quality plan for teaching and leading essential for the transformation of learning into a personalized learning environment including the recruitment, assignment, and development of highly effective staff.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	10
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Payson outlined how it organized the LEA to facilitate personalized learning.</p> <p>(a). The support provided by the LEA central leadership for facilitating personalized learning was not fully explained, but did stress there would be a degree of autonomy provided. District Office would implement a site-based” planning culture and environment. School leadership teams were to be developed. However the roles and responsibilities were not fully developed in relation to this project's focus on personalized learning environments, accelerate achievement, deepening learning, and college and career readiness goals.</p> <p>(b) PLC teams would be developed to organize site improvement plans.</p> <p>(c) Credit flexibility based on mastery was not adequately explained.</p> <p>(d) No discussion was provided regarding giving students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic</p> <p>(e) The applicant only restated the need for addressing learning for high needs students and therefore could not assure that accommodations were to be a part of the program.</p> <p>Payson was able to provide information on leadership organization and teaming. However the lack of information for the other criteria does not demonstrate that it has a high-quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	7
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>a)The District would provide access to the necessary tools but did not describe completely the plan to accomplish this as all the tools were not yet developed.</p> <p>(b). support and training would be provided by IT initiated through public information assemblies and presentations</p>		

c) Parent and student access to information exportation was referenced as a band-width problem to be resolved through an increase in such. Payson did emphasize digital portfolios for storage and progress monitoring by students.

d) Payson affirmed its systems interoperability including cloud based data retrieving. It stated that their existing system could work as an individual learning tool. However, it was not sufficiently explained how that would be accomplished, particularly with the use of such technology by students, teachers, and parents.

The quality of the plan is diminished by the insufficient explanation of how all stakeholders would have access to content, tools, along with strategies for support provided to all stakeholders.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	10
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Payson does describe a process of continuous improvement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The utilize their existing system of RtI, a 3 tiered model that enables staff to make adjustments to student variation in mastery of content standards. In addition they intend on utilizing school site RtI teams to review the ongoing student progress monitoring. Revisions to PD program will be based on monthly reviews. Annual meetings will study site-specific data. <p>However the explanation of continuous improvement does not reflect a clear understanding of a systematic process improvement. There needs to be a logical structure with discrete processes, including timelines for formative and summative progress and feedback reporting.</p> <p>Therefore, while the activities listed are good, they do not reflect a rigorous implementation of a plan for continuous improvement.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Ongoing communication and engagement.</p> <p>The Plan recognizes the importance of communication for its stakeholders. It identifies various levels of meetings held throughout the year. It seeks to use the data warehouse as a vehicle for timely communication. It describes various media that will disseminate information.</p> <p>However, there was incomplete discussion of a plan consisting of project strategies, timelines and activities for communication and engagement. with internal and external stakeholders</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The tables described the present and future performances of total and subgroups. 2. The performance goals are achievable performance measures for the most part. However, there were some goals, particularly at the high school level that may have been an overreach. (e.g. 29% to 85%) <p>The Plan provides a set of tables that document the performance measures for Payson. They're based on the AIMS and SAT 10. The targets indicating student progress are a reasonable prediction of performance to the end of the 4 year</p>		

program. The rationale for selecting these measures and projecting them over the four year period is reasonable with the subgroups they identified.

However, Payson did not provide an adequate rationale for each of the performance measures

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

5

3

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Payson did not adequately describe their approach to continuously improve the plan by evaluating their activities, e.g. PD, technology use, efficient use of time, staff, and money:

Strength: The District does adequately summarize its evaluation of academic achievement as part of the state's assessment plan. Twice annually it reports student performance to stakeholders. It has PLC teams which analyze the data and generate new goals as they re-target their instruction. Rtl teams meet frequently to confer on referrals. District teams make site visits collect data. Data retreats are conducted.

Payson has begun to improve their professional development programs and to acquire additional technology for instruction, assessment, and other purposes. However the information was not relevant to the required discussion on the evaluation of professional development, use of technology, and the related activities.

However, the Plan does not provide a coherent view of a systematic approach for evaluating the RTT applications activities, the implementation of a personalized learning environment, nor the professional development for teachers and principals. It also did not address the evaluation of the proposed technology component of the application which stresses the digital learning of the project.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	7
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Payson provides with reasonable specificity the budget categories that acquire the human and material resources for the project. They breakdown the costs according to: Individualized student achievement, Learning and digital content, Stakeholder engagement, Data warehouse, Infrastructure Foundation for Learning, and Professional development for a total cost of \$10,635.330.</p> <p>The staffing costs are sufficiently itemized and costed. However, it is unclear how certain staff will perform functions that will directly improve learning and teaching in the personalized model. It's questionable that the hiring of the Curriculum Director is an effective use of funds.</p> <p>The reviewer is unclear of the selection of Counselors, instead of teachers and other qualified instructional staff as teachers could more directly implement personalized learning environments in a classroom.. The acquisition of a curriculum director only indirectly implement the personalized learning environment.</p> <p>The technology to be purchased are appropriate costs yet, the district has not adequately explained how the equipment will be used to personalize strategies and supports.</p> <p>Expenditures for stakeholder development are a legitimate aspect of personalization since parents are considered key to the improvement of achievement. The data warehouse has the potential for being an appropriate tool for personalization and the improvement of academic achievement.</p>		

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	7
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>With respect to sustainability, the District limits its commitment to sustainability by maintaining some of the positions after the conclusion of the four year program. They include counseling positions and the curriculum director.</p> <p>In terms of technology and the Data Warehouse, the District will transfer the responsibilities of the Data Warehouse position to the current SIS coordinator. The server base will continue to operate along with the technicians that manage the server base.</p> <p>Professional development during the four years are projected to be sufficient and that the level of knowledge and skill should be sustainable.</p> <p>There was an insufficient explanation of how the reform initiative of the personalized learning environments that focuses on student based choices as well as differing instructional strategies for teachers could be sustained.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	7
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Payson has presents details that support the needs for enrolled students considered homeless and can quantify their educational circumstances of attendance, health, and academic performance. Payson has partnered with three community organizations for the purposes of supporting basic needs and academic needs of displaced and disadvantaged students.</p> <p>There were six population-level desired results listed by Payson. Of the six desired results one (tutoring and homework) had an academic type performance goal of 2-4% gain in reading and math. Result No. 3 related to credit recovery without quantifying or estimating the number to served or other specific instructional plan for that recovery in the event that this unique student population is identified and referred.</p> <p>The intent of Payson to address a troublesome area of need demonstrates an awareness of educational need caused by external economic and social conditions faced by a segment of the Payson community.</p> <p>It could not be adequately determined how the partnerships would be scaled up and extend towards other LEAs.</p>		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The plan demonstrates a genuine attempt to qualify for the RTT funding. However, the application has not met the requirements for a High Quality Plan whose end results would have been sufficiently ambitious yet achievable.</p> <p>1. The Plan provided evidence that a personalized learning environment could be realized with its current goals, objectives, and activites. The District clearly has a strong instructional plan based upon the Common Core Standards. It's current professional development plan for teachers and principals is geared towards more effective instruction of those standards and assessing student progress in mastering those standards.</p>		

2. The nature of a personalized learning environment expected of a High Quality Plan was not fully developed in terms of goals, strategies, and continuous improvement processes. This innovative approach to delivering instruction was intended to assist a school to accelerate and deepen learning for the high needs students, thereby reducing the school's achievement gap of its subgroups, increasing the graduation rate.

3. It was expected that the key reform elements, e.g., the personalized learning environments would be sustainable beyond the funding period, that the professional development would continue, and the other resources would have been sufficiently changed to assume local support. Those elements that the applicant sought to sustain were not entirely developed to the continued reform of the learning environment, the instructional expertise required of teachers and not academic counselors.

4. The Plan was able to address the basic elements of a reform effort and the current standards based direction that Payson is taking is a viable approach that has the support of the Arizona Department of Education. The challenge that Payson has faced relates to the financial constraints that has reduced staffing and programs. The attempt to seek these funds to support previous needs and new challenges is understandable.

Total	210	129
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	0

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

There were five areas proposed for one optional budget supplement for the amount of \$370,622.50. Table 3-1 outlines the costs and entitles it with a Project Name of: Video Production Studios. The following descriptions attempt to identify general uses.

However, the narratives and justifications, do not adequately support the need for optional supplemental funding.

1. Student engagement through creativity
2. Student achievement through participation
3. Collaborative Learning through project activities
4. Critical Thinking through production layout.
5. Increased Teacher development through systematic professional integration

Rationale:

The rationale was not sufficiently explained and therefore a full explanation of this optional budget plan for \$370,62 was not adequately developed

The plan did not provide the clarity necessary for determine the purpose and the strategies that would result in meaningful change to the targeted population.

The replicability was not conceivable as there was insufficient detail in the plan.

The plan did not describe completely how the strategies, activities would lead to measurable results.

The costs solely for technology were out of proportion to the needs of the rest of the areas proposed that did not require technology



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0267AZ-3 for Payson Unified School District #10

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	4
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides evidence of a realistic understanding on the part of the proposers re: how long projects take to become fully functional (in this case, beyond the life of the grant) • Narrative for this section includes positive and hopeful language, but very few details to help clarify what, exactly, the proposed project(s) are; in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ the "learning neighborhood" concept is left largely up to the reader to define (a definitional concern that is only partly addressed in later narratives); ◦ the extent to which the plan (as revealed in later narratives) relies on a major technology hardware upgrade that will absorb a significant amount of the grant is not directly indicated 		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly identifies participating schools and students, as well as rationale for population-level implementation • Applicant is less clear with respect to <i>why</i> this approach to implementation is appropriate or necessary; without provision of additional information about what the plan will look like, once implemented, it is hard to gauge the appropriateness of this level of implementation. This appropriateness does, however, becomes clearer in later parts of the proposal • Also unclear why the applicant addresses time and effort issues in this section 		

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant’s table includes some elements of a full plan, but without accompanying narrative to help explain some aspects of the provided logic model, it is difficult to assess the extent to which the plan is high-quality • For example, while the applicant’s table provides a roll-out and implementation timeline, the table is not structured in such a way as to demonstrate a theory of change that leads from reform “product” to anticipated outcomes; more explanation or detail is needed to demonstrate how items on the right will produce each penultimate outcome (labeled “Input”) on the left • Also, still unclear at this point in the narrative is what DEPs will provide, and how they might be innovative or significantly different from current IEPs or other academic plans for students 		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most goals -- especially those earlier in the process -- seem achievable, if not overly ambitious • Again, the likelihood of success remains hard to ascertain at this point in the proposal without significantly more detail about the nuts and bolts of the plan -- at the least, a concrete list of the proposed components of the plan • Achievement gap closure targets appear to be quite small and less ambitious than overall achievement goals • Applicant’s provided table indicates when goals reach or exceed state ESEA targets for some measures (e.g., overall grade level performance), but not for others (e.g., subgroup performance) 		

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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Though applicant describes a history of <i>individual</i> student academic successes over the past five years, past evidence of <i>collective</i> student success and achievement gap closure is thin; for example, with the exception of three example tables in the appendix for grades K-5, applicant does not provide numerical data to demonstrate improvement in student learning outcomes • Evidence offered for the success of the GEARUP plan to achieve ambitious and significant reform (B)(1)(b) is more compelling (ex., 27% increase in math, 8% increase in reading for targeted grades) • Though it appears to provide a host of other types of information, Edline does not appear to provide a notable amount of student performance data beyond in-class grades ((B)(1)(c)) 		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant indicates in the narrative that all required disaggregated budget information is available on the PUSD website • Though there are no examples of data that address sub-criteria (a) through (d) provided in the application or in an Appendix, the applicant does provide specific information about the location of all required financial information in the applicant’s Annual Financial Report. 		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

- Applicant’s proposal indicates nothing to suggest that these conditions are not present
- Applicant demonstrates evidence of successful conditions for implementing its proposed program by citing (in Section (B)(1)) past successful reform implementation
- Applicant demonstrates evidence of autonomy by citing evidence of a history of local taxes levied to implement district-specific programs

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

10

7

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- Applicant provides an impressive array of letters of support from across the community (e.g., concerned independent citizens), not just from organizations and entities typically associated with this type of proposal (e.g., government officials, businesses, etc.)
- Also impressive is the level of teacher support -- and in particular the supportive endorsements provided by many of them in their open-ended survey responses
- While the proposal clearly indicates ongoing efforts at openness and engagement with parents and students, there is little evidence that either group was involved in the actual development of the proposal, or that the proposal was in any way modified to reflect their feedback; clarification of the membership of the SAC may help address this, if that body includes parent and/or student membership

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

5

2

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

- Evidence is insufficient to determine whether applicant’s plan for analyzing the current status of its efforts to implement personalized learning environments is high-quality or supports the logic of the reform. For example:
 - Reflecting earlier comments, this section gives little attention to analyzing current student achievement gaps, instead maintaining focus on overall achievement results
 - The plan for analysis would benefit from more explanation of the diagnostic tool(s) referenced
 - Narrative does not link the analysis to the “neighborhoods” concept
- Applicant is, however, on-point in its assessment of the difficulty of combining data across multiple databases

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	7

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- This section provides the best opportunity for the applicant to explain the inner workings of the proposed plan, and in some instances it begins to do so (e.g., better description of the DEP than provided previously), but in many places the narrative focuses more on acknowledging the appropriateness of the various criteria rather than clarifying how the applicant’s plan will address those criteria.
- Of the twelve specific areas to be addressed by this section, the applicant’s plan fully addresses 1 (ensuring that students have access to personalized learning recommendations) and partially addresses 5 (connecting learning to goal accomplishment; providing exposure to diverse cultures, etc.; providing a personalized sequence of instructional content; providing a variety of high-quality instructional approaches; and providing frequently-updated student data), but does not appear to address the other 6:
 - C(1)(a)(ii) -- Minimal details here, beyond application of Kaplan (2009) framework
 - C(1)(a)(iii) -- Lacks details and/or examples to demonstrate how this will be accomplished
 - C(1)(a)(v) -- Description of desired outcomes without indication of plans or details

- C(1)(b)(iii) -- Description does not appear to address the content criterion, focusing instead on 1:1 technology
- C(1)(b)(v) -- Very little concrete detail
- C(1)(c) -- No evidence of a concrete plan

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

20

5

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- Again, this section provides the best opportunity for the applicant to explain how the plan will strengthen teaching and leading to help provide personalized learning environments, but responses are mostly incomplete and occasionally off-topic
- Of the ten specific areas to be addressed by this section, the applicant's plan does not appear to fully address any and partially addresses 3 (provision of PD on adapting content and instruction; data use to access, create, and share resources; provision of infrastructure that supports whole-school growth). It does not provide sufficient details to address the other 7:
 - C(2)(a)(i) -- plan focuses on better teaching overall but not on personalization of learning
 - C(2)(a)(iii) -- addresses the *what* of measuring student progress (digital portfolios) but not the *training* to support capacity to use these tools
 - C(2)(a)(iv) -- response appears to be off-topic
 - C(2)(b)(i) -- no clear plan for addressing this criterion
 - C(2)(b)(iii) -- tools, but not processes for matching student needs with resources; relies on teachers to generate their own processes
 - C(2)(c)(i) -- (not in place or developed yet)
 - C(2)(d) -- no indication of LEA-specific, innovative plans for recruitment and retention, beyond HR website upgrade

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	0
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant appears to have left most of this section unfinished; text mostly repeats the criterion text 		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In many ways, the first part of this section (D(2)(a)) provides the most detail provided anywhere in the application and is a model example of the level of detail lacking in other sections • Other sub-sections (provision of technical support, use of non-proprietary data formats) are less detailed but sound • It is not clear how the applicant is interpreting the requirement for interoperable data systems; similarity of operating system platforms is not the same as the ability of different databases to inter-communicate and easily share data. The plan appears to rely on manual and not automated data-merging 		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	11

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- Clear plan for measuring student achievement progress (though primarily summative in nature)
- Applicant provides fewer concrete details about how feedback will be delivered for other proposal outcomes (e.g., teacher development, technology infrastructure development, etc.).
- In addition, this section would be stronger if it provided evidence of or plans for incorporation of more measures for intermediate outcomes and not just predominantly penultimate outcomes, especially since continuous improvement is an important part of all aspects of the proposal

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

- Strategies are sound and diverse
- Part of the applicant’s plan is to expand stakeholder access to data via annual summary reports and an expanded information-sharing web presence
- In addition, the applicant’s plan for supporting a variety of communication platforms (e.g., annual stakeholder data retreats, podcasts, monthly site-based PLC reviews, etc.) is compelling and novel

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

- Applicant provides a healthy and comprehensive list of datapoints across grade levels and student sub-groups
- Measurement selection is clear and pragmatic
- Less clear is how applicant will incorporate data from each measure into its assessment of the effectiveness of its plan
- Monitoring the quality of information derived from each instrument in the context of the proposal also is not addressed directly
- Finally, while the overall performance improvement goal of about 2.5% is reasonable (if perhaps too linear), there appears to be little connection between several baseline measurements and the very uniform target goals of 85% proficiency across the board on AIMS tests -- some baselines for groups or sub-groups start in the low teens and others in the mid-80s, but all 2016-17 targets are uniform. While many of these targets are ambitious, the gains expected for some sub-groups require more explanation to demonstrate that they are achievable
- The basis for the projected number of participating students at each level also is difficult to gauge; there often appear to be significant early dips in projected enrollments, followed by unsteady projected rises and falls, even in early grades, when there is likely to be little information about incoming classes to inform future class-size projections.

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

- Applicant notes evaluation work already under way locally or at the state level that can support evaluation of some aspects of the applicant’s proposed plan (e.g., professional development survey data, upcoming state-level teacher effectiveness measures, etc.); the narrative does not, however, indicate how all of these will be coordinated or linked to address the specific evaluation of the applicant’s Neighborhoods proposal
- For example, much of the applicant’s narrative appears to be more about its plans for upgrading technology than about internal evaluation and assessment of the success of the various elements of its proposed plans; while sufficient technology and the opportunities to review the data collected are indeed critical components of a thorough evaluation, they are not sufficient

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, the budget seems reasonable for accomplishing the scope of the work proposed • The \$670K estimate for operating system installation seems steep • Also, it is not clear whether the proposed technology upgrade will only get PUSD up-to-date (and thus once again possibly behind before even the end of the grant period), or whether it will move PUSD ahead of the average school technology level and in position to remain there sustainably after the grant ends 		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	6
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant accurately identifies all ongoing expenses • The plan as described includes significant ongoing new human resources expenses (even with down-the-line consolidation of tasks), maintenance, and subscriptions • Evidence of state and local support appears to apply to the plan itself and not necessarily to promises of ongoing funding • Most sustainability planning relies on the ability to shift new responsibilities from multiple new employees to fewer employees as the grant progresses • There are also references to the need to find more money in the future, without a clear indication of how that will take place 		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	9
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an overall strong and, given the applicant's community context, highly appropriate support plan, with only a few areas in need of additional detail • The focus is solid and locked in on a clear problem in the applicant's LEA • The goals are achievable, and the integration of education and other services into the broader context of the proposal and the community at large is clear • Less clear are the performance measures to be tracked, the data used to track them, and indications of how the tracking will lead to improvement over time (X(3), X(5), X(6)) 		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant has invested much energy and passion into crafting a plan supported by a broad segment of its community with the intent of addressing individual learning needs and preparing students for colleges and careers
- In so doing, the applicant's proposal contains elements that reflect consideration of each of the four assurance areas

Total	210	117
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	11

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant's optional proposal is a logical extension of the primary proposal; its multi-organizational attention to the special needs of a burgeoning homeless population in PUSD map on well to the applicant's concept of developing personalized Neighborhoods of support for students based on their needs
- It is also an independent proposal; failure to secure funding for this optional proposal will not impact the applicant's ability to implement the primary proposal
- The optional proposal does not address criterion 2 – the requirement that the proposal be co-developed and co-implemented across two or more LEAs
- The budget is reasonable, given the equipment needed to carry out the plan