



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0238IN-1 for Richmond Community Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant states a vision to personalize learning plans to support youth academic interests. The plan consists of rejuvenating a network of individuals and institutions committed to bring teachers and students around a common goal of academic success. The program will partner with local community colleges to create dual credit opportunities for high school students. This strategy will result in student's advancement toward an associate degree, a technical certificate, or admission to a four-year college or university.</p> <p>WEAKNESSES:</p> <p>The applicant lacks a clear and credible approach on how their vision will build on the Race to the Top-District's required "four core educational assurance areas" or how it will support increased equity for all students. Without more detail on how strategies will result in student advancement and successful outcomes, it is difficult to assess the thoroughness of this plan.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides some limited description for how it selected schools to participate in a personalized learning project. The process includes the School District of Richmond Community School which has one high school and two Intermediate schools. The district indicated it collected data that evidenced need among the 72% of students who receive free and reduced-price lunch. The project will serve 2,980 students for the Race to the Top-District grant.</p> <p>However, the applicant does not provide a high-quality plan for their approach in implementing its reform proposal. It is not clear why the applicant selected this population for the personalized learning program beside eligibility for free lunch and it is not clear if all students who qualify for free lunch also have low academic performance. More information is needed to determine if the approach is thoughtful and appropriate.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a plan that partially describes how the program will scale up district-wide change to support schools to achieve the goals embedded in reforms. The applicant's theory of change is described as the Personalized Learning model. It asserts that the approach will improve student learning outcomes by providing development and strategic support needed to achieve success for students. Community Connections is a program that will provide opportunities for increasing support between the schools and community.</p>		

WEAKNESSES:

The applicant does not provide elements of a high-quality plan such as: timeline, the deliverables, or who is responsible for carrying out scale-up activities. More details are needed to determine if the goals are ambitious or achievable for this criterion.

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

10

5

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a partial plan to widen goals to improve student outcomes. This plan demonstrates evidence of the school district work planned to aligned the Common Core State Standards and assessments. The applicant proposes achievable goals that focus on six focus areas and will be measured by indicators such as student achievement, safe and orderly learning environments, home/school/community partners and communication, employee performance, efficient and effective operations, and customer or stakeholder satisfaction and marketing.

WEAKNESSES:

The applicant does not provide clear, detailed information around how these strategies will be carried out, so it's not clear if they are achievable goals.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	11
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant describes some strong record of success from 2008 through 2011 of student's advancement in learning. A comprehensive chart reports a graduation rate of 81.7% for 2009-2010 compared to 66.9% for the 2007-2008 and the rate in 2007-2008 of 94.1% compared to 95.3% in 2009-2010. The applicant indicates that there are significant areas of improvement needed to create stronger scores and increase the district graduation rates. A major strategy to address the needs of student learning is to offer an Early College program to increase post-secondary preparation of students to help them prepare for a global economy and have the opportunity to transfer college having already earned up to two years of college credit.</p>		
WEAKNESSES:		
<p>The applicant does provides very limited evidence of success in the past four years around advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity for middle school students.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant provides a well-defined system for publicizing finance and personnel information. This program uses Komputrol system which is designed by the State of Indiana to keep all board policies, administrative policies, and School Board minutes available to the public 24 hours a day via the web. Personnel salaries are available at the school level for teachers, and non-personnel expenditures are submitted to the Board each month in a Personnel Report and are available</p>		

to the public via the web based system as required by the Race to the Top-District grant to get in a timely and systematic manner.

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

10

5

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a comprehensive plan of their strategy to implement personalized learning in a successful environment with sufficient autonomy. This plan consists of aligning policies and practices to meet the individual needs of each student; online study; and community mentor program to improve student success. Incorporate qualified and professional teachers through RISE comprehensive evaluation system to support the implementation that align the teaching and test curriculum with Indiana Academic Standards – Common Core State Standards increasing individualized learning to ensure all student’s progress. Utilizing academic assessments which provide opportunities for teachers to make decision by using the data from the district assessment and classroom assessments to evaluate the learning growth of students. Training available for all teachers to access and interpret data. Weekly professional development time is when data is reviewed; departmental teams meet monthly to review and plan instructional responses. Data walls are created to track student’s progress and provide appropriate instructional strategies for personalized learning to all participants. Partnerships with colleges and universities will support personalized learning conditions of students in the program.

WEAKNESSES:

The applicant does not provide clear information on how the program demonstrates evidence of sufficient autonomy that support the implementation of the Race to the Top project design as required for this grant. Therefore, lack of further clarity makes it difficult to fully assess the required element needed for implementing the Race to the Top-District grant.

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

10

3

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a list of stakeholders committed to supporting the personalized learning program. This list consists of 10 outside community partners that support student’s achievement.

WEAKNESSES:

The applicant does not provide letters of support from their stakeholders to show their engagement or support for the Race to the Top- District project, therefore the proposal lacks adequate evidence in the forms expected under this criterion.

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

5

2

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides an analysis of needs and gaps for the proposed project. Data was given from the community profile showing 42,104 people residing within the boundaries’ of the school district, 19% of the population and 16% of families are below poverty; 28% under the age of 18 and 11% of those 65 and older are living below the poverty line. Socio-economic status include a 72% rate of students receiving free or reduced-priced lunch in 2011-2012 school year which increased to 53% in 2009-2010 school year. Students have been reacting negatively to traditional style of learning and graduation rates have risen from 60% to 80%. Data reported in 2010 show that less than 50% of students actually enroll in college and less than 50% completed a FAFSA form. Standardized testing from k-4th grade and scores in English

has risen from 63% to 70% and Algebra from 54% to 81% which did not meet the School Board goals of 90%. There are no substantial gains and areas of sustainability of these advancements draw serious questions. Parental involvement is important to student success, personalized learning program, and training model will focus on helping parents understand how they can make a difference. The Race to the Top project will enable the participating schools to deliver integrated, evidence-based services. The model will connect students with a combination of accessible services that will address school-wide needs in the areas of graduation rates, Career and College Readiness, Personalized Learning, advanced technology, and overall achievement.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not describe any analysis of the needs and gaps of middle schools, or provide a timelines, deliverables or parties responsible for doing so. This is important because two middle schools are a key focus of this proposed project.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	9
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant response to this criterion describes strategies to improve learning through a personalized learning environment in order for all students to have opportunities to graduate, enroll in college, and succeed in a career. The strategies are not described in a coherent way, but rather as a list of approaches that include staff sharing data, providing distributive counseling, utilizing community connections, designing and implementing course availability, stipends for teachers, hiring of staff, redesign classroom structure, and spaces. They propose to Incorporate existing programs into the project such as a Live Network Technology Design Center, Early College, and Curriculum aligned with clusters of academies, School of Arts to accelerate student learning by supporting identified needs as required by the grant. But they do not clearly articulate how all of this will work together.</p> <p>WEAKNESSES:</p> <p>The narrative lacks critical elements of a plan such as timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	9
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant presents a partial plan to improve learning and teaching in a personalized learning environment. This plan will give the students the support needed that will accelerate learning by improving instruction, using a foundation of advanced technology. For example, all teachers, students and families will provide input on their perspectives of the program, and the district will provide professional development opportunities for all staff to be trained in meaningful and productive methods to change the face of learning; Teacher On Assignment staff will put courses online and serve as chief instructional designer; face-to-face and real-time strategies incorporated into the learning models will increase and maintain rigor in educational practices; will serve as Academic Advisors to address where students are with grades and attendance. The Indiana Department of Education evaluation system is used as the method by which the project will improve teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness, and would include frequent feedback on individual, classroom observations, collective effectiveness, recommendations, supports, and interventions as needed for improvement for student's learning environment. Each teacher would be required to complete two short and long classroom observations by the principal and/ or licensed evaluator. There are four domains used in the teacher's evaluation plan which consists of purposeful planning, effective instruction, teacher leadership, and core professional rubric. Building Principals evaluation requires two summative scoring areas such as professional practice and student learning approved by the School Board. This method will enhance student growth in a learning environment.</p>		

WEAKNESSES:

The applicant lacks adequate information about how educators will adapt content and instruction. It also does not adequately address how educators will support opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks that will help the students respond positively towards their needs in graduating on time and college- and career-ready; use data to inform the acceleration of student to graduate respond positively towards their needs to graduating on time and college- and career ready.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	5
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a minimum working plan through practices, policies, and rules to meet the changing needs of teachers and students in this proposal.</p> <p>The applicant does not adequately describe a high quality-plan for how the LEA's policies and infrastructure will support the process. The Office of Student Achievement works closely with all instructional coaches, support Principals with all assessment testing and data, and work with teachers in the classroom on teaching techniques, style and qualifications according to common core standards. The district's Learning Team will focus on learning, behavior, attendance, teaching methods, and work with each school principal to establish Literacy nights and professional development calendars. Each principal will be responsible for personnel management and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators. This system allows students opportunity to master standards at multiple times in multiple ways.</p> <p>The applicant does not provide comprehensive detail for how these supports and services are delivered to all participating schools or for how students can demonstrate mastery of standards. It is not clear to what extent the resources will be fully adapted and accessible to all students. The proposal cannot be fully assessed.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	4
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant describes an insufficient and vague plan for how the school infrastructure will support the personalized learning program. There is an overly general plan described, where participants have access to appropriate tools needed to become successful; and changes are made for teachers and students and there is a stated commitment to work closely with all instructional coaches assigned in each building.</p> <p>WEAKNESSES:</p> <p>However, the applicant does not address in adequate detail how the infrastructure will support all participating stakeholders to have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources in and out of school to support the implementation of the project; and ensure appropriate levels of technical support.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	11
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

The applicant presents their plan on the approach to continuously improve the process of supporting the personalized learning program. In reaching multiple and diverse sectors of the population in the planning through representation from each school involved through community teams will provide consistent input. A careful study of the community needs assessment, identification of gaps in services, knowledge on common risk factors can predict multiple problems. The plan consists of a contracted evaluator, partner organizations, local evaluation, formative feedback, continuous assessment of the various program and activities, student data, and program records. This will enhance the student achievement in personalized learning program.

WEAKNESSES:

The applicant lacks information on how the program will ensure timely and regular feedback on progress of activities and whether or not there will be opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements will take place after the term of the grant. More clarity is needed on the program's plan to continuous improvement process to fully assess this criterion.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:
 The applicant reports their plan for ongoing communication and engagement of all participants in the personalized learning program. The Communication Team will create the marketing and communications strategy and use avenues to share successes. This method is to update school district website, facebook, annual reports, information/updates with parents, etc. to ensure all participants receive accurate and timely information about the personalized learning information program.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	0
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:
WEAKNESSES:
 The applicant does not provide performance measures that are ambitious overall or by group. These performance measures are not presented in a comprehensive chart. The narrative does not describe a clear explanation for how performance measures are arrived, whether or not they will be collected in a timely manner, or how they will inform improvements over time.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:
Weaknesses:
 The applicant does not provide clear or adequate information on how the program plans to evaluate the effectiveness of the Race to the Top-District funded activities. There was not enough information to make a full assessment on this criterion.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	5

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:
 The applicant describes the budget based on several factors which included the needs of the participants, resources, and facilities that could be used and anticipation of future needs. The program describes the allocations requested for the duration of the project. The budget is reasonable, cost efficient and supportive of the program's proposed activities. The budget narrative provides well-defined expenditures for personnel, fringe benefits, travel for staff, and other to support the

activities of the participants in the Race to the Top-District Program. This budget is serving 2,980 students Grades 5-12 and 940 teachers. The proposal is requesting \$2,314,120 which is within the guideline for Race to the Top-District program to implement Personalized Learning Program to low-income and high-needs students.

WEAKNESSES:

The applicant does not provide clear information on funds other than the grant funds requested. Nor does the applicant describe a clear plan for how the proposed funds to ensure the long-term sustainability of the reform proposal.

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

The applicant states an approach on how the program will sustain funds after the grant funding period. The plan entails moving programs from General Fund, restructuring personnel, technology in place of text books, charge as a Text book fee for technology, and student support services contract out through sole providers. This method ensures the Personalized Learning Program will continue beyond the grant period.

WEAKNESSES:

The applicant does not describe a detailed high quality plan that includes a rationale for activities, timeline, deliverables, and list responsible persons and therefore is not likely to sustain this work after the project period ends.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides in-depth details on how the program will integrate public and private resources in a collaborative partnership effort to support schools' resources for this project. The strategy consists of building community awareness; partnership with private and public organizations, establish a national recognized prevention drop out organization, communication to parents in 5th to 12th grade, supporting PTO's fairs, parents volunteering in the buildings. The partnerships collaborative effort will work directly with at-risk students with their improvement plan with grades, attendance, and/or behavior. The partnerships collaborative effort will help connect high-need families with local organizations to enhance the student through tutoring, mentoring, leadership development, educational experiences, and outreach to social-emotional and behavioral agencies. Tracking is vital to measure the result at an aggregate level for all children. Integrating formative and summative evaluation system should keep all activities on target for success. Exposure to training, peer mentoring, and competitions are essentials for a success program to enhance student's achievement and teacher's professional growth. The personalized learning environment Communities in Schools Site Coordinators and Parent Engagement Coordinators are a process for delivering integrated, evidence-based services to affect positive student outcomes at both the school and individual student levels. It will also help govern the program and make certain that the partnership piece aligns with the educational component to increase the education tools needed for the positive outcome of college and career success.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Not Met

	Met/Not Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:	
WEAKNESSES:	
<p>The applicant does not demonstrate in sufficient detail or in a coherent manner how the program will create or improve learning and teaching environments through the personalization strategies required by the grant. The four core educational assurance areas were not adequately addressed in the learning and teaching criteria responses. The results of the plan as described does not lead this reviewer to believe that there is a clear strategy to support students' advancement, achieve the project goals, or implement the key activities of this project. Because of lack of more clear evidence of a high quality plan, the absolute priority was not met.</p>	

Total	210	111
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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:

The applicant does not address this criterion, therefore it is difficult to fully assess this section.



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0238IN-2 for Richmond Community Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	2

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Richmond Community Schools' did not present a comprehensive and coherent reform vision based on the four educational assurance areas. The district did not address the required Selection Criteria in a manner that understandable. The district did not articulate a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support.

This criterion will be rated low.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	4
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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- a. Richmond Community Schools provided a vague narrative and no data to support the rationale for selecting the three schools.

- b. Richmond Community Schools provided a list of school with detailed demographic data. The proposal will include two middle schools, grades 5-8 and one high school, grades 9-12.

- c. Richmond Community Schools provided demographic information for each school to be served by the proposal. The proposal will serve 2,980 student and 190 educators.

The district failed to provide adequate information to evaluate the schools' selection process.

These criteria will be rated low-middle

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

Richmond Community Schools provided a reasonable plan to scale up the proposal district-wide through the four of the project strategies: technology, personalized learning, career and college readiness, and community support services.

The district provided a description of the proposal activities that would benefit students district-wide.

This criterion is rate middle-middle..

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	1
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Richmond Community Schools' goal is not ambitious and not achievable due to limited information. The district did not provide adequate data on the performance of summative assessments for subgroups as required by the grant to evaluate annual goals. Narrative discussion was not included to support the goals.

(b) Richmond Community Schools did not include annual goals for decreasing achievement gaps. The district does not include the appropriate charts and any additional information.

(c) Richmond Community Schools did not appropriate include a data and narrative information to evaluate annual goals on graduation rates. Goals on subgroups as defined by the grant have not been included in the chart.

(d) Richmond Community Schools has not provided goals on graduation rates. Narrative information is not included to discuss the criteria.

The district has not established adequate annual goals and provided itrequired nformation that would result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable goals.

This criterion will be rated 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	15
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a)Richmond Community Schools has demonstrated a record of success over the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement. The district has increased the graduation rate, and slightly increased student attendance. The district has demonstrated success advancing the social and emotional health of students by showing an increase in the number of students who attend school event and receive services from the school-based mental health services. Richmond Community Schools has provided data supporting the significant increase in graduation rate from 66.9% for 2007-08 to 81.7% for 2009-10.</p> <p>(b)Richmond Community Schools has demonstrated a clear record of success.The district has increased the graduation rate from 54% in 2006to 80% in 2012 . The district implemented a trimester system to increase instructional time.</p> <p>(c)Richmond Community Schools provided details on how the district informs students, parents and educators of student performance data. Performance data is made available. The district utilizes PowerSchool, a student management system, for all groups to access grades, attendance reporting and other data. The district tracks the use of PowerSchool and has determined parents and students use the system the least.</p> <p>The district has evidence of acheivinga clear record success in all areas.</p> <p>These criteria will be rate Hilgh</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) Richmond Community Schools provided sufficient information to that details the district’s transparency processes and practices already available. A listing of finance and investment available to the public included.</p> <p>(b) The district provides information on instructional staff salaries to the School Board each month and the information is available on the district website.</p> <p>(c) The district makes available per public request for school level personnel salaries for teachers.</p> <p>(d) The district makes available per public request for school level non-personnel expenditures.</p> <p>The district has demonstrated that processes are in place to address transparency.</p> <p>This criterion is High.</p> <p>(B)(3)</p>		

Richmond Community Schools provided insufficient information to successful conditions and autonomy under state legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements. The Board of Trustees; aligned district policies to meet personalized learning conditions.

The district failed to adequately address these criteria.

This criteria will be rated be rated low-Low.

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

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Richmond Community Schools has adequately described successful conditions and autonomy under state legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements. The Board of Trustees has aligned district policies and procedure to meet personalized learning conditions for students. The district receive state approved waivers, adjustments to seat-time, and support for innovative programming and on-line courses.

This criteria will be rated be rated High.

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

10

4

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(a) Richmond Community Schools provided evidence of meaningful stakeholder engagement by listing the involvement of and relationship of all participants. An extensive list of stakeholders was involved in the providing feedback on the proposal.

- i. The district included the signature of t he Richmond Education Association president on the grant's signature page.

Richmond Community Schools provided insufficient documentation of participation by the Richmond Education Association, meaningful engagement in the development of the proposal, the inclusion of families or parents in the process, and letters of support.

This criterion will receive a low-low rating.

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

5

2

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Richmond Community Schools described identified needs and the gaps for the district high school. The high school graduation rate has stalled at 80% and, less than 50% attend college.

Two middle schools have been listed as participating schools; however, the district has not provided information on the status of middle schools and any achievement gaps for grades 5-8.

This criterion will be rated low.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	5

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a)

(i)Richmond Community Schools has not provided information to describe how students will understand what they are learning is critical to their success.

(ii)Richmond Community Schools has not provided information to describe how students will identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college and career-ready standards and graduation requirements, and understand how to structure and measure their achievement toward reaching their goals.

(iii)Richmond Community Schools has provided adequate opportunities for students to gain deep learning experiences in the area of academic interest. Offering additional class space for students to pursue AP and Honors Courses through the virtual Pearson Grad Point is resigned for the academically gifted students and coursework to graduate for students who may be at risk of dropping-out.

(iv) Richmond Community Schools did not address providing access and exposure to diverse culture, contents and exposures.

(v) Richmond Community Schools did not address providing master critical academic content and develop skills and traits for goal setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical-thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving..

The district has not provided an adequate plan with an approach to learning that engages and empowers all learners, in particular, high need students.

This criterion will receive a Low rating.

(b).

(i) Richmond Community Schools has not presented a reasonable plan of professional development that addresses personalized sequence of instructional content and skill that would enable students to achieve their career and college goals.

(ii) Richmond Community Schools professional development proposal has not described high-quality content instructional approaches and environments.

(iii) Richmond Community Schools has provided a reasonable plan with meaningful learning experiences for student through online learning, flipped classrooms, and blended learning models.

(iv) Richmond Community Schools has not described sound on-going and regular feedback to frequently update student data and provide students with personalized learning recommendations.

(v) Richmond Community Schools' professional development proposal has not provided clear details addressing the provision of accommodations and high-quality strategies for students with high-needs to ensure they are on track for achieving career-and college readiness goals.

(c) Richmond Community Schools' professional development proposal does not clearly describe the mechanisms in place to ensure training and support to students to ensure they understand the tool and resources provided in order to track and manage their learning.

The district did not provide a high-quality proposal for professional development for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment for students to provide supports to graduate.

This criterion will be rated low-Middle..

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

20

10

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a)

(i) Richmond Community Schools has described a reasonable plan for providing educators information to identify optimal learning approaches through weekly building level professional development based on the current needs. Professional development focuses on communicating the desired results, implementing appropriate strategies, reporting on results achieved, assessing the difference, and initiating necessary changes to effect performance improvement Professional development will be a component of the Race to the Top-District grant.

(ii) Richmond Community Schools has described a sound plan to provide an online learning environment. The online component will consist of recorded lessons, video uploads, assigned links for homework, drop-boxes for course handouts and grade posting, assignments, and email. Students, parents, and teachers will be to interact online through real time interpretation and demonstration.

(iii) The district has a feasible plan for frequentlu measuring student progress through the Race to the Top -District grant benchmarks with summative and formative assessments will be developed and implemented by teachers. Teacher ownership will facilitate implementation by employing previously attained milestones and provide the foundation to integrate Personalized Learning for meeting student learning and growth needs.

(v) Richmond Community Schools has effectively described the Indiana Department of Education evaluation system, (RISE) created by Indiana educators RISE will serve as the method the grant will use to improve teacher and principal practices and effectiveness. The RISE system provides frequent feedback on individual and collective effectiveness, by providing recommendations, supports, and interventions as needed for improvement. Principle implementation is scheduled for the 2013-14 school year.

(b)

(i) Richmond Community Schools provides sound actionable information that helps educators identify optimal learning approaches that respond to individual student academic needs and interests. A rigorous curriculum relevant for all students based on the Indiana content area standards and Indiana Career and College Readiness standards is utilized.

(ii) Richmond Community Schools provides a rigorous curriculum relevant for all students based on the Indiana content area standards and Indiana Career and College Readiness standards

(iii) Richmond Community Schools implemented the Academic Advisor role for teachers to address implement indicators of the Indiana Career and College Readiness standards. Students are assigned to an Academic Advisor/Teacher for the four years.

(c)

- i. Richmond Community Schools has provided a reasonable plan to evaluate teachers and principals by utilizing the RISE evaluation system. The Teachers are evaluated in four major areas: purposeful planning, effective instruction, teacher leadership, and core professional rubric.
- ii. Richland Community Schools has described the need for training throughout grant. A plan for training related to the goals of the grant is unclear.
- a. Richmond Community School has not provided an adequate plan increasing the number of students who receive instructions from effective and highly effective teachers and principals.

The district provided limited information to address the criteria. The district has not provided a cohesive plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide the support to graduate college and career ready. The plan lacked implementation of instructional strategies.

These criteria will receive a low-Middle.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	4
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) Hammonton Public Schools does not provide a reasonable district organizational chart of the governance structure for the district. A professional development flowchart was included that did not address district office structure.</p> <p>(b) Hammonton Public Schools does not provide sound information to describe flexibility and autonomy for school leadership teams over factors such as school schedule, school personnel decisions, budget, and roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>(c) Hammonton Public Schools' professional development proposal lacked details on providing opportunities for students to gain credit based on demonstrated mastery, rather than time on task.</p> <p>(d) Hammonton Public Schools' professional development proposal lacked details on providing opportunities for students to gain mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple ways.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. Hammonton Public Schools' professional does not appropriately address the provision of learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities.</p> <p>The district did not present a high-quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure with adequate support and resources they needed when and where they are needed. The district did not address the required issues in this criterion.</p> <p>This criterion is rated low-Low.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	2
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) Richmond Community Schools' plan has sufficiently described a plan or strategies for ensuring all participating students, parent, stakeholders, and educators regardless of income have access to the necessary content, tools and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of the project. Professional development is offered for teachers and strategies for monitoring student progress, and each school will develop a Parent Center.</p> <p>(b) Richmond Community Schools' plan has not addressed a process to provide appropriate levels of technical support to parents, students, educators, and stakeholders.</p> <p>(c) Richmond Community Schools' plan has not clearly addressed using information technology to export information in an open format and use data in other electronic learning systems.</p>		

(d) Richmond Community Schools has not provided reasonable information on the district and school use of interoperable data systems.

Richmond Community Schools' proposal has not sufficiently addressed how the district and participating schools' infrastructure would support personalized learning.

These criteria will receive a low rating.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	3
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Richmond Community Schools vaguely described a plan to for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process. The district does address hiring an evaluator who will direct all aspects of data collection, analysis, and reporting. The district has not provided established research questions or protocols to determine the rigor or quality of the continuous improvement process.</p> <p>The district's plan does not include strategies for implementing a rigorous improvement plan. The district's plan does not include details on the research design desired by an external evaluator and the frequency of feedback.</p> <p>This will be rated low.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Richmond Community Schools' has provided a reasonable process for providing ongoing communications and engagement through the Communication Team. The Communication Team will create a marketing and communication strategy to provide updates on successes, recruitment of students and marketing for sustainability. The team will market through the district wed site, electronic media, distribution of annual reports to business and community groups and higher education.</p> <p>The district has provided a plan that includes effective strategies for communicating and engaging all stakeholders..</p> <p>This criteria is rated High</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

(a) Richmond Community Schools' plan provides a rationale for selecting the measures. The district's goal is to expand capacity of the district to meet real-time, unique needs of students.

(b) Richmond Community Schools has developed measures that will provide rigorous, timely and formative leading information tailored to the project.

(c) Richmond Community Schools has developed a plan for reviewing and improving measures over time. The plan will consider longitudinal evidence including course completion, attendance rates, test scores, and career alignment. Data-driven measures will be used to provide continuous improvements.

This criterion will receive a High.

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

5

5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Richmond Community Schools described a reasonable plan to evaluate the program including hiring an external evaluator. The evaluator will direct all aspects of data collection, analysis, and reporting. The evaluation will include both process and outcome features with an emphasis on providing frequent feedback to key stakeholders.

The district does provide plans for evaluating the effectiveness of its investments.

The criterion is rated High.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) Richmond Community Schools provided a reasonable budget that identified funds to support the grant including personnel, equipment, contracted services with community agencies and professional development. Only proposed Race to the Top – District funds is included in the budget.

(b) Richmond Community Schools' overall budget is reasonable and sufficient. The plan address four areas: administrative support, technology, personalized learning, college and career-readiness, and student support services.

(c)

(i) Richmond Community Schools provided a budget with clear description of funds.

(ii) Richmond Community Schools' budget describes only Race to the Top-District funds.

The district does not include a budget narrative.

This criterion will be rated Middle

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

10

4

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Richmond Community Schools provided a plan to sustain the grant for three years following the end of the grant. The plan included a budget for three year with major emphasis for sustainability in student support service with services for Communities in School and Boys and Girls Club.

The district did not address continuing instruction and curriculum activities and professional development for teachers to support the Common Core Standards and College and Career Readiness.

This will receive a middle rating.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

- a. Richmond Community Schools has developed a plan to identify students in Power School who receive services through Communities In-School and the Boys and Girls Club to monitor students' academic progress, attendance, and behavior. .
- b. Richmond Community Schools has described a process to to share data with teachers to enhance communications between program and educators to ensure appropriate tutoring.
- c. The district does not provide a strategy for to scale the model beyond the participating students.

(d) Richmond Community Schools' does not provide adequate details on how the partners would improve results over time.

(4) Richmond Community Schools' has reasonable designed a program that integrates education and other services. Communities In-School and the Boys and Girls Club will provide tutoring, mentoring college and career-readiness skills while working with educators and monitoring students' progress.

(5) Richmond Community Schools' has not clearly address how the district will build the capacity of the staff participating in the schools.

(6) Richmond Community Schools' does not identify ambitious yet achievable performance measures for the population-levels and describe the results for students. The data provided is based on the past four years not projections to the end of the project.

This criteria will receive a Middle rating.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Richmond Community Schools did not meet the priority for providing a coherent and comprehensive pproposal built on the four core educatinal assurance area. The four assurance were not addressed in the proposal.

Total	210	104
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0238IN-3 for Richmond Community Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	4

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda

Applicant struggles to communicate a comprehensive and coherent reform vision. The narrative provided runs on for several densely packed pages before the reviewer is first informed that "The vision of academic success for each student must be achieved." Up to this point the applicant engages in a sometimes disconnected discussion of the district's history and present and past challenges. The reader is ultimately informed that the goal of this grant is to "Meet the real-time

unique needs of students." The applicant then speaks of a one-to-one technology initiative. We are told something about what this is supposed to look like but we wait in vain for the more explicit detail of how it is to happen—just exactly what is the applicant's vision about what and how this will take place and what will be accomplished in terms of personalized instruction. Without this information the vision statement essentially remains a skeleton. As one progresses further through the narrative we are eventually informed about four themes to be found in the application. At this point the applicant begins to come closer to stating its underlying vision but never quite accomplishes this task. What is fundamentally missing is the failure of the applicant to adequately address the basic criterion in (A)(1). Specifically, a comprehensive and coherent reform vision is never presented.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant minimally satisfies this criterion.</p> <p>Applicant identifies participating schools and the total number of students involved and provides confirmation of their eligibility in terms of RTTD competition requirements. No elaboration is provided</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(A)(3) LEA-Wide Reform and Change</p> <p>Applicant makes a serious attempt to respond to the requirements of this criterion but falls short in the opinion of this reviewer. One is left to imagine just how the supposed high quality plan will be scaled up on an LEA-wide basis. One is told that a high quality plan has been designed but instead of providing a logical, sequenced explanation of this plan the reviewer is left to tease out the details from a narrative that is incomplete. This reviewer notes that occasionally there are gems that shine out from the (A)(3) response. For example, the applicant's intent to use a Personalized Learning Model or the anticipated use of technology to facilitate implementation of certain essential RTTD program components. However, overall, the applicant has failed to discuss key aspects of criterion (A)(3) specifically including a logic model and/or theory of change. The applicant has incompletely satisfied this criterion.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(A)(4) LEA-Wide goals for student outcomes</p> <p>Applicant describes its school board-approved "Work Plan" adopted on October 24, 2012. The plan includes this statement: "By 2020, Richmond's Community Schools will be the highest performing school system in east central Indiana." The accompanying mission statement, also adopted by the school board, reads: "Richmond Community Schools will graduate students who are literate, responsible and proficient in state and national standards and who are college/career ready." Relative to these statements the applicant provides chart-form data showing desired performance on summative student assessments through 2016-2017. Similar chart-form data is presented for desired high school graduation rates through 2016-2017 but the projections are incomplete. The same is true for essentially blank charts related to college enrollment and post-secondary degree attainment. The applicant fails to make a convincing case as to why/how its vision is likely to result in improved student learning district-wide. There is no clear connection between hoped-for outcomes and the visionary plan the applicant is struggling to define.</p>		

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

	Available	Score

(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	15
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant satisfies this criterion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant is a recipient of a federal Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SSHS) grant. From a low point in 2007 evidence is presented to show impressive gains relative to multiple categories addressed by SSHS priorities. These include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved student attendance rates • Increased percentage of students in grades 7-12 who attend at least 60 days of supervised activities at youth centers • Increased number of students receiving mental health services • Increased performance on state ISTEP+ English/Language Arts • Increased performance on state ISTEP+ Math • Increased performance on state ISTEP+ Social Studies (5th and 7th grades) • Applicant also cites as evidence implementation of the district’s Early College Preparatory Academy (ECPA). Goals for this academy include providing dynamic and innovative instructional change that promotes student achievement and positive, sustainable change for at-risk students. Applicant envisions use of RTTD funds to help augment implementation of this program. The ECPA continues to expand and includes emphasis on learning opportunities which enable students to earn up to two years of transferable college credit. Through use of advanced digital technology ECPA students are able to create an anytime/anywhere learning environment. The ECPA educational program is enhanced by use of flipped instructional practices, collaboration stations, podcasts/vodcasts and participation in global learning communities. <p>Applicant makes performance data available to students, educators and parents through PowerSchool (Pearson) software which supports its student management system. Applicant acknowledges its struggle to encourage greater use of this program but cites the fact that each year usage has increased.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant satisfies this criterion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District follows protocols for financial disclosure defined by the state of Indiana. • Use of its software program, Board Doc, enables the district to make available key district documents to the public 24 hours per day. • Financial and investment data are made public on the district’s web base system. • Indiana State Board of Accounts provides information to the public about personnel salaries, and costs per individual school buildings upon request. • District conforms with state requirements per public reporting of non-personnel expenditures at the school level. 		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	7
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant minimally satisfies this criterion.</p>		

- Applicant claims sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory and regulatory requirements to implement proposed RTTD program including State approved waivers for implementing innovative aspects of RTTT projects but does not provide enough evidence to convince this reviewer.

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

10

7

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(B)(4) Applicant basically satisfies this criterion through evidence of meaningful stakeholder support in the development of its proposal. Applicant provides a list of stakeholders who have provided important feedback on its RTTD application. These include but are not limited to:

- Richmond Education Association (B)(4)(a)(i)—President of Richmond Education Association signed Application of Assurances
- Safe Schools/Healthy Students project community and business partners
- Board of Education
- Student Representative Council for RTTT
- Richmond High School Leadership Team
- Review by Richmond mayor
- Review by Indiana State Department of Education
- Others

This reviewer did not find letters of support from all of the above stakeholders.

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

5

5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

(B)(5) Applicant satisfies this criterion.

- Applicant provides a useful demographic portrait of Richmond County. From these data a conclusion is reached that there is a serious need for individualized learning in the district’s schools which are proposed to take part in the RTTD funded project. The applicant continues and persuasively argues that the incidence of stalled graduation rates and student resistance to traditional forms of learning suggest a significant need for personalized learning which is integral to its RTTD initiative. Based on its analysis, the applicant concludes that participating schools in the RTTD project will be able to deliver integrated, evidence- based services which will positively impact student outcomes at both the school and individual student levels. Overall, the applicant’s response to this criterion is thoughtful and sufficient.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	4

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has failed to fully satisfy this criterion.

- This criterion—directly related to earlier criteria including (A)(1)—continues to challenge the applicant’s ability to successfully define a comprehensive and coherent vision including a high quality plan for improving teaching and learning by personalizing student learning environments. In this instance, the reviewer was looking for elements of the plan that would logically relate to criterion (C)(1). Response to this criterion is as if the applicant had failed to read the specific language of the RTTD notice. More than seven pages of densely packed narrative is presented in the applicant’s response to the criterion. Yet this reviewer struggled to identify substantive treatment of (C)(1)(a)(i), (C)(1)(a)(ii), (C)(1)(a)(iii) and (C)(1)(a)(iv). The same is true of the applicant’s response—or non response—to (C)(1)(b)(i), (C)(1)(b)(iv)(A) and (C)(1)(b)(iv)(B). Rather, what has been provided by the applicant can best be described as a narrative mixture of discrete elements of a supposed “plan” without any clear or coherent explanation of how all of the parts and pieces are supposed to fit together. This reviewer searched in vain for the applicant to break out of the dense and sometimes confusing narrative in order to respond specifically to the criterion on a step by step basis. Graphic representations of the applicant’s conceptual thinking would have been very helpful. It is disappointing to realize that embedded in the pages of narrative presented in response to this criterion are some potentially compelling ideas but, again, the applicant has failed to lucidly make the essential connections among them.

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

20

10

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(C)(2) Applicant has failed to respond completely to this criterion.

- Much of what has been stated by this reviewer relative to the applicant’s response to (C)(1) also applies to this criterion. The applicant provides an often incomplete narrative which moves in and out between directly applicable commentary and commentary which is unrelated or irrelevant insofar as the criterion is concerned. It was impossible for this reviewer to identify a quality plan for personalizing the learning environment as required by the criterion. On a more positive note, perhaps the most substantive element in the applicant’s response to (C)(2) has to do with the planned use of *RISE*, Indiana’s model evaluation and development system for teachers. The applicant’s description of this program—including its reliance on four critical instructional domains—is directly relevant to subcriteria (c)(i) and (c)(ii). Also worthy of special note is the applicant’s intent to utilize teachers as academic advisors who will meet weekly with their students to address issues related to grades, attendance AND their status with what is described as an “on track indicator” with respect to Career and College Readiness. The latter is directly relevant to criterion (a)(3).

- Applicant either fails to adequately address, or does not address (C)(2)(a)(ii), (C)(2)(a)(iii), (C)(2)(b)(ii)—especially as the latter criterion relates to alignment with college- and career-ready standards—and criterion (C)(2)(d) which relates to increasing the numbers of students taught by effective and highly effective teachers.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant incompletely satisfies criterion (D)(1)—Practices, policies, rules—with the exception of (D)(1)(e):

- Applicant reports the structure of the central district administrative office. Included is an Office of Student Achievement, Office of Student Support Services and an Office of Exceptional Education. These are seen as important to the realization of RTTD goals and objectives related to personalized learning. The Office of Student Achievement works closely with the district’s instructional coaches who are assigned in each building. Instructional coaches work with staff members on teaching techniques, style, and adherence to the common core standards.

- Each school has a leadership team which focuses on learning, behavior, attendance and teaching methods.

- Applicant acknowledges that its district policy has not been flexible in giving all students the opportunity to progress and earn credit on the basis of demonstrated mastery. It is anticipated that being an RTTD grant recipient will enable the district to accelerate its efforts in this direction.

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

Applicant satisfies criteria (D)(2)(a) and (b) but does not satisfy criteria (D)(2)(c) and (d).

- Applicant confirms that students will have access to necessary content, tools and other learning resources both in and out of school to support implementation of the applicant’s proposal. The district’s digital infrastructure will provide the means for tracking students and teachers on key measures. Fifteen such measures are identified by the applicant.
- Teachers are provided assessment tools through multiple sources. Applicant acknowledges that it struggles with having all available student data in one location in contrast to the present siloing of such information. It is thought that RTTD will provide funds for developing a district data warehouse. (This reviewer seriously questions the feasibility of this action given the costly and complex dimensions of data warehouse development.) Applicant notes that evaluative measures supported by the district’s digital infrastructure will include production of quality “narratives” to be reviewed by a committee of technology experts and teachers. Applicant does not say what will be in these narratives but by inference they will relate to the qualitative aspects of RTTD program implementation. Applicant additionally identifies seven categories of important information that will be supported by district’s digital infrastructure. The RTTD project will experience continuous assessment and evaluation.
- Applicant does not report having in place an information technology system that allows exporting of information in an open data format.
- Applicant does not address the issue of interoperability among data systems.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant incompletely satisfies this criterion:

- Applicant proposes to retain a contracted external evaluator for its RTTD project. This contractor will direct all aspects of data collection, analysis and reporting and will ensure that data are collected and processed reliably and consistently.
- Applicant notes that partner organizations associated with the grant’s implementation, as well as the district, will be responsible for collecting data for submission to the external evaluator for synthesis and analysis.
- Evaluations will include both process and outcome components. The process evaluation component will involve continuous assessment of the project’s various programs and activities. Emphasis will be given to providing frequent formative feedback to key stakeholders.
- In those cases where needed assessment data are not available the external grant evaluator will provide technical support to develop the needed systems and processes.

- The external grant evaluator will develop and administer teacher surveys and community partner surveys on an annual basis to aid in assessment of the extent to which given elements of the RTTD project have been implemented.
- Applicant proposes to incorporate measures needed to keep up and ahead of digital advances in education. Applicant sees this as directly related to the criterion’s emphasis on continuous improvement of its plan.
- Applicant emphasizes that its plan represents its best thinking at the present point in time. Applicant states that it is prepared to make required adjustments and revisions.
- Applicant does not directly address the criterion’s requirement for measuring and publicly sharing information about the quality of investments funded by RTTD.

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

5

5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant has satisfied this criterion:

- Applicant will use a communications team which will champion its RTTD project.
- The communications team will develop a marketing and communications strategy through which updates, successes and other key information about the RTTD project will be shared. This strategy will include but not be limited to use of the district’s website, Facebook page and Twitter accounts.
- Annual reports of the RTTD project will be distributed to real estate agents among other intended recipients.
- Project updates will be provided to other important stakeholders including but not limited to the district’s three neighboring colleges and universities.

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

5

2

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(E)(3) Applicant essentially fails to satisfy this criterion:

Applicant provides evidence of multiple performance measures which it intends to use. These are presented in chart format but are incomplete except in one instance: the number and percentage of participating students who complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. It is impossible to know if the charts did not print correctly or if the applicant actually did not complete them but still wished to identify its anticipated use of specific performance measures. Nor does the applicant present a rationale for the selection of its intended performance measures except for the fact that by definition this reviewer notes that each measure appears related to applicant’s project. The response to this criterion is significantly incomplete.

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

5

4

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant generally satisfies this criterion.

- Applicant engages in a rambling narrative in response to criterion (E)(4). Careful reading and rereading enabled this reviewer to identify adequate responses by the applicant to the requirement of effectively evaluating RTTD investments. The details remain somewhat fuzzy.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	3
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant essentially fails to satisfy this criterion.</p> <p>The applicant has had great difficulty throughout its responses to the various criteria in the RTTD notice in directly stating the fundamental elements of its proposal in a clear, connected and convincing manner. This reviewer notes that the budget document interestingly provides more implicit information about the applicant's goals and objectives which, with substantial difficulty, it is possible to infer elements of a program vision and a coherent plan. But once again, what repeatedly occurs throughout the entire application is a pervading fuzziness about just exactly what is the applicant's RTTD proposal. This reviewer spent many hours reading and rereading the application in order to confirm this initial impression. In the end, the same conclusion emerged. Important elements of a substantive nature are sometimes presented but they remain poorly articulated in the applicant's narrative. In this fundamental respect the application falls very short. As a consequence, any attempt to evaluate (F)(1) is severely compromised if not impossible. Essentially one is left with a budget which addresses over \$9 million dollars in expenditures ostensibly based on a clear, coherent and compelling proposal which has never been presented by the applicant in a comprehensive manner. Accordingly, this reviewer believes that the applicant has not satisfied criterion (F)(1).</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	7
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant partially satisfies this criterion.</p> <p>Applicant acknowledges importance of planning for sustainability and describes its process used in relation to an earlier Safe Schools/Healthy Students four year grant in the amount of \$6 million. Evaluations were conducted and the applicant determined which elements of the project would be transferred to the district's general fund after the fourth year. Applicant indicates its intent to follow the same strategy for the RTTD grant. The contracted external evaluator will play a key role in helping the district determine what elements of the project will be continued and will use appropriate performance indicators in arriving at this decision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This reviewer's comments with respect to (F)(1) also apply in part to criterion (F)(2). Important elements of a substantive nature are sometimes presented by the applicant but they remain poorly articulated. In this fundamental respect the application falls short. Essentially one is left with a budget which addresses over \$9 million dollars in expenditures ostensibly based on a clear, coherent proposal which has never been presented by the applicant in a comprehensive and compelling manner. . • Applicant reports that funds from other sources will be used to support the project in the amount of \$786,720. 		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	7

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

Applicant partially satisfies this criterion's requirements.

- Applicant provides impressive information about its efforts to address the importance of social and emotional learning in its schools. Its student support services are based on a social development model of risk and protective factor-focused prevention which has been rigorously validated through longitudinal studies.
- Applicant describes its close working relationship with community-based partners especially including Communities in Schools and Boys and Girls Club. The latter have worked closely with the district in establishing support systems and after school academic enrichment services. Applicant proposes to build on these relationships and presents a detailed list of potential initiatives which would become possible with RTTD competitive preference priority funds. These are impressive and convincing in terms of their capacity to satisfy the intent of this criterion.
- Applicant fails to address other criteria defined in the Competitive Preference Priority notice.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Applicant fails to adequately satisfy the absolute criterion.

- In response to criterion (A)(1) the applicant struggles to communicate a comprehensive and coherent reform vision. The narrative provided runs on for several densely packed pages before the reviewer is first informed that "The vision of academic success for each student must be achieved." Up to this point the applicant engages in a sometimes disconnected discussion of the district's history and present and past challenges. The reader is ultimately informed that the goal of this grant is to "Meet the real-time unique needs of students." The applicant then speaks of a one-to-one technology initiative. We are told something about what this is supposed to look like but we wait in vain for the more explicit detail of how it is to happen—just exactly what is the applicant's vision about what and how this will take place and what will be accomplished. Without this information the vision statement essentially remains a skeleton. As one progresses further through the narrative we are eventually informed about four themes to be found in the application. At this point the applicant begins to come closer to stating its underlying vision but never quite accomplishes this task. What is fundamentally missing is the failure of the applicant to adequately address the basic criteria found in (A)(1).
- In response to criterion (C)(1) the applicant remains severely challenged to successfully define a comprehensive and coherent vision including a high quality plan for improving teaching and learning by personalizing the learning environment. In this instance, the reviewer was looking for elements of the plan that would logically relate to the learning criterion (C)(1). Response to this criterion is as if the applicant had failed to read the specific language of the notice. More than seven pages of densely packed narrative is presented in the applicant's response to the criterion. Yet this reviewer struggled to identify substantive treatment of (C)(1)(a)(i), (C)(1)(a)(ii), (C)(1)(a)(iii) and (C)(1)(a)(iv). The same is true of the applicant's response—or non response—to (C)(1)(b)(i), (C)(1)(b)(iv)(A) and (C)(1)(b)(iv)(B). Rather, what has been provided by the applicant can best be described as a narrative melange of discrete elements of a supposed "plan" without any clear or coherent explanation of how all of the parts and pieces are supposed to fit together. This reviewer searched in vain for the applicant to break out of the dense and often rambling narrative in order to respond specifically to the criterion on a step by step basis. Graphic representations of the applicant's conceptual thinking would have been very helpful. It is disappointing to realize that embedded in the pages of narrative presented in response to this criterion are some potentially compelling ideas but, again, the applicant has failed to lucidly make the essential connections among them.

- In response to criterion (C)(2) the applicant provides a dense, free flowing narrative which moves in and out between substance and non-substance insofar as an effective response to the criterion is concerned. It was impossible for this reviewer to identify "a quality plan for personalizing the learning environment..." as required by the criterion. In this reviewer's opinion, all else in the applicant's response to this criterion necessarily hinges on the issue of "quality".
- Given the previous considerations, it is impossible to conclude that the applicant has satisfied the absolute criterion defined in this notice.

Total	210	136
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