



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #1320NY-1 for Rochester City School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(A1)There are three districts in the Consortia, the Rochester City School District which is the lead District and two other Consortia Districts, Binghamton City School District and Ballston Spa Central School District. Together they thoroughly sets forth a coherent reform vision that includes how the Consortia will address the four core educational assurance areas outlined in the absolute priority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The vision addresses how the consortia districts will comprehensively accelerate student achievement through a district-wide K-12 STEM program, professional development for teachers, accessible data systems, advanced high school initiatives, and technologically advanced classrooms that focus on personalized learning environments.</li> <li>• The applicant's model addresses deepening student learning through career building programs centered around student academic interests, such as Project Lead the Way, implementation of college readiness courses, and dual enrollment courses.</li> <li>• The applicant's reform vision is bold and comprehensive. They clearly describe how the model will build on existing work, including how the district plans to move from a traditional system to a personalized system that will ensure equity for all students.</li> <li>• Consortia districts will utilize research supported curriculum such as "Understanding by Design", inquiry based instruction, problem based learning, digital curriculum, and other efforts in order to further address personalized student support.</li> </ul>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(A)(2)The applicant provides significant demographic information for each community and each school district. All 74 schools across each district will participate, including every grade level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The eligibility is met based on at least 70% of students who are low income students. These students are served in high need, urban school districts.The applicant will aligns the goals of the plan with the needs of the students in the district. The alignment is critical because of the designations of "Focus" districts and "Schools in Need of Improvement."</li> <li>• A list of schools is provided and indicates that more than 39,835 students and more than 4,395 teachers will be served, including all required subgroup numbers. Inclusion of all students and teachers will make the implementation more robust and more likely to be successful in implementation of reform initiatives that will effect each local school, gradeband, and subject.</li> </ul> <p>High range (10)</p>		

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

10

8

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

A)(3)The Consortia provides a high quality plan that describes how outcomes will be translated into meaningful reform to support change, achieve goals and sustain outcomes.

- Because two of the districts, Rochester and Binghamton, are cited as “Focus Districts” by the New York Department of Education, they must commit to scale up reform proposals. The third district, Ballston Spa does not address a scale up component.
- Sustainability will be addressed throughout the project design incorporating a transdisciplinary approach, a STEM/Common Core Curriculum, and intensive professional development for teachers.
- The theory of change is addressed through the six required tenets identified in the Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness and outlined in the application. For example, addressing curriculum development and teacher practices are tenets that clearly align with the proposed reform initiatives and the needs of the student population.
- The plan gives serious consideration to the district-wide implementation plan for each district and indicates that Year 1 will include reviewing data, assessing current programs, piloting social/emotional programs and training teachers.

Each district in the consortia, with the exception of Ball Spa, has clearly provided evidence, along with a high quality plan that clearly describes the format and how scaleup will take for their specific districts and how improvement will impact district wide change. The consortia will use the Stem/Common Core and transdisciplinary approach to implement reform. Specifically, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math will be taught using an integrated model with application-based, hands-on, personalized learning.

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

10

8

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(4) The applicant provides charts which addresses the four areas by subgroup as required in this section. The charts include each district’s goals and list of schools.

- Summative assessments are provided for each district and include ESEA assessment or end of course test.
- The methodology for determining both status and growth will be implemented and gains will be tracked. For example, value added, mean growth percentile and change in achievement levels will be used to determine growth.
- The applicant describes a method for how achievement gaps were determined and will be tracked to determine achievement improvements across the African American, Hispanic students, and students with disabilities. Overall graduate rates are provided but not disaggregated by subgroup.
- The applicant has an ambitious goal of all students who graduate with at least one college course completed, perhaps a more achievable goal is to provide an opportunity for all student to enroll in a college level course considering the low graduation rates across all districts.
- College enrollment rates are not provided for Rochester and Ballston Spa does not yet have the capability to track college enrollment for their students. However, Binghamton reports a college enrollment rate of 85.9% for 2011-2012. The goal for the project is 90.0% by the end of the grant cycle, SY 2015-16.
- The applicant does indicate plans to track degree attainment. Considering the strong partnerships with local universities, the applicant has a good chance to track a significant number of students after high school graduation.

Score (8)

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:

(B)(1) The consortia has demonstrated improvements in student achievement as measured through the NYS standardized test in ELA, Math, Social Studies and Science as a result of grants and other district initiatives.

- The applicant provides evidence and describes a record of success based on the Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination grant, Arts Impact Study, Pump Up the Math, along with other initiatives in Rochester City Schools; The Ballston Spa Central School District claims success through their STEM enrichment programs including First Robotics Competition and First Lego League competition. Through their Early College collaborative, 100% of the students enrolled earned at least 5 credits and improved graduation rate from 79% to 86%. Through its Reading First grant, the Binghamton schools saw a decline in classification rate of 1.6% from 13.7% to 12.1% for students with disabilities.
- Clear results is provided that achievement gaps are closing in grades K-6 where positive effects were reported from 5% to 30% across all K-6 levels and significant for subgroups, including student with disabilities.
- The consortia districts are using professional development led by exemplary teachers, mentoring, and small learning communities among other initiatives.
- The applicant does not describe significant information on data sharing and access to parents, students, teachers and community stakeholders in this section.

The applicant presents evidence of past success with some initiatives, however the lack of information on data sharing and access to parents, teachers and community stakeholders could limit the impact of the success and conditions for reform. All members of the school community should have buy-in and ongoing information on the progress of all initiatives. Access creates a sense of ownership and responsibility by stakeholders.

Score middle (11)

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(B)(2)  
Limited evidence of transparency is provided for the consortia districts.

- Personnel salaries are not provided and broken out by all required categories, however, the applicant indicates that salaries can be found on the SeeThroughNY website.
- Non-personnel expenditures at the school level are not provided; the applicant references the website.
- School administration expenditures are not provided; the applicant references the website.
- Per pupil expenditures are not provided in the application and Rochester does not currently provide a school by school breakdown of expenditures for K-12 instruction or other categories outlined in this section.
- The district budget is not provided, but reference is made to the district website.

The applicant 's failure to provide the specific information for each consortia district makes it difficulty to determine the level of transparency. Providing the various information requested in the proposal as opposed to referencing the website would have made this section stronger.

Mid score of (3)

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

The consortia districts are all a part of a waiver that was granted by the US Department of Education because New York is a Race to the Top Phase 2 State. The districts, therefore, have increased flexibility and autonomy from state statues or regulations.

- The applicant has alignment with the districts' strategic plan and each district has it's Annual Professional Performance Appraisal (APPR) plans approved by New York State. The appraisal process rates teachers at all levels and all subject areas according to a uniform rating scale, which includes ineffective, developing, effective and highly effective.
- The applicant includes a description of a variety of activities that will be implemented and result from the districts having the autonomy to make bold changes, such as teachers allowed to have flex schedules, extended school day programs, and school choice district wide.

High Score (10)

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	8
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(B)(4)  
The applicant includes a description of how students, families, teachers and principals were engaged in the development of the proposal and provided feedback through surveys and established organizations such as the District Student Leadership Congress and the Parent Advisory Council.

- Teacher support does not include signatures; however, the applicant indicates teachers received drafts of the proposal through a SharePoint site where input could be collected continuously. The MOU also provides evidence of support and includes signatures of Teacher Association Presidents for each district, Superintendents, and Board Presidents.
- Stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal is described and demonstrates how stakeholders were involved.
- Proposal planning meetings were also conducted and included parents and other community stakeholders, for example the Comprehensive District Educational Planning Committee (CDEP).
- The consortia school districts are in a collective bargaining State.
- Several letters of support are provided and include professional, business, higher education, and community organizations.

The consortia has demonstrated evidence of stakeholder engagement and support by using designated websites to communicate information, MOUs signed by major stakeholders, meetings and extensive letters of support. Even though the MOU included signatures of Teacher Association Presidents, there is evidence that teachers were directly engaged in the development of the proposal. Successful implementation of this large scale proposal requires ownership and engagement of all stakeholders, especially teachers.

Score High (8)

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

(B)(5) The consortia districts clearly set forth three focused areas that impact student achievement gaps and teacher effectiveness. Their proposal not only addresses student achievement gaps, but also gaps in services to students.

- The applicant has identified student needs from school and student data and aligned students' needs with the three major gaps delineated.
- A strong argument is made to increase teacher content knowledge, develop and offer an integrated STEM curriculum to get students more engaged, and provide a data system that teachers, students and parents can easily access and utilized to increase personalized learning opportunities.
- An example of implementation of a personalized learning environment based on the district's gaps is Ballston Spa High School, which includes interventions such as mentoring, credit recovery, and increased professional development for staff.
- For Rochester, the applicant used the PACE Instrument to identify student experience gaps from the beginning of their education and how the plan will address the identified gaps.

The applicant provides clear evidence and analysis of gaps in achievement and gaps in service. A cohesive plan is described that includes students' gaps and what teachers need to know and be able to do to mitigate those gaps.

High score (5)

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	17

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(C)(1)The applicant provides a plan that addresses personalizing the learning environment to support all students to graduate college and career ready across participating districts. Four Projects are outlined as being central to the success of their plan and is linked to a cohesive plan for improving learning.

- The approaches the districts will use are fully developed and inclusive of staffing needs, instructional strategies and moving students toward taking the driver's seat while actively navigating their learning process.
- The students will learn that the key to future success through services from both in-school and out -of -school activities, such as the STEM Afterschool Program and the First Robotics program.
- The district's curriculum is aligned to national core standards which suggest students will be college and career ready. Some districts will also use placement assessment for college readiness and PSAT GROWTH for college readiness.
- The STEM Curriculum and professional development for teachers in content areas will provide students opportunities for deep learning experiences that are student led and created by students. The Rochester City Schools describes eight themed high schools that will complement the proposal.
- Access and exposure to diverse cultures is available based on the districts demographics. However no specific plan is described to address how students might take advantage of the opportunity to learn from each other as they work along side each other.
- The applicant will address content mastery and personal skills and traits through the plan's components, STEM Curriculum that utilizes inquiry-based teaching learning, professional development for teachers, and technologically advanced classrooms among other initiatives.
- The plan delineates various strategies to access services, approaches, and content; which includes self-learning, financial planning resources for parents and students, FASFA workshops, Sakia, which provides opportunity to customize student learning experiences and provides ongoing feedback in a 24/7 environment.
- The applicant's plan will address ongoing and regular feedback through a district-wide tracking system to be developed. For example, every high school student in Rochester will have access to a TI-84 graphing calculator which will enable teachers to determine if all students are on target during various lessons.
- The applicant adequately addresses accommodating all students and will share specific innovations with each other across districts. This is critical because each district has different needs and all are trying to accomplish the same

goals.

- The applicant's plan will address training and supports mechanisms by utilizing an interdisciplinary approach to learning where rigorous academics and real world experiences meet.

High Score (17)

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	16
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(C)(2) The Consortia Districts sufficiently address training and professional development for all educators to support student progress toward meeting college and career ready standards or college and career graduation requirements.

- Teacher capacity and teacher development is a major focus of the proposal, particularly, in the STEM content areas. Teachers will receive training around the use of the Danielson Framework for teacher and professional development for use of the Response to Intervention (RTI) process.
- Examples of how teachers will access training include, summer training with stipends, professional learning communities which meet throughout the year and, DataCation, which is a web-based professional development module with tutorials and interactive online courses which provides additional support for teachers to help students progress toward graduation, college and career ready.
- The applicant describes how core teachers and special education teachers will complete courses together and work in teams, for example Developing Mathematical Ideas (DMI) which is fully described in the Appendix.
- The proposal is vague on frequent measures of student progress and the importance of teachers being knowledgeable of how to use a continuous flow of data to make individual decision for students. Considering the use of multiple strategies and programs, preparing teachers to interpret and use data to make important instructional decisions is critical.
- The applicant touches on teachers using a model of continuous improvement but does not fully develop how educators will have access to the use of tools, data and resources to accelerate student progress.
- Actionable information that helps teachers identify the best learning approaches for student academic needs and interests is not clearly delineated.
- The districts all have teacher and principal evaluation systems in place, but the plan does not indicate how the information from evaluation systems will be used to improve teacher effectiveness, benefit students, and support teachers and principals.
- Rochester will build a Talent Acquisition Module (TAM) linked to Peoplesoft that will track and analyze recruitment data and performance of candidates, but there is no discussion regarding supporting existing teachers to become highly effective. This seems to be directly related to the districts' APPR plans and articulation agreements with their Unions.

score 16

#### D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(D)(1) The structure for the consortium will be individual governance for each district as governed by their elected Board of Trustees which is empowered by the state to make policy. There are policies that will enable the districts to be more effective in implementation of goals and objectives, such as flexible instructional periods for schools.

- The applicant indicates that the consortia members will use reasonable efforts to perform the scope of work described in the proposal. Evidence of the governance structure is included in the Appendix.
- The applicant includes a detailed description of roles and responsibilities of consortium members, including levels of oversight and the monitor process. Local school teams are described, along with the role they will perform to ensure facilitation of personalized learning.
- A descriptive plan for each participating school district in the consortia is provided and one of the major components is to implement data systems that provide timely data back to students, educators and parents on student growth. There is no indication or plan that describes how students will be able to move on at mastery.
- Opportunities for students to progress at their own pace is not fully addressed, nor is the opportunity for mastery at multiple times in multiple ways described.
- The plan does not address learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible for students with disabilities or English Learners. This is an important area to address because of the percentage of the districts' student who fall into these subgroups.

Mid-Score 11

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	5
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

D)(2) The applicant does not adequately address how the districts' infrastructure will support personalized learning.

- The plan does not thoroughly address how students and parents in each district will have access to necessary content, tools and other learning resources in school and after school to support personalized learning. The Ballston Spa District has piloted an e-portfolio system to reflect on their growth in meeting standards. Results of the pilot and its impact would be helpful to the other consortia districts. Both Binghamton and Rochester will create a digital data system that will support a learning portfolio to follow students from grade to grade.
- The applicant does not fully address early monitoring systems that provide alerts on student progress and there is no description of how this information can be used by parents and students in other electronic learning systems to support personalized student learning.
- The applicant indicates that all districts have interoperable data systems to support the proposal.

Score 7

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

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(E)(1) The applicant indicates that programs will be monitored and measured on a regular basis to ensure student-centered outcomes continue to improve.

- The applicant describes a system called DataCation as their program of choice because of its ability to provide students, parents, educators and other school personnel with data dashboards to track performance against benchmarks linked to college and career readiness. This program is described for Rochester schools, but there is no indication that the other districts in the consortia will use this system.
- The applicant indicates that the Teacher-Child Rating Scale (T-CRS) will be used for all districts to benchmark social and emotional growth for students.
- The applicant clearly describes how detailed information on the monitoring process will work and how information will

be channeled and used for ongoing corrections and how to inform programs improvements.

- Data based engineers will support communication to stakeholders through websites and linking systems to the New York State Data Warehouse. Additionally, the applicant describes how reports will provide substantive information that will reflect performance against drill down and disaggregation for cohort level analysis.

It is critical for a project of this size with three districts to provide clear and concise information on the continuous improvement process and the applicant has adequately addressed all components including data warehouses, for example, Data Dashboards Modules that provide stakeholders with audience appropriate data dashboards to track performance. It is not clearly delineated how the other participating districts will benefit from the Rochester District's use of this data system.

High score 13

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

E(2) The applicant indicates that both internal and external communication will be done through the various committee meetings, Board presentations and through School Leadership Teams.

- The applicant indicates that a communication plan will be developed, but did not include an example.
- No design or change model is described.

Mid score 3

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(E) (3)The applicant includes performance measures by subgroup with the required annual targets. Performance measures include K-12 grades.

- All districts selected attendance as a third measure to gauge student outcomes. The rationale provided describes the strong relationship between school attendance and student academic performance. Attendance will also be a strong monitoring feature for adapting strategies for students with high absenteeism.
- Districts have selected their specific performance measures for math and reading based on the assessed needs of their student population. Performance measures for the number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup, who are on tract to college and career readiness was not complete for Ballston Spa because the district does not disaggregate data by subgroups. Additionally, Ballston Spa has low percentages set for FAFSA form completion for some subgroups.
- The new APPR legislation requires that teacher and principal evaluation take into account student performance and growth on standardized test and is addressed in the application.
- Rigorous, timely, and formative leading information regarding implementation success or areas of concern are addressed through assessment tools each district has selected for measuring achievement. For example, Rochester selected the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) assessment for reading and math for grades K-12, which is also an approved APPR assessment. Other districts selected assessment instruments that will best serve their student population.
- The applicant sufficiently addresses how each district will review and implement improvements overtime as areas of concern and progress are monitored.
- The number of performance measures identified meet the requirement of the application.

High score 4

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

(E)(4) The applicant does not adequately address all components of evaluating effectiveness of investments by developing a series of surveys for educators and students.

- Since the Action Steering Committee includes, parents, students, teachers, stakeholders, and administrators, continual feedback can be provided. However, the applicant is not clear on how often the committee meetings will take place and the format for communicating impact of the plan.

- The applicant indicates that integrated data systems will enable effectiveness to be captured but details are lacking on specifically how this process will work and how it will be systematically communicated.
- The applicant does not adequately address how the districts will determine if there was productive use of time, staff, or funds invested to improve results throughout the project cycle.
- The applicant does not address evaluation of the plan's impact on working with community partners, compensation reform or modification of school structures that will support program effectiveness.
- The applicant does not address the evaluation of effectiveness of leadership teams at the district levels and the impact of their decision-making structure.

Though the applicant has a number of activities in place and others to be developed to address the evaluation of effectiveness, there are gaps that could create challenges in this process. For example, frequency of meetings, productivity and use of staff, time and money, and evaluation and effectiveness of leadership teams.

Score 3

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

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

### (F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(F)(1) The applicant's budget includes tables in both the narrative and the Appendix that outline cost that are reasonable and sufficient to support development and implementation of the plan. No separate budget narrative is provided in this section, however, the chart in the Appendix includes a cost description section. Additionally, the applicant provides budget narrative information in section (C)(1) of the application as aligned with each project activity.

- Though other funded projects have been described in the proposal for some of the districts, only RTT funds are included in the budget.
- Thoughtful rationale has gone into the development of the proposal as indicated by the staff included to support each project component, teacher stipend for training, and other contractual services.
- The funds to be used for one time investments vs. those to be used for ongoing operational cost are not delineated.

High score - 8

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	7
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### (F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(F)(2) The applicant indicates that each district will develop their individual sustainability plan based on their ongoing initiatives and the need for alignment.

- Teacher professional development and a train the trainer model will build capacity and support sustainability after the term of the grant. It is not clear if this model will be the approach for all districts in the consortia.
- Major support from the Board of Trustees and the Rochester Institute of Technology are examples how other entities will commit to Rochester City School District's goals for student achievement. Ballston Spa also provides a list of local partners committed to providing major support. Bingham School District support network is not mentioned in this section but the Appendix includes several letter of support.
- The applicant's budget did not go beyond the four years of requested funding.

Mid score 7

## Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

### Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The Consortia Districts did not elect to write for the Competitive Preference Priority.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The Rochester, Binghamton , and Balston Spa Districts have adequately addressed all components of Absolute Priority 1.

- The districts in the consortia will adopt the Common Core Standards , the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Instrument, International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement Courses to address core educational assurance areas outlined in the notice.
- District and State data systems that measure student progress will inform educators with data necessary to adjust and improve instruction. Professional development for teachers is clearly outlined with significant focus on how to use data to make appropriate decisions.
- The proposal addresses recruiting and retaining talented and effective teachers in schools that need them the most, through professional learning communities, teacher STEM clubs and stipends for summer training.
- Two of the districts are "Focus Districts" and the third one has a "Schools in Need of Improvement" designation. These designations require that the applicant addresses an effort to turn around low performing schools and this component is addressed throughout the proposal.
- The applicant addressed personalization of strategies, tools, and supports in addition to aligning with college and career ready standards. The districts have extensive partnerships that are committed to the project and assisting in providing personalized learning environments.
- The applicant clearly delineates how the consortia districts will accelerate student achievement in math and reading, increase effectiveness of educators through vibrant professional learning communities, and increase effectiveness across subgroups, including higher graduates for high school students.

Met

Total	210	159
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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:

No Supplemental Budget is provided.



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #1320NY-2 for Rochester City School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

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	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant, the Teaching Readiness for International Opportunities (TRIO) consortium, delineated a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that clearly and credibly aligns with the goals of this competition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curricular reform in all schools will be undertaken to align curriculum with the newly released New York State Common Core Curriculum and address the importance of STEM-related skills and knowledge across all curricular areas. In order to achieve this, Districts will embrace a transdisciplinary STEM framework for academic change that utilizes the concepts of personalized learning environments.</li> </ul> <p>They clarified and illustrated their understanding and use of personalized learning environments suggesting how they would move from more traditional systems of education to student-centered, student-driven learning, detailing that each consortium member has committed to implementing following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building infrastructure and capacity to train 4,395 educators and breakdown content and expectation barriers;</li> <li>Implementing a K-12 co-curricular programs such as New York State approved Engineering by Design (EbD) or Engineering is Elementary;</li> <li>Implementing career building programs that are in alignment with students' academic interest such as Project Lead the Way, FIRST Robotics and new high-tech CTE programs;</li> <li>Implementing college readiness courses such as Pre-AP programs, AP Courses, IB courses and dual enrollment courses;</li> <li>Creating a forum to share the best practices identified across transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary functions with New York State Department of Education and other districts;</li> <li>Providing timely data to educators &amp; parents on student's academic &amp; social-emotional growth as with the Teacher-Child Rating Scale (T-CRS) instrument;</li> <li>Personalizing the learning environment in various grades across the three districts with new technology and programs such as First in Math.</li> </ul> <p>The consortium includes two high need New York State (NYS) Focus districts and a third district with Schools in Need of Improvement. The project will serve more than 39,835 students and more than 4,395 teachers across the region.</p> <p>This is a high-quality plan for reform.</p>		

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9
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<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant meets the requirements of this criterion.</p> <p>(a) They provided a rationale for selecting all schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grant components will be implemented in each of the 74 schools across three districts and at every grade level in order to create systemic change and build capacity to deliver personalized student learning experiences. Schools will participate in grant activities as available.</li> </ul> <p>(b) They provided a list of all participating schools.</p> <p>(c) They provided the numbers of participating students as defined by this competition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Of Ballston Spa's 4,300 students, 25% qualify for free and reduced lunch. In addition, approximately 18% of the district's population is identified as high-need students.</li> <li>Of Binghamton's 5,775 students, 70% qualify for free and reduced lunch. In addition, approximately 70.3% of the district's population is identified as high-need students.</li> <li>Of Rochester's 29,748 students, 88% qualify for free and reduced lunch. In addition, approximately 100% of the district's population is identified as high-need students</li> </ul> <p>The applicant indicated that one of their districts has adopted a set of district-wide quantifiable objectives intended to monitor LEA-wide progress. The extent to which this will influence and/or apply to the other two districts is unclear.</p> <p>The applicant provided a good a rationale for including all schools; it seems likely that their approach will go some way to</p>		
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supporting high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation of the proposal.

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

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8

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

There is evidence of commitment to and growing experience in scaling up reform; notably, this experience includes efforts on closing achievement gaps.

Important features of reform are delineated, for example,

- pilots and on-going evaluations
- data review and assessment of current programs
- training teachers
- responsible parties for reviewing data and implementation,
- identification of data to be reviewed (diagnostic data, curriculum)
- review of a large number of external partnerships
- intention to include parents.

Having proposed that components of the grant would be made available to all schools, and that individual schools would participate in reform activities as available, TRIO did not specifically address how they would translate successful individual reform projects to other schools where they were not implemented.

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

10

9

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

TRIO provided the information as required.

TRIO's response is ambitious and achievable. For example,

- Presently 50% of Ballston Spa's students in grade 3-5 are below the state median in ELA and 51% are below the state median in Mathematics. The reform efforts outlined in this proposal will allow the district to increase the percent of students attaining proficiency by 10% each year. At the elementary level teachers will see a year's worth of growth for all students in reading and mathematics through tiered intervention services as well as the application of literacy and mathematics skills to relevant topics. Students in grades K-8 will be assessed at the beginning of the year to assess their reading and mathematics skills using I-Ready. These students will also participate in benchmark and end of year assessments using I-Ready to demonstrate the year's worth of growth in reading and mathematics.

The associated budget for these plans does not specifically delineate the match between, for example, the funds and the exact literacy strategy. However, there is evidence of a commitment to STEM enrichment activities, curriculum development and teacher professional development. Their vision seems to address the immediate problem, while impacting achievement gaps and contributing to the long-term project of increasing graduation rates and college-and-career readiness.

The applicant did not write to the subsection of Postsecondary Degree Attainment.

TRIO's reform vision, supported by its projections for annual goals, seems able to result in improved student learning and performance and equity.

**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	10

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's record of success in meeting all three subsections of this selection criteria is variable.

- Two districts reported on strategies to raise student achievement, high school graduation rates, and college enrollment
  - Rochester evidenced an innovative optical program supported by a formal partnership amongst its schools, some colleges, and a photonics cluster.

Ballston Spa Central School District reported improvement in its cohort graduation rate from 79% to 86% in the last five years. They highlighted three active collaborations with external partners contributing to this result, for example, Ballston Spa Central School District has collaborated with business and industry to offer STEM enrichment programs, and the Center for Initiatives in Pre-College Education (CIPCE).

- Two districts reported on ambitious and significant reforms in their persistently lowest achieving schools or their low-performing schools
  - Rochester highlighted that they have successfully implemented two US Dept of Education Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination grant with notable results for lower performing schools in their district. Rochester's accomplishment is understood in light of its large share of the total numbers of participating schools in this proposal. They also reported on a Pump up the Math program which is beginning to show impact on student achievement, but the evidence was discussed in terms of the specifics of this subsection.
  - Binghamton reported on their Reading First project. Recent results indicated notable success. In this program, as described, it seemed the emphasis was on meeting the needs of the students most at risk across the district rather than as strategy to directed at improving their persistently lowest achieving schools or their low-performing schools.
- One district specifically addressed making performance data available to students, educators parents
  - Ballston Spa collaborated with IBM to develop Sakai, an open source student learning system. The student learning system has been piloted with great success in a number of classes. The program can be used to track student progress, create access to 24/7, and create e-portfolios. This use of Sakai allows students to reflect on standards and their learning to demonstrate the progress that they are making.

All three districts revealed associated impact and results for other facets of school reform and improvement arising from their various programs, for example, a nation-leading program for teacher retention; good teacher professional development program, and productive partnerships with external partners.

Each district did not provide comparable degree of evidence in respect of all three sub-criteria of this selection criterion.

The record of success in the consortium suggests that the applicant has developed some expertise to meet this selection criteria, particularly in (a) and (b).

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

Structures are in place across the three districts that contribute to transparency in LEA processes, practices and investments.

- The state department publishes a 'fiscal supplement' for each district which details the district's expenditures per student, per teacher, etc.'
- They also state that district policies are developed by a publically elected group of citizens who, together, form the Board of Trustees for each public school district; Board policies must conform to NY state education law and must be made available to the public.
- All three use websites to share information on budgets and information on documents associated with Board meetings.
- There is access to information on all salaries of personnel.
- Two districts describe an active process of involving the public in the development of their budgets. These same two districts additionally communicate with their populations by newsletters to their addresses, and highlight that all salaries of personnel are published via the internet.
- The third district does not report on the activities mentioned immediately above, and also does not provide a school by school breakdown of expenditures for K-12.

Perhaps the same degree of transparency across all three districts might contribute to greater transparency.

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

As members of a Race to the Top Phase 2 state, each TRIO district benefits from arrangements which specifically allow increased flexibility to close the achievement gap and help accelerate the implementation of concomittant strategies. Accordingly, all TRIO members

- has obtained an Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) waiver request from the U.S. Education Department
- has agreed to adopt and have approved plans for Annual Professional Performance Appraisal (APPR). APPR assesses whether teachers are Ineffective, developing, effective and highly effective. Parents will be granted access to these teacher evaluation ratings. All District Superintendents are currently evaluated by their Board of Educations.

They provide an illustrative example of how they exploit supportive conditions within the state for implementation of personalized learning environments

- The NYS Education Department does not mandate all aspects of education, giving districts flexibility in areas such as selection of textbooks, class schedules, class sizes, staffing, length of day etc
- Rochester also has living contracts with its Unions which allow for re-visiting and adjustment on contractual issues.
  - In order to extend school hours, the district allow teachers to flex their schedules, some starting later and ending later than traditional school times, rather than hire additional people.
  - Rochester offers school-choice district-wide, so students and parents may shop for the school that best meets their needs.

Elsewhere in their application they discuss and show the successful results of active and supportive partnerships with external stakeholders. They also include a cross section of letters of support in their appendices.

The applicant has presented convincing evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy, as required, to implement their proposed personalized learning environments.

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

Meaningful Stakeholder engagement

Students, parents teachers and principals were provided opportunity to engage with the proposal. Additionally, TRIO sought the involvement of several key management staff, including the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent of Administration, Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Executive Director of Innovation, and several curriculum directors as well as the Instructional Director of Professional Development, Executive Director of Instructional Technology, and the Director of Guidance.

Students and Parents

The applicant reported that

- 'The voice of students was obtained through the District's Student Leadership Congress. The proposal was presented at the monthly meeting that brings students in grades 6-12 together to gain their perspective on issues involving schools.'

They maintained that

- 'The same process was utilized to obtain input from parents. The project was presented to the Parent Advisory Council whose primary role is to ensure parental involvement is included in decision making related to the education of all of the city's children.'

It is clear that students and parents had opportunity to be involved in the proposal submitted. However, TRIO's description of the process for involving these stakeholders did not clearly illustrate their contribution to the different phases of proposal development, including the final document which was submitted to RTTD. For example, the applicant stated that these stakeholders were presented with the proposal: it is not clear the extent to which they contributed to the generation of foci for the reform; it is also unclear the extent to which their input led to any revision of the final document.

Teachers and Principals

- Teachers were contacted via email by the directors and provided with drafts of the proposal. A SharePoint site was developed where input could be collected and responses provided on an ongoing basis.
- The support of the administrative union was the avenue for involvement of principals. Principals as with teachers were provided with drafts of the process with a request to submit responses to the president of the administrative union. The principals were also provide with access to the SharePoint site to allow for timely and constant communication.

Again TRIO demonstrated that opportunity was provided for interaction with the proposal, but the extent to which there was meaningful engagement in its development is not clearly established. They did not indicate, for example, that input was collected, and if it was, whether and how it was used to shape the proposal.

It is noted that when TRIO addressed the requirement of involving the specific stakeholders identified by this competition, the applicant spoke of 'the district'. It is not possible to discern whether this is an error in writing, or whether only one district did in fact engage in the activities delineated above.

Where the applicant identified individual districts with specific activities,

- Ballston Spa's description of their approach did not indicate depth of numbers amongst the required stakeholders consulted; it seemed this may be somewhat limited. However, the evidence indicated that Ballston sought meaningful engagement with various stakeholders.
  - Ballston Spa is said to have 'engaged the community in the development of its proposals through presentations and feedback during administrative cabinet meetings and meetings of the Comprehensive District Educational Planning Committee (CDEP) which includes representation from community, parents, teachers, and administrators. The proposal was shared with the Board of Education which includes a representative from the Ballston Spa High School Student Council. This student was able to share the information with his peers and acquire feedback in the development of the application.'
- Binghamton's description did not convincingly establish that there was meaningful engagement with all required stakeholders: parents and students are not amongst those expressly identified in its description of its process; teachers also appear to be missing.
  - a project development committee was formed in the summer of 2012 which included the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, the Director of Secondary Math/Science Education, the High School Principal, the Director of Career and Technical Education and the Director of Humanities. Data from risk assessment surveys, employee feedback surveys.
- However, Binghamton highlighted that that members of the collective bargaining unit representing district teachers, along with representatives from the Board of Trustees and the Administration, signed the Memorandum of Agreement appended to the proposal.
- The applicant did not present a description of Rochester's individual activities for meaningful engagement. Rochester was discussed in terms of meaningful support in the form of relationships and scholarship/grant programs with its local colleges and university, for example,
  - a \$25,000 tuition scheme offered in concert with The Rochester Promise Initiative.
  - Upward Bound programs funded by a \$2 million grant from the United States Department of Education that will expose as many as 100 district students to college life over four years
  - The new Rochester Early College International High School is a partnership between the RCSD, MCC, and St. John Fisher College. An accelerated curriculum allows students in grades 9-12 to earn 20 or more college credit while completing their high school graduation requirements.

#### Meaningful Stakeholder Support

TRIO referenced and included 19 Letters of support. Of these, six were direct support of Ballston Spa; six were repeats, five of these letters to Ballston Spa; the remaining eight all expressed support for the TRIO, with some additionally highlighting Binghamton (3) and Rochester (1). These letters of support were from mayor(1), senator(1), congresswoman (1), Commissioner of Education (1), businesses/chambers (3), community center (1 for Ballington Spa), and institutions associated with further/higher education (4).

TRIO did not fully and clearly address the extent to which it met a(i) or a(ii) of the competition's requirements; at this section of the application, evidence was explicitly provided for only one district, Binghamton.

#### Conclusion

TRIO evidenced arrangements for engagement for a cross-section of its stakeholders.

- The extent to which required stakeholders for this competition, particularly parents and students, had meaningful engagement was not clearly illustrated in the application.
- Similarly, the application has strong state/government support, some from other educational institutions and businesses/chambers, but is lacking in evidence of much support from parents and students.

Some ambiguity surrounds the meaningful engagement and support of stakeholders, as defined by the competition, to TRIO's proposal.

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

5

5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

TRIO has a clear, dynamic and forceful appreciation of its current status and an equally clear, dynamic and forceful logic behind its proposed reform.

They provided detailed evidence of their analysis throughout the application. At this section they provided an insightful and incisive summary:

- They delineated three major cross-state gaps to student achievement and teacher effectiveness:
  - low-level content knowledge
  - lack of student engagement;
  - lack of integrated, user-friendly data systems that inform teachers, students and parents.
- They also identified specific needs and gaps within their individual districts.
  - In Ballston there are Schools in Need of Improvement.
  - Binghamton identifies in some detail, persistent performance gaps between white and black students in MOST reportable performance areas (emphasis in original).
  - Rochester, the district with a significant share and large number of the students is identified by NYS as a Focus District; it has 25 Priority Schools and 30 Focus Schools. They highlight ninety-one percent (91%) of their students attend one of these chronically underperforming schools, and that there are large numbers of over-age, under-credited students. Through a collaborative effort, they generated insight into the incoming (2012) cohort, and used this opportunity to register a comprehensive state of affairs of the profile of students it serves - or is about to serve.
    - Low parent education rates: 43% of incoming Pre-K and K pupils' parents did not initially finish high school; 10% were in Special Education. So nearly half of Rochester's parents did not have a positive education experience themselves. [These have been the consistent data dating back to 1998, essentially unchanged.]
    - 19.5% of incoming Pre-K were NICU-hospitalized at birth, most for more than 3 days – two key at-risk indicators.
    - 16% - 21% of incoming Pre-K and K have or have had an incarcerated parent - the highest risk factor known in the national research. Eighty percent (80%) of boys of incarcerated parents become incarcerated themselves as adults, according to the national research.
    - 16.7% on prescription medication;
    - 27% have experienced the death of a close family member;
    - 20% have witnessed violence in their neighborhood.
    - 14% have witnessed violence in their homes.
    - 30% of entering Pre-K and 20% of entering K students have never been to a dentist
    - 10% of entering Pre-K and K students have had an emergency medical intervention in the previous 12 months for asthma. Rochester has double-digit asthma issues with the Pre-K – 12 student population. In one survey of 9 – 12 students, 25% reported their doctor had told them they have asthma.

Rochester is reported as having begun to actively correlate these data with student achievement outcomes.

On a wider, more comprehensive level, TRIO's vision includes educating the whole child within their classrooms, while responding to the gaps and needs identified at the state level, and building on local innovations which are responding to national and international trends in STEM initiatives.

They have identified two key required New York State high school courses that serve as gatekeepers to STEM careers and college majors – Integrated Algebra and Living Environments. Successful completion of these course allows students to enter AP and IB course well prepared as well as to enter CTE STEM programs. They intend to focus on building capacity for success in these two courses.

They highlighted that STEM initiatives have become a national and state focus for improving student achievement. However, while New York is developing its response through various initiative, the state does not have an integrated STEM curriculum. Further, teachers are not well-prepared, as in all districts there are teacher gaps in content knowledge in all STEM, application and deep understanding. This is compounded by, their view, that American high schools still remain highly departmentalized, stratified, and continue to teach subjects in isolation, with little to no attempts to draw connections among the STEM

disciplines. They referenced leading research, agitating for change, and highlighted that the lack of integrated, user-friendly data systems that inform teachers, students and parents, and the lack of interest altogether require that educators embrace better methodologies, better recruitment strategies, and better talent assessment programs.

They have identified successful strategies already afoot within individual districts that will continue and inform their reform agenda:

- Ballington Spa uses Building Leadership Teams (BLT) composed of administrators, teachers, parents and community members to review school data, assessing current programs and develop school wide initiatives based on their findings. The Comprehensive District Education Planning Committee (CDEP) which includes representatives from all of the BLTs' and district administration focuses on district wide implementation strategy based on district data. Ballington Spa will use these committees for review diagnostic data, curriculum, as well as the large number of external partnerships that exist during the implementation of the grant. The data compiled from the committee work will be used to address the achievement gaps. They also have a projection of expected growth:
- Similarly, BCSD has made great strides in overcoming challenges in performance by approaching teaching and learning in nontraditional ways. Taking cues from ongoing dialog with colleges and local, high tech businesses, the district has undertaken a long range reform effort intent on preparing ALL BCSD students for successful transition into the workforce and/or post-secondary education. Recognizing what today's workforce needs.

**Conclusion**

TRIO has a high-quality plan for analysis and has in fact started on a bold and comprehensive analysis at different levels and different combinations of needs and gaps.

TRIO has provided strong, striking evidence of their thinking, both in understanding their context and the logic behind their response to it.

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

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

**(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

Plan for rigorous, accelerated learning based on individual needs, in PLEs, leading to college-and-career readiness on graduation

TRIO provided an explanation of their understanding of personalized learning environments (PLEs) and discussed their plan for learning.

They highlight that PLEs

- allow students
  - to understand their individual learning goals and needs;
  - access deep learning experiences that include individual and group tasks;
  - and develop such skills and traits as goal setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem solving across multiple academic domains.
- provide teachers the information, tools and supports that enable them to meet the needs of each student and substantially accelerate and deepen each student's learning.

They adumbrated the features of a high-quality plan, discussing their product, goal, timelines, activities and deliverables.

The TRIO STEM Curriculum will be in alignment with the NYS Next Generation Science Standards. The goal will be to establish a STEM/ CTE pipeline that channels students from Kindergarten to college and careers in STEM disciplines and industries. Year 1 will be planning and professional development. TRIO has defined Year 1 as an eight-month budget period that will end August 31. Year 2 will launch full school-based implementation, implementing technology, digital content, expanded learning and opportunities. Year 3 of the grant will sustain professional development as well as support the implementation of professional learning communities to support hands on applications of literacy and mathematics through transdisciplinary learning at all grade levels in the middle school. During years 4 and 5 the initiatives developed through the grant will be fully realized and capacity for systemic change will be fully developed. Students that have benefited from the longitudinal implementation of the grant will be reaching high school and will be prepared to successfully participate in college level course work including AP courses, IB courses, college in the high

school classes, and specialize career programs.

They detailed staffing for TRIO as an entity, for each of three districts, including personnel for specific projects and activities

They identified and illustrated strategies and programs for four projects constituting their reform, namely,

- Infrastructure Development and Capacity Building
- Grades K-5 STEM development
- Grades 6-8 STEM Development and College and Career Readiness
- STEM Development and College and Career Readiness

They delineated specific strategies for learning.

There was strong evidence provided in examples of projects and programs such as

- A horizontally and vertically aligned curriculum; expanded learning activities; web-based programs to help address achievement gaps and also accelerate learning through STEM-based enrichment activities; FAFSA workshops, focus on linking learning to careers, and further investments in technology infrastructure, including, servers, wireless drops, broadband access and digital content, laptops mobile devices, ebooks, software, and online services notably ePortfolios and Sakai personalized use. Additionally, within districts they described such strategies as schools dedicated to specific foci (for example, The Leadership Academy for Young Men), mentoring interventions to aid transition to college, instant admission days; internship in Junior or Senior year, financial assistance, summer and holiday camps, field trips and a STEM Competition/Invention Fair.

While it is evident that students will be presented with technology and have access and opportunity to use it, there is less discussion of students receiving training to use and become proficient with the technology.

- TRIO highlights the technology component of a STEM education, which allows students to apply what they learn utilizing computers with specialized and professional applications. They highlight that they will ensure equitable opportunities for all students across the three systems and adequately prepare each student to master the content and skills required for college and career readiness through high quality instructional approaches and individualized learning environments. Further, there is much evidence in this section that teachers will receive sustained input in professional development, including being able to use technology effectively and teacher one another. There perhaps was an implicit presumption that teachers will also model use for students, and that students will gain in proficiency given the centrality of technology to the STEM curriculum.

TRIO has effectively addressed this selection criteria.

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

20

17

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

TRIO provided a detailed account of their project, including extensive detail on projects and programs, which established their proposal as a high-quality plan at C1 of the application. The evidence there also supported the requirements of this section.

In addition, TRIO highlighted that their strategy to increase the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals is to ensure adherence to NYS plan. Further, Rochester's NYS Student, Teacher, Leadership Effectiveness grant will build a Talent Acquisition Module (TAM) linked to Peoplesoft in order to track and analyze recruitment data, partnerships and performance of candidates. All districts have Network teams and articulation agreements with their Unions on effective teachers. With approved teacher evaluation plans in place, and approved or developed Principal evaluation plans, in place in all three districts, both teachers and principals are evaluated; they evaluate their Superintendent in collaboration with the Board of Education.

TRIO maintained that

- Implementing a project of this scope will entail supporting teacher and leader professional growth through a horizontally and vertically integrated professional learning communities model of continuous improvement, and providing them with the tools, knowledge, opportunities and pedagogical strategies they need to effectively differentiate instruction, integrate real-world applications and individualize learning.

There is much evidence that teachers will receive tools, knowledge, opportunities and pedagogical strategies to adapt content instruction. At this section of the application TRIO also discussed Developing Mathematical Ideas training. This will be augmented by STEM coaches who will observe for higher level deeper content as evidenced by high quality math observe discussions in classroom, higher achievement in formal and informal classroom based assessments, greater ability to apply math in varying contexts. There are reading assignments that include vignettes of teacher and student dialogue, problems and tasks to analyze, and opportunities to view and analyze student work. And, further to their discussion in C1, TRIO highlighted use of APPR; Danielson Framework also provides strategies for measuring and stimulating student growth on an ongoing basis. It seems clear that leaders and teachers will have support to assist effective implementation of personalized learning environments, meet each student's academic needs and help ensure all students can graduate on time and college-and-career ready.

More detail and discussion were provided for some sub-criteria than others. For, eample, the applicant's response to selection criteria C(2) (B) discussed one program, for one subject area (Math) in which some teachers would participate. The impact of the program seemed far reaching; however, the applicant's discussion did not illustrate how, for example, their high quality learning resources aligned with college-and-career ready standards, or college-and-career ready graduation requirements.

TRIO has effectively met this selection criterion.

#### D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	14
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>TRIO has comprehensive policies and infrastructure that ensure that every student and educator and every level of the education system have the support and resources they need when and where they need them.</p> <p>They highlighted the binding agreement and binding commitments that each district shares to the delivery of the proposal.</p> <p>They attest to the alignment of personalized learning experiences included in the proposal to current statewide initiatives and priorities.</p> <p>The plan delineates policies, infrastructure, personnel and resources at the central level for the operation of the entity, including procedures for the management of finances and procurement, and discrete roles for each member of the consortium.</p> <p>There is flexibility within the structure for leadership teams to develop structures that reflect their diversity and allows for maximum participation in strategy development and decision-making.</p> <p>They confirmed their commitment to providing the resources necessary for the cohesive integration of the STEM curriculum. As such, perhaps because they have discussed this elsewhere in the application, they do not here illustrate how they will give students opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the time spent on a topic, and to be able to demonstrate mastery at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways. They did, however, reference their Dual Enrolment strategy. There is also a plan to continue to develop and share online student learning platforms that will be used to provide personalized learning opportunities. The evidence for this is embedded in the application speaking to, for example, the enrichment program, Intensified Algebra, that is aimed both at closing the achievement gap and accelerating achievement. Ballston's practice to allows students the opportunity to recover credits for courses that they have not passed using Nova Net. Students can recover credit at their own pace; they can also earn credit for courses using Advanced Academics. Advanced Academics allow students to complete an online class at their own pace. An e-portfolio system also piloted at Ballston allows students to demonstrate mastery of both those standards as well as the Ballston Spa Central School District's Nine Graduation competencies. Multiple assignments provide students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the standards and students can use the e-portfolio to reflect on their growth in meeting the standards. These strategies also support adaptable learning resources and instructional practices. TRIO also mentioned elsewhere that Ballston pilot of Flipped Classroom is now being transfered to the other districts; Flipped Classroom allows students to visit content in podcast outside of the classroom, until they are satisfied; it also allows teachers to discuss the content in classroom and intervene as ncessary for individual students.</p> <p>There was strong evidence of providing learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students.</p> <p>TRIO has effectively met this criterion.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

TRIO identified expertise within its consortium, which it intends to learn from and exploit for the common good. This includes, for example,

- Ballston's work with at-risk and homeless students; a coordinator works with families to provide them with the resources they need. The district also works with the Ballston Spa Library and Ballston Spa Community Center to ensure that students have access to technology and tools, especially outside the school day. Ballston is also working on learning platforms and currently utilizes interoperable systems, Staff Trac and Data Mate, to track data related to teacher evaluation and student performance on assessment.
- Rochester and Binghamton have committed to creating a digital data system, which supports data-driven instruction and provides every student with an electronic, personal learning portfolio, which will follow them through to college.

A dedicated team of teachers drawn from across the district will work with both new and existing data coaches and the district's Chief Information to realize this element of the reform.

Evidenced elsewhere in the application, TRIO has identified staff to man and develop technology.

It is not strongly established that there will be appropriate levels of technical support for all users, for example parents. Access may also be restricted out school hours; there is not strong evidence to the contrary.

This combination of features suggests a strong and robust system for personalized learning environments; at this time it appears that implementation of the applicant's proposal may be somewhat affected by the ability of all stakeholders to access and participate in it both in and out of school.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

TRIO maintained that reporting will support rigorous continuous improvement processes.

They will provide feedback on a quarterly basis and adjust their plan and implementation accordingly.

They will report on investments in professional development, technology, and staff.

Their reports can be configured to reflect performance against various benchmarks and facilitate drill-down and disaggregation for cohort-level analysis.

The applicant identified software packages that will used to assist a rigorous improvement process.

- TRIO stated that, Rochester as the lead agency will utilize DataCation.
  - It is uncertain whether all three districts will use DataCation; whether it will be used to report on all three districts or whether it will only report on Rochester district;
  - TRIO database engineers will link systems to Rochester and the New York State Data Warehouse.
  - Systems will feed into the Rochester's data warehouse and the Regional data warehouse. Rochester's ParentConnect will also integrate with new data systems
  - The Database Engineer will also ne expected to integrate district data systems with the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) data into standard postsecondary degree attainment reports to streamline outcome evaluation processes. Data captured would include: Name, Institution State, Public/Private, Type of Enrollment.
- All three districts will use Teacher-Child Rating Scale (T-CRS) to benchmark social and emotional growth.

DataCation will

- provide students, parents, educators, counselors and administrators with audience-appropriate data dashboards to track

performance against benchmarks associated with postsecondary and career readiness and identify and address individual educational needs in real-time with an embedded recommendations.

- allow districts to drill down for a detailed view of each data type, and customize metrics and benchmarks according to district, school and subgroup. This enables progress indicators and customized targets to be set for different schools and student cohorts.
- enable New York State to view longitudinal data reporting by district, school and subgroup. This facilitates data views associated with plotted points in time, as well as progress over time to see where inconsistencies are happening from year to year.

School-level data views provide in-depth profiles of strength and weakness areas with easy-to-view target indicators. Full-scale comparison reporting enables side-by-side views of districts, schools and subgroups. It will also identify growth trends within accountability subgroups, subjects or cohorts and instantly generate comparison reports.

If DataCation is to be used amongst all three districts then they have identified a system that can capture a range of data and systematically monitor, measure and publicly share information on their reform.

Perhaps, the approach reported here omitted to describe how TRIO would capture information that is not quantifiable or quantified, information on the implementation process itself and adjustments made within it to safeguard rigorous continuous improvement.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	1
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

TRIO's plan at the moment is to develop a communication strategy during the first phase of the project. They anticipate that they will engage stakeholders individually and collectively through their Action Steering Committee, Board of Education presentations, School and Building based Leadership teams (which includes parents). There is an absence surrounding students' involvement

It is difficult to assess this criterion given the brevity of the response.

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

TRIO provided the required number of performance measures. They presented a rationale for each and indicated how the measures would provide rigorous, timely and formative leading information for use as required.

Their choice of attendance as a performance measure serves an illustrative example.

- Each consortium member selected attendance as their third measure (following the two required by RTTD) to gauge student outcomes. Attendance was selected because they thought there was a strong correlation between attendance and student performance. Attendance was also selected as they thought it may be an indication of a student's interest (or lack of) in the delivery of a District-wide STEM program. Attendance was considered a vital measure to assist in monitoring and adjusting the strategies laid out in the proposal

This suggests something of their appreciation of and commitment to their reform agenda. This is a good rationale with the potential to be informative as anticipated and required. Their targets are ambitious and achievable.

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

TRIO has identified plans to evaluate the effectiveness of RTTD.

- They will develop a series of surveys for educators, parents and students.
- There will be continual feedback from and to the Action Steering Committee.
- Each activity will have an evaluation that will be gathered and reviewed by the Professional Learning Coordinator.

- Each District’s integrated data systems will capture effectiveness of several efforts.
- Data engineers/specialist at each consortia level and District level will gather data and prepare mid-term reports to inform structural changes.

There are some good strategies for collecting data, such as surveys and evaluation of activities. The various databases has the potential to accumulate very useful and exciting data for generating insights. However, their plans do not have a feel of a fully thought through coordinated approach: it is not clear, for example, how feedback will flow to and from the Action Steering Committee; how evaluations of each activity will be conducted across the districts to ensure usefulness as data; the extent to which thought is given to ensure that the right approach is used to capture the different types of data necessary to generate insight into a range of possibility.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The TRIO budget meets the requirements of this selection criterion.

They identified all funds.

- The project will be supported by RTTD funds.
- It has also submitted associated documentation for indirect costs.

There is a clear and thoughtful rationale for investments.

- The reform is arranged into four discrete projects, each accomplishing different features of the reform, and building incrementally to realize overall goals, namely
  - PROJECT 1:INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING
  - PROJECT II: GRADES K-5 STEM DEVELOPMENT
  - PROJECT III: GRADES 6-8 STEM DEVELOPMENT AND COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS
  - PROJECT IV: 9-12 STEM DEVELOPMENT AND COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

They also identify one-off procurements as distinct from on-going costs.

TRIO's proposal is premised on two bold goals:

- They emphasized that one aspect of their vision provides a powerful, individualized link between existing data systems, and data-driven instruction: they propose to accomplish this aspect of their reform by creating a digital data system which supports data-driven instruction and provides every student with an electronic, personal learning portfolio which will follow them from grade-to-grade throughout their experience and on to a college or career as appropriate.
- They highlighted that their state does not have an intergrated STEM curriculum; they propose to develop one.

These emphases are reflected in the budget.

The budget seems reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	9
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

TRIO has a high-quality plan for sustainability after the grant.

The purchase of tangible technology items will build infrastructure.

All three districts have strong active partnerships with a range of partners:

- New York State’s contract resources such as the NYS CTE Resource Center, WNYRIC, NYSCATE, the State’s

Regional STEM HUB's etc. and ongoing contracts with IB, College Board will continue to support STEM efforts and serve as a resource to teachers. GLOBALFOUNDRIES, NYSERDA, Time Warner Cable, NEATEC, New York State STEM Learning Network, CISCO, Hudson Valley Community College, State Farm Insurance Company, Junior Achievement of Northeastern New York, the Center for Economic Growth, M+W Group, Albany Medical Center, The PAST Foundation, TIES, TRC, Ballston Spa National Bank, Franklin Community Center, The Prevention Council, Saratoga Center for the Family, Ballston Area Community Center, Hudson Mohawk Area Health Education Center, as well as numerous other businesses, non-profit and community agencies.

There is strong support at the state and local government leaders.

There is financial support in the form of previous and existing grants, scholarships and sponsorship

There is a focus on capacity building of teachers, leading to a train-the-trainer approach to ensure fidelity to professional development implementation will build capacity. Utilization of New York State's contract resources such as the NYS CTE Resource Center, WNYRIC, NYSCATE, the State's Regional STEM HUB's etc. and ongoing contracts with IB, College Board will continue to support STEM efforts and serve as a resource to teachers.

There is stronger support in one district in particular; this is the district with the largest share of student, so this results in more widespread sustainability. But the comparatively less showing amongst one district is obvious. Perhaps the two others did not submit their narrative.

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: NO MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR REVIEW.		

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

#### Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

##### Conclusion

TRIO proposed a project based on identified gaps and needs in their districts. It is a comprehensive plan that integrates local needs and gaps with state, national and international trends. Further, TRIO has identified how to build on local innovation and respond to the demand to prepare students for an evolving work force that requires STEM knowledge and experiences. They have refined that goal to focus on two main strategies that will tackle local and system-wide issues.

Refreshingly, TRIO resisted a deficit model of blaming the children, and seek instead to foster comprehensive restructuring of the traditional learning environment through extensive curriculum, assessment and professional development.

They do not propose or expect a quick fix but rather express an understanding of the long-term benefits to accrue when students that have benefited from the longitudinal implementation of the grant: reach high school; prepared to successfully participate in college level course work including AP courses, IB courses, college in the high school classes, and the Clean Technologies and Sustainable Industries Early College High School Program.

On the one hand, they highlighted that their state does not have an integrated STEM curriculum; they have generated a

blueprint for one in their plan.

On the other, they proposed to create a digital data system which supports data-driven instruction and provides every student with an electronic, personal learning portfolio which will follow them from grade-to-grade throughout their experience and on to a college or career as appropriate.

TRIO has made a bold and comprehensive analysis at different levels and different combinations of needs and gaps. Importantly, it is evident that TRIO welcomes, and seems up to the task, of generating and implementing a response that could comprehensively reform education in its districts.

TRIO has provided strong, striking evidence of their thinking, both in understanding their context and the logic behind their response to it.

TRIO's reform agenda is both ambitious and achievable, evidencing strong indication of being able to generate and sustain personalized learning environments.

This is a bold, deeply principled, and revolutionary plan.

Total	210	167
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #1320NY-3 for Rochester City School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that is very credible given the context provided. The District has a clear vision to implement a K-12 STEM program that will accelerate student achievement and focuses on college and career readiness. Further, the project is comprehensive: it will service nearly 40,000 students and 4,400 teachers across the central New York region. The applicant illustrates a robust professional development plan that will focus on effective implementation of the Common Core standards as well as STEM content. Overall the plan is thorough, clear, and robust.		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant provides a thorough description of the process by which schools were selected to participate and how each is committed to maximizing the potential of each student across 74 schools. The applicant provides a description of each school as well as a summary of the student and overall community populations. The applicant provides a list that includes all included districts and a summary of the total number of participating students- the response is thorough and informative. For example the applicant describes the Binghamton City School Districts and its ethnically and socio-economically diverse student population and provides descriptive data (such as from the US Census Poverty Index) to provide further detail.		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:		

The applicant provides a clear vision for how the plan will be expanded and translated into meaningful reform in all school. For example, the applicant's plan (Teaching Readiness for International Opportunities- TRIO) will be implemented throughout all three districts and further, two of the districts, Rochester and Binghamton have been identified as New York State 'focus districts.' The applicant clearly states that all focus districts have committed to scale up reform proposals. Further, the applicant describes in detail the DCIP (Large-scale District Quality Improvement Plan which is based on a district wide review in the two focus districts. Included in the plan is a clear vision for how reforms will be scaled up to affect district wide change.

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

The applicant provides a robust and thorough explanation of how the reform plan will result in closing the achievement gap as well as how the goals measure up to state standards. For example, the applicant provides a summary of how the reform efforts outlined in the proposal will allow districts to increase the percent of students attaining proficiency by 10% each year and discusses why the plan would result in improved learning outcomes for student groups including students with disabilities. The applicant describes how the plan have and will be implemented to incorporate more hands-on learning and describes how this will help high needs students develop a deeper understanding of the curriculum and graduate at a higher rate. Overall the applicant provides a detailed picture of how the plan will result in improved student learning and outcomes through examples referenced above.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	12

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant thoroughly describes a rich picture of how all three districts have a clear record of success with prior reform plans, as well as the current plan, is supported by student data. The applicant also clearly presents charts and graphs to illustrate how the plan will improve learning, is targeted to the lowest achieving schools, and is built on an analysis of student data. For example, the past data from college enrollment rates in Rochester suggest improvement between baseline years. In addition, the college enrollment rate percentages the applicant has projected through the grant period clearly show how progress is anticipated. However, the applicant does not provides an explanation for how student performance data will be made available to stakeholders and will be used to inform teaching and services.

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

The applicant provides several pieces of evidence supporting how the applicant will make personnel and non-personnel expenses available to the public. In all the applicant gives a clear explanation for how such evidence go through multiple steps that will make data available to all stakeholders. For example, the Binghamton and Ballston Spa districts will present the budget for approval to the City Council in their respective cities. All participating districts will publish expenditures by district, school, grade, and subgroup on the State Department of Education-managed website.

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

The applicant presents a comprehensive explanation for the reform plan and is supported by sufficient levels of autonomy given under New York State regulations and law. For example, the applicant discusses how NY is a Race to the Top Phase 2 state and that the State's ESEA waiver has been approved thereby providing increased flexibility. Further, the applicant illustrates state support and latitude to implement the reform plan by stating that each district has agreed to adopt an Annual Professional Performance Appraisal (APPR). However, the applicant did not thoroughly discuss how such autonomies and state supported plans will actually directly impact each district's ability to impact personalized learning.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	9
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes how it has prioritized stakeholder engagement and gathered feedback from a wide consortium of stakeholders. For example, the district provides evidence of this prioritization through describing how input was garnered from several key management staff including, but not limited to, Superintendents, all Deputy Superintendents, Executive Directors, parents, community members, teachers in all participating districts. Teachers were contacted via email and provided drafts of the proposal thus, showing how the applicant has made a genuine effort to include teachers in the reform planning process. The applicant includes several glowing letters of support from organizations both within the school and in the general communities of Binghamton, Rochester, and Ballston Spa. For example, the Rochester City mayor has included a very positive letter of support.

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

5

5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The district's response to this selection criteria is excellent- providing a substantial level of detail that outlines how all three districts have identified and plan to target three major cross-State gaps to student achievement and teacher effectiveness. The applicant provides substantial evidence for how gaps exist in the three areas: low level teacher content knowledge, lack of student engagement in math and science, and lack of easy to use and integrated data systems that will keep all stakeholders informed. The applicant describes how often times teacher preparation courses throughout the state do not prioritize STEM training and how many teachers are not confident with their STEM skills. Further, the applicant describes a high quality plan to help student become more engaged in Math and Science through requiring two 'gatekeeper' STEM classes that all districts will prioritize. This high quality plan emphasizes the implementation of district-wide STEM campaign in all three districts that aim to address high need areas that will further help improve student learning.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has put personalized learning for each student at the center of its reform plan and thoroughly addresses the selection criteria. For example, the districts provide explanation for why personalized learning has been put at the forefront of their plan including an understanding of how accessing deep learning experiences that foster goal setting, team work, perseverance, critical thinking, and communications will lead to not only K-12 success but also career and college success. The district discusses how it will provide teachers with the information and tools that will enable them to meet the needs of each student. Evidence of this includes discussion of many professional development opportunities and comprehensive teacher evaluations in each district. The TRIO program also includes projects that target grade bands and the applicant provides multi-year process by which implementation of the program will reach each student. Each student will have access to a differentiated plan tailored to their needs at each grade level as well as personal learning style. For example, in Year 1 of the grant period the districts will prioritize planning and professional development; Year 2 will include the implementation of personalized learning. communities that will support literacy through interdisciplinary learning. High school students will have the opportunity to take college level classes and engage in specialized career options thus providing evidence that the districts have prioritized college and career ready standards. The program also includes expanded and extended time learning opportunities and shows that the applicant has focused on making a variety of high quality learning opportunities available to its students in all three districts across all grades.

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

20

17

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides an extremely thorough response that addresses how instruction will be improved in order to increase overall student achievement including ensuring all students are college and career ready. Further, the applicant outlines the details how it will use professional teaching teams in all participating districts in order to improve effectiveness to help instructional staff improve practice around measuring each student's progress and track data with the ultimate goal of ensuring each student is taught by an effective teacher. For example, the applicant again discusses the APPR Plan that was adopted in two of the participating districts with the explicit purpose of increasing effective instruction through the incorporation of student growth measures as well as tiered intervention systems. At risk students will be identified and from there instruction will be personalized. The applicant described how it will use 'DataCation,' a web-based professional development tool to provide teachers with training tutorials and online courses that will help them improve instruction through student data analysis. However, the applicant also does not provide a thorough explanation for how the districts will target the recruitment, hiring,

and retention of highly effective teachers in hard-to-staff schools. While the applicant does discuss the APPR plan and Rochester City District's use of a Leadership Effectiveness grant, there is little evidence to support a plan for how high need subjects and high need schools will be staffed to support effective instruction and school level leadership.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	13
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a comprehensive and coherent response that describes the supports and processes that will be in place throughout the grant period. The applicant describes in detail how all three schools will place an emphasis on classroom instruction that will highlight problem solving in the classroom that supports a structure built on cross-disciplinary tools. This will support the overall STEM goals of the reform plan previously highlighted. Further, each member district will select and staff under a TRIO Action Team Steering Committee. The TRIO committee will provide guidance for the selection, implementation, and general oversight of the project thus showing the applicant's intention to support all participating schools in a meaningful way specifically around the reform plan. Further, the Committee will appoint a Project Director whose day to day operations will be focused on implementation of the reform plan showing the applicant's dedication to creating the capacity and infrastructure needed to oversee the reform plan through the grant period. The applicant explains how each participating district will create school leadership teams who will measure student progress through the robust collection of data thus, showing the applicant's commitment to school-level support for the reform plan. The applicant does not, however, provide a clear picture of how it will give students the opportunity to progress based on mastery and how mastery will be measured in multiple and varying ways.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's response to this selection criteria creates a clear picture for how participating districts will support implementation through ensuring all stakeholders are equipped with the resources they need that will support successful completion of the reform plan. The applicant has chosen one district, Ballston Spa, to serve as the model of personalized learning through its innovative use of technology to engage all stakeholders. Technical support will be a focus on the overall reform through creation of a digital data system which supports data-drive instruction and provides every student with an electronic, personal, learning portfolio which will follow each student from grade to grade through to the end result of college and career readiness. The Binghamton City District will also prioritize data systems by developing an effective technology-based system that will inform the curriculum and instruction in the district and further, the applicant reports that Rochester schools will develop a tracking system that will provide individual student data. However, the applicant does not thoroughly discuss how all participating students including parents, educator, and other stakeholders will have the necessary content tools and other resources that will support implementation of the reform plan. The applicant fails to describe how parents and community members will have access to data tools that will help support the project.</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>The applicant thoroughly addresses how the participating districts will track progress at regular intervals through the grant period and after. The 'DataCation' system will provide students, parents, educators, and administrators with audience-appropriate data so that each group can track progress towards college and career readiness goals. The applicant also describes a tracking system dedicated specifically to the social and emotional growth of students that will be used to measure progress of the reform plan. The 'Teacher-Child Rating Scale' will be used by all participating districts to benchmark such growth thus, showing the applicant's commitment to monitoring and measuring progress through multiple measures. While the applicant states that it will monitor, measure, and publicly share information on progress of the reform plan throughout the grant period and beyond in all districts, the applicant does not provide a clear picture of how this information will be disseminated to the public and how such dissemination will provide opportunities for ongoing improvements. The applicant</p>		

does not provide detail on how data will be used to modify or change course throughout the grant period. This substantial piece of the selection criteria is lacking in the applicant response.

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

While the applicant states that stakeholders will be engaged and that a plan for communication will be developed during Project Year 1, the applicant's response to this selection criteria fails to thoroughly represent goals for the communication plan, who will develop the plan, and how the plan will be used to support ongoing communication and engagement with all impacted stakeholders, both within the participating districts and in the overall communities. The response does not provide any detail for how the communication will help improve the plan. The applicant simply states that a plan will be developed without providing any level of detail again, around goals or strategies of such a plan.

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

The applicant provides a clear and comprehensive summary of why each measure was selected. However, the applicant does not describe or present a plan for how the measure will be improved over time if the measure fails to provide a metric for success. For example, the applicant provides thoughtful explanation for why attendance will be used as a measure of progress because it bears a strong correlation to student performance but does not explain how student attendance as a measure of progress can be modified over time if the strong correlation does not remain between it and student achievement within the participating districts. The Districts have selected the NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association) assessment for Reading and Math but does not describe a plan for revising the measure or an alternative if the measure proves to be an inadequate or inaccurate way to gauge progress.

The applicant does thoroughly describe year by year benchmarks for each measure that are aggressive yet realistic. For example, rates of progress for attendance in the Rochester City Schools are broken down by student subgroup and projected progress year is differentiated as such- meaning, the applicant has provided variation based on subgroup and does not uniformly project growth in the measure each year. This shows the applicant has thoughtfully considered how each measure will track each year.

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

The applicant has provided a clear summary of how it will develop a series of surveys for educators, parents, and students. The applicant presents a plan for how data will be gathered and analyzed in each year in each district through the grant period. However, the plan does not provide a thorough response detailing how such data will be used to improve results through a differentiated set of strategies and how such strategies will impact compensation, and modification of schedules and structures, if necessary. The applicant has a clear outline of collecting data from stakeholders, describes how participation will be used, and strategies to improve overall reform plan outcomes.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicants present a budget, broken down by participating district, that adequately supports the reform plan. For example, the applicant breaks down the budget into both continuous expenditures as well as one-time investments. However, the applicant does not thoroughly discuss, nor does it provide a comprehensive summary of, how it will address sustainability of the plan beyond the grant period. For example, each participating district lays out a budget by category (personnel, direct costs, fringe benefits) but also provides a budget that is broken down by project. In the Rochester City Schools the budget is broken down first starting with building infrastructure and capacity. Each grade level is then addressed through a budget break down of curriculum development in all grades and college and career standards (grades 6-12). Ballston Spa similarly breaks down its budget by year including what external contracts will be used to promote the use of data and professional development. Binghamton schools has also laid out a clearly well throughout budget that will support the overall plan by including personnel costs and costs for partnerships with external partners. The budget makes clear the difference between

one-time investments vs. continuous regular operational costs. For example, contracts with external partners represent a one-time investment for data systems (DataCation) and professional development (TCRS).

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

10

7

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Sustainability is addressed by the applicant only in two of the three participating districts- the response states each district will be responsible for developing its own sustainability plan but only includes plans for Rochester and Ballston are detailed. A sustainability plan is not included for Binghamton. The response does present a clear and comprehensive plan for how the goals of the grant will be continued in the two districts. For example, the Rochester District will create a plan based on its existing partnerships with local institutions of higher ed and coordinate the plan with its current federal and state grants as well as its own district and school improvement plans already in motion. Ballston Spa has partnered with the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital region and will develop an Innovation for Education funds that will service the district as a 501c3 foundation that will support sustainability of the plan. The response shows how a plan for sustainability is realistic because it is supported by a list of numerous community partners in the Ballston area. However, again, the Binghamton City District's plan for sustainability is not discussed.

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant fails to provide a direct response to to the selection criteria., For example, the applicant does not provide a response to how it plans to create and support a sustainable partnership with other public or private organizations. Further, while performance measures are charted in details, the applicant has not identified the required number of population-level results that include both educational and non educational outcomes. Because the applicant has not identified and described how it would create and support a partnership it has not described how a partnership would measure results for students and improve results over time. The applicant does not describe, further, how the partnership would then build capacity among instructional and administrative staff to identify personalized needs of students, engage parents, and track student progress.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Overall, this applicant excels in providing a clear and comprehensive vision of reform supported by an ambitious yet realistic plan. Throughout the application the applicant provides evidence showing how personalized learning environments will be implemented (TRIO and T-CRS) and instruction improved. New staffing measures, procedures, and processes will be implemented to increase the number of students with access to high-quality and effective instruction (evaluation system, 'DataCation' tool). The applicant provides performance measures that will increase the number of students who will graduate from all three districts and who are college and career ready (the APPR system).

Total	210	171
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