



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0938IL-1 for Rockford Public Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has set forth an adequate reform vision of how students are educated with in the district through the development and implementation of The Wall to Wall Academy Program. The Academy Program, designed to support students at their individual learning, is aligned with the core educational assurance areas, and will address the learning needs of high school students by utilizing intensive intervention curriculum designed to close the achievement gap and set our students on a pathway of success. The academy model will likely promote student success by allowing sophomore students to choose from the four pro-offered academies based on their interests.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant presents adequate information on the target population to help demonstrates its approach to implementing its reform proposal that will support high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation of that proposal. The applicant has provided a complete list of eligible schools, but fails to describe how the schools were chosen.</p> <p>Participating schools include: Auburn High School, East High School, Guilford High School and Jefferson High School. The applicant states that it will serve all students in grades 9-12 across the districts. There are 4 high schools in the Rockford Public schools serving 72111 students. Each high school independently meets the 40% Free and Reduced-Price Lunch (FRPL) eligibility requirement. Collectively, 76.11% of the high school students to be served by the project are enrolled in FRPL.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	0
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not provide a plan to address how it the proposed program will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	3
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>a.</p> <p>The applicant's goals for improved student outcomes are achievable but not ambitious for two of the three goal areas. As evidenced by the goals outlined for Explore Score and Plan, the overall growth is only 3 percentage points for the entire grant cycle. Furthermore, the projected growth for the Explore score remains the same for two consecutive years prior to increasing one percentage point in the fourth year. No information is presented explaining why no growth is expected. Goals provided for the PSAE are ambitious and achievable. Subgroups are expected to have between 10 -17 percentage point growth in outcomes by the end of the grant cycle. It is unclear why the applicant chose the goal areas listed in this section. It is unclear what types assessments are being used. For example, the applicant did not state that the tests were end- of- course assessments, district wide assessments or state mandated assessments. The applicant does not provide information on the summative assessments.</p> <p>b. The applicant outlines ambitious and achievable goals for decreasing achievement gaps in the targeted service area for academic performance. The subgroup and comparison groups were identified as race gaps with white, low income with norm, and female with male. The methodology for determining the achievement gaps were not stated. It is unclear if the goals provided were based upon proficiency levels or students meeting standard. The applicant did not provide an explanation to determine how the achievement gaps will be reduced.</p> <p>c. The high school graduation rates for Auburn High, East High, Guilford High, and Jefferson High will increase three percentage points over the grant cycle thus making the outlined goals ambitious and attainable.</p> <p>d. The applicant outlines goals for increasing college enrollment rates. College enrollment is calculated as the ratio between college-enrolled students and their graduating cohort. It is questionable if the goals for college enrollment are attainable for each high school. Auburn, Jefferson and East High Schools set goals 15, 21, and 28% respectively post grant cycle.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	3
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

a. The applicant details information to demonstrate its efforts to advance student learning and achievement. Data provided spans the last ten years thus skewing the results. The district as a whole has demonstrated slow and steady progress in reducing the achievement gap over the past ten years in some areas. However, there are some inconsistencies with student achievement. For example, the results illustrated on the 11th Grade PSAE for Reading, there was a 10 point decrease in the achievement gap; however, the student achievement rate also decreased 10 points for white students. As noted in section B5, graduation rates are as follows: Jefferson 73.8%; Auburn 69.7% Guilford 76.5 and East 65.8. No information was provided regarding college enrollment. The applicant provides no information regarding strategies used to make gains in achievement.

b. The applicant does not address the ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools.

c. The applicant's student performance data are available and easily accessible to students, educators and parents. Parents have the ability to view their child's schedule, attendance, class work (assignments and tests) report cards, transcripts (course history), standardized testing (ISAT, PSAE, etc.) and student registration information through the Parent Portal and Home Access Center. The teachers are able to track performance, enhance curriculum and build personalized education with the Performance Plus assessment and curriculum management system. The applicant does not elaborate on other avenues it uses to communicate student performance data to parents who may not have access to the Parent Portal and the Home Access Center.

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

The applicant clearly demonstrates a limited level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments by publicly releasing school level expenditures for instruction, instructional support, and school administration. The Rockford Public School website makes public all collective bargaining agreements which contain the actual personnel salaries. In addition, the school's line item budget is included in the annual budget report which is provided on the school and district website. The applicant does not elaborate on how it shares information with the public who do not have access to the internet. It is uncertain if the salaries listed on the website includes all personnel or teacher salaries only.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	4
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states that it has successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in this proposal. However, the applicant does not explain how the State legal, statutory and regulatory requirements give the applicant autonomy to implement personnel learning environment other than to state that the central office staff has the authority to replace principals and teachers based on performance and grant principals operational flexibility over items like budgets, staffing and calendar. More detail regarding how the state grants autonomy to districts is needed to fully award points for this section's criteria.

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

The applicant has clearly demonstrated evidence of meaningful stakeholder support in the development of the proposal. A listing of participants and stakeholders involved in the organization and development of the proposal has been provided. The community members engaged via surveys indicating agreement and district leadership worked with School Leadership Team to ensure staff is aware and supportive of the initiatives in the application. No evidence of collective bargaining is provided. In addition, the applicant does not thoroughly describe the level of engagement for the various stakeholders. For example, it is uncertain how the information regarding the proposal was disseminated and how stakeholders were to provide comments or feedback to help shape the final proposal.

Letters of support were included from local political representatives and businesses. There were no letters of support were provided from parent organizations, schools or IHEs.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has demonstrated evidence of a high-quality plan with goals to implement personalized learning environments. High truancy rates, low student achievement and graduation rates contribute to the persistent problems that negatively impact learning. However, the applicant does not fully detail the causes of the low student achievement or graduation rates. The Academy Program provides the goals and activities as detailed in section A.2. Activities which support the needs will include staff development for teachers and instructional leaders, teacher support and coaching, instructional leadership and benchmark monitoring of the personalized learning goals for individual students. The limited outline of the analysis of need presents a general logic for the plan.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has documented a plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. The plan allows eighth and ninth grade students to chart their unique "pathway" by exploring career choices. Students are then allowed to select one of the following academies to enter during their sophomore year: Business, Arts Marketing and

Information Technology (BAMIT); Engineering, Manufacturing, Industrial and trades Technology (EMITT); Health Sciences (HS); or Human and Public Services (HPS). This approach will likely encourage students to be engaged and empowered learners. The applicant has outlined broad strategies to support career and college readiness. For example, the applicant states that the students will master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity and problem solving. The applicant does not elaborate how these skills will be honed.

All students will participate in college & career prep curriculum which will put them on track and support them in staying on track. In 8th grade students will conduct an analyze interest inventories, develop a presentation of long term goals and potential careers which support those goals, examine 16 career clusters, develop a high school. The applicant does not elaborate on how these plans will be developed , reviewed regularly to ensure that they are effective or being adhered to. In addition, the plan to ensure that parents are involved in their children's education is not clearly explained. The applicant does not provide a thorough plan that explains the strategies to assist high-need students. The mechanisms to provide training and support to students in order to track and manage their learning have not been clearly established. The applicant does not fully address all the criteria for the section therefore full points could not be awarded.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	7
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant outlines an adequate plan for improving teaching and leading to improve instruction and increase their capacity to support student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements by enabling the full implementation of personalized learning and teaching for students. This is evidenced by a structure to provide professional development for educators which includes professional learning communities and participation in "Data Days". As laid out, it appears teachers will gain access to and know how to use tools, data, and resources to implement a personalized learning system with a focus on Wall to Wall academies. The data systems appear to allow teachers to analyze the gaps in a student learning profile and develop strategies to address those gaps. The district's training policy includes an adequate teacher evaluation process as outlined in B.3. The evaluation process takes into consideration student data and other elements such as working in collaboration to support school improvement efforts, walk-through observations and formal observations. The district's relationship with the union appears to support negotiations of contract terms and ensure the placement of highly effective teachers and dismissal of low performing teachers.

The applicant provided the overall qualifications of the teachers in the district such as the percentage of teachers who hold advanced degrees, percentage of highly qualified teachers and years of experience but does not provide the plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective teachers and principals. The applicant does not fully address all the criteria for the section therefore full points could not be awarded.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	0

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not address the selection criteria.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	7
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant outlines a general LEA infrastructure to support personalized learning. The applicant describes resources accessible to all stakeholders. The SUNGARD e-school suite provides learning resources and instructional practices that appear to be adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and second language learners. In addition, the applicant has Home Access Center which allows parents to view their child's schedule, attendance, class work, (assignments and tests), report cards, and transcripts (course history) standardized testing and student registration information. The applicant does not provide information as it relates to technical support available for students, educators and parents.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	5

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant outlines a broad plan for a continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements. The Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS) will ensure continuous monitoring; oversee implementation of the report model and ensure that guidelines, goals and objectives are met. In addition , IARSS will work with select staff from the Boone/Winnebago Regional Office of Education (ROE) on professional development for relevant RPS staff trainings as well as to help ensure fidelity of implementation of all grant activities. The applicant plans to hire a qualified educational administrator to assist with oversight of the project and a RTTT coordinator will be hired to coordinate all aspects of the grant and prepare the benchmark reports. The applicant does not provide details as to how frequently formal feedback will be given and reviewed. It is unclear how the evaluation will address each LEA's program implementation, details of the extent to which the project is progressing toward meeting annual goals, the extent to which the project is being implemented with fidelity, and feedback from stakeholders.

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

The applicant describes a basic system of communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. The applicant plans to ensure ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders through RTTT Oversight committee, district website feedback and

benchmark data distribution. The district website will have a standing section for RTTT which will keep up to date information about our progress and offer opportunity to give feedback or suggestions. The applicant has not provided a solid plan for communication and engagement with internal stakeholders. However, the applicant plans to have the RTTT Coordinator and the coaches be in constant contact with site level staff and teachers so that pertinent information will be shared. Other than a feedback link on the website, the applicant does not provide any strategies which will encourage active engagement of any external stakeholders, especially parents.

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

The applicant outline performance measures, overall and by subgroup, with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures. The applicant does not present a solid plan to provide rigorous ,timely and formative information to promote continuous improvement. It is uncertain if the performance measures are ambitious or achievable. The applicant does not disaggregate the data for each high school in the proposal, describe the methodology for calculating the measure or distinguish the subject area being measured. The applicant utilizes more formative evaluations to determine its effectiveness than it does summative evaluations.

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

The applicant provides a feasible approach to continuously improve its plan and evaluate its effectiveness of Rtt-D funded activities. The Regional Office of Education will ensure continuous monitoring by overseeing implementation of the report model and ensuring that guidelines, goals and objectives are met. A RTTT Oversight committee will be formed to ensure fidelity of project oversight and implementation. The RTTT Oversight committee will include the RTTT Coordinator, a representative from Alignment Rockford, a coach representative from each participating school, external evaluator, current school principals, teachers, community leaders, parents and students. The applicant plans to work closely with the coordinator and specialists to evaluate program data, monitor grant progress and implementation, and facilitate changes in the program as necessary. The applicant's fails to provide a defined process for gathering data for the quarterly reports other than assigning a person the task of managing data collection.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant is requesting a grant award in the total amount of \$10,000 over the four year grant period. The applicant clearly provides a justification for investments and priorities. The applicant demonstrates that funds will be budgeted to provide the required services to eligible schools. Overall costs appear reasonable to support services; however, the budget has erroneous totals for some line items as well as a missing total. For example, the total cost for the clerical position on page 100 is missing. In addition, the four training days per year at each of the four sites is \$2,000 per site per visit for a total of \$40,000. The actual cost is \$32,000 per year

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	0
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has not provided a plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not address the Competitive Preference Priority criteria.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant coherently and comprehensively addresses how will implement aplan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. The plan includes an approach to implementing instructional strategies for all participating students that enable participating students to pursue a course of study aligned to college- and career-ready standards. The applicant seeks to increase student achievement by the implementation of a The Academy Program which will feature small learning communities, college and career prep curriculum for all students.

Total	210	71
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0938IL-2 for Rockford Public Schools

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>Rockford Public Schools presented a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that builds on its work in the four core educational assurance areas. The reform is comprehensive because it addresses all students, from those who excel, to those who struggle, and those in the middle. It was coherent because all aspects--small learning communities, college and career preparatory curriculum, and partnerships with employers, community and higher education--were tied into one vision.</p> <p>The vision had credibility because the district took steps over the past two years to begin the process of implementing Wall-to-Wall Academies. Rockford set forth a plan to accelerate student achievement by one grade level each year; this plan met each student where they currently are and moved them to a higher level of performance.</p> <p>One of the mottos Rockford repeated throughout the application was "No student left unknown." Rockford's plan detailed the means for personalized student support ground in individual tasks that are based on student academic interests. The Rockford plan restructured schools to personalize learning and allow students choice.</p> <p>A1 received a high-range score of 10 because they met each aspect of the criteria in a high-quality manner.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>While Rockford did not explicitly describe a process used to select schools, they argued that this program to personalize learning must be in all four high schools in their district. One of the most compelling pieces of evidence to support this was that only 36% of students who graduate from their schools are college and career ready.</p> <p>Rockford included a list of schools and delineated the percentage of students in need.</p> <p>Rockford Schools chose to implement the plan, in phases, at all four of the high schools in the district. The applicant argued that their community needs more students to graduate college and career ready; therefore, a focus on the high schools was the most pressing issue. Rockford schools demonstrated a level of need in their high schools--76% of participating students from low-income families and 34% of participating high-needs students.</p> <p>A2 received a high-range score of 8 because most of the criteria were met, but the applicant could more thoroughly explain their process of selection. For example, the applicant stated that they will roll out the program, starting with 9th grade, at Jefferson. It was not clear why Jefferson was chosen to be the first school for implementation.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	0
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant did not address criteria A3. Rockford Public Schools did not detail a plan describing how the reform will be scaled up to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools.</p> <p>A3 received a score of 0.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>In the area of performance on summative assessments, the application's goals were ambitious yet achievable. Rockford Public Schools described a process to help students grow by one grade level each year. This goal was individualized so that all students were improving on their test scores. The overall goals for performance on summative assessment were ambitious yet achievable because they were all related to the group and the present level of performance. Each test and subgroup had a specific target goal based on the starting point.</p> <p>The goals in the area of decreasing achievement gaps were achievable, but they were only somewhat ambitious. The applicant only included goals in decreasing the achievement gaps in the areas of 11th grade Math and 11th grade ELA. Achievement gaps were not addressed for the ACT sequence.</p> <p>The goal of raising graduation rates almost 15% over four years at all four schools seemed ambitious yet achievable. The goals for improved graduation rates were relative to the starting point; for example, Auburn HS would go from 72.7% to 87.7% over four years.</p> <p>The goal of raising college enrollment at all four high schools to 70% seemed ambitious yet achievable, especially with the partnership of businesses and institutions of higher education into the academy systems at the high schools. The starting point for all of the schools was within 20% of 70%.</p> <p>A4 receive a mid-range score of 6 because most of the criteria were met in an ambitious yet achievable way. The area of decreasing achievement gaps did not demonstrate as much ambition. The applicant also lacked a rationale behind the targets they selected.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	7
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant did not demonstrate a clear record of success in closing achievement gaps. First, the applicant stated that the district had been working on closing achievement gaps, but there was not an explanation of how the district had addressed this issue in the past. Only specific data was included to illustrate achievement gaps; not all tests at all grade levels were included. Some of the graphs (i.e. 4th grade reading and 5th grade mathematics) show an increased achievement gap between 1998 and 2012. All of the graphs show some level of fluctuation in achievement gaps (wider and smaller), which makes the change seem haphazard rather than the result of targeted intervention. The applicant did include some impressive examples of the achievement gap closing; for example, in 3rd grade mathematics both white and black subgroups improved their scores over time, and the gap narrowed from 35 to 25. High school graduation rates and college enrollment were not addressed.</p> <p>The applicant did not address its persistently lowest-achieving or performing schools. No data or discussion were present to illustrate ambitious and significant reforms in these schools.</p> <p>Data is readily available to improve instruction. The applicant described a data system called SUNGARD Performance plus that allows teachers to change their classroom instruction based on individual students needs and the goals of the overall district.</p> <p>B1 received a low mid-range score of 7. Subpoint b was not addressed, and subpoint a was not fully addressed. Subpoint c was addressed throughout with the SUNGARD Performance Plus system for educators, which runs at risk calculations and provides a place for the development of student success plans. The applicant proved that since Performance Plus is web-based, district-wide and longitudinal, it can inform and improve participation, instruction and services.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	4
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>B2 received a high-range score of 4. The district stated that all four subpoints are addressed on a website for public access. The applicant did not describe much other than to say that the information was available.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	5
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant described some conditions that allow autonomy under State legal, statutory and regulatory requirements; however, they did not expand on freedom from seat time requirements, or freedom to adjust graduation requirements, etc.</p> <p>B3 received a mid-range score of 5 because the district described some successful conditions and autonomy. One of the successful conditions was the district demonstrated that all parts work together well. For example, the district stated that they have good communication with the teacher's union. They also stated that there is a good relationship between the district and the building administrators. The district did not provide examples or demonstrate how the conditions are successful. Also, the applicant did not address how their plan works with the state's initiatives/programs.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	5
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Several people were involved, on some level in the development of the applicant's plan. The applicant did not explain how the community was involved in the developing the plan, nor how the plan was revised based on their comments. The applicant did conduct a survey of the community regarding the importance of the plan. There was not a description of how students and families were involved in the process.</p> <p>30 letters of support were included from various businesses, community leaders, and organizations. The sincerity of the letters came into question because many of the letters had the exact same verbiage, which may indicate that the applicant provided a response for them to give.</p> <p>B4 received a mid-range score of 5 because the applicant did not thoroughly explain how stakeholders were involved in the process. The replication in the letters of support also decreased the impact of having stakeholders' full support and understanding.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant did not provide a high-quality plan for analysis of the applicant's current status. The applicant stated that they have a high-quality plan, and then explained some of the needs and gaps identified.</p> <p>There was some evidence that the applicant had a plan to analyze the current status, even though the plan was not explicit. The applicant provided the Barbara Bray stages of personalized learning as a guide for their plan. The applicant explained a scaffolding process, via the Barbara Bray stages, to prepare students for self-directed, personalized learning.</p> <p>The applicant's goals are realistic (i.e. each student will make one year's progress on standardized tests).</p> <p>B5 received a mid-range score of 3 because the applicant provided some evidence of a plan for analysis of the current state and they identified some needs and gaps to be addressed (i.e. truancy rate).</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	12
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Rockford Public Schools presented a plan for improving learning and teaching; however, there were some weaknesses in the plan. The timeline for the activities was broad (the first year only 9th grade and one school, the next year the rest of that school, and then the following year, roll out at the other three schools). Specific timelines for hiring, professional development, etc., were not provided. Responsible parties were also not identified.</p> <p>Throughout this plan, Rockford Public Schools showed resources to get parents and educators supporting students. Rockford offers a parent portal for parents to receive information about their student's progress, and the SUNGARD Performance Plus helps educators individually support students; however, there was not direct evidence to show those these resources were impacting instruction.</p> <p>The applicant provided several strategies for personalizing education: partnering with business, industry, and institutions of higher learning, the ACT testing progression, academies of academic interest and small, collaborative groups. The applicant stated that these are effective tools, but the applicant did not demonstrate how they would be effectively employed to improve student learning.</p> <p>The applicant's plan would restructure high school to create a more personalized experience, focusing on the individual learning goals of the students. The plan included an Innovation Lab, a distance learning center and four technology rich "Smart Rooms" to improve access to high-quality content. Professional development was included to provide access to high-quality instructional approaches. Systems for organizing data and providing access to meaningful data for teachers, students, and parents was evident in the plan.</p> <p>High-needs students were not specifically targeted with strategies different than any other student; however there was some evidence that the personalized learning environment presented in the plan will meet their needs as well.</p> <p>C1 received a mid-range score of 12. The applicant described strategies and the intended improvements based on these strategies, but they did not demonstrate that these strategies will be employed effectively to improve student learning. Some support for assisting the applicant in achieving learning goals was evidenced by the Alignment Rockford Board, College & Career Readiness Councils and Academy Support Teams. The applicant provided a broad timeline for implementation and did not identify the responsible parties.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	10
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant did not sufficiently describe the training that will be provided to educators. They simply stated that training will be provided.</p> <p>The applicant demonstrated that participating educators have access to data to accelerate student progress through the ACT tests and the SUNGARD system. The district also described ongoing training and coaching that the district provides in regard to the data. Discovery Education and community partnerships were described, but not many other high-quality learning resources were discussed.</p> <p>The applicant did not provide evidence that the evaluation system was tied into continuous school improvement. The district stated that they use the Danielson model, but they did not explain the effectiveness of the model in their district. Coaching and collaborative teams were described to help move the schools toward their goals.</p> <p>While the applicant mentioned a trainer/coach model to increase the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals, this model was not explained and a high-quality plan with activities, rationale, timeline, deliverables, and parties responsible was not included.</p> <p>C2 received a mid-range score of 10 because the applicant addressed each subpoint in a superficial manner. The depth of planning required to improve student learning was not evident.</p>		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	3
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant explained a central office to provide support to all participating schools.</p> <p>The applicant explained that school leadership teams have autonomy over the listed factors in their buildings.</p> <p>The applicant explained the SUNGARD system which allow students the opportunity to progress based on demonstrated mastery or standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways.</p> <p>The applicant mentioned the e-school suite that provides resources for students with all types of needs; however, the applicant does not explain what resources are available within that resource.</p> <p>D1 received a high low-range score of 3 because the applicant addressed each of the subpoints but did not provide evidence regarding how each of the components were working. The applicant did not provide a high-quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	5
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Access was not evident within the application. The applicant explained that data was available to students, parents, and educators, but the applicant did not address how resources were made available, especially outside of school.</p>		

The applicant stated that stakeholders have access to technical support, but there was not an explanation of how they have access.

Parents and students are able to export their information.

The applicant described several data systems that perform different functions within the academies (e-school, SUNGARD, Home Access Center). It was not clear how these systems work together to provide a unified picture of a student's progress for all parties responsible for that student. The number of programs seemed overwhelming rather than an interoperable system.

D2 received a mid-range score of 5 because evidence was not provided to support each subpoint.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	3
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provided a proposal for oversight and evaluation of the plan. The applicant planned to hire a RTTT coordinator and an external evaluator. The also planned a committee to monitor progress.</p> <p>The applicant provided 9 performance measures that the oversight team would use to evaluate the plan. The applicant provided a general statement for each performance measure that "the RTTT Council will analyze trends, communicate results and will revise measure as needed." The applicant did not provide specific strategies for revision, but they described target goals for each year in each of the performance measures that could guide the Council in when to make appropriate revisions.</p> <p>The applicant did not present a plan for publicly sharing. The applicant stated that updates would be available on the web, but a systematic plan for communication was not included.</p> <p>E1 received a low-range score of 3. There was not a high-quality approach presented to continuously improve the plan. Reflection and change are critical for success. Having oversight is important, and the applicant demonstrated that they would have oversight; however, they did not specify how the oversight would work toward plan revisions.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>E2 received a low score of 1 because specific strategies for ongoing communication specifically regarding the plan were not addressed. The applicant explained the various communication programs in the district that could be leveraged for communication, and the website was mentioned as a vehicle for providing RTTT specific information. SUNGARD was referenced as a means of internal communication, but it was tied to student data/performance rather than communicating progress related to the grant funding. Parent Portal was the only means of external communication mentioned. The applicant did not present a clear plan to communicate internally or externally regarding the plan and grant fund.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provided 9 performance measures. The applicant provided rationales for each of the performance measures used. The applicant also addressed multiple areas of the student; in addition to assessment data, the applicant included such measures as discipline referrals and number of students who graduate with a high-quality portfolio.</p> <p>The applicant provided two ways to track college and career-readiness.</p> <p>The goals were ambitious yet achievable. However, the applicant did not provide current data and goal ranges for all performances measures.</p> <p>E3 received a mid-range score of 3 because the applicant did not fully meet the requirements of this criteria. Some of the performances and their rationales were strong. However, the applicant included less than 12 performance measures, and not all of the performance measures included data and goals.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant had a strong proposal for oversight of the plan. There were not specific plans to evaluate the effectiveness of activities such as professional development and technology usage.</p> <p>E4 received a low score of 1 because evaluating these aspects of the plan was not specifically addressed.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	5
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant did not identify other funds that would be used to support the project.</p> <p>The budget was reasonable in that the applicant could have requested up to \$20,000; however, they only requested \$10,000 to support the development of the proposal. The budget was sufficient in that it included personnel, applicable training, and resources.</p> <p>The applicant did not address priorities, and the rationale was only partially complete. The long-term sustainability of the plan was not discussed.</p>		

F1 received a mid-range score of 5 because the budget seemed reasonable and sufficient, but it did not fully address the criteria (identifying other funds and addressing priorities).

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	0
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:
The applicant did not present a plan for the sustainability of the project's goals.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:
The applicant did not address the competitive preference priority.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:
Rockford Public Schools presented a plan to personalize education through the use of small academies. The motto "No student left unknown" was repeated throughout the document, and there was evidence that through the choice of path, through the data, and through the personalized learning, students would be known and coached through high school.
One way the applicant was personalizing learning was through data. Data was available to students, parents, and educators in ways that were meaningful to them. Through the SUNGARD system, teachers were able to personalize their education to meet individual student needs. Through the academy model, students were able to make choices regarding their academic interests.
Another way the applicant was personalizing learning was through the Barbara Bray stages of personalized learning. These stages take students from where they are (largely dependent on the teacher) and prepare them to personalize their education and make appropriate choices that will prepare them adequately for college and career-readiness.
Another way the applicant personalized learning was by integrating community partnerships into the school so students have a relevant hands-on experience with college and career-readiness exercises.

Total	210	91
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #09381L-3 for Rockford Public Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:
(A)(1)
The applicant describes Alignment Rockford, a strategy to align community resources in support of public school strategies to raise student achievement, improve the health and happiness of children, and advance the economic and social well-being of the community. The applicant is supporting the 20 year vision for Rockford to become a more vibrant community and to educate students who want to live, work, learn, create and play in Rockford. The applicant proposes to implement the Academy concept as the reform vehicle to restructure high schools by transforming teaching and learning; providing instruction in small learning communities personalized for individual student needs; and ensuring a rich business and civic involvement.
Although the applicant provides details about the rationale for its strategies, the proposal does not provide specific detail about the link between the plans and the four core assurance areas. It is mentioned that the applicant will use the National Career Readiness Certificate as a measure of career and college readiness, Illinois state standards are not mentioned. It is noted that the letter from the State Department of Education states that the reform plans do not link to or leverage State focused initiatives.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(A)(2)</p> <p>(a) The applicant's four high schools and student's in grade 9 -12 will participate in Academy initiative.</p> <p>(b) The applicant lists the four schools - Auburn, East, Guilford and Jefferson High Schools.</p> <p>(c) A total of 7,211 students and 597 teachers will participate - details regarding student participants is detailed in the sections table for (A)(2).</p> <p>The applicant is involved in Alignment Rockford an effort to align community service with school needs to improve academic achievement. As a result, the four high schools were pre-determined to be the focus of the grant proposal.</p> <p>The applicant's approach to implementation includes several goals focused on growth, reduction in non-proficient scores; increase in high school graduation rates; and increases in secondary enrollment. These goals are supported by objectives to increase teacher and school leadership effectiveness; implementation of comprehensive instructional reforms; and increase in learning time and creating community oriented schools.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	2
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(A)(3)</p> <p>The applicant states in section (A)(1) that the reform vision stems from Alignment Rockford an effort to align community resources in support of public school strategies to raise student achievement, improve the health and happiness of children and advance the economic and social well-being of the community.</p> <p>The applicant provides a matrix of the Industry Standards for Quality Graduates and the characteristics of a high quality High School Reform including descriptions of a Small Learning Community, College and Career Curriculum and Partnerships with Employers, Community and Higher Education in the narrative in section (A)(2); however, the matrix is not supported by evidence of a high quality plan in response to the requirements of this section of the proposal.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(A)(4)</p> <p>(a) It appears that the applicant uses three different assessments, Explore, Plan and PSAE. For the Explore and Plan assessment the applicant does not describe the assessment or indicate its intention. Although it is unclear the extend to which what is presented represents ambitious and attainable goals it is noted that scores for the Explore and Plan assessment are forecast to trend upward with little gap between subgroups. The PSAE assessment is likely the State proficiency measure and as such represents gains for all subgroups; however, the achievement gaps persist between groups.</p> <p>(b) The applicant illustrates a decrease, yet a persistence in the achievement gap between subgroups that ranges from 8% to 14% for both reading and mathematics.</p> <p>(c) Graduation rates for all schools reflect an 18% increase for all schools..</p> <p>(d) Increases in college enrollments for each high school range from 11% to 21% with some schools needing to make greater gains overall to reach the target.</p> <p>The applicants's goals seem ambitious and achievable. This statement is made in light of the applicant's vision to create Wall to Wall Academies in each school supported by Smartrooms, Innovation Labs, Distance Learning, Technology Platform, Professional Learning Communities and Community/Civic Engagement. The strategies establish the basis for promising practice, equity and the potential for improved student outcomes.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	6
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(B)(1)</p> <p>(a) The applicant has experienced mixed results in its attempts to close its achievement gaps. The achievement gap for 11th grade reading and mathematics has decreased; however, at the same time proficiency decreased for both reading and math. For all other grades the data demonstrates that the applicant has increased proficiency for White and Black students and closed the gap between the two subgroups. The applicant did not provide date for high school graduation and college enrollment.</p> <p>(b) The applicant did not provide the requested information about its lowest performing schools.</p> <p>(c) The Parent Portal and Home Access Center make data available to students and parents; teachers have access to Discovery Education and Performance Plus, two web-based tools that enable teachers to track and analyze student performance data and build personalized education.</p> <p>The downward trend in Grade 11 Reading and Math scores for White students, the absence of high school graduation and college enrollment data and the lack of information about the lowest performing schools contributes to reductions in the rating.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:
 (B)(2)
 (a) The district's public website makes public all collective bargaining agreements which contain the actual personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff.
 (b)(c)(d) The website shows actual personnel salaries for instructional staff, teachers and non personnel expenditures.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	2
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:
 (B)(3)
 The applicant states it has the successful conditions and sufficient autonomy although the applicant does not provide evidence of this statement.
 It is noted that the letter from the Illinois State Board of Education states that "Our review focused on the extent to which your application took advantage of State initiatives that support the goals of the application - namely personalized learning environments. After reviewing your application, we did not note State initiatives that you intend to leverage or align to in order to support your application."
 This comment referenced in the letter from the Illinois State Board of Education makes this reviewer question the extent to which the applicant indeed has successful conditions and sufficient autonomy.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	6
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:
 (B)(4)
 (a) The applicant provides a list of stakeholders involved in the creation of the proposal (who also participated in the SIG). It is stated that surveys, community forums and staff meetings were strategies deployed to directly engage stakeholders to inform the proposal.
 (a)(i) There is no evidence of direct engagement with teachers for the support of the proposal.
 (b) Letters from public and private sector stakeholders are provided and demonstrate the support for the project. This evidence of support is an important indicator of the bridge that exists between the applicant and those who will be critical stakeholders in the fulfillment of the proposal. It is noted that there were no letters from parents or student organizations.
 The involvement of internal key stakeholders is noted in the list provided by the applicant. This evidence of support is important, specifically for reasons that these are the resources the applicant will depend upon to successfully implement the proposal.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	2
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:
 (B)(5)
 The applicant makes an observation of three issues: truancy rates are too high and must be lowered, high school graduation rates and student achievement rates need to rise. To respond and resolve these conditions, the applicant describes a three-pronged approach to create personalized learning environments -
 1) To understand the three different stages of personalized learning environments the applicant will use Barbara Bray's Stages of Personalized Learning Environments. This strategy is supported by professional development for effective instruction and is believed by the applicant to building teacher capacity to provide effective instruction.
 2) To improve the capacity to analyze and use data the applicant proposes to embed the use of the Harvard data wise protocols to improve staff capacity to use and analyze formative and summative data.
 3) To improve instruction to impact student growth the Rockford Education Association has worked to implement Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Effective Teaching as the district's performance management evaluation tool.
 The applicant describes a logic model to improve student outcomes using three best practices; however, the applicant has not provided evidence of a high quality plan to analyze the current status of these domains to determine the needs and gaps for action to accomplish implementation the three strategies.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	10

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:
 (C)(1)
 The applicant provides in Appendix A (pages 34-46) a PowerPoint presentation for the Readiness Rocks College and Career Academy Supports Structures, one of five Alignment Rockford initiatives. The presentation details the Wall to Wall Academy structures that include the Small Learning Communities, College & Career Prep Curriculum for All and Integration with Business/Civic/Post-Secondary/Cultural Communities strategies.
 Addressed in the presentation are the governing and support structures (Alignment Rockford Board, College & Career Readiness Councils and Academy Support Teams) and the details for the roles and responsibilities; the structure of each of four academies - Business, Arts, Marketing and Information Technology (BAMIT); Engineering, Manufacturing, Industrial and Trades Technology (EMITT); Health Sciences (HS); Human and Public Services (HPS), including the Freshman Academy. Information about the Core Curriculum, Global Electives and College and Career Pathways

is included as in an example of the core curriculum and college and career path for each grade level. A skeletal timeline referencing 21st Workplace Skills is provided.

In the narrative the applicant provides additional information that 8th grade students will conduct an interest inventory, develop a presentation of long term goals, examine 16 career clusters, and develop a high school plan. They will also be mentored to understand the process for graduating and accessing post secondary education/training. 9th graders will develop a 10 year plan, review 8th grade plans, choose a pathway and be made aware of the difference between honors, AP, and dual enrollment. Students will also develop a growth plan related to Explore, Plan, ACT and WorkKeys scores. Students will also identify a mentor.

In addition to the Academy school structure, each school will have a Smart Room equipped with state of the art technology; an Innovation Lab of open spaces where students will experience "real world" work environments using simulation stations, robotics, health equipment, drills, presses, riveting machines, pottery wheels and other work place tools; and a Distance Learning Lab to access classes held at other schools, colleges and international learning opportunities. Each year Rockford will host an INVENTION CONVENTION sponsored by civic and business leaders.

The applicant states that data analysis is part of the personalized learning model although there is no specific plan; strategies to respond to the needs of high needs students is not specifically noted in the application's narrative; nor is there a specific mention of how parents and educators would work together to support the personalized learning experience.

In the narrative and the PowerPoint presentation the applicant lays out the key elements of it's approach to personalized learning experiences for students. This reviewer, after cobbling together the narrative and the information in the Appendix, observes that the applicant does offer an approach that links student interests to a course of study aligned with college and career readiness standards and describes, through the Smart Room, an opportunity for hands on student learning. The information provides an overview of the framework for the Readiness Rock initiative; however, the elements of a high quality plan (goals, activities, timeline, accountability, deliverables) are absent in the applicant's proposal. This is formation that would take the initiative from concept to concrete action.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	8
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(C)(2)

In section (A)(2) the applicant describes the Professional Learning Communities structure to impact the ability to restructure high school teaching and learning and offers that -

- All participating teachers have participated in the Professional Development/Coaching model designed to support the proposed reform.
- Professional development is focused on data analysis to inform instructional practice.
- Coaches support staff to implement the reform model.

The applicant provides basic details of existing elements of the professional development available to teachers and principals; however, what is not included in the narrative is a high quality plan complete with goals, strategies, timelines, milestones etc. about how the applicant will use actionable information and translate this into strategies that meet student's unique needs and interests; adapt instruction; frequently measure progress to accelerate learning; use performance management feedback to improve practice. In addition, the applicant's response did not include the details of a high quality plan to increase the number of students that have an effective or highly effective teacher as noted in the criteria.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	2

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(D)(1)

(a) The applicant does not provide an explicit response to this section's criteria. However, in section (E)(4) the applicant describes oversight of the project as follows -

- Strong leadership and guidance at the Board and Senior Administration level,
- Partnership with the Regional Office of Education (ROE) to ensure continuous monitoring and ensure fidelity,

(b) The applicant does not provide information.

(c) The applicant does not provide information.

(d) The applicant does not provide information.

(e) The applicant does not provide information.

The absence of information related to these criterion in this section or else in the proposal contribute to the rating.

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

(D)(2)

In response to this section's criteria the applicant references the attachment provided in the Appendix - the SUNGARD Public Sector system - a resource that helps teachers and principals to identify at risk students and develop Student Success Plans to address identified needs, including prescribed interventions and Parent/Student Goals and Objectives and monitor progress.

Parents can gain access to student information through the Parent Portal and Home Access Center - these systems provide parents with access to their child's schedule, attendance, class work, report cards and transcripts, as well as standardized test scores. Technology systems allow parents to export student information. Technical support is offered through a range of strategies.

Although the applicant provides information the applicant does not provide a high quality plan; nor has the applicant responded to the request for information in item (d).

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	6
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(E)(1)</p> <p>The applicant's continuous improvement plan includes action to provide project governance, oversight and evaluation -</p> <p>Partnering with the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS) to provide oversight of the implementation of the grant proposal. The IARSS will work with the Regional Office of Education to provide professional development to ensure the program's fidelity. For the period of the grant the IARSS will provide coaching in all curricular areas, train and monitor coaches and train staff in creating personalized learning environments.</p> <p>A Race to the Top - District Coordinator will be hired to manage grant activities and provide benchmark reports and a Race to the Top Oversight Committee will be formed to ensure project fidelity, evaluate program data and facilitate changes to the program, as necessary.</p> <p>A third party evaluator will be hired - University of Illinois Rockford - for technical assistance and to evaluate all phases of the implementation.</p> <p>Although the applicant identifies the resources it neglects to provide the elements of the high quality plan requested in the section's criteria.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(E)(2)</p> <p>The applicant states that the Race to the Top - District Oversight Committee will be the conduit for information to internal and external stakeholders. Additionally, the district website will have dedicated space that will be updated with results and offer opportunity for feedback and/or suggestions.</p> <p>The Race to the Top - District Coordinator will be the conduit to schools and staff.</p> <p>The applicant describes a one-way, inside-out process to communicate with internal and external stakeholders. There is no evidence in the proposal of a strategy to engage stakeholders to garner feedback and to integrate feedback into the project process. Absent a communication process where information from the district is shared with community stakeholders and community stakeholders are invited to provide feedback the applicant has not established the basis for a high quality plan and as well, has not provided the required details requested in this section of the proposal.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(E)(3)</p> <p>(a) The applicant provides a rationale for each performance measure identified. The applicant has provided on 9 of the required (minimum of) 12 performance measures.</p> <p>(b) The performance measures are aligned with the reform agenda, specifically, a focus on improving truancy, student achievement and college and career readiness. As well, the applicant has determined the source of data that it will use to monitor progress. In general, the applicant has set ambitious targets, particularly for the performance measure related to career readiness, with the most challenged subgroups (Black, Hispanic, Multi) expected to improve 30% or more within 4 years. This reviewer noted one in particular for grades 4-8 with a performance measure focused on the number of students who are on track to college and career readiness. It is curious that this population of student has been included and very ambitious targets established when the proposal does not include strategies to support the establishment of personalized learning in the applicant's elementary and middle schools.</p> <p>(c) Milestones, with timelines are detailed in the narrative, to inform instructional practice and the Race to the Top District project.</p> <p>The performance measure targets for Grade 9-12 career readiness and Grades 4 -8 are questioned given that the proposal does not prescribe a theory of action for the elementary school grade levels or for the high needs subgroup of students. Although the applicant did not provide the required number of performance measures, those that are provided address factors that include and impact student outcomes. These factors contribute to the rating for this section of the application.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(E)(4)</p> <p>The applicant describes several actions it will take to for evaluative purposes -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage strong leadership and guidance at the Board and Senior Administration level, Work with the Regional Office of Education (ROE) to ensure continuous monitoring. The ROE will oversee implementation of the model and ensure that guidelines, goals and objectives are met. Engage University of Illinois - Rockford to contract an external evaluator for technical assistance throughout the development and 		

implementation of the reform project.

- Establish a Race to the Top Oversight Committee to ensure the fidelity of the project. Committee will include a Race to the Top Coordinator, community members, school staff, parents and students.

The applicant does not mention specific plans to evaluation professional development, employment of technology and process and resource efficiencies as part of it evaluation. Nor does the applicant provide the details included in a high quality plan such as goals, strategies, role/responsibilities and timeline that are requested in this section of the application.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	3
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: (F)(1) (a) The applicant request for funding does not include funds from other sources. (b) Nearly one-half of the budget to support the program is allocated to personnel salaries. The applicant does not include a sustainability plan going beyond the grant term. Without a sustainability plan and plans for additional funding this reviewer is concerned about how the grant funded positions will stay in place to achieve and support the longer term benefit for students. (c) One time costs are not delineated. The heavy personnel cost combined with lack of funds from other sources and the absence of a sustainability plan and the lack of information about one time costs contribute to the rating for this section of the application.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	0
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: (F)(2) The applicant has not provided a sustainability plan.		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: The applicant describes a community driven project Readiness Rocks, one of five Alignment Rockford Goals; however, the proposal does not detail a formal structure or arrangement to establish, monitor or track a specific group of student subgroups at an aggregate level; use data to target resources; develop a strategy to scale the project; or determine cooperative strategies to improve results over time. As such, the applicant does not provide detail about any other requirements of this section of the application.		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: The applicant proposes a project, Readiness Rock, as part of a community based effort, Alignment Rockford, intended to focus on improving the college and career readiness of Grade 9 -12 students. The applicant states four goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will make one year's progress in reading/language arts and mathematics on local assessment measures, • Percentage of non-proficient students in each subgroup will be reduced by 10% • High school graduation rate will increase by 5% annually • Percentage of students who achieve post secondary enrollment will increase. The applicant's theory of action is the implementation of a Wall to Wall Learning Academy in each of its four high schools. The goal of the Wall to Wall Learning Academy is to graduate students prepared for employment but with the capability to choose to enter college. The academies are planned to be technology rich learning environments complete with a Smartroom, Innovation Lab, and Distance Learning Labs for anytime/anywhere learning. <p>The applicant lays out a plan to increase staff knowledge of personalized learning environments, improve data analysis and targeted action and improve instructional practice. The applicant indicates that it will use the National Career Readiness Certificate as a measure of college and career readiness and that student will earn the NCRE certificate, a Certificate of Employability based on the WORKKEYS tools. Through the use of it's SUNGARD Public Sector online system the applicant is able to monitor and track student data and identify potential at risk students.</p>		

An infrastructure of human capital and technology based systems makes it possible manage, monitor and continuously improve student outcomes as well as keep the community informed of the applicant's effort to improve student outcomes.

Based on this reviewer's analysis of the application the applicant has demonstrated evidence of it's intention to meet all of the four core educational reform areas.

Total	210	85
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