



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0381IL-1 for Round Lake Community Unit School District  
116

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reform vision was most comprehensive in that it specifically addressed the four core educational assurance areas as outlined in the Grant announcement and defined the implementation process for mastery of the goals..</li> <li>• The vision was fully and creatively embedded throughout the applicant's plan in that the focus was evident in each segment of the application.</li> <li>• The Applicant's application was very clear and reasonable on specific strategies that would encompass four areas: academic preparation, leadership and professional development, exposure, and college counseling.</li> <li>• The vision stated clearly that an integrated approach which fostered students' individual backgrounds, needs, abilities, and academic interest to improve academic achievement through high quality instruction provided by highly effective teachers and principals would form the basic foundation for this reform plan.</li> <li>• The Applicant's application was thorough in that the focus was embodied through out the entire application: creation of equitable opportunities for all students to be college and career ready following graduation into a global economy.</li> <li>• The applicant's plan was detailed based on research-based initiatives supporting the tenets of the vision.(Schuler Scholars Program (SSP), Common Core State Standards, and the Logic Model used in the Schuler Scholars Program)</li> <li>• The applicant's plan substantiated the approach of all stakeholders' involvement in the development of the vision and the grant application. Supporting documents are included in the Appendix.</li> <li>• The Applicant incorporated information which was based on previous implementation of the SSP model. Using that frame of reference, the Applicant set the expectation of a 10% increase for all students and a 5% increase for subgroups in graduation, and college and career readiness as measured by state and local assessments. With all considerations in mind, this expectation is ambitious and reasonable to achieve.</li> <li>• The Applicant's plan reflected an experienced base frame of reference which included the SSP model from the previous year. The Applicant's proposal is designed to serve as a trajectory for a larger target population eventually serving all students in the district.</li> </ul>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant effectively detailed a collaborative process for selection of participants for the program as well as grade level expectations (K-12). All schools except the high school are Title I; all five elementary schools are in federal improvement status.</li> <li>• Schools were identified with number of eligible students from each school. This information was presented in tables according to Federal Regulations and Guidelines (participation from low-income families, high needs students, and participating educators).</li> <li>• Graduation data was presented for the Majority Population; however a system is in in place to identify subgroups' graduation data in the future.</li> <li>• The requirements in this section were addressed in a comprehensive manner in compliance as defined in the grant's notice.</li> </ul>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The District has used the Schuler Scholar Program for 80 students with successful results.(2011)</li> <li>• The Applicant will scale up this reform model (Schuler Scholar Program) to serve all identified and eligible students in</li> </ul>		

a comprehensive manner. The proposed reform model will be replicated to ensure that all students will have an equitable opportunity to be college and career ready upon graduation. The model develops college and career readiness foundations in elementary school, expands student preparation in middle grades, and refines skills during high school years through use of Career Cruising. The model would be scaled up further by embedding College and Career Readiness Standards into core instruction and providing teachers with smart technologies that would permit blended instructional models based on content and learning targets. The Applicant proposes a scaled up model in that currently the initiatives that were implemented in the "pilot model" are not available to all staff and students currently. The services of this plan would serve more students thereby increasing student achievement.

- The collaboration among major stakeholders and the alignment of this reform with the District's and State's Reform Initiatives ensures a high degree of success because improvement research states that alignment and using a common frame of reference ensure a greater degree of success in project tasks.
- The reform and change strategies are most comprehensive in addressing the four assurance areas based on the Logic Model which is research driven and the Applicant has experienced success with this model.
- The reform and change strategies are reasonable and feasible with the resource needs that would be provided through the Grant award as matched with students' needs. There is an implied cultural awareness that is new and inviting for students' self advocacy and self investment through use of individual learning plans. This conclusion is evident in all sections of the Applicant's proposal.

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

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9

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- The Applicant described thoroughly the seven goals that directly impact student achievement ( the district's goals) for this proposed model based on data and research: increase in the number of students meeting and exceeding standards on local and state assessments; capacity development of staff in areas of leading, teaching, and assessing rigorous and relevant content aligned with State and Common Core; establishment of a learning culture embracing preparation of all students in being college and career ready; instructional leadership development to increase student growth in literacy and math; creation of K - 8 curriculum teams to focus on CCS; improvement in using site-based management and school improvement planning research; and development of unified systems of support through grant funded programs that support student achievement, culture, and community engagement.
- The District's goals serve as the focus for the goals and objectives of the Applicant's proposal. There is strong alignment between the two, thus ensuring a greater degree of success for students.
- There was extensive trend data analysis to determine targets for the goal areas inclusive of: school demographics, and graduation and college readiness data.
- Comprehensive charts depicting actual and projected student performance on summative assessments were included and were in alignment with identification of students' strengths and areas of weaknesses. The Applicant provided a detailed description of the methodologies for determining status and growth for all data sources.

## 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	9

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- The Applicant 's proposal outlined information that was inclusive of a detailed narrative of historical information for the District's current Restructuring initiative earmarked by a new leadership era with a Superintendent School Head and major reform areas indicative of successes and some remaining challenges. The plan identified in a comprehensive manner the aspects of the reform: reorganization, evaluation and training improvement, comprehensive District-wide Needs Assessment, trend data for grades 3-8 and ACT performance for grades 9-12.
- The trend data revealed some inconsistencies in student performance and subgroups' performance. The Applicant was transparent in acknowledging some of the challenges that are directly related to lack of alignment with : curriculum to assessment and assessment to assessments. This information serves as a sound basis for the development of a high quality plan. The information as pertinent to students' clear track records of success was factual and disaggregated by subgroups.
- The Applicant supported with documentation the need to implement the reform model as described to expand on the current practices and scale up school improvement which is evident in the achievement data. The reform as described in the plan is developed incorporating the basic principles of the pilot model. The pilot model had positive results and

those actions have the replication capabilities.

- The Applicant listed several communication processes for communicating data to all major stakeholders. The district currently uses SKYWARD as its student information system(SIS). The system has a range of tools from student and parent access to teacher grade book functions. The Applicant's district also uses the Illinois Interactive Report Card that provides data on all state and selected benchmark assessments.
- The Applicant shares a comprehensive communication plan in the section addressing involvement and ongoing communication and engagement of internal and external stakeholders.

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

5

3

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant described a detailed budgeting process which included various stakeholders. It is managed through the District's Finance Office. The budgeting process begins with the development of a budget development calendar of events that delineates the steps and approximate dates of each step in the budgeting process. This process of inclusive input is designed to get buy in from the stakeholders.
- The Applicant supported a high level of transparency of the process with specific details in the following areas: composition of budget team, information posted on the District's website, annual community forum, weekly radio shows, and local school meetings. These conduits serve as indicators of information transparency and can be adapted to varying recipients of the information.
- The applicant submitted supporting documents in the Appendix which address the requirements as outlined in the notice: actual personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff (U.S.... census Bureau's classification), actual personnel salaries at school level for instructional staff and teachers, and actual non-personnel expenditures at school level.

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

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6

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- The State has a documented process for continuous improvement. The Applicant described the process of the collaborative planning with the District and State to ensure successful conditions and sufficient autonomy to implement this reform model.
- The State's program identifies eight essential elements for effective schools which were creatively interwoven throughout the proposal. These essential elements demonstrated a common thread through the proposal by connectivity of ideas and strategies that are currently being implemented and those to be implemented as outlined in the proposal.
- The State provides reasonable support and autonomy for implementation of strategies outlined in the grant according to State and Federal guidelines.
- Tier 3 Response to Intervention is inclusive in the applicant's plan to address learners who may have special needs or identified as having disabilities which attests to successful conditions to implement personalized learning environments.
- The State has initiatives that are focused in supporting all RTTTs' districts: the District uses an interactive system that evaluates the areas of continuous improvement, learning environments, educator 's quality and teaching/learning. Under the State's law, the State Board of Education establishes overall goals and learning standards, but school districts establish learning objectives and the instructional systems to measure progress with the objectives.
- The Applicant submitted a list of supports that the State provides to RTT Districts: teacher and principal evaluation system, adoption of college career-ready standards, use of the Student Information System, State focus and policies on personalized learning environments, focus on the STEM initiative and career pathways leveraging public-private partnerships, the interactive report card and the Rising Star Improvement System. These initiatives and learning conditions facilitated by the state will support the district's rollout as described in the grant which will be measured through the Performance Measures.

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

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6

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- The District has extensive partnerships and agencies to support the initiatives that are outlined in the application. The Applicant provided a comprehensive list of services provided by partners and other external agencies. These services

have ongoing opportunities to provide immediate feedback and because of that mechanism, services can be adjusted as needed.

- The applicant's proposal will assist in providing leverage to the effective use of partnerships and will have more defined ways to utilize data in effective planning thereby ensuring mastery of the goals.
- The applicant's proposal includes evidences of stakeholders in the process of developing the plan:
  - notes
  - letters of support
  - timeline of meetings with various stakeholders was provided
  - services rendered by the partners.
- The Applicant provided a detailed process that was used in the development of the application. Teams of teachers, leaders from each school, and community agency were at the table. The process as designed is used to ensure ownership by all stakeholders and increased commitment to ensure success. There are letters of support which endorse the proposal.
- The Applicant has included monitoring and measurement benchmarks to ensure success of the project.

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

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3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant presented trend data which identified achievement gaps between student subgroups over the years. The application is a result of the district's realization and understanding that it is critical that there is improvement in professional practices and the importance of implementing personalized learning options for all students to ensure improvement. The Applicant's plan of action includes a needs analysis however it lacks details as to causes of the learning gaps and the current status of implementing personalized learning environments.. The Applicant noted lessons learned from the pilot model in reference to goals, activities, timeframes and deliverables.
- The applicant included an explanation of parents' role in blended learning as a part of the high quality plan to improve student achievement and have all students be college and career ready. This aspect of the plan is research based and has had positive results in other school improvement districts.
- The applicant comprehensively explained, "Destination Excellence" as a trajectory for personalized learning to build on already experienced successes. This serves as a strong foundation for the Applicant's plan.
- The applicant's charts provided ambitious yet reasonable expectations (Destination Excellence) by grade spans that are in alignment with identified strengths and areas of weaknesses based on data:
  - Early Grades: Common Learning Standards, Focus on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math)
  - Middle Grades: Self advocacy, academic independence development, individual interests through learning plans and goal setting
  - High School: Refine interests and self advocacy skills, personalized learning plans, development of vocational options, and partnerships with colleges and universities.
- The expectations of each grade span as outlined in the plan are detailed and goal oriented.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	12

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- - The Applicant's plan of action outlined activities and strategies for improving learning and teaching to support students in being college and career ready. The plan emphasized the use of student learning plans to develop students' understanding of what they are learning and facilitating the identification of goal setting based on needs and interests. The Applicant outlined high quality activities to increase students' interests and cultural awareness through field trips, career speakers, and high quality instructional practices.
  - The applicant submitted the development of a learning plan to follow students (K-12, based on mastery of Common Core Academic Standards and College and Career Ready Standards aligned with the four core educational assurance areas):
    - Grade 5 plan will begin to focus on interest areas and improvement of academic achievement
    - High schools will implement individualized learning plans based on a rigorous course of study aligned to college and career ready standards

- Student and parent portals will provide ongoing current data to inform students and parents on status of:
    - achievement records
    - performance on embedded tests of mastery
    - opportunities for students to accelerate via two Illinois State Board of Education initiatives:
      1. Illinois' Pathway
      2. Illinois' State Learning Environment Learning Maps.
- The Applicant's three phase implementation process was detailed and a comprehensive timeline was provided for implementation. The Applicant's proposal was thorough in addressing the current state of affairs and what the District needs to do to ensure success for all students. The proposal is data driven and developed based on research and best practices. The proposal as presented will be achievable and successful.
- Note: The Applicant's proposal lacked data on a defined process to involve parents who are difficult to reach and may be reluctant to come into a formal setting.

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

20

14

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- The Applicant's application addressed technology as a critical tool for implementing the outlined initiatives and identified professional development topics and training for students and parents to ensure use of the tool.
- The Applicant's District has created a comprehensive three phase approach to effective instruction and outlined in detail the expectations PreK - 12.
- The Applicant's District is creating a culture for leadership:
  - Site-based management
  - Principals' accountability through use of the annual evaluation cycle.
- The Applicant's application included sections of evaluation tools for principals, teachers, and non-instructional support staff (Appendix).
- The Applicant's application identified the priorities for the grant:
  - Core instruction
  - Individualized student's learning plan
  - Foundation for District wide area of teaching and leading:
    1. vision setting
    2. recruitment of development of teaching source
    3. alignment of core instruction and student interest.
- The Applicant's implementation of the individual learning plans will utilize milestones or bench marks toward mastery of the goals and the College and Career Readiness Standards.
- The Applicant's use of formative and summative assessments was defined in each phase of the plan:
  - utilization of an evaluation system
  - classroom walk through
  - use of common assessments
  - use of data warehouse.
- The Applicant detailed an extensive and comprehensive staff development and professional support plan:
  - Professional Development in the "Classroom Instruction that Works"
  - Common Core Training
  - Technology training
  - Administrative training in classroom walk through
  - Collaborative lesson planning.
- The information presented in this area was ambitious yet achievable because there are built in accountability measures and the actions are research-based. The Applicant has also included a detailed evaluation component to assess growth and mastery of objectives. The Applicant has included information of high quality to craft this plan ensuring that all indicators have been addressed.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	10

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- The Applicant provided a comprehensive organizational chart of the District along with a narrative on roles and responsibilities of each position. The description addressed the importance of roles in ensuring mastery of the goals.
- The Applicant submitted identification of support personnel for the teaching and learning components:
  - Deputy Superintendent
  - Research Assessment
  - Evaluation Administrator
  - Director of IT
  - Office of Special Services
  - Coordinator of ELL
  - Grants and Compliance Coordinator.
- The Support Personnel designations serve as the team to ensure completion of tasks leading to the projects' success.
- The Applicant's implementation of site based-management ensures the necessary autonomy of schools to implement the plan as presented in the application. The State and District have granted and organized successful conditions to ensure sufficient autonomy.
- The Applicant's Application specified the development of lessons aligned with CCSS and best practices: Bloom's Taxonomy, mastery instructional and based grading, use of rubrics which ensures effective instruction which will be measured through improved student achievement.
- The Applicant's application emphasized use of multifaceted assessments and demonstration of mastery: project based learning, student reports and presentations, use of technology. These options are comprehensive in proving students to show their acquired knowledge and skills. This component will manifest itself in improved student achievement and can be measured through the Applicant's assessment program.

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

- The Applicant's District uses Skyward School Management System (Centralized data base that integrates student information, finances and human resource information.)
- The Applicant's application referenced the use of a common online portal (teachers and administrators) can readily assess their data. This capability will facilitate immediate feedback to adjust students' plans and guide instruction.
- The Applicant's Skyward Family and Student Access will provide grades, schedules, attendance, discipline and communication with teachers.
- The Applicant's application indicated additional web-based systems and applications that will permit students to access educational resources on campus or at home: Education 2020, Scholastic Next Generation, Imagine Learning English, Compass Learning, LEXIA and Follett Library. This strategy will facilitate in seat learning when appropriate.
- The Applicant's plan ensures availability to all students especially those that have been selected and designated as the target population.
- The Applicant addressed with confidence that resources, technical support and on line services would be available to all stakeholders; however I did not see any evidence on what measures would be taken to reach parents who may be reluctant to come into the school setting or who are unavailable for training sessions.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	10

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- The Applicant's application addresses a strategic plan for improvement that has been developed with Illinois' "Rising Star" Initiatives. This Initiative is timely and yields information that is crucial for effective planning.(immediate feedback)
- The Applicant's application includes a comprehensive communication plan to ensure strong home-school partnership.
- The Applicant provided a thorough plan incorporating the use of "Wise Ways" (Center for Improvement and Innovations) research indicators of success to measure established goals.
- The Applicant's application indicates ongoing monitoring and revisions through the "Rising Star" Process for Continuous Improvement. The District's Report Card will be reviewed and discussed publicly both at District and School Level meetings: Board of Education Meetings, Community Partnership Meetings, and Community Forums. The Project

Management Team will determine established feedback intervals to inform all stakeholders on the RttD investments. The rigorous continuous improvement process as outlined by the Applicant was comprehensive and built into an infrastructure in the district that will ensure meeting its defined goals.

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

- The applicant's District uses Report Card to share progress on a Web site that will ensure ongoing communication which will have a direct input on student achievement.
- The applicant's District provides information to stakeholders through:
  - Community Forms
  - Open Houses
  - Curriculum nights
  - Board of Education Education
  - Community/Partnership meetings
- The communication to stakeholders' activities are in place to ensure informed providers and stakeholders.
- The Applicant presented an exhaustive listing for ongoing communication: newsletters, Superintendent's Cabinet Meetings, Leadership Meetings, RttD Grant Team Meetings, Teaching and Learning Division Meetings, Curriculum Advisory Council Meetings etc. The Applicant indicates use of these strategies and ideas to garner feedback and data to assess the effectiveness of the strategies as outlined in the proposal.

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

- - The Applicant has defined performance measures as stated in the grant's notice. The District has selected the Illinois Standards Achievement Test to measure student learning targets in grades three through eight. The ACT and PLAN will be used for High Schools. Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) will serve as a supporting assessment for K - 10. The MAP assessment will provide teachers and principals with the information needed to identify student strengths and challenges and will be the catalyst for individual student goal setting.
  - The Applicant will use the following assessments for performance measures:
    - Illinois' Standards Achievement Test (3-8)
    - Measures of Academic Progress will support assessment to K-10 (three times per year)
  - The Applicant's rationale for its plan of continuous improvement is predicated on aligning individual skills with the required learning targets; however, the Applicant did not provide a rationale for each performance measure.
  - The Applicant's application documented the reasons for data not available for subgroups. A system is being devised to collect data in the future. The lack of the subgroup data makes its difficult for the Applicant to establish reasonable and attainable measures.
  - This Assessment system when implemented is designed to be multifaceted and will give different snapshots to understand all factors in making driven decisions.

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

- The Applicant 's specific ways of evaluating effectiveness for the subgroups is unclear because the subgroup data for the performance measures were not available.
- The Applicant indicated an extensive focus in establishing and refining current District initiatives to ensure effective use of resources in meeting the established goals of the application which will lead to successfully meeting the four core educational goal areas.
- The Applicant denoted that the formal monitoring of students' progress in attaining targets and meeting performance measures will be in the Superintendent's Cabinet; perceptual surveys will be administered to students, staff and parents.
- Note: The Applicant's plan did not address a formal evaluation plan that spoke to deadlines, sources for feedback and persons responsible for gathering and analyzing the data.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	5
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant's Budget does not reflect other funds for the project. The Applicant's Budget request for 19,986,049 is a reasonable one to provide services as identified to meet needs of students. This budget is predicated on the past pilot initiative.</li> <li>• The Applicant's comprehensive rationale for supports needed to successfully implement program was documented and would address the challenges as denoted in the plan.</li> <li>• The Applicant's Budget narrative reflected a four year tenure of the program using RttD's monies.</li> <li>• The Applicant's Budget will provide services to five elementary schools, two middle schools and one high school.</li> <li>• The Applicant's Budget in the Category of Supplies indicated purchases of textbooks. The plan is unclear as to the LEA's and State's sustainability of this ongoing cost.</li> <li>• The Applicant's application included the indirect cost submission.</li> </ul>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	4
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant's application provides a sustainability of project goals through organizational sustainability and financial sustainability. The Applicant's sustainability component addresses the underpinnings of:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ building human compactly</li> <li>◦ additional funding from Illinois, private and public foundations and partnerships</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Applicant did not provide the major characteristics of a high quality plan in that the rationales, well defined outcomes and measures of review and progress were not delineated.</li> <li>• The Applicant's resources that are requested through the application "Destination Excellence" will be rank ordered and evaluated to determine highest priority for the future. (The Applicant's letters of support indicate possible future fiscal resources).</li> <li>• The Applicant's proposal was vague in terms of sustainability. There was limited information in terms of future considerations. The lack of details in this section raises questions in terms of sustainability at the end of the funding.</li> </ul>		

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 submit this component.		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant's Absolute Priority 1 was evident throughout the proposal in that all strategies outlined in the action plan reinforced each other and were consistent in focus of creating Personalized Learning Environments.</li> <li>• The Applicant provided reform strategies/processes which are comprehensive in addressing the educational assurance areas: (Statewide and RttD requirements) performance improvement, decreasing of achievement gap and increasing graduation rate and college enrollment. These areas were clearly defined and the action plan was aligned which would ensure implementation of the steps.</li> <li>• The Applicant presented an ambitious but reasonable implementation of individualized learning plans which has been</li> </ul>		

documented in a pilot initiative with 80 students in the District (first generation college). The application was developed in a comprehensive and coherent manner which was inclusive of student data analysis and data from sources such as teacher evaluation, surveys and ongoing partnerships' engagement.

- The Applicant's application conveyed strong collaborative and result oriented strategies that are research-based which would ensure positive results when implemented with integrity.

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

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

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

This section was not submitted.



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0381IL-2 for Round Lake Community Unit School District  
116

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	7

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant shares their reform vision by introducing their proposed program called Destination Excellence. The applicant comprehensively addresses three of the four core educational assurance areas: 1) adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace; 2) building data systems that measure student growth; and 3) recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals. However, information about the fourth core educational assurance area, turning around lowest achieving schools, was limited.

Additionally, section (A) (1) is somewhat confusing in that Destination Excellence is modeled after their previously successful Schuler Scholars Program (SSP). However, SSP is a highly selective program that only serves a handful of students. Simultaneously, the applicant also indicates that Destination Excellence will serve all students.

The applicant comprehensively addresses their goals for accelerating student achievement and deepening student learning. One example includes the incorporation of Common Core Standards, assessments, and data systems which will measure students' growth and, more importantly, inform instruction. The applicant provides evidence that Destination Excellence will provide personalized learning plans that will be based on the students' individual backgrounds, needs, and abilities which supports improved instruction.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9
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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant provides a description of the process that Destination Excellence will utilize to select participating schools.

- The applicant fully lists the schools in Round Lake Area Schools (RLAS) school district that will participate.
- The applicant lists the total number of participating students, participating students from low-income families, and participating students who are high-need students.

The number of participating educators was not in the narrative but was subsequently documented in a table provided by the applicant.

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

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6

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a plan which explains how Destination Excellence will be scaled up by initially recognizing that preparation for secondary school and college must begin many years in advance. Therefore, the applicant provides details about the Destination Excellence plan which includes: the development of career and college readiness in elementary school and the expansion of student preparation during middle school.

The applicant indicates that Destination Excellence is based upon previous SSP successes and will be expanded district-wide. The applicant is confusing when it states that they plan to implement SSP district-wide because SSP was designed for elite students and they do not provide evidence that SSP will help the applicant reach its outcome goals or improve student learning for all.

However, the applicant also plans to utilize an online tool with its middle school students called Career Cruising but does not provide evidence that Career Cruising utilization results in meaningful reform.

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

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8

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The Destination Excellence proposal addresses improved student learning and performance by providing goals in the following ways:

- The applicant plans to monitor two summative assessments, the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) and the Prairie State Achievement Test. Improved student learning and performance is also supported because the applicants plans to meet or exceed standards on the ISAT and the ACT (utilizing the goals based on Illinois Safe Harbor targets for subgroups).
- The applicant specifies its plan to decrease achievement gaps through the analysis and comparison of their ISAT and ACT scores.
- Reasonable increased college enrollment is supported by the applicant's plan.

However, the the applicant does not supply the required student subgroup information in its response.

## 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	9

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant inadequately presents a clear record of success. In addressing student achievement the applicant states that there has been incremental growth in the percent of students meeting or exceeding standards on the ISAT in the areas of reading and math.

As one reviews the district's ISAT trends, there are only three years of scores provided when the application clearly requests four years of results. Additionally, the ISAT trends are inadequate evidence of clear record of success.

In addressing achievement in its persistently lowest-achieving schools, the applicant, once again, lifts up the previously successful SSP. However, this program was limited to select students in the top 10 percent of their class who went on to

attend elite universities. This is not evidence of a clear record of success in persistently lowest-achieving schools.

RLAS utilizes SKYWARD as its student information system and SKYWARD makes student performance data available to students, educators, and parents. The applicant points out that many families do not have Internet access. Therefore, the extent to which parents are able to access the SKYWARD system is inadequate and may not sufficiently make student performance data to parents.

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

5

5

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents information that indicates transparency around the following issues: 1) all personnel salaries; and 2) non-personnel expenditures.

The school budget is managed through the District's Finance Committee. The agendas and work of the Finance Committee are available on the District's website. Additionally, budget information is shared with the community on a weekly radio show and at regular Board of Education meetings.

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

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10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Illinois law promotes the ability of school districts to implement personalized learning environments. Moreover, in 2009, the Illinois General Assembly expanded the autonomy of school districts to promote personalized learning through the authorization of "remote educational programs." Lastly, RLAS implements an alternative learning program called Student Alternative Learning Through Technology (SALTT). SALTT is an online, self-paced learning program for older students who are behind in graduation credits.

Implementation of the personalized learning environments described in Destination Excellence is feasible because the RLAS provides evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy to do so.

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

10

6

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a description of its relationship with the local Exchange Club and how it connects local businesses with schools. The applicant goes on to list an impressive array of partnership opportunities that result from these relationships. Additionally, the applicant provides the details of the extensive collaboration between teachers, school leaders, and district leaders. Lastly, the names of the entire grant planning team was included in the Appendix.

However, the inclusion of students, parents and families was sparse. In a review of the timeline of grant planning meetings, one discovers that the meetings were typically held during the day when most students, parents, and families are unlikely to attend. Therefore, Destination Excellence is not based on parents' engagement or their feedback.

RLAS has a local bargaining unit and there is sufficient evidence of their participation and input into Destination Excellence.

The applicant provides twelve letters of support for the Destination Excellence program. Letters of support are from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), their local Congressman, the Village President, and the local mayor, to name a few.

Conversely, there are no letters from parents, the local Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO), or student organizations. Therefore, the support of all key stakeholders is lacking.

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

5

2

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant identifies a significant gap in curriculum implementation in grades K-12. The applicant explains that the implementation of the Common Core Curriculum Standards will provide the district an opportunity to close their current curriculum gaps.

Additionally, the district plans to address achievement gaps with the improvement of professional practice and the implementation of personalized learning options for all students. The applicant presents a plan to hold data driven conversations between staff and parents.

The applicant does not provide all of the evidence required for a high-quality plan. Examples include: a rationale for selected the strategies, a timeline for the strategies, or the parties responsible for the implementation of the strategies.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	13
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment for its students. The Destination Excellence Personalized Learning Plan includes the following criteria: 1) students understand that what they are learning is key to their success; 2) students identify and pursue goals linked to college; 3) students are involved in deep learning experiences; 4) students are exposed to diverse cultures; and 5) students develop skills like goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, communication, creativity, and problem-solving.</p> <p>However, the selection criteria looks for the support of parents. In fact, the applicant notes the importance of parental involvement in their introduction to this section. However, the only indication of parental involvement is when the applicant states that each student and parent will be aware of exactly what essential skills must be mastered. Awareness is not consistent with parental involvement. Furthermore, there is limited parental involvement found in the the Destination Excellence Personalized Learning Plan Focus; parents are mentioned in reference to parent universities/retreats and parent communication/outreach. Parental involvement appears in Phase I only (of three total phases of the Learning Plan).</p> <p>In terms of what each student has access to, the applicant addresses the following criteria: 1) the students will have access to a personalized sequence of instructional content; 2) the students will have access to quality instructional approaches with the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS); 3) the students will have access to digital learning content; and 4) the students will have access to ongoing and regular feedback via portals with student achievement records. However, it is unclear what the Destination Excellence program plans to do to provide accommodations and high-quality strategies for high needs students. In fact, the Personalized Learning Plan mentions a Grade 9 summer academy for rising 9th graders yet strategies for high needs students are insufficient. Lastly, parental involvement continues to be vague.</p> <p>Mechanisms to provide training and support to students to ensure that they understand how to use the tools mentioned in the Learning Plan is vague.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	15
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment for its students. The applicant shares that the district has not had a formal textbook adoption or literacy review process in place for the last decade. Additionally, the applicant acknowledges the ineffectiveness of purchasing a program and simply sending it off to each building.</p> <p>(a) Moving forward, local educators will engage in training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• i) to support the effective implementation of personalized learning environments to ensure that students can graduate on time and are college- and career-ready;</li> <li>• ii) to adapt content and instruction for their students by collaborating during weekly curriculum meetings that support CCSS;</li> <li>• iii) to frequently measure student progress toward meeting goals on Learning Plans; and</li> <li>• iv) to improve teachers' and principals' practice by using feedback from district evaluations. Plans for professional development are mentioned at least six times throughout Phase I and Phase II of the applicant's plan.</li> </ul> <p>b) All participating educators have access to, and know how to use tools, data, and resources to accelerate student growth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• i) educators are provided actionable information that helps them identify optimal learning approaches; the applicant points to the Instructional Improvement System that monitors individual student achievement and school progress.</li> <li>• ii) the applicant's teaching and leading plan refers to the utilization of digital resources; the strategy of daily technology is mentioned in the proposal but clarity is lacking around the use of this technology.</li> </ul> <p>c) Participating school leaders have plans for training and resources that includes:</p>		

- i) information from the district's evaluation system that helps school leaders take steps to improve; and
- ii) trainings to consistently improve student performance. Again, professional development is comprehensive in this proposal.

d) The applicant shares a plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective/highly effective teachers and leaders. However, there is insufficient evidence of a plan to address issues such as 1) hard to staff schools; 2) hard to staff subjects like science and math; and 3) hard to staff specialty areas like Special Education.

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

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	7

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a narrative and an organizational chart that of the Central Office. In order to provide school leadership sufficient autonomy the RLAS recently implemented a Site-Based Management Model which now allows principals autonomy to make school level decisions.

Round Lake High School is currently in the process of implementing standards-based grading giving students the opportunity to progress. The applicant gives students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery in multiple times and in multiple ways; examples include: project-based learning, student presentations, corrective teaching, and differentiated instruction. The applicant provides resources that are adaptable to all students; examples include: Imagine Learning, Compass Learning, Lexia, and Education 2020.

The applicant does not provide all of the evidence required for a high-quality plan. Examples include: a rationale for selected the strategies, a timeline for the strategies, or the parties responsible for the implementation of the strategies.

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

The LEA provides a plan to provide an infrastructure which supports personalized learning by:

- ensuring that participating students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders have access to content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school; examples include: Education 2020, Scholastic Next Generation, Imagine Learning English, LEXIA, and Follett Library.
- ensuring that students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders have access to appropriate levels of technical support; examples include: RLAS in-house dedicated support team, a 24/7 web-based ticketing window system, email notifications, and a 24/7 support phone line.
- using information technology systems that allow parents and students to export their information in an open data system; an example of this is found in the employment of a Research, Evaluation and Assessment Administrator who interfaces with the information (IT) team to ensure coordination between curriculum and data-sensitive initiatives.
- ensuring that students, parents, and educators use interoperable data systems (e.g. systems that include human resources data, student information data, budget data, and instructional improvement system data); an example of this is the Skyward School Management System software application.

The applicant does not provide all of the evidence required for a high-quality plan. Examples include: a rationale for selected the strategies, a timeline for the strategies, or the parties responsible for the implementation of the strategies.

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

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	9

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents a plan for implementing a continuous improvement process. The applicant plans to utilize the

State's Rising Star process which is an interactive system that evaluates eight essential elements for effective education. The applicant also plans to utilize Wise Ways which uses research-based indicators of success to assess district progress.

The applicant plans to publicly review and discuss information from its district report card. However, this is an insufficient manner in which to monitor the continuous improvement process. Therefore, plans to monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of its investments insufficient.

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

RLAS plans to communicate with internal and external stakeholders via 22 different strategies. Examples include:

- Newsletters
- RTTD Grant Team Meetings
- Board of Education Meetings
- Parent Emails

The applicant does not provide all of the evidence required for a high-quality plan. Examples include: a timeline for the strategies and the parties responsible for the implementation of the strategies.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides twelve performance measures. Generally speaking, please note:

- For performance point #11, the rationale was insufficient.
- (C) of the selection criteria asks how the applicant will review and improve the measure. There was no evidence of this information for any of the twelve performance measures.
- The broad selection criteria requested overall and subgroup information. There was no evidence of subgroup information (except for the ACT table).
- The FAFSA table provided insufficient information.

Specifically speaking:

- ALL: The applicant failed to provide the number of participating students with highly effective teachers/principals for SY 2012 through SY 2017. The applicant fails to provide the number of participating students with effective teachers/principals for SY 2012 through SY 2017.
- PreK-3: The applicant provides at least one age-appropriate measure of students' academic growth and the applicant must also propose at least one age-appropriate non-cognitive indicator of growth. The applicant provides proposed annual overall targets for each indicator. However, the applicant fails to provide the required subgroup information.
- 4-8: The applicant provides at least one age-appropriate measure of students' academic growth and the applicant must also propose at least one grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator. The applicant provides proposed annual overall targets for each indicator. However, the applicant fails to provide the required subgroup information.
- 9-12 One grade-appropriate academic leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan and one grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan. The applicant combined these two indicators on to one table. The applicant provided subgroup information for these two performance measures.
- 9-12 On track to college- and career-readiness: The applicant provides requested information for SY 201-2012. However, the applicant fails to provide: the number of participating students who are on track to college- and career-readiness and the total number of participating students. Additionally, the applicant fails to provide subgroup information.
- 9-12 FAFSA: The applicant completely fails to supply the requested information. The applicant provides the number of participating students who completed the FAFSA in SY 2011-2012. However, no other information is provided and no subgroup information is provided.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	1
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

It is important for the applicant to evaluate the effectiveness of RTTD funded activities. The applicant plans to monitor student progress.

However, there is no evidence of evaluations for RTTD funded activities such as improved use of technology, working with community partners, or compensation reform.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	3

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's budget narrative and tables list RTTD funds but lacks evidence of LEA funds, State funds, and Federal funds. The applicant notes that SSP has been previously supported by private funds but there is no evidence of the current status of this all important program that is the basis of Destination Excellence.

The budget narrative and tables provide a plan that is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal. The proposed activities are funded over the term of the grant. The requested funds are appropriate and aligned with the actual costs of their planned activities.

The applicant provides a rationale for the use of RTTD funds. However, the application lacks evidence of LEA funds, State funds, Federal funds, and (potential) SSP funds.

Applicant minimally identifies funds that will be used for one-time investments and how those funds will be spent.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	3
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a plan for the sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. The plan lacks clarity around support from the State and local government leaders and their financial support, as requested in the selection criteria. Furthermore, a high-quality plan must include goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties and these required items are lacking in this proposal.

The applicant's budget includes a grant writer and the applicant indicates that additional grants may be the best way to move forward after the term of the grant. This is not a high-quality plan for the sustainability of this proposal.

An optional three year, post-funding budget was not provided.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The proposal does not coherently and comprehensively address how it will create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and teachers.

The applicant provides an insufficient plan to accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning, to increase the effectiveness educators, to expand student access to the most effective educators, to decrease achievement gaps across student groups, and to increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.

Total	210	125
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0381IL-3 for Round Lake Community Unit School District  
116

### 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 had a strong response to addressing the four core educational assurance areas (as defined in the notice) and the SMART goal diagram in the appendix documents the plan. The plan to build a program using the basic ideas of the Schuler Scholars program, which already serves a select population of students, provides clear and concise information to further the goals. Student achievement goals are ambitious, yet reasonable. The plan to further student learning is innovative. Student personalized support is extensive and the plan is focused on student academic interests.  The response to this criteria qualifies for a score of 10 due to meeting all of the requirements and being achievable and ambitious.		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:  The applicant qualifies for a score of 10 on this criteria due to meeting all of the requirements of the criteria. The process of selecting students and school meet the competition's eligibility requirements. A list of participating schools is provided, a description of the process to select schools is documented, and the number of participating students that are in each of the required categories is listed.		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	5
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:  The elements of a high quality plan include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties. The plan presented by the applicant in the form of a logic model presented goals, activities and deliverables to some extent. Responsible parties are not listed. The applicant does not address how the reform efforts would be used beyond participating schools for district-wide change.  Since half of the items were not addressed a score of 5 was awarded.		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	2
(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:		

- a) Table shows proficiency status and growth, with ambitious yet achievable goals. However, it is not possible to determine if the annual goals exceed State ESEA targets due to the fact that they are not included in the table.
- b) The table is confusing and it is not possible to determine achievement gap percentages
- c) The goal for graduation rates is achievable, but perhaps not ambitious. State ESEA target rate for the LEA is not mentioned.
- d) Goal for college enrollment rate increase is ambitious and achievable. Again State ESEA targets not mentioned.

The goals in A(4) are to be measured against the State ESEA targets for the LEA. The state targets are not mentioned so it is not possible to determine if these annual goals are equal to or exceed the State ESEA targets.

Reviewer was only able to read one of the five charts provided, so a score of 2 was assigned.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	5

### (B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The following are required in the response: description, charts or graphs, raw student data, and other evidence. Descriptions were provided for a and c and a chart was provided for a. One third of the responses were met, so score of 5 was assigned.

- a) There is no evidence of high school graduation rates and/or increasing them. There is no evidence of college enrollment and/or increased rates. Although there is a table representing ISAT Math Trends by Grade, it only has 3 years of data and fails to show a clear record of success in improving rates. There are no labels on the axes for the high school ACT, so it is difficult to determine if progress or improvement is being made. Evidence showing achievement gaps shows that while small gains have been made between whites and hispanics, the achievement gap has increased between whites and blacks.
- b) Applicant fails to address this question. There is one table, but it does not directly address the question. Although these are mentioned, there is no evidence of significant reforms in persistently lowest-achieving school
- c) Student data is currently available to teachers. Although SKYWARD has student and parent access, there is no evidence that it has been made available to students and parents.

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

There is a evidence of a high level of transparency in LEA processes regarding budget processes and development. The applicant does not describe other practices and investments or making them public. There is sufficient evidence that school-level expenditures are being made public.

- a) there is evidence that actual personnel salaries are being made public - however, there is no evidence that the salaries are based on the U.S. Census Bureau's classification used in the F-33 survey.
- b) There is evidence that actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff only are being made available to the public
- c) There is evidence that actual personnel at the school level for teachers only is being made available to the public;
- d) There is evidence that actual non-personnel expenditures at the school level are being made available to the public.

Since there is a lack of evidence to show that F-33 survey salary data is being used, and a lack of evidence to support LEA

practices and investments being made public, a score of 4 out of 5 was assigned.

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

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The school district establishes learning objectives and the instructional systems to measure progress against those objectives. The applicant shows evidence that they have participated in and taken advantage of state initiatives that foster personalized learning environments. The state of Illinois supports PLEs and the district has autonomy to implement them. The governance of the school district lies with the district (it had previously resided with the state). The district shows evidence of exercising its autonomy under state law to create innovative programs - such as the SALT program and also establishing programs under the Rising Star Program. There is evidence that supports the ability of the district to fully implement personalized learning environments. As a result, they were awarded a score of 10.

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

10

4

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

a) There is no evidence that students and families were included in the proposal development.

i) There is some evidence that the collective bargaining unit was included in the proposal but there is no letter of support from them contained in the appendix.

b) There are several letters of support from various people and agencies.

Less than half of the requirements were met, so a score of 4 was awarded.

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

5

2

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

A high quality plan includes the following:

-the activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities - the activities are strong and show some evidence in implementing personalized learning. The logic and rationale for the activities is sound. Needs and gaps are listed and are adequate.

- the timeline - there is no timeline

-the deliverables - there is no evidence of deliverables

-the parties responsible - there is no evidence that the parties responsible have been listed

A plan was presented, but failed to provide evidence of key elements of a high quality plan. Therefore, this criteria was rated as a 2.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

A high quality plan includes the following:

-the activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities - activities are listed in a table as evidence of a reform vision. However, the activities do not show evidence of personalized learning.

- the timeline - the timeline is reasonable

-the deliverables - there is no evidence of deliverables

-the parties responsible - there is no evidence that the parties responsible have been listed

Since only 1/2 of the elements of the criteria contained sufficient evidence, 1/2 of the possible points were awarded.

(i) There is no evidence that the plan help students to understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals;

(ii) There is no evidence that the plan helps students Identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements, understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals;

(iii) The plan does demonstrate evidence that students are able to be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest;

(iv) There is no evidence in the plan that students will have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning; and

(v) There is some evidence demonstrated in the plan that students will be able to master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving;

(B)(i) There is no evidence in the plan that students will be able to have a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable the student to achieve his or her individual learning goals and ensure he or she can graduate on time and college- and career-ready;

(ii) There is no evidence that students will have a variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments;

(iii) There is no evidence that the plan includes high-quality content, including digital learning content as appropriate, aligned with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements ;

(iv) (A) Although there is some evidence that the plan includes frequently updated individual student data, the evidence does not support that it can be used to determine progress toward mastery of college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements; and

(B) The plan does not present evidence of personalized learning recommendations based on the student’s current knowledge and skills, college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements , and available content, instructional approaches, and supports;

(v) The plan does not include evidence of accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students to help ensure that they are on track toward meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements ; and

(c) There is no evidence to show that mechanisms are in place to provide training and support to students that will ensure that they understand how to use the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	5
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

High quality plans contain, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines and deliverables, and parties responsible. Although the plan does contain activities and deliverables, the deliverables are weak (some would be considered activities rather than deliverables.) There are no timelines or parties responsible included in the plan. Only 1/4 of the plan is adequate, so a score of 5 was assigned.

- (a) (i) Although the plan includes supporting the effective implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies that meet each student’s academic needs, it does not contain evidence that it will help to ensure all students can graduate on time and college- and career-ready;
- (ii) There is no evidence that the curriculum adopted will adapt content and instruction, providing opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks, in response to their academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches (e.g., discussion and collaborative work, project-based learning, videos, audio, manipulatives);
- (iii) The plan includes a component to frequently measure student progress, however there is no evidence that they will be measured in respect to meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements. There is some evidence in respect to use data to inform both the acceleration of student progress and the improvement of the individual and collective practice of educators
- (iv) There is strong evidence that the plan will improve teachers’ and principals’ practice and effectiveness by using feedback provided by the LEA’s teacher and principal evaluation systems, including frequent feedback on individual and collective effectiveness, as well as by providing recommendations, supports, and interventions as needed for improvement.
- (b) There is no evidence that the plan includes any of the following 3 components:
  - (i) Actionable information that helps educators identify optimal learning approaches that respond to individual student academic needs and interests;
  - (ii) High-quality learning resources (e.g., instructional content and assessments), including digital resources, as appropriate, that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements , and the tools to create and share new resources; and
  - (iii) Processes and tools to match student needs with specific resources and approaches to provide continuously improving feedback about the effectiveness of the resources in meeting student needs.
- (c) (i) There is sufficient evidence that the plan contains a component for Information, from such sources as the district’s teacher evaluation system, that helps school leaders and school leadership teams assess, and take steps to improve, individual and collective educator effectiveness and school culture and climate, for the purpose of continuous school improvement; and
- (ii) Although there is some evidence to support training, systems, and practices to continuously improve school progress toward the goals of increasing student performance, the plan does not contain evidence for closing achievement gaps.
- (d) The plan does not contain an element for a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals , including in hard-to-staff schools, subjects , and specialty areas (such as special education).

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	5
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>A high quality plan should describe, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties. The applicant's response was not in the form of a high quality plan, and did not provide evidence of goals, timelines, deliverables and responsible parties.</p>		

There was evidence supporting over half of the items (although not in the form of a high quality plan). The evidence is supportive but the plan is non-existent, so a score of 5 was awarded.

(a) Although there is narrative describing the organizing of the LEA central office, or the consortium governance structure, to provide support and services to all participating schools, it is not in the form of a high quality plan. There are no goals, timelines or deliverables mentioned.

(b) There is some evidence that principals have autonomy to make day-to-day decisions regarding their schools, but no specific evidence about providing school leadership teams in participating schools with sufficient flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and noneducators, and school-level budgets. The elements of a high quality plan are absent.

(c) There is strong evidence to support giving students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic;

(d) There is strong evidence to support giving students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways; and

(e) There is some evidence of providing learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	4
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

A high quality plan includes goals and rationale for them, activities, deliverables, timelines and responsible parties.

Although there is evidence for 2 of the 4 components of the criteria, they are not presented in the format of a high quality plan. Since there is some evidence to support the implementation of a plan 4 points were awarded.

(a) There is evidence that the plan includes access to communication tools between home and school, but the plan does not show evidence of making necessary content and learning resources both in and out of school.

(b) There is evidence that the plan has appropriate levels of technical support.

(c) There is no evidence that the plan includes using information technology systems that allow parents and students to export their information in an open data format and to use the data in other electronic learning systems. Although they state that they use Skyward School Management System, the applicant does not address whether or not data contained within Skyward is in an open data format - or whether or not it could be exported into other student learning software.

(d) There is no evidence that the plan includes ensuring that LEAs and schools use interoperable data systems

## E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

A high quality plan will include goals and their rationale, activities, deliverables, timelines and parties responsible. The applicant did not present their responses to provide evidence of these components.

The applicant's response discusses current systems and processes for continuous improvement in regard to current operations. It does not address or discuss any type of plan to provide timely and regular feedback toward meeting the project's goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements. The response to (E)(1) does not discuss any type of strategy to monitor, measure and publicly share information on the quality of the RTTD investments.

Since there is some evidence of a continuous improvement process (although not in the form of a high quality plan), a score of 5 was

awarded.

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

5

1

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

A high quality plan includes goals and their rationale, activities, deliverables and timelines, and parties responsible.

Although there is a list of communication vehicles that are currently being used, there is no evidence of a high quality plan that includes the components listed about.

One part of the plan (activities) is presented, so a score of 1 was awarded. The plan is missing important components of a plan, so it is not possible to assess whether or not the plan is high quality.

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

5

2

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

A high quality plan includes goals and their rationale, activities, deliverables and timelines and parties responsible. The evidence shows that the only part of the plan present are the goals and their rationale.

The charts were not broken down by subgroup, as required. Two of the charts were incomplete. A score of 2 was awarded for the evidence shown in goals and rationales and that the goals are ambitious yet achievable.

The applicant's goals are ambitious yet achievable, but are not broken down by subgroup.

(a) There is complete evidence of its rationale for selecting that measure;

(b) There is no evidence showing how the measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant's implementation success or areas of concern; and

(c) There is no evidence of how it will review and improve the measure over time if it is insufficient to gauge implementation progress.

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

5

1

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

A high quality plan will include goals and their rationale, activities, deliverables and timelines and responsible parties.

There is a statement that "many eyes" will be looking at the effectiveness of the program, but applicant does not supply evidence of who the responsible parties are.

There is some evidence that technology tools will be used in the classroom.

Due to the lack of a high quality plan that addresses all of these items, a score of 1 was awarded.

The very brief discussion of a plan fails to show any evidence of a high quality plan. Plans to evaluate the effectiveness of Race to the Top – District funded activities, such as professional development and activities that employ technology, and to more productively use time, staff, money, or other resources in order to improve results, through such strategies as improved use of technology, working with community partners, compensation reform, and modification of school schedules and structures (e.g., service delivery, school leadership teams (as defined in this notice), and decision-making structures).

## 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 chart is completed accurately and the budget is reasonable. However, several of the required elements of the criteria are missing. Due to half of the responses being absent or incomplete a score of 5 was awarded.</p> <p>(a) There is no evidence that other support or funds are included in the cost</p> <p>(b) The evidence that the budget is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal, in looking at the budget narrative, is insufficient. For example, one-time investments are mentioned, but no amount is mentioned. There is no evidence of cost bases in the narrative.</p> <p>(c) (i) There is no evidence of a description of all of the funds (e.g., Race to the Top – District grant; external foundation support; LEA, State, and other Federal funds) that the applicant will use to support the implementation of the proposal, including total revenue from these sources; and</p> <p>(ii) Although there is a narrative identification of the funds that will be used for one-time investments versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs, no amount is mentioned.</p> <p>There is no evidence of a focus on strategies that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	2
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A high quality plan has goals, activities, deliverables and timelines and parties responsible.</p> <p>Because the plan presented did touch on how the program would be sustained, although not in the form of a high quality plan, 2 points were awarded.</p> <p>There is no evidence that the applicant has a high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant.</p> <p>The plan includes support from State funding but there is no evidence of support from leaders.</p> <p>There is no evidence of a plan that may include a budget for the three years after the term of the grant that includes budget assumptions, potential sources, and uses of funds.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>no response was given, so a score of 0 was assigned</p>		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p>		

Through the use of personalized learning plans, the proposal meets absolute priority 1. The vision that it presents is evidence of its commitment to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching. The use of technology and training for all stakeholders ensures that they will have the tools available. Performance measures that are aligned with the vision and the overall plan will provide tools as well. Teaching will be improved through rigorous professional development. Achievement gaps will be decreased through targeted services. Digital resources will allow for assessment, advanced content, and remediation, which will deepen student learning and achievement, increasing graduation rates and college and career preparedness. Curriculum adoption and alignment will increase educator effectiveness, as will the use of evaluation systems.

The applicant coherently and comprehensively addressed how it will build on the core educational assurance areas to create personalized learning environments, increase student achievement, deepen student learning and improve teaching and leading. It also presented a high-quality plan to achieve its goals, increase college and career readiness for its students and close the achievement gap. The absolute priority has been met.

Total	210	92
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