



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0913IN-1 for School City of Hammond

### 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>Notes Vision: SCH successfully prepares all learners for 21st century opportunities; Mission: By 14-15, students will be provided with engaging and diverse learning experiences tailored to their individual needs and interests; effective teachers, leaders, and policies will equip out students with measurable, world class skills required for college and career readiness in the 21st century.</li> <li>Provided specific goals per school: Elem: ensure students are performing on grade level for English and math to prepare them for a 21st century, personalized, literacy based learning experience; Middle: develop and support students' ability to be independent learners who are responsible for the continuance of their education...students will be introduced to a variety of pathways to help them identify their interests... High: continue to educate and develop student's knowledge and skills....that provide students with hands on opportunities to explore potential career and college pathways...many students will leave high school with industry certifications, college credit, and potential acquisition of an associate's degree.</li> <li>Provided 5 clear and attainable goals: 1. all students in SCH will graduate prepared to pursue the personalized plan they develop in high school; 2. SCH will use data to inform instructional and programmatic decisions; 3. SCH will recruit, support and retain a highly selective workforce to support our students to be college and career ready; 4. students in the SCH will engage in personalized learning environments that monitor their progress and provide appropriate supports so they are on track to meeting the standards and the goals they set for themselves; 5. SCH will create a responsive system of support by establishing organized and efficient structures that ensure students and schools have the resources they need for students to thrive.</li> <li>Mentioned success within last 4 years among various schools due to the school participation in the State of Indiana's model of Differentiated Accountability; School Improvement Grant; and the System for Teacher and Student Achievement (TAP)-plans to continue these efforts in order to meet the above noted goals.</li> </ul>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District uses the cluster system and consists of 4 clusters with Elem and middle schools feeding into its high school- (support the cluster approach in its efforts to sustain increases in student achievement).</li> <li>Harmond High School HHS (five Elem, one middle, and one high school) and Morton High School MHS (three Elem, one middle, and one high school) clusters were selected (20 schools to include Clark HS-MS; Columbia ES, Edison ES, Eggers MS, Franklin ES, Gravit, Lafayette ES-one of the district's highest poverty schools, etc).</li> <li>Evidence: chart provides the name of the participating schools; grade level it serves; school demographics in raw data and percentages; the raw data included # of participating educators and students; 3 of participating high need and low income students; total 3 of low income in each school. The percent data reflected the % of participating students in the school; % of participating from low income families; and the % of total LEA low income population.</li> <li>Provided additional details to show participating schools meet the eligibility requirements: HHS Cluster impoverished student population is 78%; poverty is increasing in Hammond area-provided chart that shows 23% increase in poverty from 07-10 "Given our record of success, we know with absolute certainty that funds from RTTT will have a more significant impact if invested in our community more than in any other in the nation with similar rates of high poverty."</li> <li>Description of process schools were selected was clear and justified --"they have proven most effective in harnessing the resources provided to their lowest performing schools to make changes that are showing results."</li> <li>Based on the evidence provided and the supporting details, this section warrants a score of 9.</li> </ul>		

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant provided clear evidence of how the reform proposal will be translated into meaningful reform.</li> <li>• Evidence included the critical components that will be necessary to translate the vision into reality: "A serious and comprehensive data system which allows us to monitor student learning with information regarding both academic and social emotional factors so every student can achieve high standards of learning; High quality training for all teachers and leaders to access, analyze, and disaggregate data in real time to inform instructional practices; Continuous, research based professional development which embeds a cycle of review for corrective actions in decision making against results; Continued outreach to establish partnerships which will provide world class experiences for students- such as the partnership with the College Board and Hanban Confucius Institute in the form of the guest Chinese teacher grant; Strong and responsive leadership which oversees cogent structures, processes and policies to deliver results; and A sophisticated attraction and retention process to secure highly effective teachers and leaders."</li> <li>• Strengths of the plan are demonstrated in Appendix 5. The chart provides the goals; objectives; indicators of success; evidence; strategies; responsible parties; deliverables; actions and timeline. The piece of evidence shows how outcome goals will be met.</li> <li>• Partners with AIR was a strong component and will support the applicant's attention to goals, objectives, and results.</li> <li>• Applicant mentions a centralized database which will provide an Early Warning System and information to create a personalized learning environment for every student.</li> <li>• Lacking clear and convincing evidence that demonstrates how the reform plan will be scaled up to support district wide change beyond the participating school.</li> </ul>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noted the greatest needs for subgroups (AA, Hispanics, Special needs; and ELLs).</li> <li>• Evidence that the vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance was demonstrated by the district's current gains due to the implementation of research based instructional strategies such as differentiated instruction; response to instruction, literacy coaches, TAP, and college and career pathways. Noted that the achievement gap between AA, Hispanics, and those with free and reduced lunch, special education and ELLs has closed by an average of 5.5% per subgroup since 2009.</li> <li>• Evidence in form of charts show 4a. Performance on summative assessments (proficiency status and growth); 4b. decreasing achievement gaps; 4c. graduation rates; and 4d. college enrollment.</li> <li>• Chart 4a noted Indiana's ISTEP assessment was the summative assessment used; method of determining status was the state's cut out scores and growth-value added criteria- Goal areas included ELA and Math.</li> <li>• Chart 4b. Goal areas included ELA and Math; identifying subgroups and comparison group; chart indicates that by 2015 the achievement gap in majority of the subgroups would be closed; description as to justify the 0% by 2014-15 in some areas.</li> <li>• Chart 4c: provided data per subgroup with based line data from 10-11 (noted 11-12 data was not released).</li> <li>• Chart 4d: college enrollment data is based on the College Bound Scholarship Program and the 21st Century Scholars award -baseline is @ 20-23% for all subgroups (Clark, Gavit, Hammond, and Morton HS)- goals 2012-13 increased to @ 75%. This increase does not appear to be attainable in the amount of time. More information or a rationale is needed to make this claim clear.</li> </ul>		

**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	14
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of a clear record of success in past four years was demonstrated in the following: 5 years ago SCH was a struggling district with Hammond HS cluster in jeopardy- Lafayette cited for restructuring under the Elem and Secondary Education Act; Eggers middle was on probation and headed for restructuring and Hammond HS was on probation and identified as a "drop out factory." The district was not making AYP. But under some sustained</li> </ul>		

improvement efforts, in 2010, SCH for the first time achieved AYP and has sustained in 2011. Noted that despite the odds of poverty and increasing poverty rates in Hammond area, student achievement in the district is increasing.

- District focused on what students need to know; our ability to measure students' progress; building an effective workforce to ensure student success; creating high leverage instructional strategies; and having a well organized and effective central office to coordinate and deliver support for students. The Hammond plan has contributed to their record of success.
- Success in student learning outcomes and closing the achievement gap is credited by the implementation of the state standards and common core standards adopted in 2010, improving literacy with Scholastic programs and the TAP program.
- Provided clear descriptions of CCSS, TAP, Read 180 and its impact on teaching and learning; provided a clear description of the data systems and its impact on monitoring student progress; and social and emotional supports (response to instruction; positive behavior intervention systems; coordinated early intervention services)- the social and emotional supports are credited for the decrease in suspensions and expulsions (suspensions/15 of 20 Hammond schools decreased suspensions from 09-10 and 11-12; 11 of 15 Elem schools had no expulsions in 11-12 and five middle showed decreases from 10-12).
- Evidence: Charts depicting the successes during 2009-12 in grades 3-5, increases on the ELA ISTEP assessment (21.7, 5.8, 7.2% increases); Math 3-5 from 09-12, 6.7, 5.2, 10.5% respectively; 6-8 ELA 9.2, 4.7, 9.5 respectively; 9.5, 7.6, 6.2% increases in Math for grades 6-8; HS increases on the ECA- in 08 the percent was 26.8 and in 09-10 increased to 41.5 (missing more recent data to clearly show an increase).
- Evidence: Chart of the reductions in subgroups achievement gap in ELA and Math. ELA: in 09 the gap from AA was 18.7 but in 12, the gap is 11.1, 8.9 to 4.3 for His, 41.2 to 37.4 for special needs; in Math: percentage that gap closed for AA was 7.7, 4.5 for His, 4.5 for spec education, and 4 for ELL.
- Successes in lowest achieving schools- noted that Lafayette was on academic progress for two years 06-08 and now is recognized by the state for its superior student performance and received the extraordinary state designation of Exemplary Progress A. This school increased passing % for ISTEP by 10.9; EMS-was on school improvement in 2003 and headed for restructuring; now noted for its achievement data where from 09-12, 8th graders performance in ELA has increased by 12.9% and math increased by 35.2%; HHS received School Improvement Grant in 2010, and was recognized by the state for increasing the number of minority students enrolled in AP courses and recognized because 10% increase in the number of students who passed at least one AP exam in 2011.
- Performance data is made available via the Department of Education website, letters to parents, and the learning connection-which is a tool to help make the data actionable for teachers and leaders.

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

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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- Noted financial data is published by school district website; annual financial reports published in two local newspapers; annual school board budget workshops; public budget hearing prior to school board adoption; State department of education website; public access TV show; school district personnel bimonthly reports; and new department of local government finance gateway internet system.
- Provided the school corporation demographics which provided the following info: "our assessed valuation is advertised at 1,600,000,000; 12803 students in 2012, 882 certified staff and 57 administrators and 853 classified personnel.
- Charts in the appendix provided further evidence: Locations to include Administration Building; Media; Warehouse; Clark Middle/High; Gavitt MH/Hammond HS; Morton HS; Area Career Center; Transportation; Hess Elem; Eggars M; Scott Middle; Columbia ES; Edison ES; Franklin ES; Harding ES; Irving ES; Jefferson ES; Kenwood ES; Lafayette ES; Lincoln ES; Maywood ES; Morton ES; Wallace ES; OBannon ES; Miller Site; Adult Ed; Language Development Programs: name of employee, class of classified or certified; pay group (clerical or teacher etc); job/position, and salary.
- Chart entitled Non personnel expenditures by school was provided in the appendix. The information per school included the total cost for the following: trash removal; telephone; printing; travel; supplies; library books; lab/course fees (where applicable; maintenance/utilities overhead; dues and fees; periodicals.
- Provided a pie chart that depicts the general fund expense by type (benefits, salaries, equipment; supplies; services and utilities; travel, and other; evidence- pie chart of classroom and non classroom percent of budget (28% non to 72%) - classroom expend total 71,011,266 while non classroom was 27, 617, 589.
- Provided an ADM cost analysis chart which provided info from 09 to 12 about ADM count, loss enrollment, and \$\$ per student.

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

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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- Evidence to support: the elimination of seat time requirements for credit and the elimination of the traditional 4 year high school plan (early graduation); the development of 12 college and career pathways to help students in preparing for their future.
- Noted that thru the school improvement grant, SCH was able to secure waivers necessary to reduce the burdens and increase autonomy for decision making and program implementation (credit these changes at the state level for helping to create the conditions necessary to successfully implement the RTT-D grant and create the personalized learning environments).
- Making data readily accessible was mentioned-the school report card on the state's website allows community to see the school and its performance; the learning connection allows information to be easily accessible; the state required the use of Acuity to assess and monitor student growth- an assessment tool that has increased student achievement.
- State legislated evaluation tools for teacher, principals, and superintendents. This allows for flexibility to propose an alternate evaluation structure; teachers would use the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching rubric.
- Clear evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy.

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

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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- Provided a well documented account of the engagement in development of the proposal.
- Noted that the process began with collaboration btw the superintendent and the president of the Hammond Teacher Federation; first group of stakeholders involved were school city instructional staff and administrators; idea was taken to the Hammond Board of Trustees- this group made a public announcement and the posting was loaded on the SCH website; teachers from each level were invited.
- A timeline was provided to further support the engagement; -dates, meeting purpose and attendee count was provided; sign in sheets for each meeting was too provided. The meeting purposes included RTT kick off meeting; action planning; action planning/application development; application review and development; core team writing; first draft to mayor; core team review; core team checking for gaps; second draft to Department of Education (total of 11 meetings).
- The superintendent and president of teachers federation spoke about the proposal on the local radio; school city partners were involved; such included the college bound scholarship program reps; and common council scholarship initiative (letters of support are included)
- Letters of support are included from stakeholders- to include ones from Marcie Brown from the State Dept of Indiana; Jason Culbertson (NIET) and Dave Dressler (CELL) ; the Hammond Education foundation; US Congressman Peter Visclosky; State Representative Linda Lawson and North Township Trustee, Frank Mrvan.
- Other stakeholders (letters included) are Linda Woloshansky, president and chief exec officer of the Center of Workforce Innovations; Dr Jozwiak of the Geminus Corp-head start; United Way- Lou Martinez.
- Did not see a letter from the Hammond Teachers Federation- could not tell if the LEA had collective bargaining representation; did include sign in sheets from meetings- numbers do not show 70% of teachers from participating schools.
- Based on the letters of support and lacking evidence of collective bargaining representation (with or without), this section warrants a score of 5.

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

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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

- Noted identifying "pockets of success" where implementation is strong and existing investment yields results; these practices were inconsistently implemented across the district. Therefore there was a need to leverage these into all classrooms.
- Planning for personalized learning began with district planning and use of the SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat) analysis; the results were analyzed followed by multiple discussions about student engagement, instructional strategies, student support, and fidelity, implementation, repetition, and standards achievement.
- Noted that a needs analysis of Hammond and Morton HS and their feeder schools will be conducted 60 days after the award- this would provide needed information as they begin to move forward in implementing the personalized learning environments; Analysis will include data from teachers ; collection and use of student data for instruction; knowledge and use of common core; technology use administrator self assessments; review of district documents such as policies and professional development plan.
- Major gaps exist:- due to not having a centralized data system; need for a more systemic and aligned protocol for professional development.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	14

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- Addressed most areas with strong, convincing evidence.
- Noted Goal 4: students in the SCH will engage in personalized learning environments that monitor their progress and provide appropriate supports so they are on track to meeting the standards and the goals they set for themselves" (mentioned the success of this plan is dependent on enhancing the data system which is goal 2).
- Noted in C1ai: through the use of positive behavior intervention systems, classroom management support systems students develop the discipline and focus they need to learn in the classroom - the Mayors College Bound Scholarship program and the 21st Century Scholars Program were mentioned as avenues students can take to attend college- noted that these programs allows teachers to show students that college is attainable.
- In section C1aai, noted literacy as the focus for early grades k-3-providing them with the skills they will need to engage in more dynamic learning experiences, middle grades and cooperative learning is the focus; grades 7-12 engagement in project based learning; and the process of developing and monitoring their goals for career and college readiness in 7th grade thru the EXPLORE assessment. This assessment is designed to help students recognize their strengths and weaknesses, pick a career path, and develop an individual learning plan.
- Section C1aiii, developed 4 learning programs that address aptitudes and interests: the Hammond academy for the performing arts; the Broadcast academy for those interested in radio and television; the area career center and Clark HS- pilot school of an advanced manufacturing program through Ivy Tech College
- Provided an Interest based Programs for SCH Students chart- chart illustrated programs at each level and a description of the program; Example programs include science Olympiad-offers team work on science concepts; robotics- first Lego league for grades 4-8 and 9-12- these two are for all levels; Elem and middle level programs include summer opportunities for academic recognition; Gateways to technology is a class that builds on those interested in technology-computer software; AP course; Area Career center offers courses in auto shop; early childhood; cosmetology; dental assists, culinary arts, etc
- Mentioned in section C1avi, common core state standards and technology will assist in exposing students to diverse cultures; Elem students use the Flat Stanley projects to write to friends and pen pals; Goal to expand the guest Chinese teacher program with the college board and Hanban Confucius Institute; enhance language development program for ELL in order to make them proficient in both their native language and English
- As it relates to C1av (master critical academic content and develop skills and traits), Spencer Kagan's approach was highlighted. Noted that cooperative learning structures can increase students time on task and motivate and deepen the learning experience. Cooperative learning structures by Kagan were noted to develop effective attributes of positive interpersonal peer and teacher relationships, equitable participation, individual accountability, self esteem, and achievement and thereby develop skills and traits such as goal setting, team work, critical thinking and problem solving.
- Section B, evidence demonstrated that a focus on literacy at the early years will be one method to students achieving his or her individual learning goals and ensuring he or she can graduate on time and college- and career-ready.The focus of literacy instruction is differentiation of instruction based on students reading level.Reading interventionists at all Elem schools support underperforming students. At the middle level, the use of interdisciplinary teams is the focus-math and science teachers are paired and their classrooms are adjoined to the ELA and SS teachers. It is noted that collaboration lends to cooperative learning opportunities. Project based learning opportunities at the HS level are noted.
- C1bii- a variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments- evidence notes 'training of teachers and students to work in cooperative learning and project based structures as well as in creating environments that foster teamwork and personalization'; the works of Spencer Kagan are noted here as support for the cooperative learning structures
- C1biii section includes details about new digital technologies via tablet computers in the secondary schools; Kuno tablets along with curriculum loft will bring 21st century learning to the schools and students;Curriculum loft allows students with the content materials needed and with the ability to share resources and lesson plans with peers- Kuno will help the schools become a digital environment that supports personalized learning for the acquisition of world class skills
- Ongoing and regular feedback--notes the current data system and its issues- grant will fund the data system and student data dashboards which will use identified measures to signal the appropriate interventions to provide student support; inadequate evidence for this section- no evidence provided for personalized learning recommendations.
- Evidence for C1bv includes the early warning system as a strategy/accommodation for high need students; this system will enable staff to more effectively track student successes toward graduation and provide supports to high needs students early enough to "catch" the problems

Training and support for students includes the data system as well as new technology based learning. Evidence for this section is not clear or convincing.

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

20

16

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- Provided detailed and convincing evidence for each section- evidence centers around the professional learning communities; a centralized data system; expanding existing programming, and securing the necessary resources to meet the district's needs.
- Evidence to support C2ai includes the need to have access to data, how to apply data to content and instruction, and receive training and ongoing support to build their capacity; Evidence included the recent addition to the learning communities; the establishment of multidisciplinary teams at all HS to support freshman academies- these learning communities yield two outcomes 1. the expansion of cooperative learning environments and the expansion of the TAP components in all schools; principals get training to develop and manage leadership teams (consisting of an administrator, master and mentor teachers).
- As it relates to educators engaged in trainings that supports their capacity to adapt content and instruction... (C2aii) evidence includes the district providing a number of additional trainings for teachers such as PLTW (a project based program), AP Programs, Advanced college project programs, and a variety of classes at the area career center; the TAP systems provides teachers with job embedded professional development once a week (evidence is convincing and clear).
- In response to measuring student progress toward meeting college and career ready standards, the proposal notes the importance of providing initial training and support for the data system. The system described would be a user friendly interface, data dashboard; that will allow teachers , students parents and others to gain a comprehensive profile of a student, classroom, building and or district.
- The district's evaluation system (TAP) is part of the NIET teacher evaluation system and is the evidence for C2aiv (improving teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness); the summative teacher evaluation is divided into 4 categories (highly effective; effective; needs improvement; and ineffective); besides the NIET rubric, the district uses the Web portal which provides videos of teachers in the class. Administrators and teachers watch videos and practice scoring to gain a deeper understanding of the rubric and to create a common language around effective instruction in the district. The portal also contains support materials to conduct professional development on research based instructional strategies
- Actionable information that helps educators identify optimal learning approaches include the data system which will drive actions to inform how to establish optimal learning approaches for learners; another actionable information piece mentioned was student and parent feedback as they progress toward their established plan. This actionable piece in vague and could use additional support.
- Section C highlights the multiple sources to gather teacher performance data. One source mentioned was the comprehensive online data entry system (CODE). This system includes teacher observation data on three rubrics- this data is linked to student growth and made accessible on the Learning Connection. The web based individual dashboards are also included in this section. The dashboard provides a comprehensive profile of each students.The Curriculum Loft Learning Management System is another piece of evidence to support the above claims. The curriculum loft is a three part learning management system that includes device management and resource management. Its focus is on collaboration. All pieces of evidence are clear and convincing and appropriate.
- As it relates to increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers, the SCH teacher evaluation plan (STEP) is noted to have built in support structures that move teachers into effective and highly effective categories; Partnerships with Teach for America and the College Board Hanban Confucius Institute will assist in recruiting efforts in critical errors such as math and science and world language. Elaborate on the latter statement to provide a more concise and clear picture this section.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- Evidence is convincing and demonstrates a clear and complete plan to implement policies that support reform at the district and school level.

- Mentions plans to build upon the reorganization and restructuring that has taken place by partnering with American Institute for Research -notes this will make good on the promise of the grant and demonstrate efforts to ensure sustainability.
- Under a (organizing the LEA central office), the central office and the superintendent are reorganizing and restructuring staff to meet the district's needs. A new technology director and data director were hired to help lay the foundation for the centralized data warehouse; a new turnaround director was hired to help with district's support for struggling schools; ELL position was filled but another has been posted due to growing population. Evidence of how it will look afterwards is missing.
- Supporting evidence note the development of leadership teams (created to support the academic initiatives in the buildings).
- D1cd: Noted the use of PLATO (provided a description in the appendix) which allows students to progress through lessons at their own pace or demonstrate mastery on an End of Course assessment to earn a credit; Description of Plato notes that it targets the specific issues that have prevented learners from moving forward; this evidence is convincing and appropriate.
- As it relates to providing learning resources and instructional practices that are accessible to all students, limited evidence was provided. Mentioned the personalized research based interventions of Read 180 and System 44- no supporting details.

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

- In response to ensuring all students parents and educators have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources; and technical support- evidence is insufficient. Response included verbiage to create schools that will accommodate parents technological needs through training and access to computers; parent training
- C: Evidence was appropriate and convincing. Applicant notes include the use of TAP in providing training and teacher support; the creation of a comprehensive data warehouse and early warning system (EWS) to leverage the work to build a data based culture. More details about the EWS were provided to support the claim-EWS is to use readily available data to systematically identify students who are at risk (especially for dropping out of HS) tailor interventions that target their risk factors, and monitor the effectiveness of those interventions with the goal of keeping students in school and improving their academic performance.
- The response to support the use of interoperable data systems includes the data system (which will coordinate and monitor all human resources)-; the TAP system will track teacher and leader effectiveness; evidence did not support the system that identifies budget data. Mentioned the "budget data will be transparent and regularly reviewed and reported to stakeholders and closely aligned to our overall vision, mission and goals."

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- Well planned and solid continuous improvement process developed by SCH- begins with building awareness; setting expectations; defining roles and responsibilities; collecting data; analyzing and evaluating data; revising and refining; communicating results; and repeating process from collecting data stage.
- Building awareness is supported by the following statements: "the initial step of building awareness is critical for moving the entire community toward a common language"; SCH will use staff meeting, in service, newsletters and announcements to describe changes in policies, procedures.
- Roles and responsibilities (step 3) involves the identification of which person or party will be responsible for collecting data, evaluating progress, and establishing what or who is being evaluated.
- A "revise and refine" stage occurs in the process requires taking action to either revise or refine the action.
- Sharing the data is one of the steps of the plan by writing and disseminating reports, and communicate as necessary; communication will occur thru various channels and will be disseminated to students, parents, teachers, and external members of the business community and stakeholders.
- Lacking timeline of each phase- this would add more support for the process.
- Limited details in how the applicant will monitor, and measure the quality of investments.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This section was well documented with strong and clear means to support strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with stakeholders.</li> <li>• Supporting details include the media currently employed by the district. This system is called School Messenger (a notification system to communicate with families and parents); the district website will be used to communicate with students and parents; SCH gets local media coverage at the Board of Trustees meetings; Superintendent gets radio coverage as a regular guest on WJOB AM 1230</li> <li>• There is a plan to develop an individual student dashboard that will contain info about academic achievement, attendance, behavior, progress toward graduation, and other info that will ensure students are college and career ready.</li> <li>• Applicant noted the use of tracking (in particular resources) as a means to communicate and engage with internal and external stakeholders.</li> <li>• Clear evidence of communication and engagement. Evidence to show how these elements would translate into mechanisms for adjustments and revisions o the plan was weak/unclear.</li> </ul>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided clear evidence under the following performance measures; evidence includes charts that illustrate the performance measures for all applicants; The following performance measures are convincing and appropriate- rationale for each is depicted in the description.</li> <li>• Teacher effectiveness-measured by the NIET rubric. Four schools receive evaluation (4 times) as part of TAP; remaining schools are part of the standards based testing and evaluation program (STEP) which was developed by the district.</li> <li>• Scholastic Reading Inventory-is an assessment administered thru a computer that determines the reading levels of individual students using Metametrics Lexile leveling system; Scholastics has developed growth expectations per grade level which will be the baseline for measuring individual growth of students on SRI performance.</li> <li>• Attendance-rationale for this performance measure highlights how absences in the early grades can impact future academic outcomes;</li> <li>• Charts provide supplemental support to the above claims: charts show the performance measure, applicable population, the subgroup, 2011-12 baseline data and target data; other charts depict SRI data that includes the applicable population, subgroups (all participating students) and baseline and target stats.</li> </ul>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans to evaluate the effectiveness was addressed by noting that the plans to evaluate the effectiveness of funded activities will follow the following checkpoints: SCH will hire a project manager to ensure that all components are implemented, monitored and reported with fidelity; Superintendent and project manager will develop a check list of key activities with specific timelines.</li> <li>• The project manager's role includes gathering info during the needs assessment, collecting and organizing all baseline data to move the plan forward; principals and central office administration will trend the data and report monthly- this will allow for transparency.</li> <li>• Evidence is insufficient as it relates to the entire questions; Response noted the TAP and the NIET rubric will be used to measure teacher and principal effectiveness/teacher observations will be accessible thru the TAP CODE system; Workshops will be developed to allow understanding of and curriculum alignment to common core state standards; AIR will provide leadership and management support- this partnership will allow SCH to develop monitoring systems and evaluate work.</li> <li>• Evidence was provided to support the use of data facilitator and technology professional development facilitators in evaluating professional development activities. These individuals will use surveys and observations to differentiate support.</li> <li>• Mentioned the use of workshops to allow understanding of the Common Core standards. No signs of how the workshop will be evaluated.</li> </ul>		

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F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	6
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided an achievable and realistic budget- noted a one time expense/contract for AIR's need assessment (\$80,000); the budget for the data system will include software; database admin and a curriculum data facilitator and a professional development coordinator will be hired; the Scholastic Read 180 and System 44 programs will be purchased (one time expense); technology purchases will be for the project based learning systems.</li> <li>• Charts supported the budget narratives; chart 1 included the overall budget summary (included the budget categories and cost per year) This chart provided funds from other sources that will support the project-appeared for each year.</li> <li>• Chart 2 provides addition evidence- entitled overall budget summary project list. This chart included costs for needs assessment, interventions, teacher effectiveness, coaching/mentoring; data system; personalized learning; common core; and project manager and administrative assistant costs. This chart was complete and demonstrated the primary associated criterion and location in the application of each.</li> <li>• Each of the above mentioned categories had its individual chart that showed which years money will be budgeted for the item; for example one the needs assessment chart- money was only in year one of the project where as in the intervention chart, money (personnel, fringe, contractual) appeared under each of the project. The teaching effectiveness chart contained the same budget categories (personnel, fringe, contractual); the coaching and mentoring chart designated money under the contractual category- the cost decreased as the project years increased.</li> <li>• Funds from other sources were provided on the various budget charts (for example, project based learning chart; teacher effectiveness and interventions) but there was no evidence as to who would support these implementations (description).</li> </ul>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	8
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant provided a number of financial resources that will be used to sustain a number of the new programs and activities. Noted that most of the funding sources will be directed toward areas that the data analysis indicates as needing ongoing or continued improvement or development.</li> <li>• Title 1 will provide federal funds allocated through the Elem and Sec Education Act to support educational needs of students in high poverty school districts (there are 9 Title 1 schools in which 7 are Elem and 2 are secondary)- these funds will support the position of interventionist in each of the Title 1 buildings.</li> <li>• Title II A (teacher quality grant) will focus on teacher training and professional development- funds will support the appropriate staff training that is necessary to implement programs across the district in addition to consultant fees, costs for substitutes, conference registration, and travel expenses.</li> <li>• The Common School Fund was also targeted as possible funds to be used to sustain the project. These funds are used to enhance technology for staff and students and for ongoing technology training. There is no evidence of the technology maintenance policy/procedure.</li> <li>• E-rate funds are federal funds used to work in conjunction with the Common School Fund. These funds could possibly be used for replacing and the enhancement of building infrastructure and network wiring.</li> <li>• The general fund supports the overall administration and operation of services and supplies for students and faculty. It is state supported and can be used to support some of the technology plan after the award period is over.</li> <li>• Additional funds include the special education fund- these funds could continue to support the social and emotional well being of students who are identified as being in need of the these services.</li> <li>• Monies from grants are also noted: the small learning communities grant (federal) funds the learning communities; monies from SIG and SLC grants could also be used to continue putting in programs and structures.</li> <li>• To add to the evidence, an ongoing sustainability funding chart was provided- the chart illustrated funding categories with ongoing funding for years 1-3. The total for the 3 years is 7,790,400.00.</li> <li>• Other plans to secure funding included teacher incentive grant; textbook rental funds; innovative grant; and title II B.</li> <li>• The applicant provides sufficient evidence to term this as a high quality plan for sustainability.</li> </ul>		

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

- Provided clear and convincing descriptions of partners- Hammond Education Foundation which supports SCH with its literacy initiative through its dictionary giveaways and Come Read with Me program. This program trains K and 1st grade teachers to work with parents and then supplies the materials to conduct parent workshops; Another partner identified is the Hammond YMCA which offers day care services before and after school at a number of the elementary buildings; the Boys and Girls Club of America were too mentioned as partners-they serve to support the students and families.
- The proposal identified all preschool aged students; preschool ELLs; preschool special education students, and preschool learners in poverty as the population level desired results. This evidence was presented the form of a chart where the type of result (e.g. educational or family and community) and desired results were noted. For example, for Preschool ELLs, the type of result was PACT/Head start enrollment-Educational impact and Family involvement. The desired results for this population was school readiness skills and early screening; and participation in the districts language development program and its resources to ELL families.
- Letter of support from the United Way adds to the evidence of how the partnerships would integrate education and other services. The United Way supports the students and families by providing education, income and health services. "...expands and teaches parents in the area of financial literacy so as to promote financial stability for them and their children." The partnership with the Haven House is another example-provides families with a violence free living environment.
- Evidence of how the partnership and LEA would build the capacity of staff in the participating schools was inadequate/missing.
- Applicant did not provide clear and convincing evidence that demonstrates how the partnership would track the selected indicators that measure each result; use the data to target its resources in order to improve results for participating students; develop a strategy to scale the model beyond the participating students; improve results over time.
- The applicant acknowledges the importance of integrating education with other services (e.g., services that address social-emotional, and behavioral needs). "SCH has initiated behavior/academic programs that will bring focus to and help identify and monitor student progress in all aspects." Applicant notes the positive behavior intervention system (PBIS) and the Response to Instruction (RTI) as components that focus on student behavior and how it impacts achievement. The student expulsion/intervention (SEI) initiative at the secondary schools was noted as a mechanism to deal with students involved with minor disciplinary infractions. More description in this area is necessary to make the claim more convincing.
- Not enough evidence was presented that addressed its annual ambitious yet achievable performance measures for the proposed population-level and describe desired results for students.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

- This applicant meets Absolute Priority 1: Personalized learning environments by providing the following evidence and supports.
- The goals noted clearly demonstrate how student learning and teaching will be improved. Goals include: 1. all students will graduate prepared to pursue the plan they developed for themselves in high school; 2. SCH will use data to inform instructional and programmatic decisions; 3. SCH will recruit, support, and maintain a highly selective workforce to deliberately support our students to be college and career ready; 4. Students will engage in personalized learning

environments that monitor their progress and provide appropriate supports so they are on track to meeting the standards and the goals they set for themselves; and 5. the SCH will create a responsive system of establishing organized and efficient structures that ensure students and schools have the resources needed for student success in the 21st century.

- The objectives for the project are clear and support the notion that the learning environments created will improve learning and teaching; accelerate student achievement; expand student success; decrease the achievement gap. Objectives (mentioned in appendix 5) are supported by indicators of success and evidence and deliverables. The time line is also convincing and achievable. Some objectives include SCH will "have district wide curriculum maps used by all schools that are aligned to the CCSS"; "the SCH will have assessments that are aligned to the curriculum to monitor student progress"; "create district data teams"; "build capacity of stakeholders to use data systems to support students in meeting their goals"; "continuous training on the evaluation system for new teachers"; "students ...will participate in cooperative learning and ...in project based learning."

Total	210	155
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0913IN-2 for School City of Hammond

### A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

There is clear evidence that the school district is making strides in recent years in accelerating student academic achievement (e.g., significant gains in ELA and math scores at most grade levels of elementary and middle schools; significant growth, especially in the last year, in high school ECAs in grade 10). The vision as set out in the first section also demonstrates that the district has a plan for building students' basic skills in the elementary years, use cooperative and project based learning activities in the middle schools that prepare students for working in a global society, and provide students with "hands-on opportunities to explore potential career and college pathways" while earning industry certifications, college credit and potentially an associate's degree. These strategies have the potential to deepen student learning and build on personal interest, though, in the case of the former, this is not explicitly addressed within the narrative, and in the case of the latter, it is not clear to what extent these career and college explorations will be based on student academic interests. There is uneven evidence of the vision addressing the four core assurances. For example, Appendix 2 does show a flyer for the TAP program that is apparently designed to help improve the training, support, evaluation and training of teachers; there is a mention made of principal and superintendent evaluation (the RISE model mandated by the state, mentioned in section B(3)), but there is a lack of details about the system itself. And while the narrative states that the district will use data to inform instructional decisions, there is no mention made of the ability of that data system to connect teacher and student data. Therefore, this response is a high-middle score.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	7
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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant clearly described the process for choosing the schools (i.e., the HHS and MHS clusters have been most effective in harnessing their resources and have demonstrated success as described in Section A(1)). This section also included extensive identification of LEA and school-level implementation of specific programs, along with the status of implementation, designed to move the reform forward (this was misidentified as Appendix 3 when it was actually Appendix 4). A list of the participating schools and their current implementation status was provided in Appendix 4. Chart A(2) provided

information about the number of students who would be participating, in total and by subgroups. The overall plan approaches high-quality planning as defined in the grant in terms of addressing the current status and potential timelines of program activities identified. The rationale for each of these programs, however, was not provided outside of a mention of some specific interventions that focused on literacy (Scholastic's Read 180 and System 44). Therefore, this section rated a high-middle score

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

10

10

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The district appears to have a high-quality plan for scaling up the reform from the initial clusters to the rest of the district. Appendix 5 details the plans for meeting key goals, the parties responsible and a specific timeline for engaging the activities. The initial cluster was chosen to take advantage of a cluster that has demonstrated meeting student growth outcomes and moving them out of low achieving or failing designations. Full implementation in scaling beyond the initial clusters will begin in 2 years of receipt of the grant. The district identifies research-based interventions and a comprehensive data system as tools it will use to implement its plan, thereby increasing the likelihood of success in transforming its goals to credible actions. Partners, including AIR who will monitor results, will provide support for the plan and increase the credibility of the implementation. This section demonstrates a high standard in meeting the expectations

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

10

6

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The district's recent performance on state assessments for subgroups (5.5% per annum increase on average for black, Hispanic, special education, ELL and students in poverty) indicates the capacity to carry out their vision and decrease achievement gaps. The Mayor of Hammond's College Bound Scholarship Program also provides a lever to increase motivation and access to higher education for the children of homeowners who graduate from high school. There is a clear plan for increasing student outcomes on state assessments by an annual 3% per year during and beyond the grant period. This would appear to be an achievable goal but it is not clear from the narrative whether this meets or exceeds the state's ESEA targets for the district. Given the current rate of closing the gap of 5.5%, it is also not clear that this is a terribly ambitious goal. There is also one other disconcerting statistic cited by the district of a current 35.9% graduation rate for special education students. The district applies the same 3% increase in graduation rates for these students as other subgroups (who are all graduating at greater than a 70% rate currently); while this is an equal standard, it is clearly not an equitable one for a subgroup currently graduating at less than half the rate of others. This qualifies the current section as a high mid-range score.

**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	13

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district has demonstrated a clear record of success in all grade levels in elementary and middle grades as reported on charts, with especially impressive gains at third grade in ELA (21.7% increase in three years). These gains extend to high school end-of-course assessments (ECA), with an increase of 15.1% between the 2008-09 and 2009-10 school year; it is not clear why these data were not reported in the same three year range as the ISTEP data for middle and elementary school. In this same three year time span, the district has also closed achievement gaps for all subgroups reporting from 3.8% (special ed in ELA) to 7.7% for Black students in mathematics. It is also clear that the district has not chosen to cherry pick data in the narrowing of the achievement gap as they report an increase in achievement gaps among Hispanic, ELL and students in poverty in 2012, state an awareness of the issue (a portion of which is attributable to a double digit increase in the numbers of students taking the ISTEP in these groups) and identifying measures to mitigate some of the issues. The district has also closed the gap in high school graduation rates by increasing their own graduation by 9.7% to the state's 4.4% increase. The College Bound Scholarship program has helped to increase college enrollment by approximately 40% between 2006 and 2011.

The applicants point out the progress that Lafayette School has made by being designated by the state of Exemplary Progress A. Several other examples are provided of schools within the grant cluster as making significant improvements (MHS avoiding takeover by the state by improving student performance. Most impressive is the performance of the middle school (EMS) that used the Differentiated Accountability Model and additional PD provided by an outside consultant to increase ELA (12.9%) and mathematics (35.2%) performance on 8th grade ISTEP from 2009-12.

The applicants already have several characteristics of a data system supportive of communication with multiple stakeholders available. Their current data system has a student and parent portal for the viewing of schedules, grade book scores, grades, progress reports, attendance and discipline records. Teachers and administrators have been trained and are able to access longitudinal student data. The current reform initiatives (TAP, Read 180) are forecast to increase teachers' abilities to engage students in personalized learning environments as they are fully understood and implemented. The applicants recognize that the current system is not as user-friendly for parents as it could be and proposes a centralized data warehouse that will include the creation of an Early Warning System to target early identification of students at risk. While all aspects of the data system are not currently in play, the district's recognition of the need and their own apparent attention to stakeholder feedback, along with their proposed changes, provides evidence that their proposal may be successful. Overall, this section merits a score in the high range.

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

5

5

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant identifies multiple ways in which LEA processes, practices and investments in education are made transparent to the public and disaggregated by school; these data were generated using US Census Bureau's F-33 Classifications. These methods include the district website, financial report published annually in two local newspapers, public budget hearings prior to school board adoption, and a public access TV show, among others. Evidence in appendices shows the actual personnel salaries of individuals and positions, as well as non-personnel expenditures (e.g., trash removal, supplies, library books, etc.). This is a high score

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

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has identified multiple conditions that promote both autonomy and authority to implement the personalized learning environments identified within their proposal. These include the state's elimination of "seat time" requirements for graduation and the elimination of the traditional 4-year high school graduation requirement. The districts SIG funds have also provided waivers to reduce burden and increase autonomy for implementing the program. With the state's data system in place and the district's use of formative and summative assessments, as well as behavioral assessments, the district has the potential to meet its claim of being able to personalize individual performance targets to guide student progress. In addition, the district's implementation of Acuity, beyond the state's requirement of its use in low-performing schools, demonstrates a willingness to create internal conditions conducive to the use of data for monitoring student growth. Other state tools include the use of RISE, what appears to be a state-adopted administrator evaluation system, and TAP to move to a comprehensive performance-based system of accountability and compensation. The conditions include a plan to increase the spread of TAP from the current 4 schools to cover the two clusters during the implementation of the grant. The personalized learning environment also benefits from the use of a trimester system that allows for greater credit recovery for students at risk of not graduating on time. This is further enhanced by the state's elimination of seat time requirements so that the district is able to take advantage of the district's online interface, PLATO, to demonstrate mastery of course competencies. This qualifies as a high score

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

10

5

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant made a number of efforts to include meaningful stakeholder engagement. These included initiating contact with the president of the HTF. Wide representation of teachers and administrators was evidenced in the sign-in sheets for a variety of meetings with the numbers at these meetings ranging from 3-19. A local radio show was also used to promote the application with one unsolicited email of feedback provided as evidence of its impact. A number of outside educational entities (NIET, CELL) also were engaged and leaders in those organizations wrote letters of support, as did a variety of politicians and other outside agencies (Center of Workforce Innovations, the Geminus Corporation) who apparently have partnerships with the district. The narrative states that feedback from some of these entities, citing NIET and CELL explicitly, were taken into account and used to improve the grant; no specific examples were provided. Notably lacking in the proposal was the involvement of students or parents outside of those representing particular organizations; it appears that the applicant used more traditional partner organizations which calls into question the district's information gathering from the groups (e.g., parents of ELL and special education students, those students themselves) who are targeted for support in the grant. Therefore, this is a mid-level score.

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

5

3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides clear evidence of a high-quality plan that includes goals, strategies for achieving the goals, the responsible parties, specific deliverables, timelines and evidence of success. The plan builds upon existing resources and proposes comprehensive solutions that, if they were to be carried out, have the potential to improve the learning environment for students (e.g., re-establishing mental health services for children and implementing specific supports for at-risk students in specific subgroups). The applicant's use of data and the establishment of a SWOT analysis, with a plan for follow up, is also commendable and provides evidence of high-quality planning. Within 60 days of award of the grant, the applicant states that they will implement a needs assessment specifically addressing the implementation of personalized learning environments within the cluster schools that are first implementers. This is a multivariate assessment that addresses the perceptions of teachers and administrators at length. The assessment, however, does not mention the key stakeholders of students and parents in identifying assets and barriers to implementing personalized learning environments. To this reviewer, those are significant groups to ignore and qualify this response as mid-level.

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 proposes a plan that focuses on prevention of student failure rather than on crisis management. They will use the CCSS and the previously mentioned College Bound Scholarship and 21st Century Scholar's programs as vehicles to help parents and students set reasonable goals for student success. They also recognize the need for students of poverty to have both a relationship with teachers and other adults, as well as experiencing success to help them to shift their mindsets to the value of education for future goals. They propose the use of literacy in early grades, cooperative learning in the middle grades and project-based learning in upper grades. All of these contribute to the potential for increasing personalized learning environments.

The district has a plan that provides a stair-step approach to help students build the skills necessary to identify and pursue learning and development goals. This includes the elementary focus on building basic literacy skills, including in native languages of non-native speakers. The acquisition of literacy skills will enable students to pursue more rigorous activities in cooperative groups. This also has the potential to be motivating and meet 21st century skill requirements. The project-based learning from grades 7-12, properly implemented, also has the potential to take advantage of students' interests and career goals.

The district offers a diverse selection of school-year and summer programming that enables students to have deep learning experiences in academic and non-academic experiences. In total, these (e.g., Broadcast Academy, Career Center, Advanced Manufacturing Program) provide a variety of experiences that can meet individual needs and skills that combine academic and career goals. In addition, the district offers proposals to alter current structures, including staffing, schedules, and instructional contexts that can provide more personalized learning opportunities.

The use of technology and projects like "Flat Stanley" have the potential to increase the reach of the classroom into other cultures and contexts. They also identify a commitment to their world languages program by expanding their Confucius Institute and developing a partnership with a Latin American country to expand the Spanish program. There is mention of the use of online resources, but it is not clear in what other ways technology may be incorporated to increase exposure.

The use of cooperative learning at the middle grade levels is a researched method that can increase teamwork, communication and problem-solving, among other skill development. The project-based approach in the upper grades also has the same potential to increase those skills as well as critical thinking and perseverance.

The plan proposes the use of leveled readers to increase personalization of early literacy programs and the shift in middle grades to interdisciplinary teams that will be able to help students work together in cooperative groups and make planning more coherent in addressing more rigorous content. Specific programs, like the Leveled Literacy Intervention System and Read 180 can create contexts for learning that are personalized. The team approach also is a high-quality approach to motivating students by having teachers connect content in middle grades. The adoption of the CCSS will ensure that content is aligned with college and career standards and the use of Kuno tablets will increase the use of digital contexts for learning in schools and classrooms for students. These are slated to be used for career exploration as well as addressing content skills.

The applicant states that they begin all programs with consideration for high-need students. Outside of the Early Warning System, however, there are no explicit references to exactly which of the programs they currently use or are considering will both accommodate for high-need students to ensure that they are on track to meet the college and career-ready standards

and graduation requirements.

This is a mid-range score

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

As identified previously, the district proposes to use the TAP system to leverage vertical professional learning communities of teachers and administrators to increase PD and the use of data to support effective implementation of learning environments and research-based strategies to ensure students are meeting academic requirements. They are also using the Kagan Cooperative Learning Structure by building capacity in district by training a teacher to be a certified Kagan trainer. These infrastructural responses support individual and collective capacities to address training and PD for the betterment of students. When coupled with a strong, centralized data system, students may benefit by increasing their learning opportunities based on individual needs.

The district is part of the PARCC states and have identified resources to assist them in adapting content and instruction to meet CCSS expectations. As part of this capacity building, the district has revised and aligned curriculum maps to provide resources for teachers as they insititue the new standards in classrooms and have a modeling and mentoring component to their system through the TAP program. High expectations are also met through district participation in AP, Advanced College Project and other programming efforts.

The district has demonstrated throughtout the application that they are using data and have plans to increase and improve upon current practices that will be addressed more quickly with funding from RttT-D. The dashboard, when fully implemented, will provide a good deal of information to multiple stakeholders, including educators, students and parents, that will allow them each to keep track of progress. The addition of the EWS will provide a safety net approach for those students who are at risk; there is little narrative, however, that addresses how the use of the data system will enable educators to accelerate progress for normally- or high-performing students.

The TAP system is lauded for its ability to assist administrators and teacher mentors with helping colleagues improve instruction and increase the use of a common language around high-quality instruction. While the RISE system has been mentioned previously in relation to principal and superintendent evaluation, no narrative has been provided that indicates how this complementary system will be used to improve individual or collective effectiveness on improving instruction.

The district has made investments in tools to increase the use of data. These include the Kuno tablets and the use of CurriculumLoft learning management software. A team of educators has been formed that will take on the task of defining expectations for the use of the new technology for teacher implementation. This indicates a feedback loop for improving teh effectiveness of the use of the processes and tools in meeting student needs. In addition, the new data structures will enable district leaders in using multiple sources to determine teacher effectiveness and tie it to student growth

The district also identifies policies and resources that has the potential to increase the number of effective and highly-effective teachers in classrooms. The writers believe that the infusion of funding from RttT-D may be a lure for innovative teachers. In addition, the district will use the information from the teacher evaluation program to provide assistance to teachers to help them become effective and highly effective. Finally, in order to staff hard-to-staff schools and content disciplines, the district identified relationships with Teach for America and College Board/Confucius Institute as helpful in recruiting teachers for math and world languages, respectively. No mention was made of recruiting or identifying effective principals.

Overall, the district has provided convincing evidence and narrative for meeting the great majority of characteristics of this section with the notable exceptions identified in the analysis. This is a low high score.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a high-quality plan to support project implementation, including current structures and/or plans to institute practices, policies and protocols to facilitate the implementation of the grant, which is designed to facilitate personalized learning. The central office has taken strides to create a more collaborative leadership structure, which has been evidenced throughout the application, especially in the meetings that were held to engage personnel in the grant planning. In addition, they have committed to engaging targeted support from AIR by implmeneting a formal process, Strategic Funding for Results, that is identified and described with timelines and outcomes clearly stated. The central office has also hired a turnaround director to facilitate district level support for struggling schools, as well a positions to support the needs of ELL students. The plan is to expand the TAP programs by using grant funds to train and support leadership teams at the elementary schools that are part of the clusters but have not yet had that training. Grant funds will also support the planning of equitable budgets to target resource allocations on a need basis. No mention was made of providing flexibility of school leaders over school schedules and calendars outside of previous mentions of the state's no longet insisting on seat time for graduation requirements and some autonomy on the use of technology to increase credit recovery. The PLATO program was cited as supportive of a system that allows students to demonstrate mastery and earn credits at an individualized pace; this is supportive of personalized learning that may be conducive to certain individuals' progress. The use of Read 180 and System 44 were cited as examples of personalized research-based interventions that are especially helpful to ELL and special education students. In the case of the latter, previous data on special ed students' graduation rates and the growth curve extending into the future calls that into question for this reviewer. This is a low high score.

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

The applicant states that resource allocation, and special consideration for parents technological needs and training, will be addressed, and specifically that computer access will be shared so that, regardless of income, resources will be made available. Access will be provided to parents and students by making computer labs available to the public. No specifics of how those will be accessed were provided. Staff and students will have access and training for making use of the data dashboards that will provide information on student progress and growth. This system will provide teachers and other staff with triangulation of data from formative and summative assessments, in addition to the EWS, that will enable earlier implementation and monitoring of appropriate interventions that are likely to impact student long range academic progress. The data system and training for educators will also use the TAP information to track student performance and teacher effectiveness by inoporating student indicators into the centralized data warehouse, increasing transparency on teacher effectiveness, efficacy of interventions, and student performance. This score is in the low high range.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	14

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes an 8-step process of continuous improvement that, if implemented as stated, will likely lead to adjustments and revisions because of the planned use of timely and regular feedback. The plan calls for actions to improve awareness of the initiative for both internal and external constituencies that are multi-factored and provide many opportunities to engage both internal and external stakeholders in the improvement process. These include current structures of staff meetings, in-service PD, newsletters, etc., for the former, and the use of public meetings, board meetings and social media for the latter group. Specific parties have been identified as responsible for the various aspects of the plan, including identifying the director of technology as the point person for dealing with the technical aspects of the systems, a programmer to traverse databases and customize software, and the grant coordinator as a potential candidate for monitoring the grant implementation. There is also a realistic recognition that further roles and responsibilities will need to be defined for different components as the grant is implemented and information is created and disseminated. the quality of investments funded by the RttT-D funds will be supported by the disaggregating of data that are collected and that these data will drive decision-making rather than being used as support for predetermined assumptions about student learning and teacher effectiveness. The district indicates a willingness to communicate both progress and challenges, building upon the current data-driven environment they describe in the proposal. Information flow will commence from the classroom as the core outwardly to grade levels, schools, cluster groups, the school board and the community, while maintaining appropriate rules and restrictions on the sharing of individual student information. The overall plan appears solid and scores highly in this criterion.

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

The applicant identifies a multivariate communication plan to engage internal and external stakeholders. These include an integrated notification system to communicate with parents and families, the district website, local media coverage of school board meetings and a local radio station. The student dashboard will provide pertinent information for both internal and external stakeholders on individual student progress toward graduation and career and college readiness. With grant funding, the applicant also envisions collecting data on the effectiveness of the communication efforts on public consumption of the information, including the potential for gathering information on web traffic to individual student dashboards, the district's website, and the use of the schools' computer labs. This is a robust plan and merits a high score.

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

5

1

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides charts and narrative that identify appropriate performance measures that, if implemented, are likely to improve personalized learning environments. Baseline data are provided and targets for increases in meeting the annual targets for performance measures are provided during the implementation of the grant and in the first post-grant year. What is not clear in either the narrative or the chart is the rationale for the choice of annual targets. As described previously, 3% growth in performance on academic measures (e.g., ISTEP+Assessments in 4-8th grade ELA by subgroup) may be achievable but is not necessarily ambitious in all cases (e.g., special education in the afore-mentioned example where current students are passing at only a 21% rate yet have the same 3% annual growth target as other subgroups that are currently performing 200 to 300 percent better). This one size fits all approach does not meet the equity consideration and therefore this is a low score.

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

5

3

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a plan that identifies responsible parties for determining the effectiveness of the investment of RttT-D funds. Both internal leaders (e.g., superintendent, project manager) and external partners, like AIR will support and monitor the implementation of the plan; the use of an outside consultant is touted as a way of increasing objectivity and is likely to provide information that will be useful in appropriately allocating resources. Other community partners (e.g., NIET, CELL) also provide support for making productive use of staff time. The TAP system is identified as a key component in addressing the PD and instituting compensation reform. Principal effectiveness will be monitored by central office administrators using surveys and rubrics. No mention is made of modifying school schedules and structures beyond those that have been already been identified, including the use of credit recovery and the PLATO system for demonstrating mastery of students in relation to course content. This is a mid-range score

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The budget identifies local and grant funds necessary to implement the proposed outcomes. The lion's share of expense is in year one to purchase technology resources, provide training in the interventions, and to engage in the creation of the robust data system and training of personnel in its use. These are appropriate expenditures that are necessary to implement the wide-ranging solutions proposed. The applicant provides for the use of Title funds to support intervention teachers and expresses confidence that the data from successful implementation of the reform will make for a strong case for continuing funding of these positions post grant. The applicant also appears to be leveraging Medicaid funds for the continuation of mental health services for children with the potential for convincing the school board of the need for these personnel after collecting data. The use of grant funds to support AIR also appears to be appropriate and, if implemented properly, should allow the district to build capacity to continue to monitor the effectiveness of interventions after the grant period ends. Several positions are identified as important to implementation of the grant, including the data base administrator and the curriculum data facilitator, as well as the project manager and clerical support. It appears that these positions will be fully funded by the grant. While it is likely that the district can build capacity to continue its reform efforts after the grant without the services of the project manager and clerical support, it is neither clear nor elaborated upon, how the robust data system will continue without the support of those personnel. Ongoing support will be necessary for the data system and the lack of sustainability planning for this position is a potential threat to the progress that can be made in using data within this system post award. Overall, the general appropriateness of the budget is in line with the intent but is hampered by the lack of planning for the database and is

a high mid-range score.

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

10

7

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant indicates a willingness to creatively use current and potential future funding streams to continue success that may be achieved through the implementation of the RttT-D grant. Typical sources of funding were identified, including Title I funds available to 9 of the current schools, and other federal and state sources of funding. The use of special education funds to address the social-emotional needs will also leverage the partnership with a certified mental health agency to tap into other funding sources to sustain efforts on behalf of special education students to receive RTI and counseling. The district already appears to have a documented record of seeking and securing funding for special initiatives (e.g., Small Learning Communities Grant for \$7.5 million) that have led to some of the gains documented in their application. This provides some assurance that the district will continue to seek and secure funding to accelerate student achievement through their stated goals of seeking other sources of support (e.g., Title IIB funds for STEM in partnership with Purdue U-Calumet, state Teacher Incentive Grant). They provide a three-year budget and source of funds that extends beyond the life of the grant that will provide funding for some of these projects that may enhance work begun under RttT-D. As stated in the previous section, however, no mention was made here either of how to sustain important personnel, like the database administrator, beyond the life of the grant. The sustainability plan also lacks some of the specifics of a high quality plan, including persons responsible and timelines for securing these funds. Because the time factor is so far out, however, this latter point was a minor concern to this reviewer in assigning a high mid-level score.

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	2

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a description of a variety of partnerships designed to support student health, well-being and academic success. Most notable is the success of the PACT program and the data that support its effectiveness (88% passage rate on third grade ELA and 74% on 3rd grade math). The expansion of services similar to this with the PAT program and Head Start (the Geminus Corporation) also support the major goals of increasing students' preliteracy skills. In all, the applicant describes clearly how they partner with various community organization to complement programs provided in school. They also clearly identify population-level desired results that are supportive of the goals of the grant. There is no evidence, however, that identifies how selected indicators would be tracked nor, by extension, how any data will be gathered that will allow the targeting of resources to improve results or scale the models beyond the current partnerships. It appears that the agencies will be acting relatively autonomously and there is no evidence of their being a true partnership in which there will be any development of capacity in staff. Most of the desired results identified (e.g., School Readiness Skills and Early Screening for PACT) have no measurable performance indicators. While the district is to be commended on these resources, they state in their narrative that they must expand their outreach efforts to these groups and there is no clear evidence provided that a true partnership yet exists nor is currently planned. This is a low score.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant, if funded, has demonstrated a clear and comprehensive plan to address core educational areas that could create learning environments personalized for individual students and could significantly improve teaching and learning. The track record over the past four years shows a district that is making use of data and is in the process of turning around low performing schools. While there is still much work to be done, especially with certain subgroups, most notably special education students, the district identifies structures that are currently in place that could be enhanced by RttT-D funding. The use of student data with a comprehensive data warehouse and the dashboards proposed could increase access to real-time data use for parents, students and educators. The TAP system has the potential to identify and improve teaching

effectiveness. There are also clear structures in place, like the College Bound Scholarship, that provide support for students' dreams of attending college if they are successful in school. More attention provided to non-college bound students is also likely to be implemented through the career awareness strategies. Students are also likely to develop deep learning through cooperative strategies and project-based learning once they have achieved the basic literacy foundation proposed in the grant.

Total	210	153
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## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

Application #0913IN-3 for School City of Hammond

#### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	5

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant articulates clear and credible goals in this section. The goals align with the four core educational assurance areas.

The applicant does provide some examples of possible structural shifts related to the change at Eggers Middle School where they identify *increased instructional time and instructional support* for students and staff. The applicant also identifies key elements of change at the high school level including leadership change, focus on data, implementation of TAP, and the creation of an Arts Academy that resulted in a significant increase in student achievement.

The vision the applicant articulates - specific to leadership and structures - is very broad and not very specific. Thus, the applicant does not articulate an approach that is *clear and credible* as the specifics within both leadership and in structures are not clearly identified. While the applicant provides examples of schools that have been transformed (including data reflecting significant growth), the approach used to transform the school was described as *dedicated and sustained improvement efforts*. The middle school example and the high school examples are compelling in terms of their results, yet the approach and the explicit link to leadership and structures are not clearly evident.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	7
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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant identifies the selection process/criteria of the two clusters (HHS and MHS) based on the demonstrated ability of these clusters to *harness resources* to support changes that are showing results. This included identifying key structures and practices in individual schools within these clusters that should be replicated throughout the cluster.

The applicant identifies specific school clusters (this section) and the schools within (section A-3) the clusters.

The applicant provides total numbers of participating students from low income families, participating students who are from low-income families, who are high-need students, and participating educators in section A-4.

The applicant has not articulated a reform proposal that includes a coherent plan that would support high quality LEA-level and school level implementation.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	6
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a district level organizational structure that would support the scaling of the reform proposal across the district.

The applicant provides components of a possible plan, yet does not articulate a how the various components work with each other in the form of a coherent plan. As an example, the applicant lists 6 critical components of their plan yet does not identify how they link with each other or link to a set of key structures or strategies to effect change. While these components are critical, the applicant did not articulate how they come together as part of a high quality plan nor does the applicant articulate a specific logic model or theory of change to support a plan.

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

The applicant has not articulated a clear vision with a clear and coherent plan - thus, the ability to improve student learning and performance and increase equity is in question.

The anticipated incremental growth (3-5%) across all subgroups does not reflect a plan that intends to achieve equity between subgroups. As an example, 7th grade ELA reflects a gap of 44% points between SPED and General Education that is reduced slightly throughout the life of the grant as reflected in the post grant goal (2016-17) reflecting an anticipated gap of 38%. This is consistent across all of the summative assessment measures across all grade bands.

This type of growth, incremental, is not consistent with plans that transform systems. The applicant provided examples of schools that have made significant gains over the past few years in the first section of the application. The stated gains were reflected overall growth ranging from (+.9% to over 50%). The use of incremental growth targets over time does not reflect ambitious goals.

The incremental growth goals for the various subgroups does not suggest that the applicant will achieve it's stated decrease in achievement gaps. Specifically, the SPED and ESL population suggested change would not result in the overall reduction reflected in the 2016-17 post grant goals as the applicant has identified that growth would occur across all subgroups and the whole by a rate (2-5% per year) that would not yield the stated goal of achievement gap reduction.

The comments above reflect the same concern for graduation rates.

The applicant states that the college enrollment rates reflect the percentage of students participating in both the College Bound program **and** the 21st Century Scholar award. The growth between the baseline and this school year (2012-13) is significant yet not supported by any rationale.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	11

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides school level evidence of a track record of success. Specifically the data provided for Lafayette Elementary, Eggers Middle School and both HHS and MHS provided in Section A support a track record of success.

The applicants stated increase in achievement and decrease in suspension/expulsions would support the claim that the district has a demonstrated track record of success. That said, data from all four years (2009 - 2011) would provide further evidence that the district is "trending" in the right direction regarding achievement and the reduction in achievement gaps. With regards to suspension and expulsions, specific data is not provided with only qualitative statements ("marked decrease in...") regarding trends between two points in time are provided. Actual data would strengthen the claim that the district has a clear track record of success.

The data provided at the school level from the Scholastic Reading Inventory was compelling specific to establishing a clear track record of success. That said, the growth on the ISTEP in 6th grade across the same time period does not correlate with the growth seen on the SRI. Taken together, they both suggest the district has been successful in increasing student achievement.

The use of the College Bound program as a measure is problematic as the growth may be a reflection in home ownership rather than an increase of students qualifying. This particular measure is very limited and is not reflective of the impact of the district's efforts on behalf of all students. Other measures of college readiness (i.e percentage of students participating in AP/IB or dual enrollment) would be helpful.

The applicant provides evidence of it's ability to turnaround persistently low achieving schools based on the description of Lafayette, Eggers, HMS and MHS.

The applicant identifies several efforts to make student performance data available to students, educators and parents. The applicant identifies the need to develop a data warehouse system that better communicates all of the various data points to each stakeholder group.

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

The applicant provides evidence that it engages in a high level of transparency with respect to LEA processes, practices and investments. This is evidenced by the actual reports submitted (actual school level personnel salaries, etc.) as well as the list of ways the district publishes and reports it's data.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provided clear evidence that the State level context will support the conditions and sufficient autonomy to implement the personalized environment described in the applicant's proposal. Examples of evidence include (a) elimination of seat time requirements; (b) waiver provisions from the state specific to the School Improvement Grants; (c) approved Federal waiver to NCLB; and (d) establishment of evaluation frameworks for teacher, principal, and superintendents.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	5
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a clear timeline of stakeholder engagement outreach.</p> <p>The applicant provides evidence that the President of the Hammond Teacher Federation supports the plan on behalf of their membership. That said, the engagement efforts to the collective teaching staff was very limited. The applicant provides evidence that a team of teachers and administrators helped develop the plan. Though no evidence is provided that the evolving plan was shared with teachers outside of the planning group.</p> <p>The applicant provides little evidence of targeted outreach to both families and students. The only evidence included the superintendent engaging with a radio show and speaking to 18 parents at a Title I Family Forum on October 17. There is no evidence that the district engaged in any type of systemic outreach at the school level or otherwise to engage either family or students.</p> <p>The applicant provides evidence of engaging multiple stakeholders in support of the application. However, no evidence is provided suggesting that any of the feedback resulted in revision of the original application.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant identified pockets of success with regards to implementation of high yield strategies and structures for personalized learning environment, while also identifying the application across schools was inconsistent (thus a need).</p> <p>The description of the SWOT processes identified a variety of needs linked to the five goals.</p> <p>The applicant describes the needs analysis conducted as part of the application process as <i>informal</i>. This does not suggest a high-quality plan for analysis was conducted to inform the logic behind the reform proposal. The applicant has identified the need to provide a more systematic, formalized process and intends to engage in this process within 60 days of grant notification. One concern regarding a deeper investigation is whether or not the more formalized process will yield a different direction and ultimately shape a different approach.</p> <p>Based on what was presented in this section, it is difficult to identify the need for critical aspects of the plan (i.e. no reference to Goal 3).</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	8

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

C (a) (i). The description of how students will develop an understanding of what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals is limited and not directly supported by the various activities described. For example, it is not clear how PBIS, classroom management support systems and interventions will assist students in understanding what they are learning and how it links to future success. These efforts are key in setting an environment that supports students understanding, yet do not provide the understanding and links directly.

The use of Common Core State Standards are one way to support student understanding and linkage to goals, yet assuming the new standards are user friendly suggests that targeted outreach and support of parents developing an understanding is not necessary.

The leveled focus (literacy at elementary, cooperative learning at middle school, and project-based learning in higher grades) provides an instructional focus, yet does not explicitly link to student understanding of learning goals and the links to accomplishing goals.

This particular section assumes some level of goal setting at the student/family level, yet is not addressed by the applicant.

C (a) (ii) The applicant provides a progression of learning to include a focus on literacy, cooperative learning and ultimately project-based learning. This progression may lend itself to supporting learning and goals linked to college and career ready standards.

The utilization of the Explore assessment in 7th grade is a nice start to help students make the relevant and necessary links between their strengths and interests and possible career and college pathways. While this is a nice first step, the lack of details specific to the Individual Learning Plans and what happens in high school (beyond meeting with guidance counselors) is concerning considering the level of impacted students within the district.

The lack of formalized structures (i.e. advisory models, teaching teams, etc.) may inhibit the ability to impact this approach.

C (a) (iii) The applicant identifies existing opportunities as well as identifying changes that need to happen at the school and classroom level. The applicant identifies "big ideas" yet provides few specific examples. For example, the applicant identifies the need to shift schedules to allow for PBL and personalized learning, yet offers no tangible examples of what schedules they are in or that they might shift towards.

C (a) (iv) The utilization of technology to enhance the diversity of the curriculum and the ability to better contextualize learning is a strength. The work in the area of world language and the guest teacher programs sound interesting, though I am not sure how they fit within proposed application. Further, I do not see any link to this work within the budget.

C (a) (v) The applicant identifies the need to provide *extensive training of staff* to address the challenges and barriers facing students. This statement does not articulate a clear plan for how this is going to happen and does not identify the specific training staff will be engaging in. Thus, it is difficult to ascertain whether or not the applicant will be addressing goal-setting, team work, perseverance, etc.

The second paragraph identifies the benefits of cooperative learning and the work the district will engage in with Dr. Spencer Kagan. This work would link to teamwork, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving, though the focus on cooperative learning is limited to the middle school level.

C (b) (i) The description at the elementary level is very limited. Earlier in the application, the applicant suggested the district is utilizing an RtI model though there is no reference here. Furthermore, the elementary only discusses strategies and programs to address literacy with no mention of how the district will support individual student development in mathematics.

The applicant introduces interdisciplinary teams at the middle school level in this section. The applicant does not articulate how the middle school structures will support teaming and collaboration - for example, does the school schedule support daily embedded collaboration, common planning time, or both? The lack of specific details provides a level of uncertainty with how interdisciplinary teaming and collaboration time will be achieved.

The high school focus around project-based learning has potential to support students and their individual development.

The lack of discussion specific to intervention at the middle and high school level is concerning. While it is recognized that READ 180 and System 44 may be applied across the secondary level, the lack of explicit support for intervention (as

articulated at the elementary level) may not provide the level of support necessary for kids to achieve his or her own individual learning goals.

C (b) (ii) This criteria specifically asks for a variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments. The applicant articulates cooperative learning and the work of Dr. Kagan as the primary approach - supported by data that provides a precise *picture* of where students are in their learning. Limiting the discussion to cooperative learning does not provide evidence that the applicant is pursuing a variety of approaches.

The citation provided to support cooperative learning and its impact is very old. Referencing a study that spanned 30 years (assuming 1967-1997 based on the date of the citation) and is in itself 15 years old is not very compelling.

C (b) (iii) The applicant identifies the need to align content and curriculum with the Common Core and will utilize Kuno Tablets with the software Curriculum Loft.

C (b) (iv) The applicant articulates the need to develop a data warehouse designed to provide ongoing and regular feedback.

C (b) (v) Outside of articulating the intent to support mental health via the grant, the applicant does not identify specific accommodations and high quality strategies designed to support high needs students. Rather, the applicant suggests that all of the district's strategies are chosen with high needs students in mind - though the district's current level of achievement would suggest the district's current approach is not effective with students with special needs.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	12
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Overall, the applicant does not provide clear and compelling evidence that a high quality plan has been developed specific to teaching and leading with the intent to improve instruction and to increase the capacity to support student progress.

C (2) (a) (i) The applicant identifies existing professional learning communities as a key strategy to support effective implementation. The applicant provides evidence of the use of PLCs to support the dissemination of effective strategies to include TAP and Kagan's Cooperative Learning Structures throughout the system. The TAP structures identified will also support the development and implementation of effective school based structures intended to support effective implementation.

C (2) (a) (ii) This criteria asks specifically about adapting content and instruction yet the applicant's response focuses on curriculum mapping, the development of individual student plans, and the utilization of the TAP infrastructure to support the identification and dissemination of effective strategies. These elements are critical in meeting this criteria, though providing more specific information about already identified instructional strategies would have strengthened this particular section.

C (2) (a) (iii) The applicant identifies critical components of a data system designed to meet this criteria. However, specific (formative) measures are not identified and details specific to building the capacity for staff to utilize data is not provided.

C (2) (a) (iv) The applicant demonstrates an effective evaluation system is in place and is linked to the TAP structure.

C (2) (b) The applicant does not provide adequate information specific to criteria (ii) and (iii). The identification of the KUNO tablets is one example of high quality learning resources - yet is specific to secondary students. The statement specific to *research based, data-driven best practices* is not specific and does not provide compelling evidence that the applicant will be able to meet this criteria. While the applicant identifies the need for a robust data system, the response lacks sufficient detail as to what types of processes and practices will be employed to match tools to needs at the student level.

C (2) (c) The use of the C.O.D.E system as part of the evaluation process yields the potential to inform the training and professional development planning to support teacher effectiveness. The applicant provides specific details around training on the new data system and the use of the emerging technology (Kuno Tablets), yet does not provide a comprehensive professional development plan with regards to identifying policies and/or structures that will support on-going professional development in this area.

C (2) (d) The applicant has identified the potential of its evaluation system to increase the number of students being taught by highly effective staff and has identified partnerships with two alternative preparation programs to support the infusion of teacher in hard to fill/find areas.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	8
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant identifies that reorganization and restructuring is underway, yet provides only a description of new positions that would support the grant. An overview of the overall reorganization/restructure would have been helpful to see the interconnection within the districts central office and between the central office and the schools.</p> <p>The applicant identifies the TAP structure as a means to providing a leadership model for sites. It is assumed, though not explicitly stated, that schools with have the necessary autonomy and authority to support the project implementation at the site level.</p> <p>The applicant provides sufficient examples of how students are given the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on mastery as opposed to seat time.</p> <p>The applicant links the ability to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple ways to virtual options (PLATO and Indiana Online Academy) and to dual credit opportunities. There is no mention of how cooperative learning and project-based learning techniques may provide multiple opportunities and means for students to demonstrate mastery of a concept. These two concepts were essential components of the overall plan for personalization and have the inherent potential to provide students with a variety of opportunities to demonstrate mastery - yet are not even mentioned in this section.</p> <p>The applicant identified resources that are adaptable and accessible to all students - though the resources provided were limited to reading and reading only. Identifying other resources and/or practices in support of students with varied needs in other areas (i.e. mathematics, behavior, etc.) would have been helpful.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	3
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant description specific to (a) and (b) is limited in that it identifies parent training and access as critical components. However, examples of specific training ideas for families would have been helpful. The applicant identifies the struggle families face in a high poverty district - yet does not articulate new or emerging engagement strategies specific to support parents and families. Furthermore, the applicant identifies the need to provide access - yet does not identify specific plans for how this could be accomplished.</p> <p>Criteria (c) speaks specifically to parent and student access to information, yet the applicant speaks most directly to how the developed data system will support educators. The last five sentences in the last paragraph addresses the access students and parents have to the system and does not provide enough specific information to provided evidence that this criteria is met.</p> <p>The applicant provides sufficient evidence suggesting they will use interoperable data systems.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	10
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a clear and concise improvement process utilizing 8 steps (School City of Hammond Continuous Improvement Plan). The Data System Framework provides a clear delineation of the various stakeholder groups and levels that should be considered as part of a continuous improvement process - though a level not identified may include the</p>		

individual student level.

The applicant walks through the continuous improvement process with sufficient detail to support the claim that they will implement a rigorous improvement process. One area of concern regarding the proposed process is the lack of identified structures for which this type of work will happen in a systematic way. For example, Step 6 reflects the need to *revise and refine* yet does not identify the structures that will support and ultimately facilitate this process. This is the same for each of the steps in the process. The lack of identifying district level and school level structures to support the articulated process is a weakness in this particular section.

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

The proposed communication and engagement plan are all passive and do not reflect a high quality plan to provide communication and to engage both internal and external stakeholders. The lack of targeted efforts would suggest the applicant may not get the necessary information to continuously improve it's plan.

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

The applicant provided a rationale for the selection it's measures.

With regards to rigorous, timely feedback, the applicant has not provided evidence that key academic indicators (i.e SRI, ISTEP+, or End of Course Assessments) will be timely and able to provide formative feedback. Specifically, the applicant suggests the SRI measure will be administered at the end of the year and used to evaluate effectiveness of the reading intervention based on both growth and students meeting grade-level benchmarks. There are a variety of reading measures available that provide benchmark assessments within the school year and allow for progress monitoring. This type of assessment would provide more timely feedback. The three key academic indicators are all either end of year or end of course (summative).

The applicant has identified a health measure that will be administered. The rationale for including vision and hearing screenings as a performance measure specific to the grant is confusing. This type of health screening is important at the student level. That said, it does not provide any type of actionable information specific to the grant and will not provide information specific to the grant implementation. This is not a performance measures. Furthermore, the social-emotional indicators suggested in the matrix (feel safe at school survey and suspension/expulsion rates) will provide some level of information yet may not be sufficient in providing quality information linked to the implementation of the key elements of the proposed projects. For example, there are a variety of school engagement or connectedness inventories available that would provide information as to whether classroom or school level engagement is being achieved as a result of the project.

Identifying in the matrix that the district will adopt a social-emotional assessment does not provide the evidence to support the specific criteria above (applicant must propose at least one grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator).

Finally, the incremental growth suggested in the growth targets for several measures (including SRI) is problematic. For example, the post-grant expected growth for baseline third graders is 47% (3% gain within the subgroup between 2011-12 and 2016-17). Thus, in 8th grade - after 4 years of grant work - 47% of the students would be at benchmark. 47% at 8th grade in 2016-17 is a lower percentage of benchmark students than the current or baseline group of 8th graders (52%). This is confusing in terms of what the applicant is expecting in terms of the reading intervention efforts described in the proposal.

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

The applicant has proposed a set of activities that in and of themselves do not represent a coordinated plan. A clear set of structures to support an evaluation process are not articulated.

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 identifies all funds that will support the project and identifies the nature of the funds with regards to one time investments and/or investments that will be ongoing.</p> <p>The applicant provides a rationale for the various expenditures with links to how the funds support specific project tasks. However, the budget does not provide specific details that would support the ability to assess how reasonable or sufficient the request is. For example, it is impossible to determine the level / amount of professional development funds budgeted and the potential impact in terms of the amount of time per staff member to support individual growth.</p> <p>There are several concerns regarding how reasonable or sufficient the budget is. One example is the use of funds to support FTE for Read 180 or System 44 interventionists. Based on the baeline performance data provided, only 31.8% of the studetns in 3rd grade are at benchmark as measured by the SRI. This number would suggest that nearly 70% of students are in need of some level of additional support. Purchasing an interventionist at each building is not sufficient in terms of providing the level of support necessary.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	4
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant suggests the potential need to <i>scale back</i> after the grant period. This statement alone would suggest that the efforts associated with the proposal are not sustainable.</p> <p>The applicant correctly identifies that many of the requested funds are for activities that would be on-going or for expenses that would be one time, yet does not provide a high-quality plan for sustaining the project. A few examples that are not addressed include the upkeep of the technology inventory. A one time investment of nearly \$10,000,000 dollars in technology devices will need to be supported for sustainability yet was not addressed in terms of providing a replacement cycle and the requisite funding stream for replacement beyond the grant.</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>The applicant did not address criteria 3 and 5 within this section. For example, there is no evidence provided specific to how the proposed measures will be (a) tracked, (b) used to target resource, (c) used to support scaling the model, or (d) used to improve results over time. With regards to criteria 5, the applicant does no provide a description of how the partnerships would build the capacity of staff in participating schools by providing them with tools and supports.</p> <p>This competitive priority clearly identified that all 6 criteria must be met. The score assigned reflects that the applicant did not meet all 6 criteria.</p>		

Absolute Priority 1

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

The applicant has articulated the intent to personalize learning environments in an effort to improve learning and teaching. Specifically, the applicant identifies key strategies (cooperative learning and project-based learning) designed to enhance and personalize learning at the individual student level. Furthermore, the applicant identifies the need to develop a data warehouse capable of providing *just in time* information to educators to support better instructional decision-making at the student level.

While the applicant has met this particular selection criteria, the quality of the plan (coherence and comprehensive) is assessed in other sections (i.e. Criteria C1 and C2).

Total	210	112
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