



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0507MI-1 for School District of the City of Saginaw

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	3
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's description of the needs of the four high schools to be served by the proposed project does not include evidence of existing work in all four assurance areas. The applicant states that efforts have been made to transition to the Common Core State Standards and to use data to improve instruction. However, these statements alone do not show an understanding of the work required to complete the first two assurances. The applicant's vision also does not include a discussion of recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals. Since the four high schools have been on the Priority School list in the past and have worked through School Improvement Grants to improve student performance, they do have evidence of working to turn around low-achieving schools.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant scores in the low part of the medium point range for this section.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) The applicant partially demonstrates the selection process for schools that will participate in the proposed project. The development of this proposal was informed by previous School Improvement Grants and a 2010 external Title I Curriculum Audit. Other than working with schools previously on the Priority School list, however, no mention is made of the process for selecting schools for participation.</p> <p>(b) The applicant provides a list of schools that will be included in the project. Data for these schools show that each has areas of academic need. The list includes different areas of emphasis for each school. As such, this element of the selection criteria is fully met.</p> <p>(c) Based on data provided, the proposed project will serve 7,774 students, the vast majority of whom are high needs students. This information provided by the applicant fully addresses the selection criteria.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant receives a score in the middle range of points for this section.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	2
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposed project is part of an overall reform initiative known within the district as the "Saginaw Model," consisting of embedded professional development, intense use of data to guide instruction, strategies to prepare students for college and careers, and community involvement. However, the narrative does not include a specific plan for scaling the proposed project into districtwide reform. The response to the selection criteria reads more as a framework for district operations than a plan for implementation. As such, the applicant receives points in the low range for this section.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	2
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a/b) The applicant provides data showing student performance on state tests at the current time and goals for the four years of the proposed project. In many cases, the goals are not ambitious, however. In fact, the goals often include targets that widen achievement gaps. For example. At this time, 31 percent of African American third grade students are proficient on the state reading assessment. This is 10 percent lower than the district overall. The target for post-grant performance is to raise the proficiency level for thsi group to 50 percent; meanwhile, the overall student population will be raised to 82 percent.</p>		

Achieving these targets (and not exceeding them) would result in a performance gap three times as large as it currently is.

(c) Currently, the African American graduation rate is slightly higher (less than one percent) than the overall student population. The proposal includes gains in all groups, but less for this subgroup. As such, the performance target is not ambitious.

(d) College enrollment targets are not provided.

(e) Postsecondary degree attainment targets are not provided.

Overall, the applicant scores in the low range of points for this section.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	5
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a/b) The applicant has used School Improvement Grant funds and realignment within the district to take all four high schools from the Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools List for Michigan in 2009 to making Adequate Yearly Progress in 2012. Teachers are using data tools to monitor student growth as well as other non-academic measures that contribute to student success, such as suspension and attendance data. However, data provided only show a one-year decline in suspensions and no attendance data. As such, the extent to which this has contributed to the turnaround is not clear.</p> <p>(c) The applicant discusses how faculty have used a data dashboard to review non-academic factors and how they have developed data rooms to help track student growth. This shows prior exposure and developing expertise in the use of data in decision making, as well as in the use of digital tracking of that data. They have not discussed, however, how any student performance data has been made available to students and parents. Nor do they describe the data dashboard or the data rooms. As such, the effectiveness of these measures is unclear.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant discusses initiatives such as using Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate curriculum models to improve the rigor of coursework, but few details are provided to illustrate the degree to which they have been implemented. This section receives a score in the low end of the medium range of the points.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	1
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant states that information required in this section is available on the district website. The narrative references an appendix that shows this; however, that appendix is not included in the application. Other than the assurance, the applicant provides no evidence of a high level of transparency in reporting salaries and expenditures. Overall, the applicant receives a score in the low range for this section.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	6
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant states that work has been done to provide for the transition to the Common Core State Standards. This is described within the context for discussing Michigan's overall reforms that give schools the autonomy to create a "personal curriculum." An example of this is the law Michigan passed requiring that all students complete at least one online course prior to graduation. Also, Michigan allows for dual enrollment in college courses as early as ninth grade. Michigan also passed reforms through its legislature (such as teacher evaluation) in preparation for the state application for RTTT. While the state application was denied, the reforms went into effect anyway, contributing to an environment that is conducive to this proposal.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant has not specifically discussed how the statewide reforms have been enacted in the school district. For example, while Common Core has been adopted, no description of the professional development provided to teachers to make the transition to this curriculum is described. This section receives a score in the medium range of points.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	2
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

(a) The applicant states that the district superintendent has positive working relationships with community leaders, college and university representatives, and parent advocacy groups. This discussion does not include details of how these groups or the teacher's union were included in the development of the proposal.

(b) The applicant has provided letters of support from the state teachers' union, the city of Saginaw, two institutions of higher education, the College Board, and a community foundation. All of these letters express support for the project but none give an indication of how the entities will partner with the applicant to ensure the project's success.

Overall, the applicant receives a score in the low range of points for this section.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	2
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant discusses using programs such as SuccessMaker and AIMSWeb in the development of personal learning environments. While these are useful tools for supplemental instruction, their use alone does not fulfill this purpose. Similarly, the applicant intends to use the ACT, PLAN, and EXPLORE tests to assist in the development of personalized learning environments. While this suite of assessments is useful in tracking college readiness from the middle grades forward, they do not provide teachers with all the information they need to develop personalized learning environments.

Overall, the applicant receives points in the low range for this section.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant includes a management plan that minimally addresses the selection criteria. It includes parents by using the Epstein Model for parental engagement. This shows a commitment to training parents about providing supports for students. However, it is not clear how the project will support implementation of this model. The applicant does not explain how the proposed project will keep students informed of how their education is key to their success after high school. No information is provided discussing the role of parents and educators in making this information available to students. None of the 14 action areas listed include a description of how the proposed project will empower students to use resources to stay in control of their educational and eventual career opportunities. Overall, the inclusion of models such as Epstein and Professional Learning Communities would be better supported by details showing how these models will be used. Accordingly, this section receives a score in the low range of points.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	4
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The applicant partially meets the selection criteria for this element by planning to provide training that would equip building leaders and coaches to work in their schools. However, the applicant does not explain what the training needs of these groups are or how or when the training will be developed. The applicant also says that training will be received in PLCs but does not say what the training will be or how the PLCs are organized.

(b) The applicant does not describe how teachers will be equipped to use data to accelerate student progress or eliminate learning gaps

(c) The applicant does not describe how teachers and leadership teams will be trained to use data and to implement college and career readiness standards.

(d) The applicant does not discuss how it plans to improve teacher quality in hard to staff schools or subject areas.

Overall, the applicant receives a score in the low range of points for this section.

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

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	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	0
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant did not respond to these criteria. As such, no points are awarded.		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	0
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant did not respond to these criteria. As such, no points are awarded.		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	4
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant describes an outcome evaluation process that focuses on the implementation and impact of activities within the proposed project. The process includes the collection of survey data, classroom walk through observations, and interviews with stakeholder groups. While the applicant describes the evaluation processes as formative and summative, they are actually pre/post gathering of perceptions. The means by which the applicant plans to publicly share information and provide for continuous improvement are unclear.  Overall, the applicant receives points in the low end of the medium range for this section.		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	1
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant mentions the intent to disseminate reports of ongoing project results to stakeholders but does not mention how they will be engaged with the project itself. Since internal and external stakeholders are not part of the planning and ongoing improvement of the proposed project, this section receives a score in the low range.		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1
(E)(3) Reviewer Comments: The applicant sets ambitious goals for the percentage of teachers and principals who will be effective and highly effective by the end of the grant period. However, no rationale is given in the narrative for these goals, or the incremental steps each year leading up to them. Additionally, in the final year, 100 percent of the teachers and principals are targeted to be highly effective while 5 percent will be effective. This adds up to 105 percent.  Performance targets for each grade level and each subgroup are not always ambitious. In many cases, they lead to increases in performance gaps between subgroups. For example, in the baseline year, 17 percent of all participating students in grades 4-8 are designated as being on track for college and career readiness. For African American students, the number is 9 percent. By the end of the project, the applicant proposes raising these numbers to 42 percent and 22 percent, respectively. This would increase the achievement gap from 8 percent to 20 percent. The goal for the overall population is not high enough and is not supported in the narrative with a rationale.  Overall, the applicant receives points in the low range for this section.		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0
(E)(4) Reviewer Comments: The applicant has not responded to the criteria in this section. No points are awarded.		

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

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	2
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The budget narrative includes an itemized list of personnel, travel, equipment, and services. The proposal does not include, however, a rationale for these expenses. For example, instructional coaches to be provided in the elementary grades do not match project activities described elsewhere in the grant. As such, the purpose and adequacy of these positions is unclear. Also, the budget narrative lists the salary for the project director (1.0 FTE) as \$34,133, while the salary for the clerical assistant (0.1 FTE) is \$9,851. The budget spreadsheet lists this position as director of grants. The reason for this inconsistency is unclear.</p> <p>The project narrative also includes expenses for which details are not provided. For example, the \$165,000 listed for travel to conferences does not include information about who will go, the purpose of the conferences, or the times and locations of the conferences. Additionally, The technology total cost of \$180,000 does not equal the itemized cost as calculated by year or include a list of proposed purchases.</p> <p>Overall, this section receives points in the low range.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	1
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant minimally responds to the selection criteria for sustainability of the project. The response explains that project goals are aligned with district policies, which lends credibility to the idea of sustainability. However, the applicant has no plan other than aligned goals to sustain project activities. No discussion of funding to continue with the project after the grant ends is included. As such, the applicant scores in the low range of points for this section.</p>		

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	1
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Although the applicant includes letters of support from the state teachers' union, higher education institutions, and the community, no evidence is presented showing a coherent and sustainable partnership with any outside entity. The proposal does not include any population level results to which the outside entities could contribute. It also does not mention how the outside entities will contribute to capacity building within the schools to be served.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant receives a score in the low range of points for this section.</p>		

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant addresses the first core assurance (adopting standards and assessments) but does not describe the work that has been done to implement these changes thus far or how the proposed project will contribute to those efforts.</p> <p>The applicant discusses the use of data in informing practice and helping students achieve more academically, but the proposed project does not include the deployment of data systems that measure student growth.</p> <p>The applicant does not discuss how the proposed project will support recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective</p>		

teachers, especially in hard to staff schools or subject areas.

The applicant has already turned around four poor performing high schools, but the proposed project does not coherently or comprehensively build upon that work.

Overall, the application does not present a clear, thorough plan of how teaching and learning will be improved or how instruction will be personalized. As such, Absolute Priority 1 has not been met.

Total	210	48
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0507MI-2 for School District of the City of Saginaw

### A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Saginaw provided documentation detailing its history of changing demography and decline in performance of its students culminating in the designation of all four secondary schools as persistently failing. They described efforts undertaken at the middle and high school level to evaluate their efforts with Title I evaluation, a curriculum audit, and a high school school improvement grant which allowed them to diagnose systemic problems with curriculum and instruction. The documentation was vague regarding how changes made at the secondary level relate to the four core reform areas. The relevance of their proposed project to these reform areas is clearer.

Although Saginaw's proposal started fairly strongly, later sections C, D, E, and F were thin and in the case of the budget narrative, completely missing. This decline in the proposal quality in the later sections undermined the coherence of the proposal as a whole and left the impression that it was a partially finished work product.

Saginaw's response falls in the middle range with four points being awarded. Points were deducted because the history of reform efforts was not as comprehensive as it could have been and the incomplete nature of the proposal undermined coherence of the proposal.

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

Saginaw's documentation put forth a rationale for systemic system-wide reform and plans to serve all district schools. They provided a list of participating schools showing 7744 participants with 72.7% coming from economically deprived backgrounds.

Strong aspects of Saginaw's response included the following:

- Builds on prior reform work including district data analysis, implementation of School Improvement Grants, the 2010 PDK Title I Curriculum Audit, the 2012 Audit Update, 2012 Title I Program Evaluation and district strategic planning process.
- Participation of all LEA schools constituting a systemwide implementation with a convincing rationale for doing so based on a PDK curriculum audit and prior federal high school school improvement grant work in the district.
- Involves all education levels promoting vertical integration.
- Involves all of the most critical content areas including reading and mathematics and science.
- Serves a very high need population with over 70% coming from economically deprived backgrounds.
- Provided the required list of schools and participation numbers for students and educators.

The only weakness noted in Saginaw's submission for this section was the omission of an explanation for why only 95.1% of students would be served through the project. Who is being excluded? One point was deducted for this omission resulting in a total score of nine which is in the high range.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	7
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Based on extensive self-study including a PDK curriculum audit, work with a high school federal school improvement grant, and development of the Saginaw improvement model, Saginaw provided a convincing theory of action and rationale for implementing a system-wide reform project. Since all schools will participate from the beginning of the project, there are no issues relating to selection of schools or scaling the project up over time. Table 3: Action Plan provided rather general details for implementation and did not include goals or clearly identified deliverables which are required elements of a high quality plan. Due to these omissions and lack of details in the plan, three points were deducted resulting in a score of 7 points for the section which is in the middle range.

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

Saginaw provided data tables showing recent and projected proficiency percentages on state assessments. The project has ambitious goals for improving reading and mathematics generally in the range of 30 to 40 percentage points. While those goals are ambitious, they are so high they are probably not achievable. For fifth grade science, however, very low proficiency rates through and beyond the life of the grant for all subgroups were projected which is attainable but clearly not ambitious. In fact, for black or African-American students, the initial observed rates of 2% proficient only increase to 4% in the post-grant period. There are some problems with regard to data presented for closing the achievement gap. Data presented in the first table show little or no closing of the achievement gap over time while data in the second table specifically devoted to addressing projected achievement gap closure shows total elimination of gaps on state reading and mathematics assessments in the fourth year of the project. Totally closing the achievement gaps observed in four years is not realistic and is inconsistent with data presented in the first table which is also problematic in that it does not show any closure of the gap. Due to these problems, six points were deducted from the total score for this section resulting in a mid-level rating of four.

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	8

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Saginaw provided data pooled across grade levels that shows no increase from 2008 to 2011 in mathematics proficiency levels on state assessments and a modest improvement for reading. Saginaw has succeeded in having four secondary schools making AYP this past year when they had previously been persistently low performing schools on improvement. It has also put in place substantial initiatives and reforms related to curriculum, instruction, staff development, and accountability but there has been little time for these changes to take effect and some are still in the process of being implemented. The application narrative referenced a 3 to 4 year history for suspension, attendance, and graduation rates but this information could not be located in the application or appendices. Saginaw's response for this section was in the middle range and eight of 15 points were awarded. Points were deducted because only modest improvements in student performance could be reported at this time and the fact that no information was provided regarding how Saginaw makes student performance data available to students, educators and parents.

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

Saginaw reported that it makes available student achievement data through links on the district web site and annual reports by principals to parents and community members during one of the first Parent Meetings/Open Houses of each year. The reports are also posted on the district and school websites. Saginaw also reported that prior to district budget plan adoption, the superintendent holds meetings with key stakeholders including school level planning and budget hearings, public budget meetings, and meetings with bargaining unit representatives.

Saginaw did not address the extent to which it makes available staff salaries at the school level for the categories identified in B(2). Due to

the absence of this information three points were deducted for this section and the score of two was awarded which is in the middle range.

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

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Saginaw described in some detail state-level initiatives including adoption of Common Core Standards, College and Career Ready Standards, revised graduation requirements, and career oriented state assessments that will support their initiative to personalize learning environments. Saginaw did not directly address the issue of specific regulatory, statutory authority needed to implement the project. Students reportedly do have the opportunity to create a "personal curriculum" to fit the needs of students who may need to modify the MMC curriculum. Saginaw provided a high-quality response for this section earning all 10 points.

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

10

4

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Saginaw described its constructive working relationship with the local teacher education association and general engagement of community and school district stakeholders but did not address how they were engaged in the development of the proposal. Several letters of support were provided including one from the local teacher education association. Because of the low level of evidence of stakeholder involvement in the development of the proposal, six points were deducted from this section resulting in a score of four which is at the lower end of the mid-range.

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

5

3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

In responding to this section, Saginaw provided very little analysis of its current status in implementing personalized learning and work environments and even less regarding the logic behind the reform proposal. Better information about these elements is found in other areas of the application so only two points are being deducted for the limited response here. A score of three was awarded for this section which is in the middle range.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

At this point in reviewing the application, it became apparent that there are some serious problems with it and substantial sections are entirely missing, perhaps due to some technical glitch or the inadvertent submission of an earlier partial draft. The application does not include a section labeled C(1). An action plan was labeled as C. 2. The action plan addresses overall implementation of the project and includes all required high-quality plan sub-elements except for goals and deliverables. The plan does not, however, give adequate attention to the specific C(1) elements regarding how the project will improve teaching and learning by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide support for all students to graduate college- and career-ready. Some details are included in earlier sections of this document which show Saginaw's intentions. Due to the omissions cited above, fifteen points were deducted for this section resulting in a score of five which is in the middle range.

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

20

5

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

As noted above Saginaw submitted an action plan labeled C.2 but submitted no related narrative. As noted with section C(1) some details can be gleaned from earlier sections of this application revealing Saginaw's intentions for how the project will address some see to elements. Due to the omission cited above, fifteen points were deducted for this section resulting in a score of five which is in the middle range.

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

	Available	Score

(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	3
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Saginaw's proposal did not include a section D(1) but some details are included in earlier sections of this document which show Saginaw's intentions related to D(1) elements. No information regarding how the LEA office governance structure would support the project but there was a mention of state level allowance for using mastery rather than seat time in awarding credit. Three points were awarded for this section of the proposal which falls in the low range. Points were deducted because of the missing section and the proposal's failure to systematically address all of the elements.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	2
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Saginaw's proposal included no section labeled D(2). Earlier sections of the proposal provide some very limited information regarding Saginaw's plans for providing learning resources and providing appropriate technical support but no information was included on open data formats or interoperability. These omissions resulted in a deduction of eight points and a section score of two which is in the low range.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	3
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Saginaw included no section in its proposal identified as E(1). There was a section labeled "Formative and Summative Evaluation of the Saginaw Model Implementation" which included information potentially relevant to this section. Saginaw reported that it will use an external evaluator to implement ongoing formative and summative evaluations to guide decision-makers regarding progress in implementation and effects of the project. These evaluation activities could be part of a continuous improvement process. The plan includes project goals, objectives, evaluation activities or strategies, and a timeline. These measures do not include student academic measures and generally align poorly with the purposes and objectives for the proposal. No information was provided regarding the administrative processes or structures which would translate evaluation findings into actions for continuous improvement. That omission resulted in the deduction of twelve points and a total score of three for this section which is in the low range.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Saginaw's proposal included no section identified as E(2). Other sections do provide some information on a number of activities that Saginaw has in place or planned for communication and engagement of internal and external stakeholders. The communication strategies actually look better for the planned grant implementation than they did for engaging stakeholders in the development of the proposal. The communication strategies are reasonable and appropriate and full points were awarded for this section resulting in a score of five which is in the high range.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Saginaw provided performance measure tables for E(3) but no narrative submission was made for section E(3). Saginaw did not provide its rationale for the measures how it would constructively use the information, or how it would review or improve the measures. The table did include the right number and types of measures except that there was no noncognitive measure for the grade K-3 band. The performance targets were generally ambitious but achievable. In a few cases, the performance targets for the post-grant period called for 100% of the students, teachers, and principals to reach the target which is not realistic. Three points were deducted because of the missing information identified above resulting in a section score of two which is in the middle range.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Saginaw's proposal did not include a section labeled E(4). The section labeled "Formative and Summative Evaluation of the Saginaw Model Implementation" did include information which was probably intended for section E(4). As discussed above, the evaluation activities</p>		

are generally appropriate for the project as a whole but there is no reference to evaluating professional development or to making more productive use of resources to improve results. The measures do not include academic measures and align poorly to the purposes and goals of the proposal. On the positive side the proposal calls for use of an external evaluator which should promote a higher quality objective evaluation once they are engaged. Due to the deficiencies noted, three points were deducted and a section score of two was awarded which is in the middle range.

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

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	4
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: Saginaw included some budget information but did not use the standard tables and did not provide an overall budget summary table. Saginaw did provide a single project level breakout with a narrative description of each budgeted item and in most cases the figures were the same for all four years of the grant. The budgeted amounts appear to be appropriate, reasonable, and sufficient assuming the district has identified funding for other initiatives in the grant that are not included in the budget. No funds other than grant sources were identified for supporting project activities. Saginaw did not identify one-time expenditures versus ongoing operating costs. The budget appears to be heavily loaded with personnel who would continue after the life of the grant. There was no apparent focus on strategies to ensure the long-term sustainability of personalized learning environments. Due to these deficiencies, six points were deducted and a section score of four was awarded which is in the middle range.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	2
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: Saginaw's proposal did not include a section labeled F(2) but did include a section titled "Sustainability of the Project" and located just before the E(3) performance measure tables. In that section and in other parts of the application Saginaw showed an awareness of general management and ongoing professional development issues that need to be considered for sustainability of the project initiatives. There was no high quality plan for sustainability with required sub-elements of goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and persons responsible. Also there was no budgetary information or fiscal strategy for addressing how the project initiatives would be funded beyond the life of the grant. Due to these serious deficiencies, eight points were deducted for this section resulting in a section score of two which is in the low range.		

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: Saginaw and did not provide any narrative documentation addressing the competitive preference priority but did complete the table for performance measures for this area specifying state assessments and a parent participation survey as the measures. Saginaw did not identify any partnerships that would meet this requirement and no points were ordered for this section.		

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: In the first few sections of the proposal Saginaw laid out general plans for a coherent and comprehensive project that would improve		

teaching and learning through personalization of instruction, prepare students to graduate from high school prepared for college, and all other elements required to meet this absolute priority.

Total	210	84
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## Race to the Top - District Technical Review Form

Application #0507MI-3 for School District of the City of Saginaw

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	3
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant details that the proposal seeks to take a transformational model used in middle and high schools into the elementary level. The vision to accomplish this is detailed through professional development, use of data to guide learning, professional evaluation system and a commitment to college and career ready strategies. However, the proposal does not explain how the vision will build on the four core educational assurance areas outlined in the NIA nor is goal to accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning and increasing equity through personalized student support discussed. The applicant's vision articulated is to take what is occurring in middle and high schools and placing into elementary schools. While the applicant communicated a vision for this program, they did not tie that vision back to the four core educational assurance areas as defined by the NIA. Overall, this places the applicant in the top of the bottom range in scoring.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant explains that the approach to implementation for this project is built on information gained from multiple process and outcomes data, but they fail to explain the process used to select schools to participate. A concise description of the process used to select school would have strengthened the proposal.</p> <p>The applicant list the schools that will participate in the grant activities through the chart listed on page 24 - 30. The proposal explains that the Saginaw Model proposed will take the transformation of the middle and high schools and "transport them to the elementary schools." Proposal is confusing concerning the target schools being only the elementary schools or all schools listed. They provide listing of 20 schools shown to be participating n the grant activities. The applicant further provides information that 7,390 total students will be participating with 5,369 low-income participating students, 5,982 high-need students and 203 participating educators. Overall, this section was scored in the middle range because they failed to explain the process used to select the schools.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	3
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not provide a high quality plan including goals, activities, timelines, deliverables and responsible parties related to how the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools and will help it reach its outcome goals. The applicant does detail they will support, monitor and hold accountable the instructional leaders including principals and teachers as well as creating and supporting cross level, cross school, cross subject matter learning communities. This section was scored in the lower range because of the lack of a high quality plan requirements.</p>		

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	4
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal provides summative assessment data which was derived from the Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP) for grades 3 - 9 and Michigan Merit Exam (MME) for grade 11. This data leads to ambitious yet achievable annual goals, overall and by subgroups. The applicant provides achievement gap data which near 25 percent or above for all but one subgroup. The applicant details they will eradicate the achievement gap completely which is ambitious but yet questionable for achievement. The state achievement gap average is not provided nor is the LEAs, only the percentage gap. Information on both of these would have strengthened the application. Having that information would have provided a context of the severity of the issue. Again the state average being provided would have provided context for the applicant. The goals provided for the graduation rates with the subpopulations appear to be ambitious and realistic. The applicant provides the overall college enrollment rate for the 2010-2011 year, but fails to provide projections for the remaining years of the project. Again, the rates (postsecondary degree attainment) provided do not extend out the life of the grant. No projections for remainder of grant beyond 2011-12. This section scored in the lower aspect of the point range because of the discrepancy in data and the targeted being high for eradicating the achievement gap.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	4
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has evidenced success and significant reform by turning around 3 of the 4 persistently lowest achieving schools since 2009. But, they do not provide information on improving student learning outcomes and closing achievement gaps, increasing high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates. Rates given are for the past year alone. Although the proposal explains the LEA has launched a dashboard to continuously monitor and provide feedback in indicators, they fail to explain if this tool and it's information will be available to students, educators and parents. The applicant only states that the district will use th dashboard. More information needed on dashboard and its access, information on the three schools turned around concerning their achievement gaps, graduation rates and college enrollment rates. This section scored in the bottom of the point range due to the confusion of how the data would be used and which stakeholders will have access to the data.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant states that according to Michigan law individual school salaries are subject to the Freedom of Information Act and are a part of the negotiated bargaining unit agreements and therefore are public documents. But the applicant does not address whether the non-personnel expenditures are the school level and actual personnel salaries for all school-level instruction and support staff are available publicly. Applicant is unclear what data is released whether it is a composite number of actual salaries. The section scored in the lower point range because of the confusion concerning what data is released.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a series of legal, statutory and regulatory changes since 2006 which demonstrates the LEA has sufficient autonomy too implement the personalized learning environment described. This includes Michigan passing the College and Career ready Standard in 2006 which includes the opportunity to create a 'personal curriculum' to fit the needs of the students. Their online learning requirement allows for personalized learning through online experiences which can provide accelerated learning opportunities, remediation, test preparation and credit recovery. The Michigan Teacher Tenure Act, beginning in 2013-2014 allows for at least 25 percent of annual year-end evaluation be based on student growth and assessment data, at least 40 percent in 2013-2015 and 50 percent in 2015 - 2016. This change would appear to encourage personalized learning environments designed to accelerate student achievement. The applicant also details the collective bargaining framework and how it is not to include issues surrounding placement of teachers, personnel decisions, performance evaluation systems, discharge or discipline, issues around classroom observations. This framework described allows the system to make decisions necessary for the personalized learning environment described. Overall, this section scored high</p>		

because the application sufficiently addressed the conditions and autonomy to implement the personalized learning environments.

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

10

5

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

While the applicant explains the support by the Saginaw Education Association, no evidence exists for their direct engagement, including teachers, in developing the proposal. A letter of support from the SEA does exist explaining their support. The applicant and the letter from the SEA speak to the contract and follow MOU, but neither is present in the application. Since no evidence of direct engagement exists, these documents may have provided clarity on the expectations of the relationship. While letters of support are provided, other than the SEA letter there is not letter from key stakeholders such as parents and parent organizations. No letters from the business community exist which would have strengthened the application by showing their support/ commitment to the reform efforts. Overall, this section scored in the middle of the point range because of the lack of apparent support from the business community and the lack of understanding of the MOU and contract from the union.

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

5

2

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant fails to provide a high-quality plan for an analysis of the current status in implementing personalized learning environments. The components of the plan include the goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties for carrying out the analysis. The proposal does provide a cursory environmental scan which identifies some resources, advocates and assets which exists in the greater Saginaw community. Specific information and the key components of the high quality plan would have strengthened the application. This section scored in the lower point range because of the lack of specific information in the high quality plan.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

While the applicant provides an Action Plan in Table 3, it lacks the requirements of a high-quality plan. No goals or deliverables are provided in the action area. In addition, many areas of the criteria are left unaddressed. The Action Plan clearly evidences that the educators will be engaged along with the parents through the Epstein Model as a guide and Communities in Schools model. Lacking in this plan is the support and engagement of the students. The plan as presented is teacher focused with the only interaction among the students being the individual student triage model being referenced. The applicant does not provide an explanation as to how the student will be engaged. Also, they do not provide an understanding that the student will have an understanding that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals. The applicant fails to link learning and development goals to college and career ready standards or college and career ready requirements in the Action Plan. There is no understanding provided of how students will structure learning to achieve their goals and measure their progress toward the goals. The applicant further fails to provide an understanding that students will be able to be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest. The action plan does not describe that the students will have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning. Furthermore, the applicant does not speak to the student mastering critical academic content and developing skills and personal traits. The proposal does not address that the students will have access to a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable the student to achieve their individual learning goals and ensuring they can graduate on time and college- and career-ready. The proposal's Action Plan does present that the applicant will conduct training in core area instructional coaching and in personalized learning curriculums. These PLCs are designed to allow for a variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments for the students. The applicant does not address digital learning content in this proposal nor do they address ongoing and regular feedback in the action plan. Neither do they address that personalized learning recommendations will be based on the student's current knowledge and skills, college and career ready standards or college and career ready graduations requirements. The proposal does not address they will make accommodations and high quality strategies for high need students to help ensure they are on track toward meeting college and career ready standards or college and career ready graduation requirements. The applicant fails to address that mechanisms are in place to provide training and support to students that will ensure that they understand how to use the tools

and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning. This section scores in the low range because many of the major components of this section's criteria are left unaddressed and because the proposal omitted a portion of the requirements of the high-quality plan.

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

20

4

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

While the applicant provides an Action Plan in Table 3, it lacks the requirements of a high-quality plan needed for this section. No goals or deliverables are provided in the action area. In addition, many areas of the criteria are left unaddressed.

The applicant does detail in the Action Plan that the teachers will be engaged in training to conduct core area instructional coaching and receive training in PLCs. The Action Form further demonstrates that the teachers will be provided training in organizing PLC's in each school along with organizing cross-school PLCs. The proposal does not address that the applicant intends to adapt content and instruction, providing opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks, in response to their academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches (e.g., discussion and collaborative work, project-based learning, videos, audio, manipulatives.)

The proposal does not address the applicant will frequently measure student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice), or college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice) and use data to inform both the acceleration of student progress and the improvement of the individual and collective practice of educators

The proposal does not address the use of feedback provided by the LEA's teachers and principal evaluation systems to improve teachers and principal's practice and effectiveness. The applicant does not address that the educators will have access to actionable information to help them identify optimal learning approaches that response to the individual student academic needs and interests. Also, no mention is given concerning high-quality learning resources the educators would have access to which are aligned with college and career ready standards. While the proposal does mention that the each school will design and implement intense individual student triage models, they fails to explain the processes and tools to be used to match student needs with specific resources and approaches. No mention is made in concerning use of information from such sources as the district's teacher evaluation system (as defined in this notice), that helps school leaders and school leadership teams (as defined in this notice) assess, and take steps to improve, individual and collective educator effectiveness and school culture and climate, for the purpose of continuous school improvement. The Action Plan does not address training, systems and practices to continuously improve school progress toward goals of increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps.

The applicant fails to provide a high quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals (as defined in this notice), including in hard-to-staff schools, subjects (such as mathematics and science), and specialty areas (such as special education).

This section scored extremely low because the applicant failed to address the criteria in the NIA.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal fails to address section D. No description is giving concerning organizing the LEA central office, or the consortium governance structure (as defined in this notice), to provide support and services to all participating schools (as defined in this notice); Providing school leadership teams in participating schools (as defined in this notice) with sufficient flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and noneducators, and school-level budgets; Giving students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic or giving students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways; and providing learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities

and English learners. This applicant scored 0 because of failing to address any of the criteria.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)

10

0

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal fails to address criteria in section D. No narrative is provided concerning ensuring that all participating students (as defined in this notice), parents, educators (as defined in this notice), and other stakeholders (as appropriate and relevant to student learning), regardless of income, have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of the applicant's proposal; ensuring that students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders (as appropriate and relevant to student learning) have appropriate levels of technical support, which may be provided through a range of strategies (e.g., peer support, online support, or local support); using information technology systems that allow parents and students to export their information in an open data format (as defined in this notice) and to use the data in other electronic learning systems (e.g., electronic tutors, tools that make recommendations for additional learning supports, or software that securely stores personal records); and Ensuring that LEAs and schools use interoperable data systems (as defined in this notice) (e.g., systems that include human resources data, student information data, budget data, and instructional improvement system data). This application scored 0 because of failing to address any of the criteria.

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

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	4

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided through Table 4, a formation and summative evaluation process which has a basic framework for a continuous improvement process. But, the applicant fails to address a strategy for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvement during and after the term of the grant. This section scored a low because the applicant failed to provide a strategy for a rigorous improvement process.

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

5

1

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant specified they will expand the system of parent engagement through using the Epstein Model as a guide. In addition, they detail they will expand the system of instructional support through community partners through the development and implementation of a community partnership plan. Beyond these two aspects, they fail to address their strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. These stakeholders include the community, including the business community, government leaders, the non-profit sector, and others. This section scored low because there was no clear strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholder.

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

5

2

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides performance measures are required by the NIA but in many cases they are lacking clarity. For the performance measures for all the applicable populations concerning the highly effective teachers and highly effective principals along with the effective teacher and effective principal the applicant does not describe all targets in each year but rather explains they are to be determined. Because of this, deciding whether they are ambitious yet achievable is unable to be ascertained. The statistics for *all applicants - c* are incoherent. The applicant explains that a minimal 40 percent of middle and high school students enrolled in at least one accelerates course per year by June 2015, and 80 percent by June 2016 and they further explain the baseline is estimated to be less than 10 percent and to realize an increase to 85 percent by 2016. The numbers themselves do not add up. The same is for number 2 with 75 percent of students tested assessed to be college and career ready by 2015 and 90 percent by 2016 with a 9 percent baseline and a resulting percentage of 95 percent by 2016. The performance measures for section (E)(3) for Grades PreK-3 – a appears to be ambitious and realistic but *b) with no subgroup to perform at level below the statewide average* appears to be ambitious yet unachievable. The measures for grades 9-12 have TBD as targets which leave no avenue to assess if they are realistic. This section scored low because

many of the measures targets do not have clarity for assessing achievement potential.

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

5

0

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal provides no plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the Race to the Top - District funded activities. This section is scored a 0 because there no plan communicated addressing this criteria,

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

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	5
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant identifies in the budget narrative that all funds are to come from the Race to the Top - District grant. These funds are detailed in <i>Table 4-1: Project-Level Itemized Costs</i> and are reasonable in the development of the implementation of the proposal presented. The costs are in line with the <i>Summary Narrative</i> along with the proposal narrative. A major portion of this project is the training of teachers and the budget's only aspect in addressing this is the training stipends. No dollars have been allocated for a training budget. The applicant does not provide an identification of the funds which will be used for one-time investments versus those for ongoing operational costs. The applicant scores in the upper aspect of the mediate range because of their itemizing the funds to be spent but yet no explanation of the one time investments versus the ongoing operational costs.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	3
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: While the applicant provided a section titled <i>Sustainability of the Project</i> , no mention was given to the gaining support from state and local government leaders and financial support. The only reference to sustainability is the forming and maintaining of the Emerging Leaders Academies to identify and prepare emerging principals and central office staff. Yet, this project was not mentioned in the narrative. A sustainability plan would have included what resources were needed after the project ends and how those resources would be sustained. In addition, the plan would have included what resources were only needed during the grant period and how those renounces would contribute to the continued viability of project after grant ends. This section scored in the lower range because of the lack of details provided concerning the sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant.		

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: The applicant did not address the Competitive Preference Priority.		

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: The applicant did not address how they will build on the core educational assurance areas. While they did explain they plan to create learning environments that are designed to impotent learning and teaching, they did not tie the vision and plan back		

to building on the four core educational assurance areas as defined in the NIA.

Total	210	61
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