



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0498TX-1 for Southwest Schools

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	0
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: Section not submitted		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	0
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: Section not submitted		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	0
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: Section not submitted		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	0
(A)(4) Reviewer Comments: Section not submitted		

### 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	0
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: Section not submitted		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	0
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: Section not submitted		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	0
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: Section not submitted		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	1
(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:		

Section not submitted, but there are several letters attached showing support from stakeholders.

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

5

0

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Section not submitted

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	1
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: Section not submitted. Elsewhere in the grant the applicant talks about RTI, which would allow for accommodations and strategies to meet students at different levels.		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	0
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: Section not submitted		

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

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	3
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: The narrative here only captures a portion of section D1d and all of D1e, only addressing enough information to earn a low score. The applicant is prepared to deliver instruction at a pace that matches student needs. PD for teachers as well as student instructional practices will be continuously evaluated to ensure individualized instruction. The applicant also plans to use RTI as an approach to ensure information is accessible to all students at all levels. RTI covers criteria e of this section, as it provides instruction that is individualized for the student and takes into account disabilities or limited English proficiency. The section overall is given a low score because the rest of it is not found in the application.		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	4
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: Southwest Schools communicates to stakeholders mostly through e-mail and e-newsletters. Information can be found on the website as well. The applicant does not provide detail on whether information is accessible to those who may not have internet access. Parents can access the Parent Portal through CSCOPE, where they can view class information and monitor their students' progress. It is not written whether or not parents are taught to use the Portal or if there is a tutorial for them. The applicant uses Study Island for additional instructional support for students. It is based on state standards and allows students to submit and monitor work from any location. Study Island also provides real-time data and results from student work. It is not mentioned if this is available for all students or just those in need of extra support. Southwest Schools uses AEIS, which is an interoperable data system that contains school and district information, budget information, and testing performance data. The school has also implemented a Regional Service Computer Center to track and monitor student data. The applicant meets the school infrastructure requirements, but still scores a low medium as they do not outline a plan to make it available to all stakeholders who may not have access. There is also no mention of technical support provided for stakeholders or whether all students and parents have access to the online system.		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	9
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Southwest School began its improvement process with a district needs assessment, which revealed the need to keep pace with new technology in order to keep student learning current. Southwest School will focus on keeping a variety of technology in the classroom and ensure teachers are well trained and prepared to use it. PD will be focused on teacher academic content and how students learn said content. However, the section is lacking in specifics and details as to what in particular will be offered for PD and how strategies will be monitored and publicly shared.</p> <p>The improvement plan involves forming a Site Based Decision Making Team, to assist with areas of concern. The team will review and revise needs assessments as well as the campus vision statement to ensure continuity. They will reach out to parents and community members to involve them in the process. School data will be monitored to ensure effectiveness of programs. This section scores a medium, as they have a strong plan in place, but it is not discussed how much authority the SBDMT will have to effect change within the school, aside from monitoring progress and suggesting plans for improvement.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant is fully committed to on-going communication and engagement with stakeholders and has numerous strategies in place. These include getting information to stakeholders about programs in an individualized manner, based on the stakeholders position in the school or community. The applicant will also seek to support families by helping them to access community services that would be beneficial to them. Meetings will be held at times in which stakeholders indicate they can attend. The applicant will also ensure their website is up to to date with all the latest information that stakeholders may need. Despite a commitment and numerous ideas, the applicant still fails to elaborate on any detailed plans they have for communication and scores a medium.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant lists their performance measures but does not provide a narrative to explain why these indicators were selected, nor how they intend to measure the indicators in a timely manner to use for continued improvement of the process. The section receives a point for indicating measures, but must stay in the low range as no explanations are provided.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Southwest Schools plans to evaluate the effectiveness of activities through portfolios, surveys, teacher and administrator evaluations, observations, interviews and tests. It is not described what will come of all this information or how these items will indicate progress or growth.</p> <p>Southwest Schools intends to align themselves with the standards outlined in the Long Range Plan for Technology as a way to monitor whether they are improving their use of techology in the classroom. The district also plans to look at and restructure compenents of pay as it relates to student achievement.</p> <p>Southwest schools works with several community partners already, but does not explain how they will evaluate the effect of those partnerships or how they will be improved moving forward.</p> <p>This section scores in the medium range as they make mention of all the indicators that need to be evaluated, but do not provide any explanation of how they will be evaluated or what strategies will be implemented to monitor improvement.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	4

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant identifies all funds that will support the project in its budget. The budget clearly outlines all funding for the project and whether they are one-time or on-going. It states that the budget is reasonable and sufficient, but does not provide the rationale for grant-funded projects, or explanation of priorities and reasons for investments in certain areas. There is no mention of strategies to ensure sustainability.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	1
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states they will sustain projects through CTE (career and tech ed) funding. There is no detail provided on what these funds are or how they will be able to sustain the grant projects. There is also no mention of support from state and local government or any other potential funding sources.

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

No competitive preference section submitted.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Considering this application is incomplete, it does not meet the absolute priority for personalized learning environments. Any section which addressed the core assurance areas and how this proposal would build on those in order to personalize education for students is not found in this application.

Total	210	29
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## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

Application #0498TX-2 for Southwest Schools

### A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant alludes to work in the four educational assurance areas, but there is no comprehensive reform vision to guide the work in these areas. The applicant does not specify a clear plan for accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support. There is no evidence of a comprehensive needs assessment that will guide the project and address the needs of individual student needs as well as the needs of the entire student population.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	1
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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not clearly define a process for selecting schools to participate. The recruitment, identification of needs, and overall selection process are not articulated. It appears that one school will be the grant participant, but there is little information provided about the participating students, low-income students, and high-need students who will be served throughout the project.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	2
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides minimal evidence of a high-quality plan describing how the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools (as defined in this notice), and will help the applicant reach its outcome goals. The applicant summarizes yearly project activities according to nine goals. This shows some evidence of long-range planning for the proposed project activities. Some activities are listed in broad terms, and there are no specific milestones or deliverables associated with all of the activities stated in each year of the project. For example, the applicant indicates plans to organize a promote a mentoring system for new and first year teachers. There are no details describing incremental steps for implementing this activity, and no discussion of specific desired outcomes that are associated with this task. It is not clear who is responsible for this task and what deliverables will be expected if it is fully implemented.

The applicant does not thoroughly describe the logic model or theory of change of how its plan will improve student learning outcomes for all students who would be served. It is not readily apparent how the applicant proposes to implement the goals and activities and drive

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	2
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant includes goals for the overall project. The measurable objectives for working toward each goal are lacking. For example, the applicant includes a goal of developing a high-performing teacher workforce and provide professional development and support to achieve excellent results for all students. There are few details provided about what constitutes high performing and excellent results for all students. There are no explicit connections made between the activities and data showing performance on assessments, decreasing achievement gaps, graduation rates, and college enrollment. The applicant includes performance measures for students in mathematics and English language arts for students in grades 3-12. Some goals appear ambitious yet achievable. For example, in the first year, the applicant proposes a 2.5 percent increase for all students in English language arts. This represents a reasonable increase from the baseline percentage. For some goals, the applicant does not describe the rationale or provide a comprehensive plan for addressing the particular student population. For example, the applicant predicts a larger increase for African American and Hispanic students than for all students in the first year of project implementation. The applicant does not provide a comprehensive discussion for the calculations. There is no detail outlining plans specifically designed to target these student populations that would translate into higher levels of growth in math.

**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	2

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not provide convincing evidence of a clear record of success in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching. The baseline scores provided for student performance reveal less than forty percent of students in grades 3-12 as successful on the state assessments. Success rates for all students in

mathematics were less than 60 percent last year. The data indicate challenges in student achievement from the previous school year. Specific data by grade level and by subject for the past four years are not provided.

The applicant does not provide trends over time for graduation rates and college enrollment rates, making it difficult to ascertain the likelihood of improving outcomes in these areas.

The applicant does not specify how reforms will be targeted to the lowest-achieving schools. The applicant references the use of Response to Intervention to help struggling students. There is no discussion of how this process will be implemented over time in order to achieve the results desired.

The applicant plans to continue to use the CSCOPE parent portal to provide information about student performance to parents. It is unclear how students and teachers will have access to this data and utilize it to improve participation, instruction, and services.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	0
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant provides no description of the extent to which the applicant already makes available the following four categories of school-level expenditures from State and local funds: (a) Actual personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff, based on the U.S. Census Bureau's classification used in the F-33 survey of local government finances (information on the survey can be found at <a href="http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/f33agency.asp">http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/f33agency.asp</a> ); (b) Actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff only; (c) Actual personnel salaries at the school level for teachers only; and (d) Actual non-personnel expenditures at the school level (if available).		
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(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	1
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: The applicant provides little evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in the applicant's proposal. The applicant includes a diagram summarizing a structure for collaboration and site-based decision making which shows some autonomy at the local level. There is no discussion of the State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements that may impact the use of personalized learning environments.		
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(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	2
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments: The applicant does not provide a comprehensive description of how students, families, teachers, and principals in participating were engaged in the development of the proposal and, as appropriate, how the proposal was revised based on their engagement and feedback. There is no information provided about collective bargaining representation. Letters of support indicate support for the project at the local and regional levels. For example, the Regional Service Center has indicated support for the project which shows a history of collaboration between the Center and the applicant. Additionally, support from the mayor shows a local commitment to advancing the aims of the project. Several of the letters from businesses are not signed. Chevron indicates support for the project, but the writer did not sign the letters. As a result, it is unclear who composed the letter and what level of support can be expected from the organization.		
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(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	1
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments: The applicant provides minimal information showing an analysis of the applicant's current status in implementing personalized learning environments and the logic behind the reform proposal contained within the applicant's proposal, including identified needs and gaps that the plan will address. The applicant does not include a thorough needs assessment, and there are not specific connections made between student achievement data in the content areas and how that data drove decision-making about the set of proposed strategies. The applicant proposes a set of goals that are ambitious, but there are few details		
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provided about the logic behind the proposal.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	3
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides minimal evidence of a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. The applicant does not clearly articulate a process for engaging and empowering students to understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals. There are no details about the identification of individualized goals that are linked to college-and career-ready standards.</p> <p>The applicant does not specify a process by which student academic interests will be identified and how these interests will be linked to deep learning experiences in academic areas.</p> <p>The applicant makes no reference to diverse cultures and contexts that will be embedded in and deepen individual student learning.</p> <p>The applicant references the use of Response to Intervention as a method of supporting students in mastering academic content. This strategy represents a research-based approach to supporting diverse student needs. A coherent plan for helping students with goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem solving is not thoroughly developed.</p> <p>The applicant does not include a set of strategies to ensure that every student has access to a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable the student to achieve his or her individual learning goals and ensure he or she can graduate on time and college- and career-ready.</p> <p>The applicant lists several components within the first two of the three tiers of Response to Intervention, showing evidence of some variety in the instructional approaches that will be incorporated. The applicant does not specify examples of high-quality content, including digital learning content, which will be utilized within personalized learning environments.</p> <p>The applicant indicates that progress monitoring will take place every two weeks on target skills to ensure adequate progress and learning. This represents one component of data collection that can provide important information about individual student progress toward the mastery of critical standards.</p> <p>The application is lacking information about ongoing feedback in the form of personalized learning recommendations based on the student's current knowledge and skills, college- and career-ready standards.</p> <p>Study Island is mentioned as a personalized learning approach, but it is unclear how this program is aligned to rigorous standards that lead to college-and career-readiness.</p> <p>The tiered instructional approach offered through Response to Intervention provides one aspect of the use of accommodations for high-need students. Individualized student support as noted in the third tier, can be beneficial to struggling students.</p> <p>The application contains no information about mechanisms that 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.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	1
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Specific elements of a high quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready are lacking.</p> <p>The applicant references that all teachers and administrators can access and use statistics generated from the Study Island program, but there is no mention of specific training for all educators to utilize this data to inform instructional practice. The applicant provides little information about training for educators in all project components. The applicant lists several programs that will be utilized, but there are no specific details about the training that will be required for students, teachers, parents, and staff to utilize the programs. Progress monitoring tools are available through some of the various programs proposed. There is little information about how teachers will analyze the data and use it to inform instructional practice and</p>		

decision-making about the needs of individual students.

The applicant does not elaborate on the teacher and leader evaluation systems that will be implemented. It is unclear how feedback from evaluations will be utilized to provide support, recommendations, and interventions as needed for improvement.

The applicant references CSCOPE, Kilgo, and CHAMPS, but no details are provided to connect these tools with specific learning goals. Without additional information about these tools, it is unclear whether or not they represent high quality learning resources to support student needs.

There is little mention of a comprehensive, high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers. The performance targets in this area are not accompanied by a description of the strategies and a rationale for the projected targets.

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

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	3
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The use of Response to Intervention provides a basic foundation of increasing accessibility for students with disabilities. The applicant provides specific programs that will be utilized in each of the three tiers. This shows evidence of learning resources that will be incorporated to address diverse student needs. The use of Positive Behavior Intervention Support and Crisis Intervention also contributes to a varied approach for increasing accessibility for students to may have needs that differ from other students in the classroom.</p> <p>The applicant provides a diagram of the structure of student support services to show the basic structure that will be utilized to provide direct services to students. There is little description about the structure and how it will be used to facilitate overall project activities.</p> <p>The applicant provides little description about school leadership teams. As a result, it is difficult to ascertain the level of flexibility and autonomy that will be afforded in implementing personnel decisions and outlining roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>The applicant does not thoroughly describe how students will be afforded opportunities to demonstrate mastery in multiple and comparable ways. There is little discussion about the progress of assessing student progress based on mastery rather than time spent on a topic.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	5
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant cites use of electronic communication and opportunities for parents to use the website; however, there is no discussion about access to the necessary content, tools, and other learning resources for those who may not have Internet access.</p> <p>A parent portal is included, and can be a useful tool for parents. For example, it provides opportunities for parents to view key concepts of the curriculum that students are engaged with. This knowledge can facilitate parent support at home and empower parents to become more involved in their student's learning. The use of Blackboard Connect also provides a mechanism for one way communication with stakeholders. The applicant focuses on online support for stakeholders, but there is little discussion of a range of strategies that will be integrated to ensure that all stakeholders have appropriate support.</p> <p>The applicant discusses two web-based instructional programs that can provide information about student performance and progress. There is little discussion about specific systems that provide a wide-range of capabilities in allowing parents and students to export their information in an open data format.</p> <p>The applicant discusses several examples of data systems that are supported by the state's network. For example, the applicant utilizes the Academic Excellence Indicator System provided by the Texas Education Agency. Additional software that the applicant references provides evidence of opportunities to combine school level data and enhance reporting capabilities.</p>		

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

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	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	7
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant cites several guiding questions that will drive the continuous improvement process. These questions related back to data and student progress and support the practice of data-driven decision making. The applicant plans to use data derived from the comprehensive needs assessment to determine priorities for student learning. The incorporation of a Site-Based Decision Making Team to assist with identified areas of concern represents a commitment to involving a variety of individuals in the improvement process.</p> <p>The applicant does not thoroughly describe how the data analysis will be used to make adjustments throughout the project to ensure continuous improvement. There is little information provided about publicly sharing information about the quality of the investments and practices utilized in the project.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides some vague strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. For example, the applicant states that all stakeholders will be provided with information about school programs and school progress in a format that meets their individual needs. There is no description about what this format includes and how decisions will be made about how to communicate the information.</p> <p>The applicant notes that the school website will be used for communication, but there is no discussion of providing this information to stakeholders who may not know to regularly visit the website.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant plans to utilize the state model, once it is completed, for determining effectiveness. There is no discussion of specific performance measures overall and by subgroup with annual targets for growth. There is no evidence of a plan for measuring improvement and no discussion of how performance measures were developed.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has established five objectives to guide evaluation of project effectiveness. These objectives are in line with needs cited in the proposal and are measurable. The applicant proposes a variety of methods for evaluating performance. For example, self-evaluation, surveys, portfolios, principal observations, student data, interviews, and the creation of the Site-Based Decision Making Team will all be considered in evaluating the project. Using multiple forms of data can provide insight into the effectiveness of various project components that may not be observed with one data source. Linking student outcomes with specific teachers will also provide information about levels of teaching and learning within individual classrooms in the school.</p> <p>The applicant provides an overview of strategies for evaluating effectiveness of the project overall, but there are little connections made between each of the data sources and specific project components. For example, the applicant discusses the implementation of a STEM educational program, but provides little specific evidence of how the effectiveness of this investment will be gauged.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	3
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides basic information about the investments and priorities. Some descriptions of budget items are vague. For example, the applicant indicates that \$500 per staff member will be provided in stipends for pursuing advanced education. The total cost for this line item is \$3000 per year. The applicant does not describe the rationale for this investment or discuss</p>		

the process for determining who will receive stipends each year and what criteria will used to make decisions about allocations. It is also not clear how this investment ties directly to the project activities.

A comprehensive discussion of all project goals and initiatives is lacking, so it is difficult to accurately assess the reasonableness and sufficiency of the proposed budget.

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

10

1

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not provide a comprehensive plan for sustaining the project after the term of the grant. It is unclear what potential sources of income may be after the grant is complete.

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: This section was not addressed.		

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: A comprehensive plan to address how the applicant will build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching is lacking. The applicant does not clearly describe project strategies as they relate to the overall project goals.		

Total	210	41
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## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

Application #0498TX-3 for Southwest Schools

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	0
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: No documentation is provided for sections A through C of the proposal to determine the extent to which the applicant articulated a comprehensive and coherent reform vision.		

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	0
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>No documentation is provided for sections A through C of the proposal to determine the extent to which the applicant has a clear or reasonable approach to implementing its reform proposal.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	0
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>No documentation is provided for sections A through C of the proposal to determine the extent to which the application includes a high-quality plan describing 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 the applicant reach its outcome goals.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	0
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Although the proposal has LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes, however, no documentation is provided for sections A through C of the proposal to determine the extent to which the applicant's vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goals that are equal to or exceed State ESEA targets for the LEA(s), overall and by student subgroup.</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	0
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The extent to which each LEA/applicant has demonstrated evidence of a clear record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching cannot be determined. No descriptions, charts or graphs, raw student data, and other evidence are provided. In addition, the applicant did not provide documentation for sections A through C of the proposal.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	0
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The extent to which each LEA/applicant has demonstrated evidence of increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments cannot be determined. No documentation was provided for sections A-C.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	0
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The extent to which each LEA/applicant has demonstrated evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in the applicant's proposal cannot be determined. No documentation was provided for sections A-C of the proposal</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	2
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant demonstrated very limited evidence of meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal and meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal.</p> <p>Letters of support were written in support of Southwest School District from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A parent</li> </ul>		

- Mayor of Houston, Texas
- The Bridge School Ne (On-line Educator for grades 6-12)
- Region 4 Education Solutions
- CSTEM (A Designer of STEM Curricula)

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

5

0

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The extent to which each LEA has demonstrated evidence of a high-quality plan for an analysis of the applicant's current status in implementing personalized learning environments and the logic behind the reform proposal contained within the applicant's proposal, including identified needs and gaps that the plan will address cannot be determined. No documentation or supporting evidence was provided for sections A-C of the proposal.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	2
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant demonstrates a very limited plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready cannot be determined. The applicant only provides the following: Based on identified assessment data, grades and attendance, students will be placed in tiered interventions. Assessment progress on targeted skills will be monitored every two weeks.		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	2
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant does not demonstrate a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. However, the applicant does propose to use the following tools that support instruction and are used as resources or interventions to accelerate student progress such as: Read Well, Successful Reader, Achieve 3000 and Accelerated Math.		

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

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	3
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant demonstrates an ambiguous plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator, and level of the education system (classroom, school, and LEA) with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed.  There is no mention of organizing the LEA central office, or the consortium governance structure to provide support and services to all participating schools. There is no mention of leadership teams in participating schools. The applicant does not mention giving students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the standards.  However, the applicant does propose to provide all students, including LEP and special education students, daily instructional resources and practices to help their learning.		

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	5
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The LEA and school infrastructure adequately supports personalized learning via the following: E-mail, newsletters, education agency's Web site, link to curriculum Web site, Blackboard/message call-out system. Students have access to Study Island, which is a learning intervention for additional academic support. The applicant provides communication that includes district-teacher-school data, budget information and testing performance. The database program helps teaching staff track grades, contains student testing data, teacher lesson planner, tracks asset inventory and facility use, and includes a professional development management system. The majority of the infrastructure is Web based and does not take into consideration members of the target population that may not have sufficient or on-going access to technology within their homes and community-based facilities that allow the public access to the internet.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	5
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant proposes to address the need to employ a variety of technological equipment/software and the need for instructional staff to attend high quality staff development trainings and conferences. The applicant's instructional staff continues to establish an effective relationship with the students in an environment conducive to learning. However, the applicant's strategy does not sufficiently and clearly address how the applicant will monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of its investments funded by Race to the Top – District, such as investments in professional development, technology, and staff. The strategy would be strengthened if the applicant defined "variety of technological equipment/software". The applicant does not define the instructional staff.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The following are some of the proposed internal and external communication plan strategies the applicant feel will add value to the applicant's communication with all stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All stakeholders will be provided with information about school programs and school progress in a format that meets their individual needs;</li> <li>• School leaders will incorporate an appropriate balance among all stakeholders so they are aligned to maximize students achievement;</li> <li>• The applicant proposes to assist and support families in gaining access to support services from other community agencies;</li> <li>• The applicant proposes to create a family school community compact that describes how the school expects families to support their children's education and what the applicant should expect from the community;</li> <li>• The applicant proposed to ensure district and school meetings are scheduled at times that permit all stakeholders to attend.</li> </ul> <p>The extent to which the applicant has strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders is ambiguous and does not clearly support the goals of the proposal.</p> <p>Relative to the proposed internal and external communication, the applicant does not cited what kind of information would be communicated or what would be measured to determine "progress". The applicant stated that school leaders will incorporate an appropriate balance among stakeholders. The applicant does not explain "balance" when relating stakeholders alignment to student achievement .</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

The extent to which the applicant has ambitious yet achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup, with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures cannot be fully determined because the applicant cites that no valid and reliable data tool exists to determine teacher and principal effectiveness exists within the district. For example, the goal of going from zero ELL students with highly effective teachers and principals to 356 students having highly effective teachers and principals in this sub-group is ambitious but may not be achievable. Although the applicant proposes to augment technology across the district and provide professional development that is aligned with the technology standards of the district, this proposal could make the performance measure attainable if the results or outcomes of the professional development could be used as one of the data tools to determine teacher and principal effectiveness. It is also highly likely that the performance measures would be attainable if the applicant would have proposed at least one grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan that was directly correlated with teacher and principal effectiveness and its impact on overall student achievement.

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

5

2

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates a sparse plan relative to how it will evaluate the effectiveness of Race to the Top – District funded activities, such as professional development and activities that employ technology, and to more productively use time, staff, money, or other resources in order to improve results, through such strategies as improved use of technology, working with community partners, compensation reform, and modification of school schedules and structures.

- The applicant communicates the following to address its plan:
- Recognize the importance of data-driven decision making for educational leaders;
- Utilize a systematic process for making data-based decisions;
- Utilize performance-based data in the design and operation of instructional programs and guiding staff development, with the implementation of technology;
- Consider data infrastructure requirements to support school and district-data base decisions; and
- Identify various ways that the district can use data to guide program, personnel and resource allocation decisions.

However, the applicant does not communicate how professional development and activities that employ technology will be evaluated. In addition, the applicant does not address how it will more productively use time, staff, money, or other resources in order to improve results, through such strategies as improved use of technology, working with community partners, compensation reform, and modification of school schedules and structures.

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

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	4

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's budget, including the budget narrative and tables identifies all funds that will support the project and are feasible. Costs associated with the project will include personnel and fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractals and indirect costs over a four year implementation period. The costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. However, it cannot be fully determined if the budget is sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal inclusive of project services and activities due to the fact that no documentation was provided for sections A through C of the proposal.

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

10

3

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not have a clear plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. The plan implies support from State and local government leaders and financial support. For example, the applicant states that the project goals will be sustained through additional funding obtained from current sources. The applicant anticipates dependence on increased achievement score that will effect current targeted funds being shifted back into the project budget and will assist with retention of employees provided through the RTTT grant funds. The applicant does not provide documentation relative to

being able to solicit support from State and local government leaders and financial support from for profit and non-profit community based organizations or other grant-funding sources.

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: A narrative was not written regarding the Competitive Preference Priority.		

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant did not coherently and comprehensively address how it will build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements; accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student; increase the effectiveness of educators; expand student access to the most effective educators; decrease achievement gaps across student groups; and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers based on the following:</p> <p>Relative to internal and external communication, the applicant did not cite what kind of information would be communicated and cite specifically what would be measured to determine “progress”. The statement that school leaders will incorporate an appropriate balance among stakeholders is unclear.</p> <p>The majority of the infrastructure is Web based and does not take into consideration members of the target population that may not have sufficient or on-going access to technology within their homes and community-based facilities that allow the public access to the internet. The applicant does not have a clear plan for sustainability of the project’s goals after the term of the grant. The plan only implies support from State and local government leaders and financial support. For example the applicant states that the project goals will be sustained through additional funding obtained from current sources. In addition, the applicant did not provide documentation that addresses elements A through C.</p> <p>It cannot be determined if the performance measures are ambitious yet achievable, overall and by subgroup, with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures as the applicant does not provide valid and reliable data tool(s) to determine teacher and principal effectiveness exists within the district.</p> <p>Costs associated with the project will include personnel and fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractals and indirect costs over a four year implementation period. The costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.</p> <p>Relative to sustainability, the applicant did not provide documentation indicating that it was able to solicit support from State and local government leaders and financial support from for profit and non-profit community based organizations or other grant-funding sources.</p>		

Total	210	32
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### Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	0
<p>Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant did not apply for additional funding (beyond the applicable maximum level provided) up to a maximum of \$2 million for each optional budget supplement to address a specific area that is supplemental to the plan for addressing Absolute Priority 1.</p>		