



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0765TX-1 for Sulphur Springs Independent School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p><i>Sulphur Springs ISD articulates a complete and coherent reform vision. The school district addresses each facet of the four core educational assurance areas.</i></p> <p><i>In regards to adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and beyond, the district plans to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Implement various assessments that will improve teacher preparation and instruction,</i></li> <li><i>Incorporate technology to raise reading achievement and create student portfolios, and,</i></li> <li><i>Revamp the culture of eight campuses to reflect a 'no excuses' policy, which will provide additional rigor.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Sulfur Springs ISD identifies ways in which it will build data systems that measure student growth and success, such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Collecting a variety of data, including past performance measures and student learning strategies,</i></li> <li><i>Develop an action plan to address the next phase of school-wide improvements, and</i></li> <li><i>Improve the existing infrastructure to accommodate additional technology.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>The school district does not address how it will recruit, retain, and reward effective teachers and administrators; however, the applicant offer a comprehensive narrative about how it will support its teachers through ongoing support from coaches and providing continuous professional development opportunities throughout the year.</i></p> <p><i>Sulfur Springs offers an extensive and impressive list of ways in which the school district turn around its lowest achieving schools.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The school district will increase its capital expenditures to address STEM deficiencies by investing in computer hardware and electronic notebooks,</i></li> <li><i>Restructuring the curriculum to focus on core courses which will facilitate college readiness and/or obtain an associate's degree while still in high school, and</i></li> <li><i>Finally, the district will provide personalized learning assessments/plans for each student.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Overall, this places Sulfur Springs in the bottom of the high range. While overall the vision was strong, the applicant failed to address the recruitment, retention, and the rewarding of teachers—a critical part of the process.</i></p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p><i>Sulphur Springs ISD shared its reasonable approach to implementing its reform proposal and how it will support high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation of its proposed activities. The district will</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Require that participating schools commit to at least seven of the 20 initiatives,</i></li> <li><i>Create a vision for the school system,</i></li> <li><i>Identify the system's strengths and weaknesses, and</i></li> <li><i>Regularly assess its reform measures.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>The applicant also provides the necessary data about which schools will participate and the total number of students who</i></p>		

*meet program requirements.*

*Because the district took the time to conduct meeting with all stakeholders, including parents, community representatives, and teachers; and because the district has a strong record of past academic success, this places Sulphur Springs ISD in the high range.*

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

10

10

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

*Sulphur Springs' school reform model is based on the International Center for Leadership in Education's System for Effective Instruction. This plan, while seemingly basic in design, places student achievement and instructional effectiveness at its core. (The model is circular.) Each outlying component and its intended outcomes (Teaching, Instructional Leadership, and Organizational Leadership) are detailed.*

*The Applicant scores strongly for this criterion.*

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

10

8

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

*Overall, the Applicant convincingly details how its vision will result in improved student learning and performance. The project is ambitious, but the achievability is unclear.*

*According to the figures and information presented in the last table in section (A)(2), two out of nine of the listed schools did not meet AYP; however, one of these schools was listed as exemplary for the previous three years--perhaps an indicator of instructional or leadership change. The Applicant fails to explain how a well-performing school became a low-performing school and how performance on summative assessments seem to be on a downward trend.*

*With the decline of performance on some summative assessments, the achievement gap seems to be increasing. For example, in the 2010-2011 academic year, 87% of students achieved a proficient score; however, in the 2011-2012 academic year, only 72% of students scored in the proficient range.*

*Graduation rates continue to decrease as the district rose from 94% in 2010-2011 to 85% in 2011-2012.*

*The figures for college enrollment are unclear as the Applicant indicates that 50% of all subgroups enroll in college. The Applicant states that this figure is estimated.*

*Because of the varying degrees of achievement, the Applicant scores in the middle range.*

## 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	12
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: <i>Sulphur Springs ISD demonstrates a strong track record of improvement for student achievement and has implemented a series of products and services which will provide a good foundation for further progress.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Commendable scores on 5<sup>th</sup> grade STAAR state assessment show that students in the district performed above state levels.</i></li> <li><i>Clear evidence that the school district maintains a high school drop-out rate (1%) far below the state's rate of 2.4%.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>And while the district maintains impressive overall rates in closing the achievement gap between the years 2010 and 2011 where 3 out of 5 subjects saw a decrease of 5 percentage points or more, some sub groups saw a drop in performance, such as White students (ELA, Math, and Writing), African American students (Writing and Social Studies) and Hispanic students (Science). Also, the data provided in the achievement gaps tables were difficult to interpret.</i></p> <p><i>Sulphur Springs ISD also has a strong track record of intervening in the lowest-achieving schools.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Implemented a Texas Education Agency Investment Capital fund to provide technical support for high school math</i></li> </ul>		

courses.

- *Additional Texas Education Agency Investment Capital funds to help met AYP scores for middle school math.*

*Overall, this places Sulphur Springs ISD in the bottom of the high range. While there are a few indicators that point to a gap in growth, the Applicant has provided strong evidence that schools will maintain or improve performance going forward.*

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

*Sulphur Springs ISD maintains a high level of transparency in its processes, practices, and investments.*

- *Budget Comparison Summary Reports for the past five years are available on the district's web site.*
- *Quarterly Investment Reports are distributed to a variety of news outlets and are made public at school board meetings.*
- *Staff salaries are posted on-line for public viewing.*

*Overall, the Applicant demonstrates an extensive effort to be transparent in all financial matters. This places the Applicant in the high range.*

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	7
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

*The Applicant provides a letter of support and confirmation from the school district that Sulphur Springs ISD has the authority to implement needed changes and personalized learning environments to effect change in the designated schools; however, the Texas Education Agency declines to comment on the LEA's Race to the Top application form.*

*Because the level of autonomy cannot be fully determined, the Applicant scores in the middle range for this criterion.*

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

*Sulphur Springs ISD has taken great strides to engage all stakeholders in the development of the proposal and possible implementation of the project.*

- *A variety of media such as flyers, emails, surveys, and focus groups were used to gather comments.*
- *Individual schools were given the opportunity to voice their concerns and offer comments about the process.*

*More than two dozen letters of support were offered by the Applicant. Stakeholders from a wide range of areas such as Head Start and the Federal Programs Advisory Committee offered their support and provided positive feedback for the proposed services.*

*Overall, the Applicant score strongly on this criterion.*

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	4
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

*Sulphur Springs ISD goes to great and impressive lengths to explain and analyze its current status in implementing personalized learning environments.*

- *Internal assessment needs have been conducted.*
- *Adopting the Breaking the Mold personalized learning system.*

*The Applicant also identifies needs and gaps that the plan will address.*

- *Instructional coaches are needed to assist teachers with effective instruction.*
- *Additional technology personnel are needed to maintain building and technological upgrades.*

*The Applicant gives insufficient information about responsible parties. Because of this, the applicant scores in the lower end of the high range.*

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	12
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p><i>Sulphur Springs ISD offers an ambitious plan to improving the existing learning environment.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Student learning will take on a virtual component where not only will skills be tied to experiences, but also tied to their future endeavors. A digital portfolio may be used throughout the student's academic and professional careers.</i></li> <li><i>The virtual experience will also provide engaging experiences for the learning environment. Teachers will incorporate virtual field trips and workspaces, giving students additional access and exposure to diverse cultures and perspectives.</i></li> <li><i>Classroom experiences will also be used to garner feedback on soft skills, which are important when students begin their careers. The Employability Rating is impressive.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>However, the Applicant's ability to provide students with a deep learning experience in areas of academic interest is vague. The Applicant offers many examples of deep learning experiences for careers, but none for those students who wish to pursue academics beyond high school.</i></p> <p><i>The Breaking the Mold program serves as the cornerstone for student improvement and academic achievement. This personalized program seems to be strong in content and structure and will support a variety of learning environments. However, some areas of concern remain,</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Students will be able to take advantage of a variety of approaches and environments, but there is no plan of how students may transition between environments.</i></li> <li><i>Students may work at their own pace, but this practice, if not adequately monitored, does not ensure that students will graduate at the appropriate time or master the required standards.</i></li> <li><i>Student information and progress will be available to stakeholders, but there is no mention of how this information will be kept confidential, or who is included under the 'stakeholder' umbrella.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Overall, the Applicant describes a feasible plan, yet more information is needed about learning environment transitions and how under-performing students will be engaged. The Applicant scores in the middle range for this criterion.</i></p>		

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	14
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p><i>Sulphur Springs ISD places a strong emphasis on teaching and learning.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The district will continually engage teachers in technology and software training to effect student performance as they will use learning management systems such as Desire 2 Learn.</i></li> <li><i>An interactive learning environment will complement instruction and allow increased student-teacher interaction.</i></li> <li><i>Teachers will also participate in collaborative planning and develop professional portfolios to increase their effectiveness.</i></li> <li><i>Voice Authority will allow teachers to provide continuous feedback to students.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>This plan, however, does not address how the district will increase the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers. The applicant fails to offer a rubric/evaluation system or explanation of its definition of effective and highly effective. Moreover, there no mention of a plan to address the need for effective and highly effective teachers in hard-to-staff schools, STEM subjects, and/or specialty areas.</i></p> <p><i>The Applicant scores in the middle range for this criterion.</i></p>		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	12
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

*Sulphur Springs ISD provides an impressive narrative about the individual schools' autonomy and how it will improve student outcomes.*

- *School leadership teams have school calendar, staffing, professional development, and budget oversight.*
- *Students have the opportunity to advance and/or earn credit after taking regularly scheduled exams.*
- *Schools provide resources such as Individual Growth Plans to bilingual, ESL, and special services studnets.*

*Sulphur Springs ISD offers strong examples of LEA practices and policies, but an important gap still remain*

- *The Applicant fails to demonstrate how the Central Office is service oriented and what services it provides to the individual schools.*

*Overall, the Applicant scores in the lower end of the high range.*

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

*Sulphur Springs ISD has undertaken great measures to ensure that all students have access to necessary content and resources.*

- *The school district is making an effort to equip all students, regardless of income, with electronic books and notebooks.*
- *Staff will be increased to provide additional technical support.*
- *Parents will receive technological training to assist students.*
- *The district will utilize the TxEIS PLUS software to house its human resources data, student information data, budget data, and instructional improvement system data. This software is used in multiple school districts and serves as the interoperable data system.*

*Overall, the Applicant will take the appropriate measures to ensure that all stakeholders will be supported by the district's infrastructure.*

*The Applicant scores strongly for this criterion.*

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

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

*Sulphur Springs ISD outlines a sound strategy for obtaining regular feedback on progress toward project goals. The program will use a longitudinal data analysis report during and after the grant as the foundation for this process. The Applicant also states that it will monitor staff training through a data-driven system. Progress reports and completed goals will be posted on the district web site and will be available for stakeholders to review and offer feedback.*

*The Applicant scores highly for this criterion.*

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

*Sulphur Springs ISD will attempt to communicate with and engage internal and external stakeholders using a variety of channels such as telephone calls and web site updates.*

*The Applicant will work recognize the contributions of students and staff through sharing information in district newsletters and on the district web site. Sulphur Springs staff will also cultivate its relations with media as it intends to use this outlet as a means of promoting district, staff, and student accomplishments.*

*The Applicant scores strongly for this criterion.*

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

*Sulphur Springs ISD provides a comprehensive chart of performance measures. Each performance measure includes baseline data as well as target goals for each initiative. Sub groups are highlighted, giving additional attention to achievement gap data. For example, the Applicant seeks to have 100% of African American students be on track to college- and career-readiness during the 2016-17 academic year (post-grant) versus the 47% indicated by baseline data. Additional indicators such as the number and percentage of participating students who complete and submit the FAFSA form and at least one grade-appropriate academic leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan is included.*

*Overall, the Applicant outlines an effective means of measuring and monitoring performance. The criterion is rated high.*

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

*Sulphur Springs ISD outlines a comprehensive plan to evaluate the project's effectiveness. Ongoing data-gathering procedures such as surveys and interviews will provide program staff with sufficient information. Staff, parents, and community members will have ongoing involvement in the implementation and evaluation of the program. An external evaluator will be utilized to ensure that program design and data collection are consistent and adhere to rigorous guidelines. And stakeholders will be given the opportunity to monitor and adjust program activities through the Applicant's tracking measures. Information will be disseminated and feedback will be requested from all interested parties.*

*Overall, the Applicant outlines an effective means of evaluating effectiveness of investments. The criterion is rated high.*

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

*Sulphur Springs ISD outlines a thorough budget that is reasonable and sufficient to support the project for the duration of the grant. It appears that all funds to support the project will come from Race to the Top grant. Additional funds will be sought from state and federal agencies, when and if they are available. The Applicant mentions the use of Title II, Part A funds, but it is unclear how these funds will be obtained.*

*The Applicant also identifies the technology infrastructure upgrade as a one-time investment--a critical part of implementing the personalized learning environments.*

*Overall, the Applicant outlines a strong means of measuring and monitoring performance. The Applicant scores strongly in this area.*

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

*Sulphur Springs ISD outlines a comprehensive budget that is reasonable and sufficient to sustain the proposed project beyond the funding period such as seeking additional funding in Years 3 and 4 to extend the life of the project. Potential funding sources include local industries, state and federal funding programs, and foundations.*

*State government leaders have offered their support through the duration of the project; and the Board of Education has made a firm commitment to sustain the professional development component of the project. The school district will also seek foundation funding to help with technology applications as well as provide salaries for four of the six grant-funded positions.*

*Overall, the Applicant outlines adequate means of measure and monitoring performance. The criterion is rated high.*

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The Competitive Preference Priority was not included in the application packet.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

*Overall, the Applicant provides a strong narrative and complete overview of the proposed plan.*

*The Applicant will implement various assessments that will improve teacher preparation and instruction, and incorporate technology to raise reading achievement and create student portfolios. The Applicant will also make campuses changes in order to reflect a 'no excuses' policy, which will provide additional rigor.*

*In addition to assessments, student learning will take on a virtual component where not only will skills be tied to experiences, but also tied to their future endeavors such as a digital portfolio that may be used throughout the student's academic and professional careers. Classroom experiences will also be used to garner feedback on soft skills, which are important when students begin their careers.*

*The district will continually engage teachers in technology and software training to effect student performance as they will use learning management systems such as Desire 2 Learn. Teachers will also participate in collaborative planning and develop professional portfolios to increase their effectiveness.*

*A variety of strategies such as parental engagement and community partnerships will be utilized to ensure the successful implementation of the project.*

*The Applicant successfully meets this goal.*

Total	210	171
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0765TX-2 for Sulphur Springs Independent School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant, an independent school district located in Texas, provides a vision statement that proposes to provide students with a rigorous and relevant personalized educational program. The program addresses the four core elements of the Race To The Top program. Each core element or component has several initiatives associated with it. For example, the core element of adopting standards and assessment has five initiatives, including a situational analysis and electronic assessment process, accelerated reading comprehension program, on the road to college campaign, and user-friendly electronic access to student documents and portfolios. Overall, the district is proposing 20 initiatives. While each of the initiatives has value and addresses the four core educational assurance areas, the number of them seems challenging. The large number of initiatives tends to

diffuse the focus of the vision over a very large number of activities.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)

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10

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The selection of schools was made by various stakeholders such as paraprofessionals, parents, community representatives, teachers, and administrators. Schools that had 60% of its students meeting the requirements for free and reduced lunch participation were selected. The schools enrolled 2, 165 students attending eight schools. The applicant identifies each of the schools, the grade levels, number of total students, the percent qualifying for free or reduced lunches, and the number of teachers. Two of the eight schools missed the annual yearly progress rating. All schools received state ratings of academically acceptable or recognized. Several of those recognized by the state had exemplary ratings for two or more years. The applicant provides a supporting table of school demographics which includes the required raw data and percentages concerning each of the selected buildings. The information is timely, responsive to the criteria, and complete.

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

10

5

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant described its reform model in terms of organizational leadership, instructional leadership, and teaching. For each of these areas, the applicant identifies outcomes they anticipate accomplishing. For example, under organizational leadership the applicant seeks to create a culture of high expectations, create a shared vision, build leadership capacity, align organizational structures, align teacher and administrator selection, and support decision-making with data systems. The desired outcome or changes being sought by the district reflect appropriate measures. The applicant does not support the statements with a high-quality plan. Missing are objectives, activities or rationale for each of these outcomes, a timeline, specific deliverables, and supporting materials to describe proposed activities.

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

10

9

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides data in graphic format for students in selected schools showing their performance levels in reading and language arts, math, science and other subjects for specific student subgroups. In addition, data are included for decreasing the achievement gap, graduation rates, college enrollment, and post secondary school degree attainment. The projections for achievement and closing the gap in achievement levels are appropriate and reflect careful planning. College enrollment rate is projected to go from an estimated 50% to 82% for all students. The graduation rate is projected to rise to 99% from the current rate of 95% for all students. The applicant indicates that it will endeavor to permanently close the achievement gap that currently exists. Overall, the projections and proposed changes reflect a very positive determination to achieve reform. The objectives are ambitious, but it is difficult to determine if all are achievable. For example, it is unclear how the applicant will improve college enrollment by 32% and postsecondary degree attainment by 30% for all students. In 2016-2017, it projects that all students will have a 90% college going rate.

**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	12
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant provides a variety of examples indicating that they are improving outcomes and closing achievement gaps. Information on gains made for African-American and Hispanic students and several grade levels is provided. The district has also been recognized with a college readiness award. In addition to test scores, the applicant indicates that it has a low dropout rate and a notable college enrollment rate as well. The applicant also points to equity in teaching and learning as a positive factor in overall improvement in the district. The applicant also provides evidence that it is improving low performing schools. For example, the high school was rated academically unacceptable and is now an academically acceptable school in the state. The applicant also indicates that it has provided parent and student portals in its curriculum information system providing feedback for students, parents, teachers, and principals. In this discussion of reform and improvement, the applicant presents somewhat of a fragmented and incremental approach. While there are successes, it is unclear if the advances are part of an overall effort at reform.</p>		

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	4
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a listing of its various reports and documents made available to the public. These reports include information on investments, school level expenditures, personnel salary classification, instructional staff salaries, teacher salaries, signing bonuses, and non-personnel expenditures. The applicant is providing the required information necessary to seek funding. The information is complete and appropriate. Based on the information provided, it is unclear if the district provides more information than is listed and reaches a higher level of transparency.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant indicates that it is a school district under the state Board of Education and the state education agency. It is governed by a locally elected school board and exercises all the legal responsibilities and autonomy given to such elected governments. The applicant indicates that it has secured assurances from local government and other agencies that they will support the reform effort. In addition, the Board of Education is in full support of the proposed strategies, services, and activities being proposed in the application.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	7
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>In this section, the applicant provides information concerning a substantial involvement on the part of stakeholders in the development of the reform efforts and the application. The applicant indicates that students, families, teachers, and principals were directly involved as were community-based organizations, institutions of higher education, business and industry, and other stakeholder groups. Letters of support are provided in appendix. The applicant indicates that it does not have collective bargaining in the district. The local Association of Texas Professional Educators was involved in the process and signed off on the proposal and provided a letter of support. Specific information concerning the percentage of teachers from participating schools was not provided. There is no evidence that 70% of the teachers involved support the proposal.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant describes its efforts to conduct a needs assessment, indicating that it has already completed an internal needs assessment with proactive interventions with students, staff, parents, community stakeholders, and administrators. Using such national programs as the Correlates of Effective Schools and other experts, the applicant has designed its overall proposal which seeks to personalize learning environments across interdisciplinary studies and align relevant and rigorous materials with state standards, common core standards and assessments, and ongoing professional input. While the information is appropriate, the statement lacks the elements of a high quality plan. It does not include assessment objectives, a unified set of activities, a timeline, specific deliverables, and an overall conceptual design.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	10
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant indicates that it will use a state of the industry learning management system to supervise the various activities that are planned for students. In its description of the activities, the applicant refers to various initiatives outlined earlier in the application. The activities include efforts to personalize learning for each of the initiatives. To reach its goals, the applicant depends on the state standards and guidelines associated with them. Overall, the applicant will focus on multiple learning environments for upper grade students and understanding of learning styles for earlier grades. Deep learning activities include the development of personal portfolios for each student. Its predominantly white student body will be introduced to cultural diversity issues that they will face in college and in the workplace. Other activities include skill development and preparation for a lifetime of learning using online sources. The applicant also includes activities and strategies to deal with high need students as well as the need to track and manage learning activities. The proposed programs and services identified by the applicant are noteworthy themselves. However, it is unclear how all these programs and services interface and support each</p>		

other. The description provided by the applicant does not reflect a high quality plan. For example, there is no timeline nor are there any specific deliverables. While the Initiatives provide the basis for goals, it is frequently difficult to align the activities with those statements. It is also difficult at times to identify who will carry out these various activities and services. Overall, there is limited involvement of parents. While there may be increased access to data and information, there seems to be limited involvement of parents in the instructional and support programs being proposed.

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

20

15

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a number of activities it will develop to assist teachers in participating in the various reform efforts. Professional development opportunities will be available concerning professional learning communities, implementing learning environments, instructional approaches, educational practices, feedback for accelerated use of technology, and other supportive programs. The applicant aligns these activities with the initiatives discussed earlier in the application. Each of the proposed programs, services, and activities are valuable and worthwhile in themselves. For example, the use of professional learning communities and regular feedback are important aspects of helping students learn and teachers develop new skills. The applicant focuses on students, programs, and teachers providing a great deal of information on what it intends to do. Few details are provided about programs designed for school leaders and their potential impact on students and schools. Information on specific leadership training programs for principals, supervisors, and other administrators at the district and school levels is not provided. As a result, it is unclear how the applicant will prepare current leadership for the various changes that are being proposed. Specific strategies and techniques to assist school leaders in addressing these issues as well as the use of data to improve student performance and close achievement gaps are not presented and developed. Overall, the information does not reflect a complete response to this section of the application.

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

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes how it has organized into a service oriented central office, has embraced site-based management, and has emphasized its flexibility in all its programs. The statement emphasizes the great flexibility which individual schools have in terms of staffing, budgets and professional positions. The applicant describes how students can earn credit by mastering the contents of the grade by passing an appropriate test. Grade acceleration is based on a score of 90% on the test and involves both school and parent approval. These programs are available throughout the year and are easily accessed by students and parents. The applicant indicates that the concept of differential instruction is effective. Using its learning management system, the applicant indicates that it plans to create, develop, deliver, assess and re-address content areas and develop personalized learning environments for students. It expects to do this for both college and career minded students. It plans on using traditional courses, hybrid courses and virtual classes to help students learn at their own pace. In addition, the applicant plans to develop learning labs, supplemental instruction, online environments, and video tutorials to personalize the instruction. The applicant also plans to monitor students and adjust programs as needed. The system will allow stakeholders to view student's personal portfolios as well as test scores and progress toward goals. In many of the descriptions, it is unclear who will participate in the activities, who will conduct the activities or lead them, when they will occur, and what specific activities will take place at each grade level and in each building program. Overall, while all the programs are appropriate, there is a general lack of specificity in terms of specific audiences, applications, when these programs will be in place, and who will conduct them. These components are needed in a high quality plan.

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

10

7

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes its concerted efforts to make all learning materials available to all students. It has provided learning materials at no cost to those students in need. The applicant provides specific examples of how it has provided electronic notebooks and tablets to students. In terms of technical support, the applicant indicates that it has the staff and capacity to support the instructional programs currently in operation and those being proposed. To assist staff, students, and parents in developing computer skills, the district will provide an online tutoring program. It has also adopted a statewide administrative program as an interoperable data system. While the applicant indicates that parents and students have access to such programs, it does not clearly explain the overall process and what methods the parents and students must employ. The applicant indicates that it will make many electronic programs available. It does not fully explain the data systems it will have

in place, the nature of their accessibility, and how parents and students can use them to make decisions.

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

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant indicates that it will employ a continuous improvement process that includes timely and regular feedback, regular correction and adjustment of grant activities, high expectations, regular improvements during and after the grant, regular review of professional growth and development, and embedded coaching at all levels. The activities described are appropriate for accomplishing these desired outcomes. For example, the use of coaches at each school is designed to increase the likelihood of a reform and to make the professional learning communities more aggressive and purposeful. These activities will ensure that information is collected and made available when needed or desired.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant indicates that it will use methods to ensure open communication to create awareness on the part of staff and students. It will employ a two-way communication process that will solicit feedback from students, parents, faculty, staff and other stakeholders. It will include electronic surveys, telephone calls, and one-to-one interaction. It will use technology in terms of providing graphic design and website development. The district will also work with the media and develop a strong relationship.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides the required performance measures for all grade levels and for the appropriate subgroups of participants. The performance measures for grades pre-kindergarten through three, four through eight, and grades nine through twelve are generally appropriate for the various instructional and academic support programs. All information and data as required are presented in the appropriate chart. Overall, the goals are achievable. Similarly, most goals are ambitious. Less ambitious, however, are the goals dealing with highly effective teachers for performance measures for all subgroups. The percentages for students with highly effective teachers/principals in the final year of the project seem to be very low, ranging from 31% to 35%. While the baselines reflect very low numbers, these percentages seem to be very modest and not ambitious.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant indicates that it will work with the department of education and a national evaluator to ensure that data collection and program design are consistent with those plans submitted in this application. Included in the plan are monitoring measures, ongoing evaluation activities for each of these initiatives, and involvement by all stakeholders in the project. The applicant indicates that data-gathering will be done by surveys, interviews, collection of all records, and other pertinent data. Also included are annual pre-and post-surveys. Information will be reviewed regularly at joint meetings of stakeholders and will examine student achievement, intervention services, and other reform efforts. While the statement includes appropriate information, it is unclear exactly what evaluation activities will occur, when they will occur, who will collect the data, and how it will be utilized by the project leadership to make changes or adjustments.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

The applicant provides a detailed budget requesting just over \$9.2 million. The allocations are appropriate and reflect support of the activities and services included in the application. The allocations are reasonable and are sufficient to accomplish the outcomes. The applicant identifies allocations for improvement of its technology infrastructure as a one-time investment appropriation. The information supporting this allocation is sufficient and reflects an appropriate allocation.

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

The applicant indicates that it is committed to sustaining the activities and services after the end of the grant period. It will use other federal, state, and local funds to maintain the services and activities. For example, it will move four of the six positions to its ongoing operating expenses. It will also seek foundation and other sources to assist with technology. To support these desired outcomes, the applicant provides strategies during the project to lay the foundation for transition of the activities and services from federal funds to its ongoing program budget. Included are specific funding sources and activities to raise finances to support grant-related programs.

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant indicates that it has support from a number of community and business organizations. It is unclear if any of these supporting groups are in partnership with the district. For much of the application, the applicant addresses programs and services provided by the district. While applicant has developed population-level desired results, it seems it will essentially use district and school staff to conduct the project. The applicant does not provide convincing information that any partnership with public or private organizations has been developed.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant uses the four core educational assurances as the basis to organize its 20 initiatives that are included in the application. Overall, its plan seeks to increase student achievement, effectiveness of teachers, involvement of parents, and improve college going rates. The application is focused on enabling students to attend college or prepare for a career and work. In addressing the four assurances, the applicant has selected programs and services such as professional learning communities, expanded technology, use of data to plan and conduct instruction, and job-embedded coaching and mentoring which reflect responsible steps to employ school reform initiatives. In addition, its efforts to revamp the curriculum, improve teacher planning, and have common assessment processes represent positive approaches by the applicant to focus on individual students and personalized instructional programs and services aimed at making each student prepared for college or work.

Total	210	156
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### Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

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

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Not addressed.



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0765TX-3 for Sulphur Springs Independent School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sulphur Springs used 20 initiatives to articulate a clear and credible approach to reaching these goals. These initiatives are categorized into 4 district reform components.</li> <li>The use of these initiatives allows Sulphur Springs to receive a 10 in this category. These initiatives will provide students with opportunities for college and career readiness, the opportunity to graduate high school with an associate's degree, increased reading comprehension, and more efficient and user-friendly data systems to measure student growth and provide individual learning plans. Instructors will create Professional Learning Communities and have professional learning opportunities. Sulphur Springs plan to turn around Bowie Primary School and Sulphur Springs High School by further implementing STEM, Project Lead the Way and digital technology is exemplary.</li> <li>Each component to their plan shows how strong these strategies are and how dedicated they are to the success of their students.</li> </ul>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sulphur Springs provided a selection process and eligibility requirements to determine schools that qualified for this plan. Collectively the schools were determined and charts were provided as to which schools qualified and why.</li> <li>The charts provided the names of the schools, number of students participating, number of teachers, percentage of students on free or reduced lunch and AYP.</li> <li>Sulphur Springs received a 10 in this category for providing accurate information on the process used to determine eligible schools and participants.</li> </ul>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sulphur Springs receives a 10 in this category for providing a clear plan for successful reform. They identified organizational leadership, instructional leadership and teaching as the three categories with goals provided for each category. This will provide meaningful reform and changes district wide. All three categories will improve student learning outcomes.</li> </ul>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	10
(A)(4) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sulphur Springs provided charts with data to show performance on summative assessments and goals</li> <li>Sulphur Springs provided charts with data to represent decreasing achievement gaps and goals</li> <li>Sulphur Springs provided charts with data to represent graduation rates and goals</li> </ul>		

- Sulphur Springs provided charts with data to represent college enrollment and goals
- Sulphur Springs provided charts with data to represent post secondary attainment and goals
- Sulphur Springs provided all information to receive a score of a 10 in this category by showing current percentages in each category as well achievable goals with increases in each category to show a desire to succeed.

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	15
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sulphur Springs showed a clear record of success by turning around two low performing secondary schools in the last four years. They also have schools who received exemplary ratings as well as Sulphur Springs High School received the College Readiness Award for increasing the number of students taking the ACT. This clearly shows a move in the right direction for college readiness.</li> <li>• Sulphur Springs also provided data to show closing achievement gaps in grade 5, increasing graduation rates and college enrollment. As college enrollment was low it was still an area they strive to work on.</li> <li>• Sulphur Springs provided significant reforms to improve performance in low achieving schools by providing interventions at the school which is now Academically Acceptable.</li> <li>• Sulphur Springs has used district competitive funding to help middle and high schools increase secondary mathematics support and technology in classrooms to meet AYP and test data proves this is a move in the right direction.</li> <li>• Sulphur Springs provided data to show closing achievement gaps of sub populations.</li> <li>• Student data is available to students and parents through the district website and through the state of Texas. Sulphur Springs would like to take this one step further by providing parents, students and teachers more information to better help the student succeed and the teacher the ability to align curriculum with individual needs.</li> <li>• Sulphur Springs receive a 15 in this category for providing the above mentioned material in the grant to show a clear record of success.</li> </ul>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	1
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sulphur Springs provided an annual budget and investments however they did not include actual salaries for instructional staff, personnel and non personnel expenditures. They stated this information was available online but was not provided in the grant thus resulting in a loss of points.</li> </ul>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sulphur springs provided explanations of successful conditions under local autonomy, the commissioner of Education, and local government. The local school board has supported the implementation of more than six prior grants and is in full support of this plan. They are committed to shift student learning from one channel to a system where students draw connections from a matrix of resources.</li> <li>• With above mentioned credentials Sulphur Springs receives a 10 in this category.</li> </ul>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	10
(B)(4) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sulphur Springs provided letters of support from District advisory Council and Federal Programs Advisory Committee.</li> <li>• Students, families, teachers and principals were notified of RTT through fact sheets, emails and announcements.</li> <li>• Focus groups, public meetings, collaboration and surveys were used to create the reform.</li> <li>• Meetings were held and parent, teacher, administrator and principal were represented in the process.</li> <li>• Sulphur springs Association of Texas Professional Educators signed off and provided a letter of support.</li> <li>• The eight participating campuses signed letters of support</li> </ul>		

- Letters of support from parent groups, businesses, elected leaders, community based groups, as well as business and industry support.
- Sulphur Springs receives a 10 in this category for providing correct documentation of meaningful stakeholder engagement in this process for reform.

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

5

5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

- Sulphur Springs received a 5 in this category for providing an internal needs assessment to identify weaknesses and provide proactive interventions for all stakeholders.
- Sulphur Springs did this by providing logic behind the reform proposal, indentifying the advantages to personalized learnig environments, identifying the achievement gaps and which subgroups would be affected, and included reviews by faculty and staff to identify weaknesses and include suggestions for this reform.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	17

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- Sulphur Springs plans to integrate a learning management tool to upload and assign state college and career readiness standards to individuals. Students, teachers and parents can access this information to make direct correlations between mastered skills and performance requirements.
- Sulphur Springs uses TxCCRS which focuses on prepares students for higher education and sets goals for students preparing to enter the workforce. Sulphur springs lost a point as they did not mention how they plan to measure this progress towards these goals.
- Sulphur Springs plans to create digital portfolios which allows parents, students and teachers to see earlier works and improve on past work. Sulphur Springs believes this will deepen student interest as this will allow students to build off what they learned and see where their educational path is taking them. Examples were used in culinary arts and heating and cooling industry.
- Sulphur Springs plans to incorporate virtual field trips, guest speakers to increase cultural diversity. In addition, they have a plan to launch a Bring Your Own Device so student learning is no longer limited to the four walls of a classroom.
- Sulphur Springs will use Employability Ratings allowing student work to be rated in a reflective manner. They lost a point in this category for not explaining the goal setting part to this system.
- Sulphur Springs will create individualized learning plans to improve on skills and measure growth.
- Sulphur Springs plans to use blended learning environments while blending college and career readiness standards with authentic learning experiences. The use of online and traditional classroom learning blended with a personal learning plan encourages learning at the students own pace.
- Sulphur Springs plans to use Khan and Discovery Learning. They state they will use numerous other resources but do not mention what they are thus resulting in a lose of one point. They do not clearly state how a teacher can utilize this curriculum in their classroom.
- Sulphur Springs will use on going and regular feedback in in their learning management system with the use of online assessments. Monitoring of these assessment can be done and allow for students to redo assessments. A system has been built into this to safeguard plagiarism to ensure high quality student work.
- Sulphur Springs plans to use differentiated instruction as well as online course to meet the needs of high needs students. They also have the opportunity to pair with Paris Junior college to offer career readiness courses.
- Sulphur Springs idea to implement an 8 period day to ensure students and teachers know how to use the learning management system demonstrates their understanding of this importance.

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

20

17

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- Sulphur Springs instructors will participate in two professional development trainings and implement an online learning software which directly impact instruction in the classroom for college and career readiness

- Sulphur Springs plans to use online collaborations, project based learning, manipulatives and lab activities to meet this collaborative piece.
- Sulphur Springs will implement an electronic monitoring system and provide common planning for teachers to collaborate to meet this need.
- Sulphur Springs will participate in ongoing professional development and PLS's as well as use a management program to create teacher portfolios to ensure feedback and use of best practices
- Sulphur springs learning management system will provide teachers and student the opportunity to have quick response to feedback and information on standards based instruction meeting this need.
- Sulphur Springs plans to incorporate Common Core Standards and TxCCR. They provided an example of using high quality lessons with a standards based rubric. As this is not a requirement there is not a guarantee all teachers will follow this resulting in a loss of a point in this category. The idea for this is excellent but without a system to ensure this is taking place, the use of high quality lesson plans may not be carried through.
- Sulphur Springs plans to use their learning management system, standards based content as well as reworking existing content to meet this need.
- Sulphur Springs has a plan for this criteria however they do not mention teacher evaluation systems or the school culture or climate thus resulting in a loss of points. Teacher evaluation systems and a positive school culture and climate are key parts to the success of this reform.
- Sulphur Springs plans to use multiple strategies to meet this need which shows a desire to meet the need of teachers and students.
- Sulphur Springs has a high quality plan of professional development, a digital learning management system and increasing expectations of sub groups to meet this need.
- Sulphur Springs demonstrates a comprehensive plan in this category yet do not provide a clear system of accountability to ensure lesson plans are being used properly. Sulphur Springs also does not demonstrate how they will promote a positive school culture and climate and this is an integral key to success for this plan to work. Finally there is no evidence of the teacher evaluation system and the role this will play in assessing the success of this reform. Teacher evaluation systems play a key role to this success.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (a) Sulphur Springs meets this criteria by having a plan in place to move away from district hierarchy and allow site-based decision-making to take place following the management theory of Demings</li> <li>• (b) A clear plan is in place with flexibility and input from all stakeholders to create calendars, hire and train staff and use of a defined budget to meet the needs of the campuses students thus meeting this criteria</li> <li>• (c) Credit based testing with a 90% passing score is in place with agreement from parents to accelerate learning based on mastery.</li> <li>• (d) Students are provided opportunities to show mastery during and after projects as well as using summative assessments to reach this need.</li> <li>• (e) Multiple learning resources are available for all students especially subgroups such as students with disabilities and ESL. Support is given at the school and district level meeting this need.</li> </ul>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (a) Sulphur Springs meets this need by providing textbooks for students at home and is in the process of creating a check out system to all families to use digital technology</li> <li>• (b) The use of their technical support department ensures all stakeholders have the necessary support they need.</li> <li>• (c) There is not a clear plan in place. Sulphur Springs states they will revolutionize this data system. Without a clear plan to follow Sulphur Springs lost points in this category.</li> <li>• (d) Sulphur Springs has a data system in place within the district level to meet this criteria and will further enhance it with funds from the RTT grant.</li> </ul>		

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

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	14
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sulphur springs receives a 14 in this category for identifying how they will implement their plan and provide regular feedback in a timely manner. They plan to attend the professional learning community conference to expose educators to the highest standards over four years. Training will be monitored through the data driven process. There is not a clear explanation of this data driven process thus resulting in a loss of a point. They will track technology as they do building projects with monthly results posted on the district website.</li> <li>• Sulphur Springs identified they will use a longitudinal data analysis report of where the district has been and is going in relation to the benchmarks and assessments during and after the grant.</li> <li>• Sulphur Springs will give timely and regular feedback with the implementation of an electronic suite of applications.</li> <li>• Comprehensive reading programs with be used for increased critical thinking skills across disciplines.</li> <li>• Sulphur Springs will provide coaching and PLC's on campuses</li> <li>• Sulphur Springs will provide performance management reviews and provide monthly public updates.</li> <li>• Sulphur Springs provided a systemic model involving a cyclical process to increase and sustain greater levels of student achievement which is an important element to the success of this reform. Sulphur Springs does not clearly identify how the data driven process to track and monitor the professional development will successfully impact this reform.</li> </ul>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sulphur Springs receives a 5 in this category for excellent ongoing communication with ideas for open forums, campus meetings, surveys, phone calls and interviews with stakeholders. The plan includes two way communication with parents, teachers, administrators and families. In addition they pan to utilize the district website, newsletters, handbooks and calendars.</li> </ul>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
(E)(3) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sulphur Springs lost points in this category. They provided necessary charts and rationale, however they did not provide how the measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant's implementation success or areas of concern; and how it will review and improve the measure over time if it is insufficient to gage implementation progress. They did provide goals.</li> <li>• By only providing goals, there is not a clear plan in place to ensure the success of students. By not providing how their rational will be met it will be difficult to meet the needs of students for college and career readiness as well as difficult to measure the success of this reform.</li> </ul>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
(E)(4) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sulphur Springs has a clear plan to monitor both in house and with the Department of Education the progress of this reform. They plan to include ongoing evaluations and stakeholder collaborations during this reform thus resulting in full points in this category.</li> </ul>		

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

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		

- Sulphur Springs identified all funds that will support the project. This is reasonable as most items in year one are one time initial costs.
- Sulphur Springs will apply for additional funds through other resource avenues to sustain costs after this reform. They provided a chart of these strategies and objectives. I do not believe all financial responsibilities can be met with these fundraisers and grants to sustain the cost after this reform thus resulting in a loss of points.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	8
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- Sulphur Springs does not provide a plan for a budget outside of the term of the grant.
- Without a proper budget after the term of the grant it will be difficult to support students to this capacity

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

- Sulphur Springs does not provide this information and cannot receive points for this category.

### Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

- Sulphur springs meets the necessary criteria of Absolute priority one.
- Sulphur Springs plan appears to specifically improve learning and teaching through a personalized approach. Sulphur Springs provides evidence on how this will align with college and career readiness. Sulphur Springs shows a comprehensive plan to increase graduation rates for students prepared for college and careers. By doing this, students will have a greater understanding of content thus increasing assessment scores. This plan will decrease achievement gaps. Sulphur Springs plan to provide learning environments that are personalized to students ensures the success of this plan.

Total	210	181
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