



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0656TN-1 for Tullahoma City Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>In this section, the applicant sets forth a clear, coherent, and compelling vision for reforming education across their coalition districts through migrating to an open source textbook model, and through providing digital delivery of content to students in four districts across rural Tennessee. This responds to the challenges of outdated instructional materials that do not consistently align with Common Core State Standards and student assessments, and a need for enhancing equitable access to technology in rural parts of the state.</p> <p>Grounded in research of existing open source text efforts (in Utah and California), the applicant asserts that open source texts could lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased teacher engagement in instructional materials, • More nimble and responsive instructional materials, • Less expensive instructional materials, and • No measurable significant difference in student achievement as a result of open source texts. <p>Furthermore, the applicant would make these materials available, free of charge, to any state or country.</p> <p>While this vision is laudable, it is not comprehensive, as it does not fully or directly address all four of the core assurance areas. The applicant leaves the reader to extrapolate from its vision how this proposal might impact standards and assessments, teachers and leaders, data systems, and school turnaround.</p> <p>Overall, the vision set forth does address accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support, and scores in the high range of available points for this section.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>While the applicant did not describe in this section its process for <i>how</i> the four coalition districts opted to collaborate, it does provide a thorough list of all the schools in those districts, and the demographics by percentage and numeric count of students within the schools. The participating schools - all schools across all four districts - collectively meet the eligibility requirements. This proposed project would serve just over 21,000 students, and the applicant provides a breakdown of how many students from each district are from low-income families, how many are high-risk, and how many educators are in each school.</p> <p>The data tables in this section are clear and well-designed. However, some of the wording in the table headers is cut off due to font size and formatting issues, and therefore the reader must guess or assume what the applicant intended, and the table lacks a row detailing the aggregated total sum of students (all and by subgroup) and educators across all the schools in all four districts.</p> <p>The applicant's approach to implementing its reform proposal would support reasonably high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation; this section therefore scores in the highest range of points available.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant is ambitiously taking on <i>all of the schools</i> in the partnering LEAs, and therefore is already planning to launch this initiative as a district-wide change effort across four different LEA systems.</p>		

Rather than relying on the open source texts as the answer to systemic improvement, the applicant recognizes that textbooks do not change systems; people change systems. Built into the open source text creation is collaborative professional development, using technology and content specialists to help teachers to integrate Common Core State Standards into the digital texts.

The applicant's theory of change is that if the open source texts are exciting and interactive for both teachers and students, grounded in local relevance, and created with input and engagement from local universities and industries, then students will become more motivated, engaged, and higher-achieving learners.

The applicant proposes a high-quality plan to achieve LEA-wide reform and change across multiple LEAs that improves student outcomes, and receives all points available for this section.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	8
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The applicant clearly explains how it set ambitious and achievable summative assessment proficiency targets for each participating LEA and every content area and grade level tested, further breaking down proficiency targets by subgroups (race/ethnicity, economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, and limited English proficiency). Once again, the applicant provides detailed tables for this criteria, with target percentages for each subcategory of testing. These targets are equal to the state's ESEA targets, and take into account the shifting landscape of testing, with PARCC assessments of Common Core State Standards predicted to cause slide in test scores across the state.

(b) The applicant proposes a methodology for determining the achievement gaps in the participating LEAs, and a measurable trajectory for decreasing those gaps. While the applicant outlines multiple dimensions of achievement gaps across subgroups, it does not define the achievement gap as ED does in the NIA, namely, as the difference in achievement between subgroups and the LEAs' (or the SEA's) highest performing subgroup. In this case, Tennessee's Open Source Project measures the gap between subgroups and *all students* within a given LEA, presumably a set of students that includes the same subset subgroup under consideration.

(c) The applicant provides specific target graduation rates for each LEA and its affiliated subgroups. It does not, however, provide any narrative to explain the targets set - only a table of numbers.

(d) The applicant outlines somewhat ambitious and likely achievable baseline and target college enrollment rates for each LEA, overall and by subgroups (gender and race/ethnicity).

(e) N/A

The applicant's vision is, overall, likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity - and the applicant scores in the highest range of available points for this section.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

To demonstrate its track record for progress, the applicant draws upon Tennessee's longstanding Value Added Assessment System (VAAS) to create detailed district-, school-, and student-based Value-Added Reports, comparing mean gains across multiple assessments with the three prior years of scores. Additionally, the applicant has Performance Diagnostic Scores, which are designed to predict future scores but are not used for accountability purposes.

All participating LEAs present significant, measured, overall improvement in the percentage of students proficient in math, proficient in reading/language arts, and in their graduation rates. That said, all LEAs still demonstrate need and room for continued improvement. While much of the demonstrated improvement in the VAAS data (in the appendices) appears to have taken place in the middle- to highest-scoring prior achievement student subgroups, as measured by subgroup progress with at least one standard error above the reference line, many of the participating schools and districts have made improvements across all students over the past four years. The applicant therefore presents evidence of improving outcomes, with mixed evidence of closing achievement gaps.

The applicant provides data on college enrollment rates in the appendices from 2010, reflecting 2005-2006 through 2008-2009

data. This data is a bit outdated - much has happened in TN since 2009, including the roll-out of the new high school graduation requirements in 2009 - and this data tells a mixed story:

- Lawrence County increased its college-going rate from 50.5% to 56.0%
- Lincoln Country *decreased* from 57.7% to 48.5%
- Tullahoma District (high school) increased from 72.7% to 75.3%
- Coffee Country *decreased* from 51.9% to 51.2%
- Warren Country *decreased* from 48.6% to 47.5%

These changes could reflect changing demographics and interests of the student bodies across these districts, but the applicant does not mention or explain them in its narrative in this section. In this section, the applicant also presents a table of LEA improvements in testing and graduation rates, and includes a column for college enrollment rates that is oddly left completely blank - which seems to be a deliberate omission.

The applicant states that all of the four LEAs "have responded to 1(b) in meeting the challenges of increasing achievement in their lowest performing schools, although none of the schools in the four districts are considered in the lowest 10% in achievement scores or gains." The applicant does not provide much detail beyond this assertion regarding *how* participating LEAs achieve ambitious reform in their low-performing schools in this section.

The applicant states that it provides "multiple communication venues" but lacks detail about these communication methods, their purpose, and their connection to improvement.

Because the applicant does not demonstrate a clear record of success over the past four years across all of these sub-criteria, it scores in the middle range of available points for this section.

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

The applicant thoroughly meets these criteria, demonstrating transparency in the four required categories of school-level expenditures. State auditors require public accountability for all district budgets, and all documents pertaining to budgets are either published online or available by request. All school board meetings are announced in advance and open to the public. Some participating LEAs offer other means of transparency, such as filming board meetings and posting them online. Thus, all points are awarded for this section.

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

The applicant sufficiently demonstrates evidence of the successful conditions and autonomy required to implement this proposal. As a Race to the Top state and a state that is operating under a waiver from No Child Left Behind, all participating LEAs are accustomed and subject to ED reporting requirements, and operate under state statutes and a governance system of school boards. Local boards of education have the authority to "manage and control all public schools established...under its jurisdiction." The applicant therefore scores all available points for this section.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	8
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Since the state Professional Educators Collaborating Conferencing Act of 2011, no LEAs participating in this proposal have collective bargaining representations; they do, however, have active teacher organizations that unanimously support this proposal. Additionally, the applicant surveyed teachers across the participating LEAs and met or (more often) exceeded the 70% threshold for supporting this proposal.

The applicant states that the proposal concept and its planning were discussed at an array of meetings, such as principals' meetings, curriculum coordinators' meetings, school board meetings, and during teacher professional development sessions.

No mention is made of engaging families, students, and other non-school/district-affiliated stakeholders in the development of this proposal.

The applicant provides enthusiastic letters of support from a variety of stakeholders, such as: mayors, school boards, an industrial development board, a community college, a business roundtable, a chamber of commerce and its board, and a strongly supportive letter from the state Commissioner of Education - who reviewed 17 applications and chose to write letters of support for only four of them (this being one of them), and is committed to scaling up successes from this proposal across

the state.

While the applicant lacks details regarding some critical stakeholders, it provides strong evidence of meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of and support for this proposal, and therefore scores in the high range of available points for this section.

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

The applicant identifies its needs and largest student achievement gaps and argues that this proposal, the Tennessee Open Source Project, will ameliorate those gaps through equitable access to highly individualized, technology-based instructional content and delivery. The stated goals for this proposal align with the applicant's theory of action and are further backed by a timeline for implementation in this section, as well as deliverables.

Overall, the applicant provides a high-quality plan for assessing its current status in implementing personalized learning environments and scores all available points for this section.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	18

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The applicant describes an exciting education paradigm shift across the four participating LEAs, in which *all* students - the highest achievers, *and* the most struggling - are empowered and engaged learners, and are prepared for postsecondary education, careers, and citizenship. The applicant aims to engage families throughout this process, and provides classes and opportunities for parents and family members to develop their own skills as well.

(i-iii) In the four participating LEAs, students chart out their high school courses of study in 8th grade, and college- and career-readiness is emphasized from P-20. The applicant provides a helpful metaphor for this proposal, in which they would provide students with a "roadway, map, and compass" to chart their course (goals) and be successful along their journey - through providing a network to access Open Source material, sending out Open Source content to digital devices, and providing all students with these devices. The applicant envisions a dynamic, self-directed learning environment, in which "instead of sitting in rows of desks listening to teacher lectures and taking notes, students will work in teams or groups, work on projects and problems, research individually or collectively..." and so on.

(iv) Through the usage of real-time digital content delivery, the applicant envisions readily connecting student learning to international events and cultures, providing a global and multicultural perspective that would motivate engagement and deepen learning. While this is a possible outcome, it rests heavily on the discretion of the individual teachers and students to ensure that it takes place; multiculturalism could be more deliberately integrated into teaching and learning.

(v) The applicant asserts that open source learning will require teachers to transform their teaching practice, and become facilitators of student learning. In this proposed project, students would take more responsibility for their own education, and would develop and apply critical skills and traits such as creativity, problem-solving, and teamwork to their learning. The open source texts would also connect student learning with real-world events and challenges. The applicant does not outline a plan for the possibility that some students may *not* be more engaged and eager learners through a digital platform, and developing their non-cognitive skills.

(b) The applicant states that as a result of Tennessee's work with the College and Career Ready Policy Institute, it knows how to address gaps in students' achievement through personalized and careful adherence to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Instructional approaches in this project cited by the applicant include virtual field trips, online dissections, discussion forums, and other technology-enabled means of engagement. Extensive individual, subgroup, and aggregated student data would be collected and reviewed across the LEAs and their schools, and used to further personalize instruction and improve achievement.

(c) The applicant outlines a convincing and comprehensive list of training, accommodations, and strategies for ensuring that students are able to exercise agency over their learning and remain on track.

While this is a strong section, it was not clearly organized it so that the reader could directly connect the assertions and

proposed elements to the evaluative criteria. The applicant tells a compelling story about the need for and power of open source texts and digital learning, and while its narrative could be more focused and aligned with the NIA, it scores in the highest range of available points for this section.

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

20

15

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides an extensive overview in the narrative and appendices of its teacher, principal, and administrator evaluation systems. All include student growth and student achievement in their scores, and all are focused on frequent, constructive, collaborative observations and conversations about improvement. The applicant makes a strong case that all participating educators would develop their individual and collective capacity for implementing this proposed project through both the capacity-building evaluation system and through embedded, ongoing professional development. The applicant does not, however, address how to assist teachers who are not "digital natives" as they engage in new and perhaps intimidating technologies within a classroom context in which their students are likely to be more proficient and adept at technology usage than they are.

While the applicant makes assertions that the criteria in this section are met, it provides little substantiation or documentation of *how* they will be met. For example, the applicant states that "Each of our four districts have a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals..." copying verbatim from the NIA, but it does not state their strategy for how to do so.

Overall, the applicant presents an acceptable but not comprehensive approach to teaching and leading that helps educators to improve instruction and increase their capacity to support student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards by enabling the full implementation of personalized learning and teaching for all students, and scores in the low end of the highest range of available scores for this section.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

In this section, the applicant provides a comprehensive overview of each participating LEA's professional development (content and scheduling), professional learning communities, and technology acquisitions through this proposed project. The applicant provides inconsistent evidence across the four LEAs of their central offices supporting schools in this work, and providing school leadership with sufficient flexibility and autonomy. While the reader could extrapolate from other sections of this proposal to determine how this project would provide adaptable and accessible learning resources to all students, the applicant fails to clearly address in this section:

- How each LEA's central office will be focused on providing relevant supports and services to schools;
- How (or whether) students will be allowed to earn credit based on mastery of content, breaking free of the fetters of Carnegie units and seat time; and tracking learning as the constant, rather than the variable; and
- How students will be able to demonstrate their mastery of content through multiple modes of assessment.

Because of its inconsistency and lack of comprehensively addressing all of the subcriteria in this section, the applicant scores in the middle range of available points.

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

10

8

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant sufficiently assures that all participating students and other stakeholders will have access to the necessary content and resources needed to successfully implement the proposed project - both in and out of school. Recent upgrades to the technology capacity of participating districts (i.e.: increasing internet bandwidth) provides improved infrastructure needed for the proposal's implementation.

The proposal outlines a relationship with a technical support provider, Education Networks of America, which will provide an array of detailed assistance to all levels of the education systems, including a 24/7 helpdesk for users/students/teachers. This is an impressive support made available to stakeholders.

Google for Education and the state data system will allow parents and students to access and download data as needed. The narrative lacks clarity as to whether or not this proposal would include interoperable data systems, and whether or not its information systems would allow students and their families to export data to other electronic learning systems.

Because the applicant puts forth a predominantly high-quality plan (albeit with some need for detail in places) for ensuring that all stakeholders have access to the tools, content, and support they need to support professional learning, it scores in the highest range of available points for this section.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	6
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides two sentences for this section; it could use a lengthier explanation. The applicant first states that goals will be monitored on an annual basis, and formative assessments will be administered four times throughout the year to track progress towards goals. It then states that information on goal progress will be widely shared through assorted media.</p> <p>The applicant fails to provide any detail regarding the improvement process, such as: who will be examining the data and when, how analyses and conclusions drawn from the data will be used to revise and improve the program implementation, and how changes will be communicated.</p> <p>Given the lack of detail in this section and throughout the proposal on continuous improvement processes, it scores in the middle range of points available for this section.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant commits to holding "annual meetings regarding the grant scope of work" with internal and external stakeholders. It then, oddly, goes on to describe in lengthy detail the process and cost for procuring digital devices - which, while important to the initiative, is not germane to stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>The applicant also provides in this section an overview of the goals of the project, its affiliated activities, and timelines. Most of this is not relevant to stakeholder communication and engagement (particularly external stakeholders), although some of the activities described include policymakers, educators, and business leaders collaborating on shaping this proposed project.</p> <p>Overall, this section lacks clear strategies (including cycle times, methodologies, and content) for reaching out to, engaging, and seeking input from both internal and external stakeholders. It therefore scores in the middle range of available points for this section.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's rationale for its performance measures is based on benchmarking against existing targets and measures, for example: the Tennessee Annual Measurable Objectives for reading/language arts and math for all participating districts and their grades and subgroups; the College and Career-Ready Policy Institute's Final Policy Plan for Tennessee, 2010 for its measures of college- and career-readiness; and the state's Coordinated School Health (CSH) initiative for its age-appropriate non-cognitive indicators. These measures and targets will provide rigorous, timely, and formative information, although the applicant did not provide a clear process for reviewing and improving these measures over time.</p> <p>Each participating LEA has a CSH coordinator, and will report on district-specific performance measures across a variety of health and wellness indicators, primarily the number of minutes a child is engaged in physical activity.</p> <p>Provided in this section are detailed tables for each LEA, outlining target performance measures by grade and subgroup over the life of the grant, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The numbers and percentages of effective and highly effective teachers and principals; • Graduation rates • Standardized test scores - academic growth • Physical activity, BMI, and other health indices 		

Overall, the applicant puts forth a well-reasoned set of ambitious yet achievable performance measures, and scores in the highest range of points available for this section.

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

5

1

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not provide any narrative for project evaluation in this section; the proposal narrative transitioned from performance measures to budget and sustainability.

The applicant makes mention elsewhere in the proposal that "Goal attainment will be monitored on an annual basis through the actual student performance measures with frequent formative assessments on progress toward goals occurring at least four times per year...Information on goal attainment will be shared publicly on an annual basis through various methods..." but keeps this broad assertion in the passive voice, without clarifying the persons and processes responsible for doing so for all RTT activities, both within and across the four participating LEAs.

As a result, the applicant scores in the lowest range of available points for this section.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant lists other funds (LEA, federal from Title programs, career and technical education, and "other"), and includes a thorough narrative for each LEA regarding how these additional funds will support the launch and implementation of this proposed project.

The applicant did not clearly indicate which operational costs are one-time versus ongoing throughout the implementation period of the project and beyond, nor did it provide a table that shows how much funding is expected from where, and for what purpose.

Nonetheless, the budget appears to be both comprehensive and reasonable, with clear rationale for the investments it proposes in the project-level itemized costs, given the ambitious scope of the project. With four LEAs with different timelines, deliverables, and budgets, the overall budget emphasizes an investment in technology (59.4% of budget is in equipment and supplies for this), which aligns with the applicant's vision for reform. The applicant therefore scores in the highest range of available points for this section.

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

10

8

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The Utah Open Source Project, on which this project is modeled, indicates that the proposal will result in cost savings that will allow for its sustainability through LEA budgets into the future. The applicant provides evidence that LEAs are committed to sustaining this project through redirecting their textbook funding to support replacing devices and through seeking additional grants and funding. Additionally, in his email and letter of support in the Appendix, the Commissioner of Education also expresses interest in sustaining the successful practices from this project.

While it lacks a high-quality, *detailed and specific* plan, the applicant does have a high-quality *conceptual* plan with a strong evidence base for textbook funding reallocation to sustain this project. As a result, the applicant scores in the highest range of points available for this section.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: N/A - the applicant did not provide a response for the Competitive Preference Priority.		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant puts forth a clear, coherent, ambitious vision for improving teaching and learning through personalizing education with open source and flexible content and digital technologies. Through its two broad goals - to create an open source content environment (grounded in Common Core State Standards), and to provide digital delivery of content (in a flexible format that allows for local needs and interests to be integrated into the content) - the applicant aims to accelerate achievement, deepen learning, close achievement gaps, and ultimately support all students to graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.

Total	210	155
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0656TN-2 for Tullahoma City Schools

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 evidence provided demonstrated that the Tennessee Open Source Project is comprehensive and coherent and will build upon all of the core instructional educational assurance areas.

Specific linkages between the grant activities and the core educational areas were clear. The proposal demonstrates how Common Core standards will be addressed and curricular resources updated to better align with the standards and assessments. The project's focus to have teacher build technology-enriched Open Source lessons aligned with the Common Core has the potential to deepen educator knowledge of the standards, instructional practices, and the methods to create learning materials that are universally designed and personalized for students with the most significant learning gaps. The proposal also clearly describes how the project will mitigate access issues since all students will have access to the same instructional curricula and technology. However, the TN proposal was vague about the student data systems provided by the state and how this data will be used to enhance teaching and learning.

TN proposal articulates an approach that is likely to help accomplish the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized supports. Overall, this places TN's proposal in the high range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element since the project provides sufficient evidence of a comprehensive and coherent reform system.

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

The TN proposal states that all students in the LEAs represented in the consortium will participate in the project, demonstrating strong evidence of implementation of the reform. The narrative indicates that all schools were selected since most meet the eligibility requirements.

The evidence provided was sufficient to demonstrate the project has the required numbers of participating students, including those from low-income and high needs families. While the tables provided show teacher participation numbers in three of the consortia districts, the number of participating teachers was not provided for the Tullahoma City Schools. However, in later sections of the proposal, the percent of educators participating is indicated.

The TN plan to include all schools demonstrates a commitment to district-wide implementation that is likely to result in the desired change. Overall, this places TN's proposal in the high range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element.

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

The TN proposal provides strong evidence that the reform will result in district-wide change since all schools within the four districts in the consortium will participate starting year one of the grant. Further, including all students will allow the consortium to reach its overall outcome to ensure that all students have access to the technology and curricular materials to improve student learning outcomes.

However, the TN proposal did not provide evidence of a high quality plan address its theory of change model that includes actions aligned with creating open source materials and integrating digital tools, outcome measures, persons responsible, or timelines demonstrating how the reform efforts would be implemented to help the consortium to reach its goals.

Although including all schools demonstrates a commitment to district-wide reform, the TN proposal did not address an implementation plan that clearly outlines how the reform will be implemented across all districts and schools. Therefore, it is difficult to determine if RUSD will be able to achieve the LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes. Overall, this places TN's proposal in the mid range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	8
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The TN proposal provided sufficient evidence that the status and growth targets for each of the districts in the consortium are set by the State and reflect the the ESEA status targets as well as the State set growth percentile. However, the proposal does not provide sufficient information about how each district set achievement gap goals or why there might be differences between subgroups or districts in the way these were set. For example, Lincoln County schools have set a gap target for 2015-16 of 11.7% for Economically Disadvantaged for grades 3-8 reading with a baseline difference of 18.2%. Tullahoma City Schools target of 19.9% for Black/Hispanic/Native American grades 3-8 reading from a baseline difference of 18.3%. These discrepancies are also seen in graduation rates and college enrollment.

Although the narrative does not include an explanation of the differences, the goals provided by each district appear to be ambitious yet achievable for all subcriteria of this element. For example, for Warren County Schools, in reading/language arts grades 3-8, subgroups with higher levels of achievement have targets set at 3.3 percentage point gains while those with lower baselines, such as limited English proficient students have goals of five percentage point gains, demonstrating that goals are designed to close achievement gaps.

Overall, this places TN's proposal in the high range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element since the TN project provided sufficient evidence of ambitious but achievable goals that are likely to result in student learning and performance.

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

	Available	Score
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(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	13
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(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The data provided in the TN project presents a clear record of success in specific grade levels over the past four years,

indicating that all districts involved in the consortium have improved student learning. This is especially true for reading and math performance in grades 3-8. Growth data also shows gains for all subpopulations across districts. High school TCAP, EOC, and ACT scores and graduation rates indicated more variability across the years, making it more difficult to suggest a pattern of success over the past several years.

Although none of the districts in the consortium have persistently low performing schools at this time, the proposal provided clear descriptions of the K-12 reforms currently implemented within all schools in each district and the lowest performing schools. The score gain reports for schools within the district in the appendices provide evidence that suggests that these reforms are in line with the four core instructional areas and are ambitious.

The proposal includes multiple ways in which the districts are using performance data, such as the Value-added reports and Value-added Diagnostic Reports for improvement and how these data are made available to students, educators, and parents to improve learning.

Although the status high school level and college and career readiness indicators did not present a pattern of gains over time, the proposal provides evidence of sustained gains within grades 3-8 and gains in a number of the secondary indicators aligned with college readiness. In addition, the reforms described show evidence of impact, indicating that these reforms are likely ambitious. Overall, this places TN's proposal in the high range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element.

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

The TN proposal describes forums for public accountability that includes media reports for governing body expenditures, state auditing, and open school board meetings. Although it was unclear how Warren County Schools makes expenditures and salary information available to the public, all other districts in the consortium provided a clear description about how each make expenditures and salaries available to the public. The TN proposal states that budgets and salaries are open and available both online and at the District Central Office. Each district in the consortium provided evidence of the approved budget for 2012-13 and the actual and estimate operating costs, including personnel salaries, from 2011 through 2013 for each district.

The evidence submitted demonstrates that the LEAs in the TN project demonstrate a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices and investments. Overall, this places TN's proposal in the high range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element.

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

The TN proposal demonstrates evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy in several ways. The proposal provides the state statute citation giving local school boards the authority to manage and control the schools under its jurisdiction. The TN proposal clearly states that if funds are allocated, board policies will be developed locally to address federal and state requirements.

The TN proposal provides evidence of successful conditions and autonomy to implement personalized learning environments. Overall, the proposal scores in the high range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	6
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The TN proposal includes a number of letters of support from various key stakeholders, including the SEA. However, there was no description provided for how students, families, or administrators were engaged in the development. While the appendices provides the grant committee names, the positions of each member were not provided, making it uncertain as to whether any of these member represented family or administrator stakeholders.

Letters of support from each district teacher association was provided, although the proposal indicates that all four LEAs in the consortium no longer participate in collective bargaining. The TN proposal provided evidence that each LEA administered a teacher survey to solicit feedback and to determine the overall level of support for the project. However, the information provided made it difficult to determine the number of teacher who participated in the survey and if 70% of teachers within the participating schools supported the proposal. For example, Warren County and Lincoln County indicated that 90% and 83% of respondent, respectively, supported the proposal, respectively. Tullahoma and Lawrence School Districts provided a table that provides the combined results of these two districts. Based on the numbers and percentages provided for the teacher survey

results, it is not clear if 70% of the teachers support the proposal. The narrative states that out of 500 teachers responding to the survey from Tullahoma and Lawrence, 88% supported the proposal. This means that 440 teachers between these two districts agreed. Yet there are 678 participating teachers from Lawrence; and of this number 70% would be 475 teachers. That does not account for the number of teachers from Tullahoma that was not included in the teacher's participating category of the tables.

TN's proposal demonstrates strong support from key stakeholders. However, it is not clear from the evidence submitted that 70% of teachers support the proposal or how the consortium engaged students, families, and administrators in the development of the plan. Overall, the proposal scores in the mid range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element.

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

5

3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The TN narrative did not clearly describe how the needs assessment was conducted or analyzed that resulted in the actions and timelines described in the proposal or clarity of how this analysis supports the logic behind the proposal. The TN proposal describes the steps it will take to prepare for the implementation of the proposed personalized learning environment that include the overall goal, timelines, with actions, and deliverables or outcomes. Although many elements of a high quality plan were included, actions were very broad (e.g.. development of reading/language arts CCCS and Open Source resources) and the specific parties responsible for overseeing or implementing the activities within each of the districts were not included. A plan for scaling implementation of the tools and open source materials across each district was also not included, making it difficult to determine how the proposed plan will address gaps for district-wide implementation.

The TN proposal addresses activities and timelines but it is unclear how actions address the gaps based on a needs assessment and how the implementation of personalized learning environments will scale across the districts. Overall, the proposal scores in the mid range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	16

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The TN narrative articulates the strong linkages between the vision and how instruction and learning can be changed as a result of implementing the Open Source project. Materials development and integration of digital tools are well described and the narrative describes a plan for how students may access the tools and resources in exciting and challenging ways, such as lessons that embed multiple types of materials for learning.

The data systems proposed provide support that students will be able to set goals based on college and career standards. Students, families, and educators will be able to monitor progress. Since lessons will be individualized and include digital tools to increase collaborative learning, students are more likely to experience deeper learning based on their interests. The TN proposal also addresses how students will have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives through technology-enriched learning environments. Implemented well, these strategies will provide a learning environment that can prepare students to meet the CCR standards and graduation requirements.

While the TN describes how students will access open source materials on using technology tools and students will help to create their own programs using the information from the student data systems, the narrative does not provide a clear description of how students would have access to a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development. Also, the proposal relies heavily on the teacher developed lessons through the open source materials and the narrative did not sufficiently describe how the personalized sequence of instructional content will be created for each student.

The narrative provides an extensive description of multiple accommodations for students, including E-readers and inviting online programs. The proposal also discusses strategies to individualize lessons for students based on needs, such as the use of universal design when creating open source materials and accessible technology tools.

However, the TN proposal did not describe the training and support students would receive to track and manage their own learning. Further, the TN proposal does not provide a high-quality plan, including goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsibilities, to demonstrate the steps the districts will take to make sure that student learning is being addressed in the classrooms, including the extent to which students understand how to use their learning data to set goals, monitor their progress, and access the open source materials to create their own personalized learning environment.

Although the TN proposal did not include a detailed plan for implementation, the proposal describes a clear vision and steps for providing students with a personalized learning environment that will prepare students to meet the CCR standards. The evidence provided demonstrates that students will use data to inform goals, and use their technology tools to download open source lessons tailored to their learning needs. Overall, this places the TN proposal scores in the high range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	15
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The TN proposal provides clear evidence of its approach to teaching and leading that is likely to support educators to increase student progress toward meeting the CCR standards and graduation requirements.

The district's proposal is dependent on teacher creation of the open source materials using digital tools and their ability to adapt these based on student needs. The proposal describes a professional development agenda, using both face to face and embedded formats that are likely to lead to increased teacher effectiveness. The narrative indicates that embedded professional development will also provide a guide for teacher teams to use data sources to inform instruction and to monitor that students are making progress toward college and career readiness. Further, the narrative provides a description and plan for an ongoing teacher training in the implementation of the open source resources and tools to provide personalized learning environments for students.

The use of the Value-added data and evaluation rubrics further ensures alignment with the State's quality teacher and administrator plan. The district's plan to train principals on all initiatives and provide each with coaching that is likely to increase their effectiveness in providing teachers with productive feedback. The proposal further describes how student data and the teacher and administrator observation tool will be used to improve, individual and collective educator effectiveness and school culture and climate, for the purpose of continuous school improvement that is likely to lead to improvement in student achievement and educator effectiveness. Given that all schools and teachers will engage in the project, the district has demonstrated a thoughtful plan to increase student access to high quality teachers over the implementation of the project.

The narrative describes multiple steps that will support teacher and leader development and implementation of personalized learning environments that have great potential to arm students to be college and career ready. However, the proposal does not lay out a well developed plan that includes activities, as well as timelines, related to the implementation of the proposal. In addition, the proposal does not describe how open source lessons will be monitored for quality, rigor, and alignment to the Common Core and that these embed the use of digital tools as intended. Further, the proposal did not describe steps to ensure that the training for both teachers and administrators occur and that the tools are being used as intended to support student learning, making it difficult to determine sufficiency of implementation planning. Overall, the proposal scores in the mid range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The TN proposal provides specific details about how each district in the consortium will support the implementation of the project. Each district extensively addressed how their central office would be organized to support the technology and curriculum development requirements associated with implementation of this proposal.

Although not every district addressed subcriteria (b), most districts indicated that school leadership teams will be afforded flexibility. This includes autonomy to make decisions about how learning resources will be used.

Although each district proposes similar and different applications for the tools, all districts demonstrate methods that will provide students with different ways to access coursework, including classes outside of the traditional school offerings, proving students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic. The narrative provides extensive support for how the schools will use the open source materials and digital tools support mastery based learning and access for all students.

The TN proposal includes a plan that addresses these criteria but does not include persons responsible to demonstrate the steps they will take to support the project implementation.

The narrative and clearly addresses each criteria for this element. Overall, the proposal scores in the high range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element.

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

10

8

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The TN proposal clearly meets all the subcriteria for this element. The proposal addresses how all students will have access to the open source materials and technology beyond the school day. The proposal provides create ways in which support will be provided to staff, students, and families to access the student information and curricular resources. Each district provided assurances that security and support of these systems would be addressed now and beyond the grant period.

The TN proposal includes a plan that addresses these criteria but does not include persons responsible to ensure the infrastructure is in place to support the project goals.

Overall, the TN proposal addresses how each district will provide the necessary supports and structures to ensure that students, parents, and educators, and other stakeholders will have access to data systems, content through the development of open sources materials, and digital tools and technology since all students will have access to laptops or IPADs and internet availability. The narrative also provides sufficient evidence that technical support will be available as needed through personnel, website information, and peer to peer support. Overall, the proposal scores in the high range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	6
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The TN proposal indicates that the goal attainment will be monitored through actual student performance measures and goal attainment and the results shared publicly on an annual basis via the web and other media. The description provided assumes that any gains will be attributed to the project implementation without verifying the level of fidelity to the use of the open source and digital tools. Although there were other sections that identified global evidences that would monitored, a plan for how this would be monitored or data collected. In addition, there was no evidence provided in the proposal to ensure that a rigorous improvement process for feedback toward progress on goals related to implementation of the project.</p> <p>The TN proposal did not provide evidence to support that a rigorous improvement process to monitor the goals of the project was developed.</p> <p>Overall, the proposal scores in the mid range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>In prior sections the narrative addresses ways in which the local community can be engaged to support the project. The steps of an implementation plan located further in the narrative suggest stakeholder input throughout each step of the process. Although the narrative discusses annual meeting and use of the web and media, there are no specific steps provided to provide evidence of a plan to engage internal and external stakeholders in communication and feedback forums about grant activities.</p> <p>Overall, the TN proposal scores in the mid range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The TN proposal includes academic, health, and college and career readiness indicators.</p> <p>The proposal provides sufficient detail to indicate TN describes a number of performance measures beyond the achievement and college readiness targets from section A. However, minimal evidence that included a rational for selection of the measure. The proposed goals appear to be ambitious and achievable and goals are set for subgroup to close gaps. However, the proposal provided no information about steps the districts will take if the measures are not sensitive to</p>		

implementation progress.

Although the TN includes a sufficient number of ambitious and achievable measures with supporting rationale, only minimal information was provided about the formative information provided to gauge project effects. Further, the proposal did not describe a review process to gauge sufficiency of these measures over time. Therefore, the TN proposal scores in the mid range of score points for this element.

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

5

3

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

TN provided a plan that included the overall implementation of the grant and some general evidences of implementation, such as the creation of lessons available in a digital delivery format. Steps outline some of the process, but the narrative does not clearly indicate how the goals of the project will be evaluated throughout the grant period using formative progress measures, how data will be collected, analyzed, and reported, and how this information will be shared with stakeholders.

Overall, the TN proposal does not provide a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the funded activities. Therefore, the TN proposal scores in the mid range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>TN provided a complete budget, budget narrative, and tables that addressed the proposed activities and resources for the project.</p> <p>The narrative provides a clear description of the funds that will support the project through the grant period and beyond the scope of the grant (e.g. refreshing computers using dollars previously dedicated to textbook adoption).</p> <p>Each district presented a detailed, separate budget that includes provided a clear description of all funds to be used, including personnel, operational, and hardware costs and how those funds would support both initial costs as well as ongoing operational costs to sustain the implementation of the project beyond the grant. The rationale provided for budget items reasonable and described throughout the narrative. One time funds and ongoing investments were identified in each budget.</p> <p>The TN proposal provides a complete budget, narrative, and supporting tables demonstrating how funds will be directed for initial and sustained costs. Therefore, the TN proposal scores in the high range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	7
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The narrative describes the funding sources supporting the implementation beyond the scope of the grant and support from the State and local government leaders. These sources, including repurposing funds from textbook purposes, are likely to help sustain the project beyond the grant period. However, the evidence did not provide a detailed plan indicating continuing costs or how funds would be used to sustain the initiative.</p> <p>Therefore, the TN proposal scores in the mid range of score points in meeting the criteria for this element</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The TN proposal did not submit evidence for this element.</p>		

Therefore, the TN proposals scores at a low level of points for this criteria.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Tennessee Open Source Project is comprehensive and coherent and specific linkages between the grant activities and the core education areas were clear. The proposal demonstrates how Common Core standards and assessments will be addressed through technical enriched systems and curricular resources. The project's focus to have teacher build personalized, technology-enriched Open Source lessons for their students based on Value-added data has great potential to positively impact the quality of teaching and learning. Access to learning environments can be adapted based on student's needs, interests, and abilities to accelerate student learning.

Overall, the TN proposal scores meets Priority I.

Total	210	148
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0656TN-3 for Tullahoma City Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant articulates strong comprehensive and coherent reform vision that addresses a critical need in their current educational reform movement by providing support for the school districts represented to move from traditional adoptions of hard copy textbooks to "open source", a digital source for textual information. Points to support the movement:

1. Current hard copy texts fail to align with current educational reform efforts (i.e. Common Core Standards) and tested materials,
2. Hard copy textbooks are expensive and often outdated (due to the 6 year adoption cycle),
3. Current textbooks are void of critical local connections that would allow students to make relevant connections to spark their interest
4. Current textbooks do not provide teachers with the flexibility to personalize learning opportunities to meet individual student needs.

The applicant clearly connects the urgency to address the disparity of information provided within the current textbook system and clearly identifies the extent to which this reform effort will support the four core educational assurance. This plan is further supported by the current research of the Utah Open Textbook Project.

The Applicant scores at the top of the high range for this criterion. The connections articulated in this proposed plan for making significant changes in textual instructional materials indicates great promise for increasing flexibility for personalized

learning environments that will support overall student achievement and yet further support a decrease in achievement gaps.

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

The Applicant states that four districts will take part in the Tennessee Open Source Project and that all student in the four districts will be served by the project. A detailed list of all schools participating was provided with individual schools listed as well. Over 21, 000 students (100%) will be participating in this project, the vast majority are from low income families (over the 40% as required for eligibility), minority groups (Black/Hispanic/Native American), and students with disabilities.

The total number of educators participating was noted for Lawrence (676), Lincoln (304), and Warren (532) school districts, the number of educators to participate was not noted for Tullahoma. All other pertinent data was included for Tullahoma.

Additional support was also provided in the appendix to confirm the data provided for this criterion.

The Applicant scores very high for this criterion, all required eligibilities were met. One point was deducted for the missing data in regard to educators participating in the Tullahoma School District.

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

The applicant describes a unique plan to “ramp up” a current LEA-wide reform effort that focuses on the accomplishment of goals articulated in their *No Child Left Behind* “wavier”. By incorporating the flexibility to include digital curricular materials, this model will increase student’s motivation to learn by providing a connection with local resources that they will find relevance.

This personalized perspective for incorporating “relevance” is a strong logic model that will improve learning outcomes for all students, especially those who are considered “at-risk”.

The Applicant provides strong support and clear understanding for the needs of the students in the districts to be served by this project. Recognizing the “regional” wealth of information and how the information can be personalized to meet the needs of current reform efforts (Common Core) and more importantly, measures to interest students is critical for the success of any project. For those reasons, the Applicant scores extremely high for the criterion for LEA-wide reform and change. Full points earned.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	8
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant currently has in place a multitude of summative and formative evaluations that will measure annual goals for all students, and by student subgroups:

- a. TCAP (annual)
- b. NEAP (annual)
- c. PARCC assessment for English/Language Arts and Math starting in 2012-2015. This assessment will particularly helpful in that it will provide intervals during the school year.

Student performance is measured across 4 achievement levels with clear descriptors: advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic. For the year 2011-12, a baseline was provided with in the applicant. Some schools provided baselines for 2010-2011. The target goals identified seem ambitious, reasonable, and attainable. The growth is consistent between the SY increments across all subgroups, resulting in an overall increase. Projected target goals continue to show achievement gaps between subgroups with the gaps slighter smaller.

Target goals for graduation rates seem reasonable and also attainable. In addition, the Applicant provided a summary of evidence for college enrollment with projected target goals through 2016-2017. The slight increase in annual goals seems very reasonable.

The Applicant provided significant support for the goals for this proposed project. Based upon the various assessment measures and the data presented, there is convincing evidence that this project and the quality of reported data is likely to result in improved overall student learning and for that reason earns a score in the high range for this criterion. However, a few points were deducted because the targeted goals, while only slightly, leave gaps in achievement between subgroups.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	11
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Applicant noted changes within the past four years to the transitions in the state in regard to meeting the rigorous CCS standards and assessment requirements. With the changes, teacher and administrator accountability is influenced by their students' achievement gains (Teacher Value Added Assessment System, TVAAS). Scores from The TVAAS for the spring of 2012 were not available at the time of the applicant. While the evidence is not readily available, the description of the sophisticated TVAAS system outlined in the application, should provide a wealth of data for the districts to make academic decisions on the levels ranging from the four districts, to individual schools, teachers, and individual students. The data will allow educators to adjust needs for individual students easily.</p> <p>Student performance data will easily be assessable to students, educators, and parents and will be used to inform and improve student academic success with the new system however based upon the presentation in this application document it is not available currently. For this reason, points were deducted in the overall score for this criterion.</p> <p>Due to the change in systems of measurement for student performance, data across the four years to support increased student was not easily to determine. The information provided in the applicant stated that there has been overall growth for the four consortium districts, however not all the schools in the 4 districts are considered in the lowest 10% in achievement scores or gains.</p> <p>The Consortia LEA provided evidence of growth in proficiency and advanced placement in grades 9-12th on math and reading/LA scores and overall graduation rates across school districts (graduation rates for Lincoln and Warren were omitted for 2012).</p> <p>While this applicant provided a wealth of data in the appendix, it was difficult to determine if the data supports 4 years of a clear record of success in advancing student learning. However, the overall picture presented did demonstrate that this Applicant (and the State) is making significant improvements in data collection that will show evidence of growth. For those reasons, the Applicant scores at the highest level of the middle range for this criterion. Citing the loss of points for lack of proof for meeting the requirement for a successful record over the past 4 years.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Transparency is clearly outline within this application in the highest regard. Full discloser for salaries for all school personal and the school-level expenditures is clearly defined and supported documents online and copies of District budgets as well.</p> <p>The highest degree of transparency scores this applicant at the highest of the high range.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>Clear evidence is provided to support the extent to which the four school districts that will be served by this applicant meet the state context for implementation. Although the State has regulatory authority over the local LEAs, the Tennessee Code provides provisions that each county school system is controlled by an elected school board which directs and establishes policy for the district thus allowing the implementation of personalized learning environments through the use of digital instructional devices.</p> <p>The Applicant fully meets the criterion scoring the highest score.</p> </div>		

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

With regard to Stakeholder engagement and support, the Applicant provided details as it applies to each school district served by this application.

1. None of the school districts are represented by collective bargaining
2. All four districts have an active teachers' organization that represents members.
3. Each of the school districts sought support by teachers for this project and received positive support for the proposal
 - a. Tullahoma and Lawrence combined 88%
 - b. Warren 90%
 - c. Lincoln 83%
4. Letters of support were submitted and provided a high level of support from a multitude and variety of agencies.
5. Support from student organizations, Parent/Teacher Organizations (which includes parents), local community organizations, professional organizations, as well as support from principals (and administrators) was clearly noted in the application and supported by the various letters of support and survey data included.

While the Applicant lacked 100% support from teachers, the minimum (70%) to meet this criterion was fully met. The Applicant provided a high level of support for this specific proposed project which clearly demonstrated that the districts have internal and external support to move this project successfully forward. The Applicant met and exceeded the requirements for this criterion, resulting in the highest score for this criterion.

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

The Applicant provides an analysis of their current status (via AMO reports and documents in the appendix) for implementing the proposed personalized learning environments. The Applicant shared a detailed analysis of the achievement gaps among groups in the four school districts to be served by this proposed project. Strong data emphasizes the disparity between SWD, LEP, and ED subgroups, particularly Black/Hispanic/Indian, and white students. The Applicant clearly states and provides evidence that the goals for this proposed project will address the variability of student needs faced by the district, especially those students who are the most at-risk (noted above in order). This project proposes to make technology readily available to all students in the four districts through the use of digital devices. The plan has a realistic timeline with a variety of instructional approaches that will address the specific learning needs of the most at-risk students.

The application includes project including the goal, timeline, deliverables (good, activities, and services) aligns perfectly with the timeline for full integration of Common Core Curriculum which will also address the identified needs and gaps as noted in the "current status" analysis. The timeline and plan will help this district to meet the varying needs of all students and will help to close the achievement gaps by leveling access to high quality instructional materials. An high score is earned for this criterion due for the extent of this high quality plan, all encompassing plan.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant not only provides a convincing argument for the proposed plan but also supports the argument with current scholarly research as it pertains to the concept of *universal design* (flexible approach to teaching and learning) that supports learning to read and reading to learn across the curriculum from K-12. Furthermore, the Applicant provides research and justification that demonstrates the connection between the proposed project and how the plan will support preparing students to be college and career ready, reinforcing that the implementation of his plan will provide flexibility and high levels of engagement for all learners, decreasing the achievement gaps especially for those noted as at-risk.

The Applicant identifies clearly how the implementation of this project will increase student engagement by allowing them to

see connections between *what they are learning* and the world around them. In other words, the experiences will allow students to fully engage and see relevance.

The goals of this project are additionally supported by the current reform efforts of the State.

- Adoption of CCS
- Race To the Top-State
- Wavier for NCLB
- Focus on literacy skills
- Legislative Policies (directives to universities, Master Plan, College and Career Readiness Standards)
- PARCC Assessments
- Achieve, Inc. (Transportation service for students)
- The Diploma Project
- Global Awareness

The involvement of multiple reform efforts clearly demonstrates the commitment towards ambiguous goals focused on preparing students to enter the workforce and/or higher education. Students will be able to monitor their own progress and scores. Parents will be invited to attend special events and training for the technology so that they can better support their children at home. And, parents and students will be provided on-going and regular feedback

A very sophisticated articulation of the plan to implement this project starting in kindergarten and the development of the project through high school is provided.

The details and complexities of this plan are of the highest quality resulting in the Applicant earning the highest score for this criterion.

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

20

20

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The Applicant provides a detailed description of the teaching and leading plan designed for educators and administrators for the four districts this proposed plan will serve.

The Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) is described in detail and serves as the foundation to foster daily communication between principals and teachers to ensure that student's instructional needs are met "every day". The TEAM approach includes the collection of assessment data to measure the success of teachers, administrators, instructional leaders, the school, and the district that hinge on student performance and academic success.

Administrators and teachers are required to engage in training for professional development as individuals and teams in multiple ways including virtual resources and videos. Regular intervals of professional development is provided through team meetings, after-school, in-service and during the summer. The training focus on the integration of technology and how to adapt instructional content to meet the needs of individual students.

The Applicant also included evidence to support the advanced educational training of their teachers. The majority of the teachers from each of the school districts hold degrees higher than a bachelor's degree signally the value this Applicant places on professional development and advanced education.

The outlined measures described for this criterion are engaging and exceed the requirements as defined. The degree to which the Applicant seeks to prepare educators (principals and teachers) are solid and will enable this project to be successful.

The Applicant scores extremely high for this criterion with no loss of points for exceeding the requirements.

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> <p>The Applicant clearly outlines the practices, policies, and rules for each of the four school districts represented in this application.</p> <p>(a) Organizing the LEA central office to provide support and services to all participating schools is not adequately supported across all schools within the LEA. While 3 of the school districts (Lawrence, Warren and Tullahoma) describe an annual plan (practices, policies, and rules) for professional development in the narrative, Lincoln County Schools does not. In fact the description for the Lincoln County School district begins by stating they will use Microsoft 365 Online. The majority of the narrative in regard to Lincoln focuses on Microsoft products offering support as well as free apps for students to use and share original work. It is also noted that additional personnel will need to be added as part of this project to provide technical support for students and teachers. The other three school districts seems to have a PD plan already in place to train and prepare teachers.</p> <p>(b) Leadership teams within each school within the LEA is not clearly evident within the application. While provisions seem to be in place for Lawrence, Warren, and Tullahoma, evidence is missing for how Lincoln to support sufficient flexibility and autonomy.</p> <p>(c)(d)(e) In the narrative for this criterion, the Applicant addresses many important aspects for the areas noted in (c)(d)(e), which focus on access to students, however fails to fully address (d), how students will be given the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards in multiple times and in multiple comparable ways across each of the four school districts. Specifically for Lincoln, the applicant states the availability of support before and after school but does not address how students will be provided options for assessment in mastery of standards. For Lawrence and Warren County Schools remediation and enrichment is clearly noted.</p> <p>For this criterion, the Applicant scores in the lower portion of the high range due to the lack of support for providing leadership teams and the lack of remediation (or demonstrating how they will provide students with multiple time and in multiple ways for mastery of standards). The other school districts seem to have in place the necessary criterion and have provided a clear picture of how they will meet the requirements.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Applicant notes that access to high-speed, reliable broadband service is vital for K-12 infrastructure and for this proposal project and states that within the past few years each of the districts has made significant upgrades to their current networks and circuits. While the Applicant states that the current systems will support more bandwidth-intensive applications, it does not clearly state that it will meet the needs of this project. However, the Applicant does describe in detail the Internet service providers and the services currently in place in four school districts. The Education Networks of America (ENA) provide internet connections, protection, and 24/7 support.</p> <p>Earlier in the application, the Applicant discussed the use of various digital devices, but in this section of the application only clarifies the use of Chromebooks and the "infrastructure" in various places (home, afterschool library, and community businesses with free internet). Support for students is offered through SchoolStation and the Google for Education program is noted for use for students and parents for writing, developing and exporting documents. The STAR student system is an online gradebook where students and their parents can check student progress.</p> <p>Support is not provided in the application for (c). While the Applicant clearly notes that Google Docs will be used to write, develop, and export their ideas and learning assignments and that the platform is "entirely open", the application does not provide evidence for the use of the data to be used in "other electronic learning systems. However, the Applicant does note that Classworks, Study Island, and Khan Academy will be available, yet still there is lacking evidence to meet the criteria as outlined in (c) of this section.</p> <p>The Applicant clearly states that an interoperable data system will be used to house and share student information and data. However, the details of the types of data is not clarified beyond student information and gradebook.</p> <p>For this criterion, the Applicant scores in the high range, the discussion does not include support for the other digital devices noted previously in the application, iPads, MacBooks that may require different expertise. Because the use of Apple products may require a different kind of technical support that could impede the personalized learning environment/experience for students and parents, a few points were deducted for this criterion.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	3
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Applicant states that the goals for this project will be monitored on an annual basis through the actual student performance measures. Goal attainment will be shared publicly through a variety of systems including social media and new outlets.</p> <p>Annual evaluations fails to meet the requirement of this criteria for “rigorous continuous improvement” to allow for “ongoing corrections”. Once a year monitoring is too long of a time. Losing an entire year of student performance without adjustments could impact student academic success adversely. The Applicant fails to provide details enough to demonstrate the strategy that will be used to monitor or measure progress.</p> <p>Lack of detailed information that demonstrates a plan for the continuous improvement process and the extended length of time noted for monitoring results in a low range score for this criterion. Because the Applicant did not describe or provide evidence for how the monitoring would be provided to the public in a multitude of ways a lower end high-range score was earned.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Applicant included a very elaborate and detailed 4 year plan that supports ongoing communication and engagement.</p> <p>The Applicant outlines the scope of the work which describes a high-quality plan with goals for the project including the activities (for all stakeholders), and timelines (consortium, county, state) for the four years of the grant funding and a three years beyond the funding. Within each of the outlined planned areas (activities and timelines) strategies for ongoing communication and engagement is described.</p> <p>The plan seems very reasonable and fosters support from within the school systems and outside of the school system with all stakeholders. The Applicant scores at the top of the high range for this criterion.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Ambitious yet achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup, with annual targets are provided on cognitive and non-cognitive indicators. Interestingly, health including physical, emotional, and social indicators are slated to be measured along with standard academic subjects knowledge. The rationale for these measures performance measures are ambitious and yet achievable. The proposed measures will help to support the health measures of students, which ramps this project to a higher level. By encouraging a healthier positive lifestyle, students will benefit academically as well. Many digital apps related to health will be implemented. Career readiness goals are included as well as measures that will assure students are ready for careers (and college) beginning with 3rd grade measures of Reading/LA and Math. Middle school measures include reading, math, science, and English. Another interesting inclusion within the measures is postsecondary access and success that includes personal finance, ACT/SAT prep, and motivational quotes of the day.</p> <p>(b) The measures are rigorous, timely, and formative in that they align with College and Career-Readiness goals, indicators, and benchmarks as outlined by the state's accountability system. Baseline data for the indicators are provided with interim and proficient targets which will support the implementation success and allow for the addressing of areas of concern.</p> <p>(c) Baseline data for each gradeband, sub-group and school district is provided within the application with performance measures annually. In addition to the baseline data, targets for each year are provided. This indicator measures will provide gauge for implementation progress and overall success.</p> <p>The variety (health, K-12 academic, and postsecondary concepts) and uniqueness of the performance measures exceeds ambiguous goals, the performance measures all achievable and support the focus of the reform effort. The Applicant clearly pushes to the top of the high range for this criterion.</p>		

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Plans for evaluation was gleaned from (E)(2) which outlined the project timeline and included details for project over a 4 year period. The evaluation of this project will hinge on the evaluation of teachers, principals, and superintendents which includes an overall 50% of the evaluation based on student achievement growth.</p> <p>The evaluation plan is sophisticated (outlined in the appendix for teachers, principals, and superintendents) and relies on student performance data gained from performance measures (50%). The tools for educators evaluations based upon student performance is quite detailed with longitudinal data used (based upon previous years baseline and measures) will be used to assess the project.</p> <p>The Applicant scores very high for this criterion due the direct use of student performance growth being used as a direct measure for evaluating this project.</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> <p>A description of all funding supporting this project is described within the application. All budgeted spending is supported by the project proposal details within the application. Each of the four school districts addressed their expenditures and resources individually with the exception of Lawrence and Tullahoma school districts that were addressed together. Reallocation of funds for textbooks is clearly noted to be used to support this project.</p> <p>Budgets for each year of the project is clearly presented in the summary table along with reasonable budget categories. Year one, which is the year slated to install the necessary infrastructure, purchase digital devices, and implement training for personnel has the greatest expense of \$14,707,504. Each year after the year 1, the cost of the project is decreased , making this project a viable long-term sustaining vision for ensuring personalized learning environments.</p> <p>Detailed budgets for each school district was accurately presented and each fully integrated in the overall proposed budget. Each school district budget was clearly aligned with the individual needs for the school district as noted within the application.</p> <p>The applicant provides reasonable rationale and details to support the proposed budget. For this criterion, the Applicant scores in the high range.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The outlined proposed project is a high-quality plan (detailed and reasonable) with ambitious and achievable goals that are sustainable beyond the term of the grant. The funds allocated to purchase textbooks will be used to keep this project moving forward after the funding period has ended. Persons responsible for maintaining the project are listed in the narrative as well as a timeline identified for initiating additional local funding to keep the project going. However, after careful review it seems that the funds saved from the purchases of textbooks will be able to support this project as it moves forward after the grant funding period has ended. This project is without any hesitation sustaining.</p> <p>The Applicant scores in the very high range for this criterion.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Competitive Preference Priority not included in this application.</p>		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Applicant presents a very elaborate, detailed plan that is automatically sustainable after the funding from this reform effort has ended. The outlined plan for implementing the use of digital devices to all 21, 000 plus students across four school districts with over 60% of the school population falling into the at-risk groups who historically hold gaps in achievement will surely benefit from the accessibility of digital devices. The digital access will help to engage and motivate students while at the same meeting their individual needs. The use of digital devices will also serve to increase graduation rates and prepare students for college and careers by expanding their instructional experiences beyond the limitations of outdated textbooks. Teachers will be trained to incorporate current information into their instruction including access to local and more relevant information. The proposed personalized learning environment will be created and boarden over time with the infusion of the digital devices.</p> <p>Overall this proposed project is unique, ambitious, and achieveable fully meeting the criterion of Absolute Priority 1.</p>		

Total	210	176
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