



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0483MD-1 for Washington County Public Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>WCPS plan addresses the enhancement of personalized learning through 3 technology projects. Individualized Technology Innovation Program (iTIP), Virtual High School and E-Learning. Each of these areas provide a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support.</p> <p>The vision and plan is provided for a Individualized Technological Innovation Program which develops and implements a digital plan from pre-kindergarten to grade 12.</p> <p>The plan includes the creation of a virtual high school which will offer courses conducted in 3D immersive virtual worlds. The elements of learning is proposed in two categories; learning management system and effective online pedagogy. Supporting benchmarks, objectives and timelines are provided.</p> <p>WCPS creates an alternative option E-Learning to provide students access to continue working towards graduation at an alternative time and setting. WCPS provides access to a personalized education program utilizing a blended approach.</p> <p>All three goals builds on its work in the four educational assurance areas and articulates a clear and credible approach to articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Although there is evidence that all staff will use MAP Assessments and its commendable that that the Association President serves a role in writing the iTIP proposal there is no evidence of the process in which the applicant used to select schools to participate.</p> <p>A list of the schools are provided for the virtual high school deployment and there is evidence of the total number of participants.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>WCPS uses research and current evaluations on other IPAD implementation plans in developing and implementing the iTIP plan.</p> <p>Effective strategies that were targeted and are evidence of a research based plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target low-income, high-needs feeder patterns • Embed Technology integration coaches • Ongoing professional development opportunism (Professional Learning Networks) • Quarterly iTIP meetings • Differentiated instruction on utilization of devices • Digital collaboration K-12 <p>Virtual High School</p>		

Transition strategy from 90% text based to 40% or less text based with interactive collaborative learning as a focus in each online course.

Instructor professional development in learning the technology and developing effective online pedagogy are both evidence of LEA-wide reform and change model.

E-Learning provides a personalized learning environment that is provided electronically at an alternative time and setting. The plan includes both a online orientation course to all 8th graders and traditional online courses.

The plan identifies 3 focus areas and strategies to provide LEA-wide reform and change that enhance personalized learning environments that are both ambitious and achievable.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	7
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The performance on summative assessments provide moderate growth in performance on summative assessments and ambitious growth on closing the achievement gap. Example: Overall reading proficiency 3-8 and High School in 2010 87.2% in 2016. Although its annual growth goal is small in size the percentage already proficient is 87.2% and becomes both ambitious and achievable at that high level.

The growth goals on closing the achievement gap are quite ambitious. The reduction expected is for a 50% reduction over the course of five years. The evidence of a plan to substantiate such a reduction is not evident.

The graduation rate is provided for 2010/2011 of 89.8% to a target growth of 91.5% in 2016-17. This is a high percentage and a difficult task within the make up of the community, but it would be expected that such a target would be higher to be ambitious, yet achievable.

The College rate is provided for overall at 58% and a growth goal of 60% in 2016/2017. It would have been more convincing of ambitious, yet achievable goal if information was provided to support a 2% increase target over 5 years.

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:

A clear track record of success is provided demonstrating strong success and clear conditions for reform. Identified strong supporting examples are:

- Increases in AP and IB exam participation and performance. 211 test takers in 2000 to 1,283 in 2012.
- Number of scores of 3 or higher for AP and 4 or higher in IB increased from 198 in 2000 to 1,175 in 2012.
- Continual increase in percentages of students scoring advanced in middle school. 19.9% in 2004 to 40.5% in 2012.
- Reduced meals sub-group reduced by 31.3% from 2005 - 2011 in the Middle School MSA.

Information is not provided showing the growth gains and/or declines in the High Schools and Elementary Schools in regards to its lowest performance schools and the achievement gap history over the last 4 years.

Evidence is provided for two student performance data systems. Performance Matters, Inc. (PMI) and Edline, a web-based parent information system that provides parents with real time access to their children's assignments, class calendars, and grades. A movement to Edline provides evidence of a plan to enhance students, educators and parents in ways to inform and improve participation, instruction and services.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
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<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: WCPS shows evidence of creating a transparent view of LEA processes, practices and investments by providing the location of salaries for all staff as well as the location of non-personnel expenditures.</p>		
<p>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: WCPS has demonstrated evidence of implementing a prior record of success and conditions of reform by making use of the Classroom-Focused Improvement Process over the last 4 years on building collaborative teams. SMART Teams have focused on needs of struggling learners through the RTI model which has resulted in highly individualized learning plans. The one to one laptop indicative has led a culture change in student directed learning. These strategies as well as others have shown evidence of related successful conditions and sufficient autonomy to implement the personalized learning environments as stated in the vision and plan.</p>		
<p>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments: Evidence is provided of staff conducting planning meetings. Student, teacher and parent input was provided through survey. Evidence of Collective Bargaining representation is provided. Some teacher support through letters of support. Strong letters of support.</p>		
<p>(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments: Evidence is provided showing that WCPS is in a continual process of review identifying needs and gaps. An example provided is the Washington County Literacy Initiative with multiple partnerships. Over 100 business partners have been previously identified to assist in identifying needs and gaps.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<p>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: WCPS provides strong supportive statements such as early literacy and numeracy establishes the foundation upon which all learning follows. Another example of engaging all learners is the joy of learning that results during early school success should not be underestimated; the early enthusiasm for learning must be harnessed and advanced vertically. WCPS shows evidence of preparing students for college and careers by promoting the importance of personalized goal-setting. Having students develop online portfolios. Initiating the next step of linking to digital portfolios and digital warehousing system. WCPS provides a table of evidences, showing how they utilize a continuum of formal and self-assessment measures along with real-time informal assessments in the classroom to match learners to appropriate programs, resources and instructional assistance. MyBigCampus provides collaborative learning and communication tools for teacher, teacher to student, student to student and teacher/student to parent.</p>		

There is a lack of discussion on the use of frequently updated student data.

Strong evidence of accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-end need students that encourages students suitable for Advanced Placement, dual enrollment or college classes.

WCPS provides evidence of an environment of tiered flexible supports. One-to-one, collaborative, and digital. The addition of digital resources, PLE via online or virtual options are examples of this support.

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

An example given by WCPS is the involvement of three elementary schools, two middle schools in the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant that provides for a model for instructional planning, evaluation, and improvement across the system.

Examples of training on multiple levels is provided.

A plan is discussed to use MAP testing kindergarten through grade 8 to provide norm referenced based data on each student's skill growth. The goal is to personalize lessons that build on identified strengths and support identified areas of need.

Effective teacher evaluation systems and training systems and practices are evident through PLC's and Charlotte Danielson Teacher evaluation system permit teachers to self-evaluate their lesson designs and conduct student artifact analysis.

Partnerships have been established with WCPS with several universities to run Professional Development Schools in the system and run job fairs locally to recruit hard-to-staff schools, subjects and specialty areas.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	13

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strong evidence of participatory support of staff in the Maryland Council for Virtual Learning. The Superintendent, Board of Education Member and Lead Teacher for the Virtual High School all participate on the Council.

E-Learning and the Virtual High School permit students to work at their own pace, provide opportunities for credit recovery or original credit through immerse 3D environment and the systems can be accessed anytime, anywhere for original credit. This provided evidence of an opportunity to progress, as well as a method to demonstrate mastery. There is a lack of supportive detail on methods to demonstrate mastery not on amount of time spent on the topic.

WCPS has aggressively worked on learning resources and instructional practices that adaptable and fully accessible to students with disabilities and English Learners. Evidence is supported by the use of technology which has helped provide appropriate services in a less restrictive environment and provide services for at-risk students.

Providing learning resources and instructional practices for students with disabilities and English Learners is not evident other than the RTI model.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	7
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

WCPS three reform initiatives meet the requirements of ensuring that all participating students, parents and educators and other stakeholders regardless of income, have access to implement the plan. All three directly line up with creating a personalized learning environment.

Appropriate levels of technical support is provided through Ed-Line. The data management system Ed-Line is created for

transparent communication between schools and families as well as access by parents.

The District is currently soliciting a data system that will synthesize all of the data systems in WCPS to streamline efficient processing of data. Therefore using information technology systems that allow parents and students to export their information in an open data format and ensuring the LEA's and schools use interoperable data systems is not discussed.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Evidence of a strategy for implementing a rigorous continuous process is provided. A description of the internal and external stakeholders who will be required to meet and a timeline of when they will meet is provided.</p> <p>WCPS has developed a culture conducive to implementing change based upon stakeholder and external observer feedback. WCPS recognizes the strategic advantages of collaborating and contracting with a national leader in the field of educational measurement and evaluation. Therefore, evidence is provided on how the applicant will monitor, measure the quality of the plan.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A plan is provided identifying the internal and external stakeholders and the objectives of the stakeholders as well as a list of events, activity, person responsible and time frame in which to meet which is evidence of ongoing communication and engagement.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Evidence of performance measures are provided. The narrative does not provide information on the performance measures.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>WCPS shows evidence of a plan to implement an outside evaluation of a trained organization to evaluate the effectiveness of program design and student achievement from an objective, unbiased perspective.</p>		

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>Evidence is provided that identifies the funds that will support the three parts of the project. The budget is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal. The budget narrative clearly provides rationale for expenditures.</p> <p>The applicant's budget identification of funds for one-time investments versus those for ongoing operational costs as well a</p>		

strategies on long-term sustainability are not evident.

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

10

3

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

WCPS expects to obtain funding through general operating fund, foundation support, and cost savings realized through efficiencies. Examples are not provided to support this plan.

Virtual High School, iTIP and E-Learning programs will use a combination of marginal State and Local revenue and careful redeployment of existing positions. Evidence is not provided to create a vision that the plan is achievable.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

WCPS shows a strong list of supportive partnerships to support their plan.

Population-desired results are provided.

A MOU with the two non-public learning centers and Head Start are continuously updated between the partnerships. Showing evidence of integrating education.

Offering such programs as summer school to 1st graders reading below grade level, students exiting 3rd grade will be given interventions if below grade level in reading are evidence of assessing the needs of students and providing ambitious yet achievable plans to address the needs.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

WCPS has a strong plan that meets priority 1. There is strong evidence that this three tiered plan will create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning.

Total	210	184
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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: N/A		



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0483MD-2 for Washington County Public 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 presents a coherent vision that builds on previous work and is consistent with the four core assurance areas. The applicant adheres to state mandate regarding teacher and principal evaluation; has a data system that collects various data elements subsequently shared with members of the community; follows state mandates regarding alignment of curricula to the common core standards; and has piloted an initiative to personalize learning by using technology to deliver instruction.		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant meets the requirement of this criteria fully. The applicant provides a rationale for identification of targeted schools, addresses the eligibility requirement regarding poverty threshold (40%), and provides tables with list of schools.		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	7
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: The applicant presents strong statement regarding the specific activities that will be undertaken with program funds, and timeline for delivering at each school, number of staffs to be involved at each of the schools. The statement is not a theory of change, but a description of what the district intends to do. The specific deliverables are not clearly delineated, nor does the applicant tie the activities to the person responsible for implementation of each phase of the reform. However, else where in the application, the applicant provides credentials of the staffs that will lead the overall effort. The applicant asserts that efforts will be scaled up subsequent to evaluation, however it does present a strategy for achieving this goal.		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	5
(A)(4) Reviewer Comments: The applicant's vision could result in improved student learning, but the evidence provided by the applicant is not sufficient to assert with confidence this outcome because of inconsistencies in student performance and manner in which the applicant presents the evidence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant's evidence regarding performance district-wide shows a pattern of consistent improvement. However, when comparing subgroups with comparison group, the pattern is inconsistent. There are improvements in a given year, for a specific subgroup, in a given subject area. For example, the gap between "two or more races" and "white" student shows a gap closure for elementary reading between 2010 and 2011. however, the gap seems to widen for 		

elem math, middle school math and middle school reading for the same years.

- The applicant presents the data regarding on improvement in terms of decreasing achievement gap only. This is ambiguous particularly when the raw data is not presented.
- The applicant presents college enrollment goals that seem low (2-3% per year), and in the case of special education students the percentages decline between base line year and post grant year. The applicant does not explain this inconsistency.
- The applicant provides expected goals for the duration of the grant, but only for some grade levels (3-8).
- There are a number of empty cells in the data provided.
- The table in the section showing goals in decreasing the achievement gap is unclear because it presents a comparison between the "all" group and all subgroups combined. This level of generality masks the performance of specific subgroups in the district.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	8
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: The district demonstrates a partial record of success: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant presents a record of success district wide, but the track record of success is inconsistent when comparisons are shown between the comparison group (all) and various subgroups. • The applicant provides evidence of decrease in number of students with disability, and number of SWD requiring non-public placement. This is considered a positive indicator of a district capacity to address the needs of SWD. • The applicant notes that it does not have persistently low performing schools. • Applicant asserts that performance data is made available to various audiences via a specialized web based program provided by an outside contractors. There are no examples (evidence) of the reports generated by the contractor, but specific programs are noted in the application. 		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant does not establish full transparency in its reporting of information regarding actual personnel salaries and teacher salaries. While this information may be available in the district database it was not included in the materials accessible to the reviewer. The data presented in the appendix (school level reports) shows lump sum allocation for teacher's salary. The data shown does not separate salaries by types of instructional staffs. The district report card does include non personnel allocations.		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: The district appears to have the conditions and sufficient autonomy from the state to implement the reform goals outlined in the application. To support its assertion regarding autonomy the applicant lists the range of reforms that have already been implemented in the district. It argues that the reforms in place verifies their autonomy to implement new reforms.		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	7
(B)(4) Reviewer Comments: The district provides adequate description of the process used to elicit support from stakeholders. However, the statement is		

general and does not specify how each stakeholder was engaged and provided input to the application review process. It lacks full elaboration. There are letters of support from key stakeholders in the application package including from teacher, parent organizations, and the business sector. The requirement of parent input may not be fully satisfied as the support comes from the PTA rather than individual parents whose children attend the targeted schools.

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

5

4

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant narrative provides some evidence of prior analysis to ascertain gaps in delivery of educational services, but the description is not sufficiently focused on the issue of personalized learning.

The applicant provides evidence of a gap analysis process that was previously conducted and resulted in a number of recommendations regarding improvement in education and other sectors. The plan cited was a citywide assessment conducted by a non-profit community based organization. While it contains a section on education, it is not a gap analysis focusing, in depth, on the system's capacity to deliver personalized learning to its students. Nonetheless, the plan includes goals related to career readiness, increasing college going rates, and reducing the drop out rate.

The applicant demonstrates evidence of prior gap analysis in the area of literacy.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	15

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates capacity to attend to personalization by implementing a number of initiatives in the domains of instruction, counseling, curricula, use of technology and other supports. More specifically, the applicant intends to promote personalization by aligning the counseling system to college and career readiness goals; establishing student portfolios and individual career/college plans; providing access to learning opportunities outside of conventional classroom settings; and aligning content of instruction to challenging standards. The approach proposed by the applicant is closely tied to the use of technology. The applicant demonstrates current efforts that align to this goal and that supports personalization.

The applicant provides a listing of assessments currently used to assess student status in a number of content areas including career readiness, however the applicant does not demonstrate how all of the measures (or some) might be used towards assessing progress or mastery of college and career readiness. The applicant indicates in another section how the assessments will be used more generally to address the needs of the students and inform parents of progress.

Applicant does not mention how ELL students will be accommodated in its reform efforts. There is reference to services provided to SWD in another section of the application. However, the applicant does not describe how services currently in place will be augmented for this population in order to meet the personalization goals.

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

20

15

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The elements of a high quality plan are presented in the applicant's response to this criterion.

- The applicant demonstrates is willingness to build on current practices, use state resources and supports, and work with its partners to advance the goals of personalization, career development and use of technology tools to personalize instruction.
- The applicant describes an approach to implementing instructional practices through professional development. But, the professional development approach is not closely tied to specific actions that support personalization. The statement addresses the district approach to implementing best practice in professional development generally and the reviewer is left to make the connection.
- The applicant highlights the connection between professional development focused on building capacity of teachers and administrators to use technology and the means by which the district will accomplish that goal including working with school based teams.

- The narrative demonstrate that the district has an infrastructure that can deliver the deliver professional development activities to teachers and principals.

However, the narrative is presented at a high level of generality and does not include all component parts of a high quality plan. In addition, the applicant does not seem to have a plan for placing effective teachers in hard to staff schools (or areas). Specifically, the applicant notes that positions in high needs areas are advertised but that seems to be the only effort used to direct quality staff to high needs schools.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	7
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant describes elements of a high quality plan but at a high level of generality. The applicant shows evidence of having a management strategy that supports activities associated with this effort (resumes), the hardware supports to equip schools with technology infrastructure (increase bandwidth); prior record in working with partners on technology based projects to enhance learning goals (Johns Hopkins). The applicant describes various ways in which students access instruction (e-learning) and ideas to expand technology based learning through proposed activities (virtual high school iTip, virtual high school).</p> <p>However the narrative's language is aspirational and lacks concrete steps to realize opportunities for students, There is no reference to how the reform goals will be adapted to EL learners. There is a general statement about subgroups having access to the content and supports available to all others in the district.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides sufficient evidence of having the infrastructure to facilitate access to various internal and external stakeholders. The narrative in this section is rather thin [lacking in details] but elsewhere in the application the applicant describe the various tools used to communicate with the stakeholders. While the district does not have a data system that can integrate all the various data bases in place and those that might be added with additional programmatic initiatives, there is a plan to contract with a contractor to provide such services.</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 does not adequately respond to this question. Instead, the applicant provides an extensive discussion of the importance of evaluation and how each component of the initiative would be evaluated.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides an acceptable communication plan in which it identifies audiences, means of communicating various messages, timeline and responsible person.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant includes 10 performance measures, but does not provide a rationale for their selection. Instead, the applicant</p>		

provides an extensive discussion of how the specific initiatives, for which the applicant is seeking funding, will be evaluated. The narrative about evaluation does not align to the performance measures.

In addition, in the tables with the performance measures the applicant did not include targets.

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

There is an extensive description of the evaluation plan that would be used to evaluate each initiative proposed. The descriptions satisfies the requirements under this criteria.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's response satisfies the items listed in this criteria. specifically, the applicant identifies all funds, appears reasonable and sufficient to implement desired activities, and provides a rationale for the investments. There is a justification in this section with discussion regarding sustainability of the effort subsequent to funding.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant responds to this criteria but not at the level of detail that should be provided in a high quality sustainability plan. Specifically the elements of a high quality plan are not addressed. Nonetheless, there is a statement about sustainability in the description of project activity.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	3

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes too many activities in this section that cannot be fulfilled with the level of funding that is available under this priority.

The initiative does not seem to be self-contained and supplementary, but instead, the contents of another large scale proposal. Specifically, the proposal does not seem achievable. Moreover, the applicant is not responsive to the specific elements of the criteria.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents the intent to put in place three technology based initiatives that are intended to enhance personalized learning. While the use of the various technology tools have the potential of bringing greater personalization, the applicant

does not make the connection between the tools and the learning sufficiently clear and compelling. The application reads as though the applicant needs the funds to continue what it is already doing. The funding is needed to expand current effort, but the rationale might be stronger. In addition, there were several sections of the proposal that contained lofty goal statement but no concrete evidence of how the district will put in place the initiatives, and no examples in the appendix to assist the reviewer in judging the section.

The applicant treatment of subgroups was superficial. Few instances in which the applicant specifically discussed how personalization might be attempted with needy students. The one exception was a brief discussion of current services to special education students. Critical data about expected goals were not included in the tables included in the application.

Total	210	143
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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:

The budget was not included.



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0483MD-3 for Washington County Public 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:

Strengths

District vision includes evidence-based strategies to enhance student learning opportunities (e.g. teacher training, problem-solving, teacher training, student-centered learning, and extended learning opportunities);

District is in 3rd year of implementing a TIF grant which is focused on working with at-risk populations and creating student-centered learning environments;

District recently has increased professional development and collaboration time for teachers;

TIF grant has provided incentive pay for educators and administrators to remain in high-need schools;

District vision of creating a virtual high school which offers AP, elective, credit recovery, and other technology-based opportunities that will extend learning opportunities for high need students is evidence-based and achievable;

Self-directed learning is a pedagogical strategy that is more feasible for high school students than for elementary school students;

"Learning lounges," student collaboration projects, hybrid learning opportunities, cooperative problem-solving, and connecting learning to everyday living are all research-based strategies that are proven to not only enhance student achievement, but also

to prepare students to be career- and college-ready;

District's proposal to provide incremental technology-based learning opportunities for pre-K to grade 12 is an evidence-based practice;

District's vision includes embedding "technology integration coaches" will help to provide scaffolded learning for teachers that can be transferred to future technology-related training;

Providing ongoing professional development provides teachers with the resources to adjust teaching and learning more efficiently than scheduled trainings;

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

10

10

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Selection of participants appears to be "voluntary," based upon interests and needs of district students;

Estimates for FRPL and other potential students seem reasonable;

The implementation of hand-held devices (technology) was already piloted with high-need elementary school;

Professional development is proposed to be differentiated by user ability (1st time, intermediate, and advanced), collaborative, and to use hands-on demonstrations of technology integration;

District will use a digital collaboration model which includes hybrid learning communities and social learning platforms which will build upon how students (and educators) are currently communicating and learning together;

Virtual high school will begin with lower-level math and English courses, and eventually scale up to more complex courses;

Use of simulations, "in-world" problem-solving, instructor feedback, synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities, project-based learning, and avatars are cutting-edge technology- and research-based strategies;

Partnering with NASA and the Smithsonian will provide students with access to extended, external learning opportunities and resources;

The state has specific requirements and guidelines for teaching online courses;

District's E-learning program is purposely designed to be online, with consistent face-to-face contact with highly qualified teachers, which are critical pedagogical strategies for online learners;

District will prepare middle school students for future high school online and hybrid learning experiences;

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

10

10

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

District's vision for the virtual high school student learning opportunities appear to be research-based and attainable;

Professional development is proposed to be ongoing and curricula imbedded;

Student online learning opportunities are supported by deliberate face-to-face interactions, which is an evidence-based practice;

According to the research, middle school is an appropriate place to begin to introduce self-regulated, technology-based pedagogy.

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

10

10

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The proposed intervention is likely to enhance student achievement in that it addresses the individual student learning modalities, styles, and pacing;

The technology-based, online learning opportunities provide students with increased, extended, self-paced, and enhanced learning opportunities for high-need students;

Increased opportunities for learning in different contexts, using different platforms in evidence-based practice for increasing and maintaining student learning towards college- and career-readiness;

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
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Number of high school students who were taking the AP exams within school district has increased from over 200 to over 1,200 over past 12 years;</p> <p>Students scoring 3 or above on AP and 4 or higher on IB exams has increased significantly during past 12 years;</p> <p>District students scores on state assessments have increased significantly to "advanced" and "proficient" in core subject areas at the elementary and middle school levels;</p> <p>Recent sub group performance (2010-2011) in reading between white and multi-race students has decreased (-26%);</p> <p>Middle and elementary school student achievement gaps have decreased in several state assessments over time;</p> <p>District has proactively sought out patterns of low student achievement and used data to restructure and improve subgroup performance;</p> <p>District makes student performance data available in multiple formats to students, instructional staff, and parents;</p> <p>District uses a data management platform to help teachers, administrative staff, and families assess student data;</p> <p>Parents and school staff are provided with training to use data management platform data;</p> <p>District is currently piloting a web-based parent information system that will provide real time access to grades, assignments, and school schedules;</p> <p>Six year pilot of a student assessment system for reading, language, and math, the assessment system will be implemented district wide;</p> <p>District is currently implementing a web-based data portal that gives educators the ability to assess student academic growth, areas of mastery, and the longitudinal tracking of individual student data;</p> <p>For more than 4 years, district has used the research-based practices of classroom-focused improvement process (CFIP) and other complementary reform methods to improve student achievement in a comprehensive manner. Use of several, methods that address multiple student achievement issues are evidence-based practices;</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>District personnel and non-personnel salaries are publicly posted in the local newspaper and are available on the internet through the local county government;</p>		

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	0
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: State and local contexts (e.g. legislative, statutory, regulatory, or legal requirements) and their impact on PLEs were not noted in this proposal;		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	10
(B)(4) Reviewer Comments: District held planning meetings with key stakeholders (technology staff, hardware staff, curriculum and instruction staff, postsecondary staff, and school staff) on a regular basis in developing proposal; Student, family, and community member input and support was gained electronically through surveys and online forums; President of the teachers union was a member of the planning committee and played a role in the writing of the proposal;		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	5
(B)(5) Reviewer Comments: District partnership with United Way helped in identifying community needs and in developing the proposal; District has aligned community resources with school partnerships and student learning needs; District plan includes assessing, matching, and anticipating community needs with student learning opportunities and teacher efficiency;		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	16
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: Strengths District developed a strategic plan that included a focus on developing and creating a culture that supports college-readiness; District strategic plan acknowledge the link between college- and career-ready graduates and future community economic development; State's Career Development Framework is supportive of resources committed to preK-12 college- and career readiness; District's 5-year plan maps, aligns, and matches district students schedules with career or college interests; District students also engage in completing online portfolios and surveys to document and map student interests for the purpose of linking course taking patterns to postsecondary aspirations; District has over 100 local community and postsecondary partnerships; District partnerships include postsecondary articulation agreements with higher ed and technical insitutions;		

District uses a continuum of formal and informal assessment measures (e.g. criterion- or norm-referenced, self-perception, portfolios, etc.) to match students to appropriate courses, programs, resources, interventions, and pedagogical needs;

Intervention strategies promote metacognitive and self-awareness techniques designed to prepare students to be active, self-directed learners;

Technology-based high school is designed to move students beyond their local community by exposing students to interactive and proactive educational experiences;

The proposed digital environment is designed to be living curricula, which can match student interests with aptitudes and interests, which is an evidence-based practice;

District plan includes not only technology-based pedagogy, but also the technical support for teachers, students, families, and administrators;

Weaknesses

District does not adequately address how the specific and unique needs of high-need or subgroups will be targeted in the learning goals of the intervention;

It is unclear when and how often training and ongoing support will be implemented;

It is not clear how the needs of students, particularly those placed at-risk will be addressed within the various subgroups to support learning and PLEs;

Other than having access to the internet, it is not clear how students will be exposed to diverse cultures, thinking, or people;

The proposed intervention does not provide enough detail on how students will obtain mastery, goal setting, problem-solving, and other key outcomes associated with PLEs and student success;

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	14
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

Professional development is proposed to be multi-level and technology integrative;

Professional development training will include comprehensive reform-based models (e.g. AP, IB, college knowledge, individual student learning, technology, and assessment platforms)

Weaknesses

There is not enough detail about the Danielson evaluation model to delineate how this framework will help educators create optimal pedagogical approaches;

It is unclear as to what the acronym UDL is, and what it represents in facilitating the proposed model;

It is not clear how or when professional development will be implemented;

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

Virtual high school will allow students to work at their own pace and in their selected environment;

E-learning opportunity offers expanded and extended opportunities to learn (e.g. credit recovery, credit earning, advanced credits, traditional school day, or night time learning);

Virtual high school will give students flexibility in developing their school schedules, modalities, and pacing;

District's give principals the autonomy to develop and tailor instructional programs to meet school and student needs based upon the School Improvement Team process;

District policies, procedures, and regulations give students the flexibility to master content areas using different modalities through distance or e-learning settings;

Virtual high school plan will give students the opportunity to extend and personalize learning and demonstrate mastery of skills in different ways;

Weaknesses

Students with disabilities category is not well defined;

Not sure how the proposed reform efforts will specifically impact or implemented among the various subgroups such as: ELLs, African Americans, FRPL, and students with disabilities;

Results of postsecondary research on the district's implementation of iPad intervention is unclear;

Unclear as to whether this intervention is specifically designed specifically for students with disabilities subgroup;

Not clear on how many of the district's SWD students participated in the the original piloting of the intervention, or if the decrease in identified SWD students is attributable to other interventions;

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	3
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: The extent to which there is a high-quality plan will be supported within the district through a comprehensive set of policies and infrastructure is not comprehensively described.		
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E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	12

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
Strengths		
District will use mixed methods (quantitative/qualitative) to monitor the implementation of the PLE and technology interventions which can be a strong method of analysis, if the measures and assessments utilized are objective, reliable, and valid;		
TIF grant helped district to introduce the concept and culture of stakeholder input to the pedagogical process;		
Weaknesses		
Surveys do not produce qualitative data;		
Proposed communication strategies appear to be uni-directional (reporting) and not collaborative (diagnostic);		
Focus of the evaluation appears to be centered on the "process," rather than on the outcomes (student achievement);		
A significant portion of the proposed evaluation is focused on process, development, and implementation of the proposed PLE and technology-based high school, not on the student achievement, mastery, and cultural outcomes,;		
Unclear as how to the summer 2012 implementation of iPads at a district elementary school was determined to be successful;		
Not sure which participants will be selected for the E-Learning intervention;		

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths</p> <p>Evaluation proposes to examine student data in a control (non-PLE) versus experiemental (PLE) group design, which is a moderately effective model for statistical analysis;</p> <p>Professional development is proposed to embed curriculum integration and technology integration;</p> <p>Individual larning plans for students will help students to build ongoing digital literacy among students;</p> <p>The state has specific requirments and guidelines for teachers of online courses;</p> <p>The district will be developing PLEs opportunities for both students and teachers;</p> <p>The description of the types of data that will be analyzed in the evaluation were not consistent with the data that was noted to be collected and analyzed at the student level;</p> <p>The proposed mixed-method design does not appear to be collaborative or diagnostic, but rather directive and potentially punative;</p> <p>Weaknesses</p> <p>It is not clear how the various data analyses frameworks will be implemented across schools or how professional developent will work collaboratively for stakeholders;</p> <p>There is little distinction between the differences between data warehouses, data platforms, and data analyses packages;</p> <p>Four teachers will be selected to attend national technology-related conferences. However, who these teachers are and why they would be selected for participation is unknown. Also, how the information gleaned from conference attendance is unknown also;</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Baseline data limited..</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths</p> <p>District plans to use an external evaluator to collect and analyze implementation data</p> <p>External evaluator will provide annual intervention outcome data;</p> <p>Weaknesses</p> <p>District plan to evaluate the intervention is more focused on implementation of intervention and less on individual or subgroup outcomes;</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	5

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

Data management specialist position will be continued after the grant with local and state funds;

Weaknesses

Intervention budget includes state and local revenue sources only;

District does not identify federal and other funds associated with funding the intervention;

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	7
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

District plans to extend learning opportunities and availability of credits for online learners to increase opportunities for college- and career-ready students;

IPad access will give students opportunities to learn and have access to extended curricula;

Weaknesses

Sources for future funding are limited to local and state funding;

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

District plans to increase partnerships with local postsecondary institutions;

District plans to support technology-based intervention will include innovative collaborative student strategies among students (e.g. lounges, technology integration, etc.);

Students will have access to leveled, online communities, lessons and activities that will be student directed and teacher guided, which are evidence-based practices;

Weaknesses;

Intervention effects and impact on lower grades is unclear (e.g. Pre-k - 8);

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Focus of the district intervention is to provide high school students with innovative and extended learning opportunities for college and career readiness in a community that has few options for preparing global learners, which is evidence- and research-based.

Total	210	156
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