



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0134CA-1 for Animo Leadership Charter High School

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant presents reasonable information about the extent to which the consortium has a comprehensive and coherent reform.</p> <p>The applicant states that they address four core educational assurance areas: (1) they use the California State Standards and Common Core State Standards, (2) their data systems use multiple standardized assessments and qualitative data to develop student intervention plans and provide appropriate teacher training, (3) the applicant provides frequent professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators and has established a performance-based compensation system to reward and retain effective teachers and principals, and (4) the consortium provides a clear evidence, such as the case of Locke High School, David Starr Jordan High School and Henry Clary Middle School as for their capacity to turn around lowest-achieving schools. The applicant states that Jordan's growth was four times the target set by the California Department of Education, and their growth was the highest of any school in the state of California in 2012-13. Their performance-based compensation system has clear pathways for internal advancement, pays stipend teachers for leadership responsibilities, and provides teachers and counselors yearlong sabbaticals. While applicant discussed the four core assurance areas, very little information is provided regarding their plan to recruit and retaining effective teachers where they are needed most.</p> <p>By presenting the three goals of personalizing learning for all students, parents, and teachers, the applicant describes their plan to help all students gain skills and knowledge to become college- and career-ready. It is noticeable that the applicant recognizes the parents' roles in children's education and provides appropriate support. However, the proposal offered no details or examples as to how they increase equity through personalized student support and draw upon student academic interest.</p> <p>The applicant provides an excellent and detailed narrative clearly describing what the classroom experience of personalized learning environment would be like. The story of Alma Ruiz and Ms. Baker presents a vivid description of students and teachers who participate in personalized learning environments. For example, the teacher, MR. Lowe and counselors discuss ways to integrate English language activities into Alma's online math units to accelerate her language proficiency. The Curriculum Specialist works with the teacher at a professional development session about EL interventions available for Alma.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides reasonable explanations of their approach to implement their proposal. First, the applicant indicates that all of the schools in the consortium are located in areas identified by the Community Safety Scorecard as high risk and those in need of high educational intervention. The applicant's data shows that all schools (16 of them) and students (n = 10,300) will participate. The applicant provides the data indicating that the participating schools meet the eligibility requirements: 92% of the students in the consortium are from low-income families. Except two schools, the poverty levels range above the 90% level. The data make the case well that the proposal addresses the process of school selection, or lack thereof, due to the fact that all schools in the consortium are participating, and that the participating schools meet the RTT-D eligibility requirements. Still, there is little narrative to accompany this section to further clarify how the applicant's reform aligns with the idea of including 'all' schools from the beginning. It remains unclear why the applicant decides to include all schools to implement the reform rather than selecting specific schools, grade bands, or subject areas and then scaling up in later years.</p>		

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application states that they use the Green Dot model and illustrates Green Dot’s Theory of Change. The applicant explains that the theory includes five investment strategies and core initiatives that produce a series of short-term outputs and long-term outcomes. For example, their long term outcomes include that Green Dot students will graduate from high school, enroll in college, and will be prepared with career-ready skills. It seems that the applicant is committed to sharing their reform efforts as evidenced by their partnership with Tennessee’s Teacher Town talent development initiative and by attending conferences, such as the California Charter Schools Association and the Teacher Union Reform Network. In addition, the responsibility chart (Initiative Leads) along with the diagram of their theory of change gives a sense of credibility to the infrastructure and support in place to implement the reform efforts. In this section, the application, however, is not yet in-depth enough to describe the high-quality plan as it lacks details about activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, and the deliverables. (The table 3-C in the application provides some information; however it lacks details addressing the required criteria.) The applicant would like to share its success with a broad audience, but what remains unclear is how the reform proposal, whether it be about the Green Dot model, Race To the Top reforms, or the combination of both, can be scaled up including robust details of precisely how their plan helps to achieve its outcome goals in the theory of change to improve student learning.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant states that they use California State Tests to set annual goals on proficiency, student growth, and closing achievement gap and include other goals such as graduation rates and college enrollment rates. It is impressive that the applicant is thorough in categorizing subgroups. A description of how these targets were decided is presented; however, the application is lacking important details on the information that helps to evaluate whether/how the goals are ambitious yet achievable. For example, the applicant explains that a review of school-level data from other LEAs that serve similar student populations was conducted, but there is insufficient explanation about who are the LEAs and what constitute significant gains in student outcomes. The applicant states that estimates based on the accelerated student growth that results from Green Dot’s teacher evaluation and coaching models were considered in setting the goals. But there are no details such as the specific ways to compute the accelerated student growth. Consequently, it is difficult to make sense of the baseline goals. Nonetheless, the target goals seem very specific and ambitious.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	12
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant meets the requirements of the criterion on demonstrating some track record of success. The applicant provides extensive information regarding their ability to improve student learning outcomes and to close achievement gaps. For example, the applicant uses API, a primary indicator of school success to provide evidence that Green Dot’s schools exceed district and state averages in 2012 – 2013 and that African American, Latino students, and English Learners all achieved higher academic proficiency than comparable schools in California. Other evidence includes UCLA’s 2012 study that reported that with four years into turnaround, the students in the Consortium were 50% more likely to graduate and more likely to compete college-bound courses by three folds. The applicant also states that their cohort graduation rates in 2012 by subgroups indicate that minority students in the consortium is more likely to graduate than those in other schools in California by more than 40%. Although this is an impressive snapshot of the success the applicant were able to achieve, it was unclear as to the extent of the improved student learning outcomes and closing achievement gaps in the past four years using more comprehensive data for the whole consortium rather than some select campuses. For example, Figure 2-B shows the performance data from 2009 to 2013 pertaining only to those of Locke High School.</p> <p>A compelling argument was made to demonstrate ambitious and significant reforms in some low-performing schools (e.g., Henry Clary Middle School and David Starr Jordan High School). The highlighted improvements in API from 553 (year 2011) to 662 (year 2013); and from 516 (year 2011) to 638 (year 2013) are commendable.</p>		

The applicant clearly states that they have made student performance data available to students, educators, and parents in ways that inform and improve participation and instruction. Currently, the applicant has a web-based student database called PowerSchool so that students and parents have access to the data. Currently, about 25% of parents participate in PowerSchool training workshop. For educators, the applicant launched a knowledge-sharing platform called Connect so that their educators have access to student demographics, assessment results, and other PD resources. With respect to using assessment data to inform instruction, it is noticeable that the applicant has Tableau reports that provide real-time student- and school-level data for teachers, counselors, and administrators. More importantly, the applicant states that they provide support for teachers to use assessment data in curriculum planning and interventions. These evidence of prior success bodes well for their future success, but the chronological information in the area of managing student performance data is not thorough, thus it becomes difficult to evaluate their efforts to improve data management and sharing in years, for example, 2009 – 2012.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant shows adequate evidence of transparency and establishes trust among the stakeholders in education. For example, the applicant publicly presents an annual budget report including all personnel and non-personnel expenditures. The applicant states that each school in the consortium has a school advisory board council of teachers, parents, students, and community members and review school budgets prior to Board approval. Although the applicant does not publish individual salaries, the applicant makes teacher salary schedules based on the seniority available online. Although the applicant states that they are willing to increase the transparency of all school-level financials, it seems unclear whether and how personnel salaries for all school-level instructional and support staff are publicly available.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	6
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates evidence that they have access to the right conditions including scheduling, academic autonomy, and labor-management relations with the sufficient level of autonomy to implement their proposed plans in their state context. The applicant states that Green Dot schools are highly autonomous in governance, operations, staffing, and financial decision-making. The applicant also indicates that their union contracts is atypical and accepts teacher performance evaluations, professional work days with no defined minutes, and flexibility to adjust the contract over time. Although the narrative asserts that the applicant have access to the good conditions and sufficient autonomy, equally important to articulate is how State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements ensures the successful implementation of the personalized learning environments, which is not thoroughly addressed in the narrative.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	13
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides information on meaningful stakeholder engagement throughout the development of the proposal and meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal. The applicant describes how students, families, teachers, and administrators of the consortium were engaged in the development of the proposal including a summary of feedback surveys. The revised content of the proposal (e.g., Initiative 5, 7, and 9) were clearly identified. Further, the applicant provides the Letters from the Consortium’s Teacher & Counselor Union and the Consortium’s Union for Classified Staff as evidence of direct engagement and support from teachers. Most impressive is that the applicant provides over 400 letters of support from parents, teachers, government officials, their partners in the community, academics, and local/national foundations. These letters serve evidence as for documenting support from key stakeholders in both development and implementation. However, a close review of the support letters reveal that some letters were templates with signature sections to be filled in and therefore lack authenticity; and the narrative does not provide clear information on some specific on the events of stakeholder engagement including when they occurred and who participated in.

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

	Available	Score

(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	14
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(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes their approach to implementing instructional strategies for all students to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned with college- and career-ready standards and accelerate his/her learning through appropriate support.

It is convincing that the applicant's plan will enable students to do the following:

(1) To Understand that what they are learning is key to accomplishing their goals; the applicant states that they work hard to foster the self-motivation, thirst for knowledge, and self-improvement. It also identifies the character traits as an important part of their learning. It is impressive that the applicant already invested in the system for the teacher development to facilitate continued improvement and support the parent academy to model the principles of lifelong learning.

(2) To Identify and pursue learning with college- and career- ready standards, understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals; the applicant currently has 6 initiatives focused on students and 2 initiatives focused on parents all geared towards to supporting both students and parents to pursue college-bound or career building learning paths and monitor the progress. The applicant maintains a lower than average student-to-counselor ratio so that their students can benefit from individualized support. It sounds credible that the applicant supports students for developing personalized pathway to graduation and college/career success. For example, they partnered with CollegeSpring to offer high quality, small group SAT prep programs. Further, the applicant uses the College Ready Teaching Framework to ensure that students set goals, demonstrate specific behaviors and practices to achieve the goals, and provide support such as Peer to Peer Coaching programs.

(3) To be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest; the applicant supports the introduction of technologies into the classroom to expand the range of content available to students and deepen engagement. They also offer a wide range of after school programming.

(4) To have exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning; the applicant states that their teachers provide alternative contexts and perspectives that enable students to recognize the differences between communities and allow students to experience a diverse range of cultures, contexts, and perspectives through a curriculum (as illustrated by the examples of sociology and English classrooms) and instructional models. It was also evident that their teachers contextualize student learning with real world examples.

(5) To master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving; the applicant indicates that their teachers receive personalized coaching to design lessons with rigor. A strong piece of evidence on how the applicant's plan will help students develop critical academic content and meaningful skills and traits of behavior and motivations is the advisory class in which students work with teachers and peers to receive academic support, have opportunities to reflect on their school experience and other important issues, such as nutrition and conflict resolution.

The applicant provides clear evidence that each student has access to the following:

(1) A personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable the student to achieve his or her individual learning goals and ensure he or she can graduate on time and college- and career-ready; the applicant provides clear details on their variable curriculum pathways and the variety of academic activities in school electives or after-school programs. By illustrating a school day of Alma Ruiz as for her personalized learning experience, the applicant effectively makes the case that their students have access to the college-bound and career-related personalized instruction. For example, counselors identify Alma's interest in science, and she takes Robotics and AP Physics concurrently; counselors also ensures that as an English Language learner Alma receives both English and Academic Essentials in English. The Academic Essentials course addresses literacy development, active reading, text annotation, and writing – the essential set of skills for success in college. In this way, Alma is approaching her goal of becoming an engineer with adequate skills in the language and science. Further, what lends more credibility to their plan is the fact that the applicant uses teachers' capacity to design and implement differentiated lessons as one of the indicators of effective teaching.

(2) A variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments; the applicant clearly states that their teachers are evaluated on their ability to create differentiated learning experiences for all students, and their framework for effective teaching includes the ability to implement differentiated instruction. The applicant also uses a Rtl model to address student needs with specific services and resources. These serve as strong evidence to demonstrate the applicant's readiness to allow their students to experience a variety of high-quality

instructional approaches and environments.

(3) High-quality content, including digital learning content, aligned with college- and career- ready standards; the applicant asserts that their teachers are encouraged to go beyond state standards, set more rigorous lesson objectives, and develop content that supports college-ready skills and competencies. The applicant demonstrate a willingness to implement digital learning content as evidenced in their use of Digital libraries, table applications, and other learning software such as Scholastic’s Read 180 and Carnegie Math.

(4) Ongoing and regular feedback to determine progress toward mastery of college- and career-ready standards; and to examine personalized learning recommendations based on the student’s current knowledge and skills, college- and career-ready supports; the applicant states that their students use an online grade book (PowerSchool) and their DataDirector helps students identify the standards about which they need improvement. The applicant’s intent to provide effective feedback to their students in their learning includes using the “feedback to students” indicator in learning process as an important aspect of their College Ready Teaching Framework. It is clear that teachers and counselors in the consortium use assessment data to guide students’ graduation plans with a focus on developing students’ ability to map out their own paths to college and career success (i.e., self-directed learning).

Lastly, there is sufficient explanation for how the applicant ensures that mechanisms are in place to provide training and support to students so that they can understand how to use the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning. Their tiered system of student advising is such that advisory class (Tier 1) allows students to receive the training and support to understand and use the data tools, counselors (Tier 2) assist students with tracking and managing their learning, and Intensive Services via referrals (Tier 3) are available. In addition, Parent Academy in the consortium offers computer sessions to train parents on how to monitor their children’s progress through PowerSchool so that students learn and grow in the support system.

Overall, the applicant provides an excellent and detailed narrative clearly describing how they plan to implement instructional strategies for all students to pursue learning with college- and career-ready standards and to provide learning through effective support. However, it is noted that the applicant does not explain all of the elements of a high-quality plan (a plan that includes key goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities). In addition, the applicant does not provide clear evidence as for their plan to implement accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students to help ensure that they are on track toward meeting college- and career-ready standards. Additionally, as they consider using high-quality content (e.g., digital learning content) aligned with college- and career- ready standards, it was unclear how their high-quality content aligns with state or national standards and how the software, such as Scholastic’s Read 180 and Carnegie Math emerge as their choice for digital content for reading and mathematics.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	12
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a plan for improving learning and teaching by providing opportunities to increase their educators’ capacity for implementing personalized instruction and to have access to data and tools for improving student learning.

The applicant states that they ensure teachers have multiple opportunities to improve instructional planning including curricular trainings, monthly late-start Wednesdays. It is noticeable that the applicant has collaborative efforts such as the Instructional Leadership Team and the Common Core Transition Team. One promising result is that the teams have developed a digital library of resources about the Common Core State Standards including sample units and assessment tools. The applicant also supports the effective implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies by starting “coaching infrastructure” in which teachers meet to discuss student performance data and devise action plans aligned with the Common Core.

With respect to measuring student progress, the applicant provides clear evidence as for their efforts to build a systemic benchmarking process in which four times a year students’ learning is assessed and teachers will examine individual student, class, and the consortium-wide results and consider ways to improve student learning.

The applicant indicates that they use feedback provided by the Consortium’s teacher and administrator evaluation system to provide recommendations and supports. For example, the applicant implements teacher observations, surveys, and student growth data as part of the teacher evaluation system. The fact that the applicant hired additional assistant principals in 2012-2013 school year adds more to the applicant’s commitment to increasing frequent observations and additional support for teachers. In addition, the applicant states that they have

curriculum specialists to support differentiated instruction, and teachers have open door policy so that colleagues can visit at least 4 times a semester to learn effective practices. As for the administrator evaluation system, the applicant developed a bold system (pilot program) with six measures to indicate administrator effectiveness so that administrators are evaluated based on their ability to improve academic achievement for all students and to increase the effectiveness of their teachers.

The applicant provides detailed narrative indicating their educators have access to actionable information to identify optimal learning approaches. Specific data tools include BloomBoard, DataDirector, Connect, and Tableau. All of these makes a strong case that applicant can use assessment data to inform and improve personalized learning opportunities. The applicant’s digital resources include personal laptops, document cameras, and the high-speed Internet. These technological tools and resources have the potential to facilitate successful implementation of the personalized learning environments and strategies.

The applicant presents clear evidence that the applicant is committed to ongoing monitoring process about the effectiveness of the resources in meeting student needs. For example, the applicant conducts semi-annual administration of surveys, facilitates learning communities to share knowledge and understanding of resources, and provides feedback about the applicant’s process of supporting students with learning tools and resources.

The applicant states that school leadership teams have support for training, policies, tools, data, and resources. Each campus, for example, has the Teacher Evaluation System to impact practice and policy in classrooms; has an Instructional Leadership Team to provide support to improve teaching; has to conduct a full-scale program review and discuss the results with the leadership team of the Consortium; and operates with the framework of ‘95/5’ and ‘PD Principals’ that nurtures school leaders’ professional growth.

Overall, it is convincing that the applicant has a plan for improving learning and teaching. However, it is noted that the applicant does not explain all of the elements of a high-quality plan (a plan that includes key goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities). Further, what remains unclear in the narrative is (1) how the applicant supports teachers to provide opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks, in response to their academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches, such as discussion and collaborative work, project-based learning, videos, audio, and manipulatives and (2) how their investment in the technology infrastructure remains relevant to college- and career-ready standards and how the applicant prepares multiple layers of using technology in instruction in response to different needs of each content area. Other concerns include the applicant does not provide clear evidence as for placing effective teachers and principals in hard-to-staff schools, math and science, and special education. It is clear from the narrative that the applicant (1) has developed comprehensive system to recruit and hire high quality teachers through multi-dimensional hiring process and (2) is willing to use RTT-D funding to support teacher growth and advancement to ‘highly effective’. However, assuming that the applicant can be successfully in identifying effective teachers and principals, it is impossible to judge from the information available at this time whether the applicant has a plan for placing their best teachers where they are most needed.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

This section is thorough its presentation addressing how the applicant provides the Consortium’s practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning. First, the consortium has a three-tiered organization that provides support and service to all participating schools. The figure 1-D illustrates the structure of the system. For example, the schools are grouped as geographic “clusters” to pool resources and share expertise and services. The applicant describes that a Cluster Director ensures the effective implementation of the Green Dot model at school sites, provides twice-monthly individualized coaching sessions, delivers PD workshops for principals; coaches and evaluates school leaders; and supports the annual school-site strategic planning process. Second, school leadership teams have sufficient flexibility and autonomy over school calendars, school-level budgets, and other areas such as governance, operations, staffing, and daily operations. The applicant provides evidence such as the School Advisory Council (SAC) Bylaws that supports a single school plan and the Memorandum-of-Understanding that documents the flexibility and autonomies granted to schools. Third, it is clear from the narrative that students in the consortium earn credit based on demonstrated mastery as determined through assessments and performance tasks, not the amount of time spent on a topic. Fourth, the applicant states

that the courses in the consortium offer students multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery in a number of varied and personalized ways, which is supported by their Initiative 1, and that providing students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery is one of the indicators of the standard of practice (Level IV) within the consortium’s College Ready Teaching Framework. Fifth, clear details are provided showing that the applicant provides learning fully accessible to all students including those with disabilities and English learners. The applicant indicates that their special education teachers must provide a combination of consultative support, coteaching in the general education classroom, and direct instruction outside the general education classroom. The evidence includes the consortium’s Response to Intervention (RtI) model that systematically identify and support students with special learning needs; the use of California English Language Development Tests (CELDT) to assess English language acquisition to inform coordinators and curriculum specialists to develop specific EL interventions with teachers; and the consortium’s policy that students with an IEP are full participants in all learning opportunities. However, the applicant’s narrative does not explain all of the elements of a high-quality plan including key goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities.

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

The applicant identifies their infrastructure that supports personalized learning as evidenced by the following:

(1) The applicant ensures students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders have access to content, tools, and other learning resources in and out of school to support their RTT-D implementation. The narrative states all students, parents and teachers have access to resources with appropriate support. The applicant indicates that they will introduce new and innovative technologies in the classroom supported with the recruitment of Technology Integration Officers, the promotion of Data Fellows, and a sustained schedule of ongoing professional development. For parents, the applicant’s plan includes the implementation of the Parent Academy, providing parents with an expanded curriculum and access to resources with a comprehensive outreach strategy and a schedule of training sessions and ongoing tech support. In particular, the applicant mentions that tablets are not to be allowed to take home by students, but clarifies that students have access to tablets outside of the classroom during extended office hours and in after-school programs but may not take home due to safety issues. The appropriate levels of technical support are clearly articulated. For example, Technology Integration Officers and Data Fellows will provide support through peer support, online support, and training workshop. However, the narrative is lacking important details exactly how Technology Integration Officers and Data Fellows provide differentiated support to teachers, parents and other stakeholders.

(2) The applicant states that they allow parents and students to manage information in an open data format – electronic documents are saved and opened regardless of operation system or software and their Open Database Connectivity will facilitate the sharing of data.

(3) The applicant provides clear explanation of their interoperable data system to be implemented with the support of RTT-D funding. For example, the applicant’s schools share a custom-built data warehouse to gather and store data from a broad range of systems, so that different program and software in their data warehouse are streamlined for data sharing (e.g., human resources data, student information, budget, and instructional improvement system data) and cross-referencing. Further, the applicant promises that additional work should be done during the grant period, schools will secure access to additional data feeds from other strategic partners during the grant period, and they will enhance data visualization tools and teacher training programs.

Overall, the applicant’s infrastructure seems adequate in providing students, parents, and teachers with support and recourses. However, the narrative’s explanation (1) does not thoroughly describe their comprehensive policies to provide all students and teachers with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed and (2) does not clearly include all of the elements of a high-quality plan, such as key goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	11

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a clear plan to implement a rigorous improvement process to monitor, measure, and publicly share information on their investment. The applicant states that the RTT-D Project Compliance Manager (PCM) will monitor improvement efforts and ensure there is timely and regular feedback on progress of the RTT-D efforts. For example, the manager will use a dashboard tool to track progress. It is impressive that the applicant requires that the team of the PCM and project leaders have the quarterly meeting with an agreement in writing on the priorities for the next quarter. Other responsibilities of PCM include administering feedback surveys, meeting with school principals at least once a semester, and reporting progress and outcome on a quarterly basis.

Yet, it is unclear in the narrative about whom PCM reports progress and outcome information to, and there is lack of description regarding how this information will be used for continuous improvement processes. The narrative details their improvement process and inviting various stakeholders in the process; however, what remains unclear is what kind of qualifications of the PCM position entails and how the applicant provides support for the PCM personnel when he/she needs administrative manpower or leverage when the PCM has to work with other groups such as Continuous School Improvement and Green Dot Strategic Plan as illustrated in Figure 1-E. In addition, the applicant states that each school will meet annually to review all of the planning process including financial resources. It is noted that there is limited evidence as for how the applicant shares information on the quality of its investment funded by RTT-D in this section, but the applicant states (See Section (E)(2)) that Green Dot schools hold Board meetings in which a review of RTT-D investments will be included in the agenda. It is also noted that the narrative lacks in providing an explanation of all of the elements of a high-quality plan (a plan that includes key goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities).

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides their strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. The applicant states: the PCM and each school principal will meet at least once a semester to solicit feedback regarding the implementation; multiple surveys will be conducted to seek feedback from students, parents, and teachers; and a shared weekly newsletter called News From the Dot will be distributed to all teachers and school site staff. Other newsletters with the similar purposes include the Green Dot Difference distributing to 5,300 external community stakeholders. The applicant indicates that they will update the accountability section of its website at least quarterly to include a detailed information about the RTT-D efforts and contact information for the PCM. Other noticeable venues of open communication about the RTT-D implementation include quarterly community breakfast at school sites and community centers and an annual Connecting the Dots event. However, it is noted that the narrative does not provide an explanation of all of the elements of a high-quality plan such as key goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has the required number of performance measures and presents ambitious target goals. It is impressive that the consortium aims to have the percentage of classes taught by a highly effective teacher in a school with a highly effective principal to increase from 17% to 90% and to have the percentage of seniors with reading and math SAT scores totaling 1100+, or ACT scores of over 24, to increase from 4% to 54%. However, the narrative is lacking important details on the applicant's rationale for selecting a performance measure, the specific ways each measure can provide formative information, and some concrete directions on how the applicant will review and improve the measure when the measure is not appropriate to gauge implementation progress.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes that they contract an external evaluator to study the impact of iPads on student outcomes. Such evaluation is convincing and may be achievable. The rest of the RTT-D related activities, however, seems to be evaluated by the Project Compliance Manager (PCM). As noted earlier, the applicant is not clear about the qualifications of the PCM personnel and does not provide strong evidence as to the feasibility of the PCM conducting the *rigorous* evaluation of the effectiveness of RTT-D activities. Also, the applicant's narrative does not provide details shaping a high-quality plan including key goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale

for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities.

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's budget is sufficiently detailed in identifying all funds and seems reasonable to support the development and implementation of the proposal. The applicant also provides a description of all of the funds and identifies one-time investments versus ongoing operational costs. The rationale for investments is clear. Still, the narrative remains unclear about their strategies of how they ensure the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	7
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant has a plan for sustainability of the project's goals. The applicant's one-time investment will not continue past the grant period. New, ongoing costs are estimated to be \$2.7 million/year but represents less than 3% of the applicant's current annual operating budget of approximately \$110 million and can be funded with a small fraction of forecast growth in existing general-purpose state funding. The applicant's plan provides sufficient budget details to indicate that the program could be sustained after the grant period. However, it is noted that in order to earn a "high score" in this selection criteria, there should be an explanation of all of the elements of a high-quality plan (a plan that includes key goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities), and the narrative is lacking details about the key elements in a high-quality plan.		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	8
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: The applicant demonstrate that they integrate public resources in a partnership to additional student and family supports in order to address the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of the students. The applicant clearly states that they give the highest priority to the students with high-need students. The applicant provides clear details on the Locke Wellness Center (LWC) model, which provides programs and services that do address the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of the students and other beneficial programs including after-school art and dance, vision screenings, sexual health education, foster care, adult ESL classes, referral services to free/low-cost professional services. The applicant indicates that the LWC involved 20 local organizations in its design process and currently is in partnership with multiple community organizations and LAUSD with the support of the U.S. Department of Education's Full Service Community Schools Program and the California Wellness Foundation. It is explicit in their narrative that the applicant is willing to expand the same services and programs to all students and family, but what remains unclear is the opportunities and challenges during the expansion and how the responsible parties involved, especially the leadership with the LWC, in the expansion responding to the need of scaling the model to all students and family in the consortium. The applicant provides a table (2-CPP) and identifies the desired results for students in the consortium including both educational results and family and community supports results. The applicant provides excellent details describing how the partnership with the LWC would track the selected indicators that measure each result by using ETO Collaborative software and use the data to improve results for students. It is also in their plan to identify children and families with the highest need as their community schools coordinator examines program-identified subgroups. In addition, the applicant indicates that they have a strategy to scale the model to improve results over time by addressing key common components such as staffing,		

stakeholder engagement partner recruitment, program monitoring, and outreach. The applicant is thorough in describing these components and their plan to contract UCLA to evaluate the LWC to improve recruitment, enrollment and retention of program participants.

The applicant makes a case that they integrate education and other services through collaboration within the group of the community school coordinator, community-based organizations, the school leadership teams, and clinical services. This is convincing.

The applicant states that they are committed to building the capacity of staff and other stakeholders in the LWC engagement and provides sufficient evidence that the LWC partnership can assess the needs and assets of the students, the school and community and create a decision-making process and infrastructure so that they can engage parents and families of the students. The applicants provides adequate description of how people in the process such as the community school coordinator, student services and attendance coordinator, other stakeholders in the advisory committee can collaborate and make decisions. Yet, there is no explicit information about how the community school network meetings resolve challenges and problems, if any.

Lastly, the applicant identifies their performance measures for the proposed population-level, but where this proposal is skimpy is their description of the desired results for students so there is not enough evidence to consider whether the measures are ambitious yet achievable.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: Overall, the applicant does meet Absolute Priority 1 based on the application. Their overall plan carries from their current best practice with a successful track record and focuses on materializing their personalized learning environments and strategies with a strong connect to the use of technology in instruction. Their commitment to a strong data system is also commendable. In conclusion, the applicant has presented a plan that demonstrates Absolute Priority 1 for the required criteria.		

Total	210	146
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0134CA-2 for Animo Leadership Charter High School

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	7
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: In an effort to "tell all," the applicant provides a less than clear, coherent reform vision. The narrative does contain good intentions and lists four goal areas, developed later in the document, to support personalized learning and support that appear to be the focus of the proposal. (A)(1)(a) In section (a) the applicant introduces strategies and initiatives that support its four goal areas and endeavors to		

link the "vision" to the four core educational assurance areas. California State and Common Core Standards are cited; assessments, including the interim and benchmarks, are listed in section (b). Periodically throughout the proposal surveys are referred to, but sample survey documents, response rates, and survey results are sparse. Data systems and the data elements collected are cited as are strategies for recruiting, growing, and retaining effective and highly effective teachers - all without supporting evidence. The accounts of taking over/turning around lowest achieving schools are impressive but not supported with documentation.

(A)(1)(b) The applicant provides a general description of the Green Dot model, including its work with parents, community members, and service providers. The narrative is organized around the four goal areas but focuses more on the "what" than the "how" of meeting them - a lot of "fluff" and little substance. Evidence to support claims made in (b) was limited.

(A)(1)(c) The applicant clearly meets this requirement. Anecdotes describing events in the academic life of fictitious Green Dot student Alma Ruiz bring to life the personalized learning environment suspected to be the heart of this proposal.

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

10

7

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

All 16 LEAs that comprise the Green Dot Consortium (11 high schools and 5 middle schools) are included. Some proposed initiatives will be implemented in all schools immediately; others will be piloted in a subset of schools. Details about which schools would become pilot sites for which projects and how this was determined, were not included. That all schools are "enthusiastic participants" in the proposed documents is laudable but not grounded with evidence. It is unclear how the generic "design-pilot-implement-evaluate" process will be applied to the initiatives in this proposal.

The list of participating schools with appropriate counts is provided per the requirements of sections (b) and (c).

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

10

7

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The Green Dot Theory of Change identifies 4 broad goals and strategies. Each goal is supported by one or more initiatives. Short- and long-term outcomes are listed for each goal. Responsible parties are identified by name and position for each initiative; they constitute the Management Team. Cluster Directors are mentioned but their selection and roles were not adequately described. The narrative does not present a high-quality plan for how the proposal will help the applicant reach its outcome goals. Specific activities, timelines, and deliverables are not included. The proposal states that "future LEAs adopting the Green Dot model, while not part of the grant, will have the opportunity to benefit from the best practices adopted by the participants." No explanation of this would occur was provided.

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

10

10

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant clearly meets this criteria. Ambitious yet achievable annual goals for increasing performance on summative assessments, decreasing achievement gaps, improving graduation rates, and increasing college enrollment are clearly presented in table format in Appendix O. Considerations upon which the targets are based are explained and appropriate.

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	9

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(B)(1)(a) The Academic Performance Index for the Green Dot Schools and their peers (local comparison schools, LAUSD, and state schools) are presented by subgroup, but only for one year, 2013. How local comparison schools were selected was not described. Success stories are included for some but not all schools. The included CRESST study summary is based only on the Alain Leroy Locke High School (one of 16 schools included in the proposal). Cohort graduation rates with comparative data are included for three years; disaggregated rates for African American, Hispanic/Latino, Low SES, and English language learners are presented for only 2012. Achievement gaps and college enrollment were not discussed.

(B)(1)(b) The proposal states that no consortium school is "lowest achieving" or "low-performing."

(B)(1)(c) Students and parents have access to PowerSchool which contains information about attendance, assignments,

grades, test scores, and disciplinary incidents; access opportunities and use patterns were not described. The impact of the data availability (to inform and improve participation, instruction, and services) was not discussed. Through "Connect," educators have access to PowerSchool, DataDirector (assessment results), and BloomBoard (professional development resources). No samples of the reports or records of educator use and effectiveness were found.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	1
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states that budgets are available to the public and that Board of Directors meetings are open to the public. How meetings are advertised, meeting agendas, and evidence of attendance were not included. School Advisory Councils review school budgets, but it is unclear whether they have any input or influence on their content. A sample budget is included that provides revenue/ revenue sources/amounts and total allocations for personnel and non-personnel expenditures. No salary information was included in the application; Green Dot schools do not publish individual salary information. The proposal states that a seniority-based teacher salary schedule is available online, but no link or evidence was included.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	5
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal states that, as charter schools, Green Dot schools have "increased operational and instructional freedom" over governance, operations, staffing, and financial decision-making. While examples were given, no evidence was provided to substantiate the claim. School Advisory Councils, made up of school personnel and parent and community representatives, have "input on school policy." Further description, impact data, and evidence were not included. Master scheduling and academic flexibility including curricular and staffing autonomy are mentioned but not supported by evidence.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	7
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(B)(4)(a) The proposal states that the School Advisory Councils at each school site were consulted via dialog and surveys. Presentation slides, the survey instrument, and a summary of results are included in the appendices. About 10.5% of the surveys returned were from teachers. "Full participation" of the teachers' union is stated but not documented. The degree of stakeholders' meaningful engagement and how the proposal was revised based on stakeholder engagement is unstated.

(B)(4)(b) Over 400 letters of support are included in the proposal from community organizations, the teachers' and employees' unions, parents, students, and teachers. Many teacher and parent letters are templates, differing only in signature.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(C)(1) contains elements of a high-quality plan. In subsection (a) the narrative suggests that in regular and advisory classrooms, students are prompted to understand how current learning endeavors are key to future success. Current initiatives aimed at student identification and evaluation of goals are described; electives, the teaching framework, and afterschool programming are cited as means to involve students in deep learning experiences of academic interest. No evidence of current or intended implementation is included. In subsection (b) the applicant provides narrative describing personal graduation plans, variable curriculum pathways, elective classes, after-school programs, high-quality instructional approaches and content, and regular feedback as means to personalized learning. In subsection (c) the advisory class, RTI, a electronic database, tutoring, and parent involvement are cited. However, claims made in sections (a), (b), and (c) were not substantiated. For example, extent of implementation, student and teacher utilization of the strategies, and impact are not addressed.

At the end of section (C)(1) the applicant reveals its plan. It is organized around four goals, each supported by strategies and initiatives and includes a crosswalk linking RTT-D selection criteria to specific Green Dot initiatives. For each initiative there is narrative describing the planned implementation. Following the narrative is a work plan in table format that

includes activities, deliverables, timeline, and responsible person(s) for each initiative. Some detail is lacking. For example, little information is given about how pilot schools/grade levels would be selected. The evaluation piece includes monitoring progress against milestones and outcomes, but milestones were not found. Many activities listed in the work plan are not specific; for example, "Expand ESL, job readiness, citizenship, and financial literacy classes." It is unclear whether the program will be implemented in additional schools, offered more times, provide additional options, or include more parents.

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

Section (C)(2) requires a high-quality plan for implementing instructional strategies for all participating students that allow them to meet the intent of the proposal. This is goal three of the applicant's plan. The section begins with narrative describing the adoption of administrator and teacher evaluation systems that are the basis for determining teacher quality and developing personalized professional development plans. It appears about 85% of teachers take part in the evaluations; no explanation was found for why all were not included. It is stated that teachers are involved in the design of their professional development; however, nothing was found to substantiate this claim. Nor was a description of the types, relevancy, frequency, and impact of the professional development. The narrative describing how goal three will meet the selection criteria lacks supporting evidence, detail, and substance. For example, master calendars, common planning periods, department meetings, teacher observations, weekly school-wide professional development, and a digital resource library are mentioned in subsection (a)(i), yet no descriptions, samples, agendas, quantitative data, or links are provided to authenticate the statements. Part of goal three is to expand the "teacher coaching model," but it is unclear just what the model is. Pursuant to subsection (a)(iv), Appendix H provides an excellent summary of the teacher evaluation system. Implementation and follow-up activities (debriefs, individualized coaching, demonstration classrooms), however, are not documented. Student progress is measured by comparison to peers in the LAUSD; "peer group" is not defined. No samples or results of stakeholder surveys were provided; program reviews were not documented. Data tools including BloomBoard, DataDirector, and Connect are described in (b)(i) without supporting evidence of their output and use. No discussion of pairing highly effective teachers with the neediest students was found. The applicant provides career advancement opportunities to effective teachers so they can remain in the classroom rather than having to transition into administration; degree of implementation was not described.

Goal three, Personalized Learning for All Teachers, is supported by two strategies and four initiatives; the initiatives are crosswalked to (C)(2) selection criteria. Each initiative is introduced by a story relating the impact of achieving the initiative on fictitious staff/students. A rationale precedes the work plan which contains activities, deliverables, a timeline, and responsible parties. Additional detail regarding professional development opportunities would have been helpful. Despite the applicant's efforts, it is still unclear how the initiatives will come together to improve learning and teaching. The fragmented plan does not convey a clear vision - many words, less clarity, substance and evidence.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	9

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Section (D)(1) contains references to many practices and policies in place to facilitate personalized learning. However, evidence is scarce.

(a) The three-tiered governance structure is explained, but the degree of control of the Board and the Cluster Director over the schools and the lines of communication/accountability between them are not clear.

(b) The application states that schools are "highly autonomous" in areas of governance, operations, staffing, financial decision making, and daily operations. Decisions are made by the principal working with the School Advisory Council. The degree of control from above and the influence given to the SAC were not addressed.

(c) The applicant states that students are able to amass credits and demonstrate mastery of state standards through assessments and performance tasks. There is no explanation of how this is operationalized. The relationship between demonstrated mastery and time spent on a topic was not mentioned.

(d) Several mechanisms are listed to address providing multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery. How and the extent to which they are used as well as their impact were not addressed.

(e) The applicant provides a copy of the special education framework but gives no implementation data. Use of the

California English Language Development Test for English language learners is cited; additional language development classes are provided for beginning and early intermediate learners; no evidence was provided. English Learner Advisory Committees are in place in high-ELL areas; supporting evidence was not included. The types and amount of training provided to teachers by the Special Education Coordinator was not described.

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

10

5

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

No high-quality plan is present in (D)(2). The narrative simply states that the proposed initiatives will impact all students. Expansion from pilots to full-scale implementation is mentioned, but there is no supporting plan. "As many students as possible" and "more teachers than ever" are insufficient quantifications. Student access to resources, including the proposed tablets, after school hours was not detailed. Free internet and after-school access to classroom technology for parents is promised without specifics.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	6
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>While the applicant claims to utilize a "sophisticated continuous improvement process," the narrative failed to convey that process. Further, describing past experiences with that "model" do not translate into a useful process for this endeavor. While many of the components of a continuous improvement model are mentioned, no high quality plan for implementation was presented. Convening "responsible parties" and using a dashboard tool (a blank table listing the strategies and initiatives accompanied by empty cells for baseline data and targets) aren't specific enough to describe the activities of the Project Compliance Manager. The narrative describes a lot of discussion and meetings, but no plan for identifying problems/issues, adjusting the plan, and re-evaluating the results was discernible. Timelines, responsible parties, and monitoring activities are vague; activities are poorly described. No prototypes or even descriptions of proposed surveys were included. Publically sharing of information was not addressed.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>In lieu of a high-quality plan for communicating with internal and external stakeholders, the application lists various activities including focus groups, meetings, newsletters and press releases, surveys, breakfasts, reports, and websites. No goals, measurable activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties are included.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant presents ambitious performance measures overall and by required subgroups with annual targets during and after the grant. A sound rationale for each selected and required measure is stated. The annual targets seem very ambitious, and the applicant does not explain how they were calculated.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>There is no high-quality plan proposed for evaluating the effectiveness of activities funded with RTT-D monies. Instead, the applicant references the "plan" required in section (E)(1) which received a low rating. The purpose of the plan required in (E)(1) is continuous improvement, different from measuring the impact of component activities such as a professional development initiative.</p> <p>The applicant's fourth broad goal/initiative 13 is the evaluation of the impact of iPads (equivalent tablets) on student outcomes. (The proposal calls for the purchase of 4,560 iPads for student and staff use.) An external evaluator dedicated to just initiative 13 is specified. No high-quality plan is included for the external evaluation.</p>		

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's budget identifies the funds that will support the project. Descriptions of and rationale for all expenditures is included, and one-time investments vs. ongoing operational costs are identified. Whether the funding is reasonable and sufficient to support the implementation of the proposal is difficult to judge due to the lack of clear, comprehensive, coherent, high-quality plans.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: No high-quality plan for sustaining the project's goals after the term of the grant is included. Over 3.3 million dollars worth of computing devices for classroom use would be purchased with RTT-D funding with no plan to replace any over time. This seems very optimistic. New ongoing costs would be funded after the grant expires "with a small fraction of forecast growth in existing sources."		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	10
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: The applicant plans to scale key components (undefined) of the Locke Wellness Center (LWC) model to all participating schools. The LWC brochure included in Appendix N advertises the services provided, and 2012-2013 partners are named. Five desired results, both education and family and community supports are identified. Web-based software would be used to coordinate service delivery and track outcomes over multiple service providers. The software's ability to inform targeting of resources is not demonstrated. A strategy for scaling the model to two new sites, including the program improvement model, is described. Community School Coordinators facilitate the integration of education and other services. Performance measures, baseline data, and annual performance measures are included.		

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: The substance of this proposal supports the intent of FY 13 Race to the Top - District. Generous narrative describes existing and proposed initiatives to continue and expand the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support. Lack of high-quality implementation and evaluation plans dented the score.		

Total	210	133
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0134CA-3 for Animo Leadership Charter High School

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant establishes a coherent reform vision by establishing the basis for this consortium of charter schools. Originally designed to provide opportunities to leverage the potential of urban schools, the consortium focuses on improving educational opportunities for students in grades 6-12 in 11 high schools and four middle schools.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Each of the four core educational assurance areas are identified. Area 1 is targeted through the adoption of California State Standards. Area 2 is addressed through a shared nine-person knowledge management team. Data is accessed through a software program DataDirector and utilized to inform instruction. Area 3 is addressed through plans to improve teacher behaviors through professional development and coaching. The consortium describes a rigorous employment screening. Area 4 is addressed by documenting the history and development of the Green Dot Charter school system. Three goals are identified for the project; personalized learning for students, personalized learning for parents, personalized learning for teachers. The goals are broad in nature and do not specifically identify what exact steps will be taken to achieve the outcomes. A reform vision is mentioned, however, little is done to articulate exactly what is meant by "additional instructional opportunities and exciting technologies." The applicant utilized a narrative to explain possible experiences of a student but by limiting the narrative to one individual, fails to clearly articulate the potential experiences for a varied group of individuals. The descriptions of proposed activities are vague and utilize key words like differentiated instruction and individualized learning but fail to explain specifically how these things will be achieved. <p>The lack of clear and concise descriptions of specific activities prevents this section from receiving full points. This section earns a score of 8 out of 10 possible points.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant proposes to serve eleven high schools five middle schools for a total of 10,300 students. All subjects are identified as being involved. Middle schools serve grades 6-8. High schools serve grades 9-12.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> All Green Dot Charter schools will participate in the project. Each charter school is identified as a high need school by levels of poverty as well as minority status of a majority of the students. A list of each school involved in the project is included. Table 3A on pages 25-28 identify populations. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 100% participation for all 10,300 students Low income percentage ranges from 67% - 99% with a majority of the buildings in the 90% range. Percentages of teachers involved is not clear, however, teacher to student ratio seems reasonable <p>Full points were not awarded due to not knowing full percentage of teachers involved in the project.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has a clear theory of change as illustrated in figure 4-A of the proposal. Four goals are identified with six strategies and thirteen initiatives.</p>		

Each of the thirteen initiatives has an identified project lead. The entire plan identifies nine short-term outcomes and three long-term outcomes. The plan is robust in a sense that all outcomes are desirable and lofty. The focus of the plan is on student success, however, the goals are general in nature in terms of quantifiable data. The final outcomes state that all students will successfully graduate from high school, however, short-term goals do not identify benchmarks or timelines related to the final outcomes.

The lack of specific quantifiable benchmarks and outcomes keep this section from receiving full points.

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

The applicant has clearly articulated performance goals for student growth.

- a. Summative assessment goals are based on the California Standards Tests. A moderate growth in performance is targeted ranging an average of eight percentage points per year.
- b. The targets for each content area target a decrease in achievement gap each year. The gaps, however, are not identified per sub-group but as an entire consortium. Due to the nature of the demographics of the schools, it is assumed the gap is between minorities and peers across the state, however, it is not clearly defined.
- c. Graduation rate targets increase each year with a final rate of 95%. The long-term outcome in the previous section, however, indicated that ALL students would graduate from high school. It is not clear if the long-term outcome was targeted for the end of the grant period or beyond.
- d. The baseline data indicates a current college enrollment of 95%. Previous sections identify college enrollment lacking, thus the need for the project.

The discrepancy between the long-range goals in the previous section and the questionable baseline college enrollment data result in a less than perfect score 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:

The applicant does demonstrate some success in student learning and achievement.

a) Citing the California Academic Performance Index as the measure, the applicant shows higher achievement rates for each subgroup when compared to similar schools in the area. (Figure 1-B)

Student growth was demonstrated in Figures 2-B and 3-B for two separate schools on the API with one school being cited as the most improved school in the state. However, the applicant fails to provide evidence of growth in the other schools of the consortium, thus preventing full understanding of the consortiums success.

Graduation rates for the cohort are higher than local both the state average and local comparison schools. While graduation rates are in the 80th percentiles, the applicant indicates that the state percentage of students completing the necessary subject requirements for college was only 32%, it noted that some of the areas served by the Green Dot schools only have 21% of their graduates completing the necessary requirements.

b) No school in the consortium is listed as “lowest-achieving” or “low-performing”. Data provided in the previous section indicate several schools in the consortium have been identified as turn around schools. A UCLA evaluation (CRESST) indicated Green Dot students were 50% more likely to graduate and 269% times more likely to have college ready

coursework.

Student performance data is available to students through the on-line grading system PowerSchool. However, the applicant is stating that only 25% of parents take advantage of trainings on how to use and access the site. Additional data systems including Connect and BloomBoard were mentioned, however, the narrative lacks explanation of exactly what the systems report and how the information from those systems work with other systems and how it ultimately drives student instruction. It appears as though a majority of the data is available to teachers to make instructional decisions about what to deliver to students but lacks a clear connection between student choices in instruction.

While the applicant does make a case for success, the data provided is limited to only a few of the consortium schools. There still remains a significant achievement gap for the 2013 API scores when compared to the state average. There was no historical evidence provided for prior years to determine if the gap was shrinking. In addition, access to student data is limited for parents as only 25% have been trained in the use of the on-line grading system. These deficits place the score for this section in the higher-middle range.

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

The applicant follows open record laws of the state, thus providing a certain level of transparency in the processes of the consortium.

- a. Actual individual salaries are not made public, however, the negotiated agreement is public record which allows for some estimation of staff salaries.
- b. Actual personnel salaries are not posted at the school level for instructional staff. As in section a, the negotiated agreement is posted.
- c. School level salaries for teachers only are not posted. As in section a, the negotiated agreement is posted.
- d. Non-personnel expenditures at the school level are not posted.

The applicant follows state rules and regulations concerning open records, which include financial records. Salaries of individuals or sub-groups are not publically posted, however, salary schedules are available. The lack of sub-group or individual postings of financial expenditures for staffing prevents full points for this section.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	6
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant is considered an LEA. As LEAs operating as a charter schools, they are afforded some freedoms not allowed to traditional public schools. Each individual LEA has the autonomy to schedule courses and provide the curriculum that best meets state learning standards.

The applicant fails to explain if state rules concerning seat time, units of instruction, or content delivery models are governed by the state or if the LEAs can set those parameters on their own. It appears as though the current method of delivery is teacher-centered with normal attendance and credit requirements of traditional public schools. There is no presentation or mention of alternative lesson delivery or non-school site instruction so it is not clear if this is allowable or if the LEAs must conform to state mandates. The lack of explanation of non-traditional methods does not allow for a clear understanding of the level of autonomy for the consortium members. This lack of explanation disallows full points for this section.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	12
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does an average job of including stakeholders in the proposal development. The applicant did not indicate if the proposal was revised due to stakeholder feed back.

- a. Educators were surveyed during the planning process. Students were involved with school advisory councils that reported back to classmates. The grant was communicated to parents in both English and Spanish and classified staff was involved in discussions. 421 responses were collected. Response rates seem low, especially for student and staff members. Survey results are included in the appendix of the application.
 - i. The LEA has collective bargaining representation. Along with surveys, the president of the teacher's union signed the application. Survey responses from teachers seems low considering the magnitude of the proposed funding.
- b. Letters of support are included in the appendix of the application. Letters are from parents, teachers, government officials, community partners, higher education, and local and national foundations.
 - i. A majority of the letters, however, are templates with little individual input. Most of the business partners were general but individualized.

Low survey responses and lack of supporting documentation (meeting notes, participant sign in sheets, etc.) keep this section from receiving full points.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	8

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant fails to deliver a high-quality plan. The applicant identifies three goals that include Personalizing Learning for Students, adults, and teachers, however fails to provide solid evidence of specific strategies, identified resources, or solid examples of resources to be utilized.

Learning: An approach to learning that engages and empowers all learners, in particular high-need students (as defined in this notice), in an age-appropriate manner such that:

(a) With the support of parents and educators, all students—

- (i) The applicant does provide programming identified as Leadership and Life curriculum. This is supported through daily advisory class time. Students meet with counselors only twice per year to map learning goals and objectives. There is no evidence to suggest that counselors are available outside these two meetings per year.
- (ii) The applicant has aligned the courses and program of study with the California “a-g” subject requirements. The specifics of those requirements are not clearly defined or listed. Twice yearly guidance counselor visits are to assist students in developing goals and identify possible college and career aspirations.
- (iii) This is where the project fails to clearly articulate specifically what will take place in regards to learning models, resources, and opportunities for students. The narrative continually refers to differentiation of instruction for students that is teacher led. There is no reference to student-directed learning opportunities other than mentioning the use of digital tools and media to enhance student projects. The Innovation Hub is restricted to one location but offers the best opportunity to provide interesting areas of study. There is no definite plan of how experiences in the Innovation Hub will gain students academic credits or if real-world internships and partnerships with industry or businesses will provide credits.
- (iv) The applicant indicates that culturally based experiences are provided in the context of units of study. There is no mention of utilizing virtual field trips, video conferencing, or other resources to access world-wide opportunities for students. Again, all instruction appears to be teacher lead with a heavy emphasis on differentiation by the teacher and little mention of student directed interests and projects.
- (v) Daily advisory classes will assist students in setting goals. The applicant refers to the College Ready Teaching Framework as a guide for teachers to support these skills. Teachers are expected to provide opportunities for students to move into higher levels of Bloom’s taxonomy through differentiation of instruction.

(b) With the support of parents and educators (as defined in this notice), each student has access to—

- (i) This is where the applicant fails to make a connection between the data components mentioned in earlier sections and individualize student instruction. Again, structures have not been put in place to allow

for students to utilize on-line content for credit as opposed to teacher directed instruction. There is mention of potential pilots with Carnegie Math but no articulated plan to provide access to on-line course work as a stand alone or supplement to direct teacher-led instruction.

(ii) Again, the applicant is basing the project design on a Rtl model that begins with whole group instruction and differentiates levels of guidance based on student need. This limits other opportunities for students who are capable and willing to utilize fully automated programs or self-contained on-line courses as an alternative to teacher led instruction. There is no evidence of allowing real-world experiences with appropriate guidance and measureable objectives be allowed for credit.

(iii) Again, very little emphasis is placed on digital learning content with the exception of math.

(iv) Ongoing and regular feedback, including, at a minimum—

(A) Students can track progress of grades and credits in PowerSchool. Previous sections indicated that enhancements of the program could be made but no explanation is given of what those enhancements will do.

(B) There is no mention of specific ways to identify current knowledge and skills outside of traditional achievement and quarterly benchmark testing and teacher observations or classroom formative assessment. No product has been identified that could possibly provide real-time information to students concerning progress. There is mention in the antidotal narrative of a student that the teacher will assign work on an “app” they had identified. The use of such apps has not been systemized and appears to be at the discretion and skill level of the teacher.

(v) There is mention of using a Rtl model to address student needs. No additional strategies are mentioned other than access to quality teachers.

(c) It is planned that the advisory class that students attend each day will provide the training and support necessary for students to understand the tools and resources provided. The advisory class is considered a tier 1 intervention. Tier 2 intervention, if necessary would be to schedule guidance from a counselor, however, in previous sections, it mentions an over 200:1 student to counselor ratio thus possibly limiting adequate access to counselors. Tier 3 interventions are described as more intense services but move into wellness referrals as opposed to actual training or assistance with the use of tools.

The applicant fails to articulate specific individualized opportunities for students and relies heavily on teacher led instruction as opposed to a truly student centered individualized learning model. The incorporation of tablet technology may provide access to increased creative types of projects, but again, the entire model is teacher led as opposed to student choice. The applicant fails to maximize potential on-line tools and resources that could support such individualization. This lack of individualization and innovation results in a low-medium score for this section as the plan cannot be considered a high-quality plan.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	16
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The extent to which the applicant has a high-quality plan (as defined in this notice) for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. This plan must include an approach to implementing instructional strategies for all participating students (as defined in this notice) that enable participating students to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice) and college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice) and accelerate his or her learning through support of his or her needs. This includes the extent to which the applicant proposes an approach that includes the following:

Teaching and Leading: An approach to teaching and leading that helps educators (as defined in this notice) to improve instruction and increase their capacity to support student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice) or college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice) by enabling the full implementation of personalized learning and teaching for all students, in particular high-need students (as defined in this notice), such that:

(a) The applicant, through a 2012 TIF grant, has adopted several practices and procedures that allow for common evaluations based on the Danielson Framework. In addition, master calendars allow for shared planning time and professional communities.

(i) The focus of the applicant is on quality teacher instruction with an emphasis on differentiated

instruction to meet individual needs of students. This does support the goal of meeting individual student needs based on learning styles and skills but does little to address other instructional opportunities including on-line course work.

(ii) Again, the applicant utilizes the College Ready Teaching Framework to support teachers as they provide strategies for students. Teachers are also encouraged to increase the use of technology with students. To support this, the project proposes the addition of Technology Integration Officers.

(iii) Benchmark exams are administered four times a year. Department chairs and administrators lead data analysis. There is no mention of systems or tools in place to monitor more frequent work.

(iv) Through the TIF grant, a rigorous teacher evaluation system has been put in place. It includes classroom observations three times a semester, student growth measures, stakeholder surveys. In addition, administrator evaluation systems have been put in place.

(b) All participating educators (as defined in this notice) have access to, and know how to use, tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice). Those resources must include—

(i) An online portal called BloomBoard that allows teachers to track their own evaluation and professional growth. A system of Data Fellows compensates professionals who provide additional data analysis.

(ii) The plan identifies technology hardware but fails to identify other learning resources such as on-line content, simulation software, content repositories, or learning management systems.

(iii) The mention of real-time reporting systems like Read 180 is brief and not the status-quo for the project. The section mentions matching students with resources but with the exception of the Read 180 reference and a previous mention of Carnegie Math, there are not specific resources identified.

(c) All participating school leaders and school leadership teams (as defined in this notice) have training, policies, tools, data, and resources that enable them to structure an effective learning environment that meets individual student academic needs and accelerates student progress through common and individual tasks toward meeting college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice) or college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice). The training, policies, tools, data, and resources must include:

(i) The robust teacher evaluation system implement through the TIF project includes administrator evaluation tied to the number of Highly Effective I and II teachers.

(ii) The applicant has a robust system for recruitment and retention of quality teachers. Professional development is provided through common planning as well as professional communities. The system has also adopted a performance-based bonus system.

a. The applicant's system of peer coaching supports the other work being conducted in supporting teachers.

The applicant has a highly structured teacher and administrator evaluation and professional growth system in place. Through the help of the TIF grant, work has recently been done to increase teacher performance. The only missing component in this section is the provision of adequate resources to use with students. While hardware is mentioned, additional tools have not been completely identified. While pilot projects are planned, in order to receive full points for this section, the applicant needs to have already identified the resources and developed a plan to support teachers in the implementation of the resources. This section scores in the lower ranges of high due to the lack of identifiable student resources and tools. The applicant fails to deliver a high-quality plan due to this lack of resources and tools.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The extent to which the applicant has a high-quality plan (as defined in this notice) to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator (as defined in this notice), and level of the education system (classroom, school, and LEA) with the support and

resources they need, when and where they are needed. This includes the extent to which—

The applicant has practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning by—

- (a) The applicant has a clearly defined organizational system. The lead LEA is governed by a board of directors and will provide over site to all schools in the consortium. Below the consortium structure, clusters of geographical areas will pool resources.
- (b) Bylaws of the LEAs allow for highly autonomous environments in terms of governance, operations and staffing.
- (c) The applicant states that the schools are built with mastery and not minutes. It further explains that they use evidence-based online learning tools that enable students to progress through the curriculum and earn credits but fail to explain what system or software is being used. The only other mention of this in previous sections is Read 180 and Carnegie Math. There is no evidence to suggest other systems are being utilized and currently, the Carnegie Math is being proposed as a pilot and not something currently being utilized.
- (d) The applicant refers to credit recovery systems and drop out prevention systems as ways to demonstrate mastery in multiple ways. It does not provide evidence of other systems outside of traditional teacher directed, achievement, or benchmark testing.
- (e) Resources currently in place support some levels of learners.

The applicant has organizational structures in place; however, policies concerning mastery of skills as opposed to seat time are not clearly articulated for all students. Credit recovery and reading support on-line systems exist but they do not identify opportunities for other learners. The applicant earns a high-middle score for this section. The lack of policies and other opportunities prevent this from being a high-quality plan.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	9
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The extent to which the applicant has a high-quality plan (as defined in this notice) to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator (as defined in this notice), and level of the education system (classroom, school, and LEA) with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed. This includes the extent to which—

The LEA and school infrastructure supports personalized learning by—

- (a) The applicant proposes to provide access to students in phases. Teachers will be fitted with tools in the classroom immediately. Parents will have access to tools through the Parent Academy. (previous section indicated only 25% of parents participated in the academy.)
- (b) Additional staffing will be secured to provide the support necessary to support new technology. In addition, data fellows will be added as well as curriculum support people as new curriculum pathways are developed.
- (c) PowerSchool is the only technology system mentioned. This system provides grading information but no tutorials or additional items.
- (d) The applicants ensures all systems are interoperable.

The applicant provides supports that meet the criteria outlined in this section at a minimal level therefore could be considered a high-quality plan but does not receive full points as the plan lacks detailed information on how parents with limited or no access will be served and supported.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	13

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant will support continuous improvement by first hiring a Project compliance manager. This position will oversee the daily activities and conduct quarterly reviews of project targets and plans. The improvement cycle utilized will be “develop-implement-monitor-evaluate”. An evaluation committee will be consulted which is comprised of teachers,

administrators, and members of each school's education teams. The plan does not include specific benchmarks for project activities, nor does it involve external evaluation of the entire project, only the implementation of the i-pads. Information concerning the progress of the project will be shared with stakeholders.

The plan seems to fit within the day-to-day operations of the consortium in general. There is no mention of formal reports or processes that would be consistent with the general structure and operations of the schools involved so therefore cannot be considered a high-quality plan.

The applicant allows for redirection of the project based on feed back from quarterly reports. This section earns a middle to high score based on the generalness of the plan.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:
 The applicant proposes to deliver quarterly surveys to students, parents, and teachers. Other activities include quarterly community breakfasts, board meeting reports, newsletters, and website postings. The applicant appears to be utilizing most normal channels of reporting. There is no mention of the use of social media to push out information to stakeholders. The lack of the ability to push information through social media or other instant forms of communication prevent full points for this section. Therefore, the applicant did not deliver a high-quality plan.

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

- (a) The applicant clearly identifies targets and provides sound rationale for choosing the measures.
- (b) The performance measures for students utilize achievement data for measurement. Formative information is not identified in the measures.
- (c) There is no narrative to define how the process will grow or change over time.

The applicant has identified several performance measures for both students and teachers/administrators. The targets are relevant to project goals.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	4
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:
 One of the applicant's four goals is dedicated to evaluation. However, the evaluation is targeted to the implementation of the tablet technology and not all aspects of the project. The evaluation plan includes internal evaluation, led by the Compliance Manager, and an external evaluation. The external evaluation will focus on research questions including distribution and training of tablets to teachers and students, the extent to which the tablets improve personalized instruction, the extent of change in student achievement, and increases in teacher effectiveness.

Data to be collected includes performance measures, teacher effectiveness data, teacher and parent satisfaction surveys, interview with administration, and artifacts from teachers and student work.

Briefings of data results will be conducted twice each year. It is planned that the evaluator and schools will publish a final report with evaluation findings.

The evaluation plans are adequate however, due to the limited nature of the external evaluation plan, this is not a high-quality plan.

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>(a) All funds are identified and include grant funds, e-rate funds, Gates Foundation Funds, state and local funds.</p> <p>(b) Funding seems in line with budget narrative. The proposal supports the goals of the project adequately.</p> <p>(c) Clearly provides a thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities, including--</p> <p>(i) The applicant utilizes funds to expand current programs by hiring Science and History curriculum personnel when the student performance measures are all tied to language arts and math. This seems out of line with the narrative. All the funds are identified for all sources. There is no explanation of how tablets and other technologies will be replaced at the end of the project.</p> <p>(ii) It is not clear how personnel can be considered one-time investments. New hires for curriculum development are allocated as well as technology support. Sustainability of technology may be compromised when project funds run out. Also supporting current staffing with grant funds reduces potential impact of the funds. If staffing is intending to be continued, funds could be allocated to the purchase of improved on-line content and courses.</p> <p>The question concerning high personnel costs place the score for this section in the low-high range.</p>		

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	6
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Sustainability of the project is questionable considering the high cost of personnel for this project. The implementation of tablets for every student will dramatically increase support costs. Equipment is to be leased. Increases in lease costs are not calculated. The project proposes to terminate some positions at the end of the project including the Science and History curriculum positions. The applicant did take into consideration the cuts in state funding when calculating on-going costs.</p> <p>The lack of continuation of staffing after the grant makes sustainability of the project questionable. Therefore, the plan cannot be considered high-quality.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	10
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant meets the competitive preference priority through the development and implementation of an integrated wellness center. Capitalizing on both school, local, and state resources, the centers provided service to a large percentage of patrons. The first wellness center launched in 2011 and a second center is set to open in the 2014-15 school year. A third center will open to serve an additional geographic location in the near future.</p> <p>The original center engaged over 20 organizations in the planning and implementation stages.</p> <p>Desired results address student academic success, physical and emotional health and family engagement. The integrated wellness centers meet the parameters set forth for the competitive priority so full points are awarded.</p>		

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

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	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does meet the absolute priority by encouraging differentiated instruction for students as a means to personalize learning.</p>		
Total	210	157