



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0242NJ-1 for Bergenfield Public Schools

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Applicant's plan responds to some extent with information about the four core educational assurance areas. The plan gives a description of work that is currently occurring in the two high schools.</li> <li>The Applicant's data is evident of each school's state of affairs and some of the inequities that exist in each high school.</li> <li>The Applicant's plan details the multiple data sources to yield quality data analysis for appropriate instruction. A Director of testing is employed to provide "real data" for application, instructional delivery and professional development.</li> <li>The Applicant's plan provides a rigorous plan of action to recruit, develop, reward and retain effective/ highly effective teachers and principals. (Teacher Mentoring Program, Partnerships with NY and NJ Universities and rollout of a new evaluation tool using the Danielson's model. The partner high school is using McREL's teacher evaluation.(The different teacher evaluation systems of the two schools lacked information on bridging of the evaluation components to encourage a common language of sharing between the two staffs.)</li> <li>The Applicant's plan provides high quality information regarding several school turn around initiatives that are recognized as highly effective.(Multiple sources were named in the narrative.)</li> <li>The application provides extensive information about learning opportunities for students to enroll in advanced courses and college level courses.</li> <li>The Applicant presented a high quality action plan that articulates ambitious yet achievable goals and strategies: extensive plan for improving the college and career readiness of all students, and a Universal Design For Learning to personal learning.</li> <li>The Applicant's plan details specific classroom learning environment that is inclusive of multiple means to acquire information and knowledge, multiple means and alternatives for students to demonstrate what they know, and multiple means of engagement to tap into learners' interests and motivation.</li> </ul>		
<b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Applicant presents high quality information on the approach to implementation involving two high schools very different in cultural diversity and economic impact. The implementation process involved multiple task force groups and subcommittees. The plan lacked specific clarity as to how the groups would filter services with overwhelming the recipients of those services.</li> <li>The Applicant's plan shares specific details about the success of the two districts who have partnered on other discretionary grant initiatives.</li> <li>The Applicant's plan addresses specific areas of strengths for each high school and the strengths will serve as lessons learned to improve the quality of education for all learners in the two districts.</li> <li>The Districts selected the high schools because the needs in both high schools focused on weaknesses evidenced in the core educational assurance areas. The Applicant provided data about the system's prior spending plan for early interventions with minimal funding to support high school initiatives. Specific quality data sources were provided as to school selection.</li> <li>The total number of participating students were given in the introduction and vision of the plan.</li> <li>The Applicant provided a detailed chart of participating schools and school demographics.</li> </ul>		
<b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>

**(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant’s high quality plan explicitly detailed how the two districts will combine resources and collaboration to execute a cohesive plan to scale up successful pilot initiative to facilitate the reform to the district’s middle schools.
- The goals of the reform model outlined ambitious yet reasonable and achievable results.
- The Applicant’s high quality plan identifies all necessary resources, mechanisms and accountability measures to the greatest extent. The high quality plan is firmly based on professional collaboration, professional Learning, online communities and research.
- The Applicant provides many details with a focus on the teachers' instructional delivery and changing the classroom culture to an individual student focus which may require more time for attitudinal shifts as well as individualized teacher training. The Applicant throughout its plan refers to the culture of the classrooms and the learning environments for students. The Applicant throughout the plan refers to moving teachers from a traditional classroom concept/lecturing mode to a student engaged facilitative mode. The Applicant's plan provides quality information in reference to the professional development strategies to promote a change in teacher behavior. The Applicant provides many activities to facilitate these factors but the plan is lacking in the specific resources needed.

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

**10**

**9**

**(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant's plan is an initial step to bring two different high schools from two districts together with the vision of meeting the four core educational assurance areas by becoming learning partners with each other and to a great extent should achieve reasonable and appropriate results based on the existing governance infrastructure. Both schools exceed their current Title I targets.
- The Applicant’s plan details in a strategic plan of action for proficiency status, growth decrease in achievement gaps and graduation rate and college enrollment increase with specific goals and objectives.
- The Applicant’s high quality plan contained ambitious yet achievable goals that exceed ESEA Targets. The goals are specific, based on rationale, identify deliverables, timelines, and responsible parties.
- The Applicant’s high quality plan contained charts that detailed the goal areas subgroups’ data as well as projected data targets for 2014-2018.
- The applicant's high quality plan contained an increased rate of 10% annually which is rigorous yet attainable. The annual 10% increase rate is ambitious for all subgroups of the various population; however the Applicant's plan lacks specific strategies and interventions to narrow the specific gaps when all population groups have the same target.(10% annually)

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

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>

**(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant’s high quality plan gave substantial data about the track record of success for both schools to the highest extent. Both schools are classified as "Schools in Need of Improvement" for the past five years but data show they are improving and making progress and have moved from New Jersey's classification as "Priority" Schools to "Focus" Schools.
- The high quality plan utilized multiple data source to validate the ability of the two school districts to achieve all areas in its plan.
- The high quality plan details its highest attention to transparency of student data for teachers, parents, students, and partner agency to ensure the necessary success for all students.
- The applicant’s plan details to the highest extent the Department of Education’s NJ Standards Measurement and Resource for Teaching (NJSMART) as the comprehensive statewide longitudinal data system which will serve as its major analytical tool.
- The Applicant’s high quality plan presented a historic overview of the data system: its purpose; its initiatives and the outcomes. Information is provided as to servicesand information being available to all stakeholders for continuous improvement.

<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
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<b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant's high quality plan demonstrates evidence of transparency to the highest degree on the areas outlined in the grant application. The State requires salaries of all staff employed by the District as public information.</li> <li>• The Applicant's high quality plan presents an extensive menu of ways that information about school's budgets is shared: a published user friendly booklet, school districts' Web pages, consortium Webs , monthly LEA Board Meetings and the annual audit report.</li> <li>• The Applicant's high quality plan includes charts with the various reporting purposes and categories.</li> </ul>		

<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
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<b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant's High Quality Plan speaks to the greatest extent referencing successful conditions and autonomy for the initiative provided under the State legal, statutory and regulatory guidelines.</li> <li>• The Applicant's High Quality Plan supports the needed conditions as being present and more advanced because of previous RTTT funding.</li> <li>• The Applicant's Plan provides major regulatory and statutory changes that the Governor's Education Transformation Task Force issued in September 2012 to provide greater autonomy to local school leaders and educators to develop and implement initiatives that will improve student achievement for all students. Although these conditions are being implemented, there are differences in the two schools that will involve The Advisory Board and other Stakeholders as they are encountered. The plan lacked evidence of a process to address differences.</li> <li>• The applicant's plan provides research-based examples of increased autonomy for local districts:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implementation of innovations to change cultures of low performing schools</li> <li>2. Provision of multiple assessment tools but can be use their own.</li> <li>3. Adaptation and modification capability of exemplar curriculum units,</li> <li>4. Opportunities for addition of evaluation components to the state's evaluation model, and</li> <li>5. Choice to design and implement Achievement Academies to improve student achievement and address needs.</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant's plan provides little evidence on how the two schools will address the various autonomy and flexibility contexts.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>
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<b>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant's High Quality Plan to the greatest extent details the meaningful stakeholders' involvement in the plan development through the existing School Improvement Committees.</li> <li>• The High Quality Plan clearly describes the roles of the existing School Improvement Committees that are comprised of principals, teachers, support staff, parents and students.</li> <li>• The High Quality Plan contains descriptive roles of each participating group/ various stakeholders had in the plan development to ensure success for all students.(Chart embedded in the text)</li> <li>• The High Quality Plan contains letters of support from the major government infrastructures and universities but lacked letters of support from teachers, parents, students and local community partners.</li> </ul>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>
<p><b>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Applicant's High Quality Plan presents a comprehensive plan of action outlining six major projects to align with the core educational assurance areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>College and Career Readiness of all students</li> <li>Implementation of Universal Design for Learning to personalize instruction and learning for each student</li> <li>Closing the achievement gap</li> <li>Improving Superintendent, Principal and Teacher Evaluation</li> <li>Acceleration of district wide achievement</li> <li>Maximizing power of data.</li> </ul> </li> <li>The Applicant's High Quality Plan outlines comprehensive measures and information for each project area in alignment with RTTTD expectations:</li> <li>Activities for each project area is completely detailed to include the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rationale</li> <li>Responsibility owner</li> <li>Timeline and</li> <li>Deliverables.</li> </ol> </li> <li>The Applicant's High Q Quality Plan is rigorous and relevant to the applications requests. The goals, timelines, and deliverables are ambitious yet reasonable and achievable.</li> <li>The Applicant's High Quality Plan defines the Sharing What Accelerates Performance (SWAP) Consortium as the ensure of success for each student. The activities and steps for success are clearly defined. SWAP will afford multiple high quality opportunities to empower parents and students to make rigorous decisions for themselves.</li> <li>The SWAP Plan involves an assigned counselor to meet with each student beginning in ninth grade to map out and individualized plan of short and long term goals. The Counselor role becomes one of meeting with the student and teachers on an ongoing basis to benchmark progress.</li> <li>The Swap Plan has a technology focus to ensure parents/guardians and students access to their personal information.</li> </ul>		
<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>
<p><b>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Applicant's high quality plan details learning and leading goals (ambitious yet achievable), rationale, timeline deliverables and responsible parties for implementation to the greatest extent possible. (Chart Form)</li> <li>The high quality plan presents a descriptive narrative with supporting details to ensure success of all program initiatives.</li> <li>The Applicant's plan details a specific yet attainable plan of activities with its UDL model: processes and action steps for professional development for all teachers aligned to the four educational core assurance areas, the teacher evaluation systems, state mandates :common core standards, New Jersey State Improvement Goals and RTTTD goals.</li> <li>The Applicant's plan is detailed extensively about processes and use of ongoing data to provide training , tools and resources for all stakeholders resulting in improved student achievement and every student being college prepared and career ready.</li> <li>The Applicant's plan involves and engages various stakeholders, the deliverables, responsible parties and outcomes. The plan lacks clarity in the coordination of the overall facilitator and coordinator in keeping the multiple number of activities and initiatives focused.</li> </ul>		

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

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	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant's high quality plan provides a detailed narrative sharing practices, policies and rules that would successfully implement the RTTTD initiatives.</li> <li>• The Applicant's high quality plan to the greatest extent defines the roles and responsibilities of major agencies/departments and personnel to provide structures, and opportunities for autonomy and flexibility to provide the necessary environment for student's learning to be guided as well as emanated by students.</li> <li>• The high quality plan involves a governance infrastructure to ensure success: Superintendent, Board of Education Consortium Advisory Board, the State, RTTTD Advisory Board, SWAP Co-Coordinator, external support, agencies, program evaluator.</li> <li>• The Applicant's Plan provides a focus on information and strategies that would have students progress at their own rate as well as show what they know and have learned in multiple ways: E-Portfolios, demonstrations, performances, simulations, reflection papers, and oral presentations. The plan does not address the rigor and relevance of tasks to address the challenge or needs of learners.</li> <li>• The Applicant's plan provides information of assuring all students with the necessary technology and digital tools as well as ongoing training to support implementation of achievement of personalized learning environments.</li> </ul>		
<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant's plan to a great extent details action steps that are inclusive of all stakeholders' accessibility to necessary tools and resources needed to meet the expectations of personalized learning environments. The plan lacked specificity regarding interventions of support for stakeholders at varying levels or stages of implementation.</li> <li>• The high quality plan ensures ongoing training and support for all stakeholders. The plan addresses 24/7 online resources. The supports described in the plan include parent training and academies, peer support, online support and local support.</li> <li>• The high quality plan details the current state mandated data systems and resources as well as other resources and tools that will be implemented through the grant funding.</li> </ul>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant's High Quality plan to the greatest extent possible provides a detailed action plan to provide timely and regular feedback toward meeting program and process goals.</li> <li>• The High Quality plan assigns responsibilities for progress monitoring to its SWAP Advisory Committee.</li> <li>• The High Quality Plan effectively aligns all components so that there is integration and differentiation negating loosely and impromptu actions.</li> <li>• The High Quality Plan defines strategies that can be benchmarked and can facilitate ongoing changes toward meeting goals: process integrity, data cycles, and feedback loops. The plan lacks a comprehensive feedback and monitoring timeline calendar.</li> <li>• The High Quality Plan clearly identifies processes and tools that will assess student data on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis.</li> </ul>		
<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>		

- The Applicant's High Quality plan clearly designates ongoing communication mechanisms to keep all stakeholders informed:
  1. Quarterly reports at monthly Board of Education meetings
  2. Results posted on Web sites
  3. Monthly parent training sessions
  4. Classroom grades and progress reports
  5. Pre and Post teacher created rubrics
  6. Student and educator E-portfolio review
- The Applicant's plan provides information on an identified area of need is parent engagement and communication. The Applicant's plan provides a list of activities that is planned for implementation. The plan lacks details regarding monitoring of this area of need and how adjustments or modifications will be made if needed.

**(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)**

5

5

**(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

- The High Q Quality Plan contains 12 performance measures that address the applicant's district needs in alignment with the RTTTD expectations.
- The Applicant's High Quality Plan reflects and builds on initiatives already being implemented as a result of the previous RTTTD funding.

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

5

5

**(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant's High Quality Plan reflects a rigorous existing evaluation plan that will be enhanced through the hiring of an external evaluator.
- The Applicant's High Q Quality Plan focuses on quality professional development to enhance the skills of classroom educators so that instructional delivery is impacted.
- The Applicant's High Quality Plan specifically addresses intervals for evaluating the areas of professional development and activities that employ technology to make ongoing adaptations if needed. The plan states that quarterly evaluations will include a process evaluation and outcome evaluation.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant's High Quality budget plan identifies all funds to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal.</li> <li>• The budget is reasonable for the plan implementation combining existing local, state, and Federal funds with the anticipated funding RTTTD funding.</li> <li>• The Applicant's budget information includes cost descriptions and cost projections for four years. (Information is provided in Appendix.)</li> </ul>		
<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>		

- The Applicant's has a sustainably task force to begin strategies for the future
- The Applicant's High Quality Plan outlines, the following areas to build its future sustainability:
  - Diversified Funding Sources
  - Meaningful Partnerships
  - Support from School
- The Applicant's additional revenue seeking process has developed a comprehensive listing of possible financial sources that will be dependent on future goal outcomes and program improvements.

**Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)**

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant provides a listing of multiple ongoing collaborative partnerships. The listing lacks a description of all services provided by each partnership partner or the designation of supporting funds from each one.( Several of the partners such as the universities were listed in the vision narrative and introduction.)
- The Applicant makes reference to services being available through the SWAP Program as resources for students and families; however lacked clarity in terms of which organizational/ partnerships' services would be matched with what specific needs.
- The SWAP Consortium identifies the goal area of improving college and career readiness as the garnering for support. The Applicant provides bench mark data in the development of an action plan for this area' but does not provide the expectations for service providers.
- The Applicant's plan listed numerous resources but the plan lacked how the resources would be assigned.

**Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments**

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>		<b>Met</b>

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

- The Applicant's plan presents a comprehensive focus to improve academic achievement for all students starting with the school selections and appropriate student population as designated in the RTTTD application.
- The Applicant identified needs using an assessment process utilizing information from multiple sources.
- The Applicant indicates committees, task forces and subgroups of all stakeholders, (parents, students, teachers, principals and external supports) that assisted in the development and will be major in the implementation of its proposal.
- The Applicant's goals, objectives and activities are rigorous, and ambitious yet attainable in an infrastructure where autonomy and flexibility are given to the local schools.
- The Applicant's plan is a challenging yet achievable one in bringing two different high schools together to partner to ensure personalized learning experiences for students.

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>164</b>
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**Race to the Top - District**



## Technical Review Form

### Application #0242NJ-2 for Bergenfield Public Schools

#### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant presents a coherent vision of reform that will be implemented through six projects, two of which are notable. The task of hiring two additional career coaches for the two participating high schools as a part of Project 1's implementation will allow for increased contact time with the participating high school students. The inclusion of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principals in the classroom as the primary focus of Project 2 will increase inclusion of all students. However, the applicant does not present a comprehensive reform vision that articulates a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning and increasing equity through personalized student support. Although increasing the number of guidance counselors in high school, offering parent academies, an incorporating E-Portfolios to assist students are all useful strategies, it is not apparent of the extent to which these initiatives will yield a substantial increase and acceleration in student achievement. Furthermore, UDL principals are not comprehensive enough as a district reform model to produce sustainable achievement growth.</p> <p>The applicant presents limited evidence of building on the core assurances. Notable are the adoption of the college readiness Common Core standards and the implementation of a longitudinal data system (RenLearning) which provides resources of ongoing instructional feedback. Via developed partnerships with local institutes of higher education, the applicant has incorporated strategies of recruiting and developing effective teachers. However, the applicant does not present sufficient evidence of rewarding and retaining these effective teachers.</p> <p>The applicant provides limited evidence of turning around lowest-achieving schools. Notable are the decrease in drop-out rates in Bergenfield High School (from 63 in 2008 to 0 in 2012) and the increase in AP participation. However, the applicant asserts that "a few years ago, both Bergenfield school district and Cliffside Park school district had schools classified as failing schools" and that "these schools have turned around and students are attaining proficiency." The applicant does not provide sufficient details to ascertain the extent to which this turn-around was comprehensive and sustainable.</p> <p>The applicant proposes to create Advisory Committees and Transition Teams at participating schools to "conduct action research projects" to determine how to best reach every child. Although the work from these teams will likely result in strategies of reform for the development of personal learning environments, it is difficult to ascertain the comprehensiveness of the potential reform model since this work was not completed prior to the submission of the application.</p> <p>Although evidence is presented throughout the application regarding the urgency of reform needed for the middle schools, the proposed reform plan provides limited resources and strategies for the participating middle schools. Furthermore, the comprehensiveness of the reform model is limited since the middle schools will not be phased into the reform model until year 2.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>

**(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant provides a list of participating schools. There are only four participating schools, two high schools and two middle schools. The rationale to only implement the reform plan in the two high

schools in year one of the grant period and to phase in the middle schools in year two is unclear and is not ambitious. It is also unclear if all of the middle school students will participate in the reform model since limited middle school participant data is provided.

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

**10**

**7**

**(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant includes most components of a high quality plan describing how the reform proposal will be scaled up. Personnel (such as the Advisory committee and school transition teams) and responsibilities are identified for the implementation of the scale up. Strategies such as sharing of reports of all goals, objectives, activities, and assessments will assist with scaling up the reform proposal. However, the detail time schedule of scale up strategies is not clear in the application. Also, the phase-in strategy of the two middle schools in year two may not translate into meaningful sustainable reform.

The applicant does not present a scale up plan for implementing reform in the elementary schools.

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

**10**

**5**

**(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

Although the proposed reform model includes middle schools, the applicant only provided summative assessment goals for grade 11. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which middle school performance measures are ambitious yet achievable since goals were not provided for middle school student performance.

The applicant presents goals per subgroup for improvements in graduation rates during the grant period. However, the projected sustained five year goal of 100% graduation rates in Bergenfield high school is unreasonable.

The applicant presents reasonable goals for college enrollment.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>

**(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant presents evidence of a clear record of overall population success for high school graduation rates and college enrollment. However, the applicant does not provide evidence of a clear record of success per subgroup.

The applicant asserts that both middle schools in the consortium have been classified as "Schools in Need of Improvement" for more than five years (persistently lowest-achieving schools) and that they have moved from the state's classification as "Priority" to "Focus" schools indicating some improvement. However, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which this improvement is significant since the applicant does not provide details on the measures used for classifications of "Priority" and "Focus" schools.

The NJSMART data system is a well established system that makes availability to teachers, parents, students, and stakeholders appropriate data that informs and improves participation, instruction, and services.

<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b> The applicant provides sufficient details of transparency of processes, practices, and investments. This transparency is likely to be sustainable since, as the applicant asserts, it is required by the state to post and publish such information as the salaries of all employees, monthly expenditures, and LEA Board of Education meeting notes.		
<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b> The applicant coherently presents evidence of the extent to which the consortium has sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement their proposal. Notable is guidance provided by the governor's education transformation task force that recommended an additional 428 regulatory and 46 statutory changes to give teachers, principals, superintendents the autonomy needed to implement necessary reform.		
<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b> The applicant provides sufficient evidence of a wide scope outreach to a variety of stakeholders. Notable is the stakeholder engagement with university partners such as Rutgers and William Paterson Universities. The university partnerships are critical to the implementation success of the proposed reform model.  The applicant asserts that the teacher association representative reviewed and provided feedback on the proposed reform model. However, it is unclear if the teacher's association representative is committed to the entire reform model since (as the applicant states) that on behalf of its members the association is "committed to participating in the new teacher evaluation model" and "to collaborating on structural changes." The acknowledgement from the association is vague and does not specifically address support of the entire reform model as described in the application. Furthermore, there are no letters of support from teachers or parents.		

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

	<b>Available</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b> The applicant presents a high quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all participating high school students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. Goals, strategies, persons responsible, and timeliness are identified in the plan. Notable are the responsibilities of the Career Counselors, two additional counselors per high school, who will ensure each high school student will have an individual learning plan and who will assist students in tracking their progress on goals identified in their learning plan. Through personalized guidance from their Career Counselors, it is apparent that the participating high school students will understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals. Although, the applicant asserts that "the SWAP partners will maximize technology resources to create and monitor personalized learning plans", the extent to which the proposed technology will meet the need of the students and Career Counselors can not be determined since limited details		

regarding the proposed technology is provided.

It is unclear if a high quality plan exist for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all participating middle school students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. Although the applicant asserts that teachers will be trained on inclusive classroom strategies, such as UDL, to create personalized learning environments, inclusive classroom strategies do not ensure a rigorous personalized learning plan for each individual student. It is unclear if there will be Career Counselors assigned in the participating middle schools to assist middle school students in developing individual learning plans and tracking progress towards their goals.

The applicant presents sufficient evidence of opportunities to deepen learning experiences for high school students such as job shadowing, online college courses, and apprenticeships. However, there is little evidence of opportunities for the participating middle school students to deepen learning experiences.

The applicant presents sufficient evidence of proposed strategies to assist high need students such as the use of assistive technology (CoWriter, Read Outloud) for ELL students and "flexible curriculum" through the alternative middle school program.

The applicant does not provide sufficient evidence of high quality digital learning content. Although the applicant asserts that teachers will be trained on the integration of technology in the classroom, insufficient details are provided on the specific digital learning content that will be integrated.

The applicant asserts that new culturally diversified instructional materials will be purchased. However, the extent to which the participating middle and high school students will have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning via the new instructional materials is unclear due to a lack of details provided.

The applicant asserts that district technology coordinators will assist students with using technology. However, the extent to which each participating student will receive appropriate training specifically for the proposed ePortfolio tool is difficult to ascertain due to a lack of detail provided. Although, there is an assertion of the intent to train staff on the ePortfolio tool.

<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>
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**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant presents sufficient evidence of many teacher training opportunities that will be provided by partner university staff and contractors. Teachers will engage in professional learning communities throughout the grant period. This is a critical component of the proposed SWAP reform model because it will allow for effective sharing of best practices amongst professional educators.

The applicant asserts that the Bergenfield school district will model for Cliffside Park school district how to frequently measure student progress and use data to inform both the acceleration and progress of performance improvement. It is unclear the extent to which the Cliffside Park school district will begin to incorporate these strategies for using data to inform student achievement.

Given that the two school districts participating the consortium will implement two different teacher evaluation systems, it is unclear of how the applicant plans to assess evaluation results and make data driven decisions to improve collective educator effectiveness for continuous improvement.

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

	Available	Score

<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>
<p><b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Given that the applicant's consortium is small in that it consist of two high schools, two middle schools, and nine elementary schools, the applicant presents sufficient evidence of an appropriate consortium governance structure. Via a strategically staffed advisory committee and locally placed transition teams, it is likely school leadership teams will have sufficient flexibility and autonomy to implement the proposed reform model.</p> <p>The applicant presents overwhelming evidence of its intent to build capability of the Universal Design for Learning strategies so that teachers would understand how to provide multiple opportunities for student demonstration of mastery multiple times and in comparable ways.</p> <p>The applicant provides limited details on how it will adapt learning resources full accessible by all students.</p>		
<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant presents a high quality plan including persons responsible and timing of resource support for participating students, parents, and educators. Notable is the applicant's assertion that the district will purchase iPads for students for loan to high need students so that access to learning resources will not be limited by a student's financial status. Parents will also have increase access to resources via partnered local libraries. District technology coordinators will also avail themselves to stakeholders to assist with training on technical resources.</p> <p>The applicant asserts that the proposed technology will allow parents and student s to export student information in an open data format. The applicant provides sufficient evidence of interoperable data systems via the establish NJSMART data warehouse.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>
<p><b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant presents a high quality plan for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process including the identification of process goals, persons responsible, and timing. Notable is the SWAP Advisory Committee's planned responsiveness to expected project milestones not being met. Project adjustments will be made swiftly and at an appropriate scope to address the concern. The applicant asserts that the Advisory Committee will seek ongoing feedback from parents and teachers. However, it is unclear if the applicant will seek feedback from one critical stakeholder, the students.</p> <p>The applicant provides sufficient evidence of transparency of the continuous improvement process and feedback. Via quarterly reports, project updates will be posted on the districts' websites for public access.</p>		

<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
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**(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant acknowledges the need for ongoing communication with internal and external stakeholders. However, the applicant does not provide a coherent and detailed plan as to how it plans to accomplish this goal. Specifically, the applicant asserts that an improvement area of concern is parent engagement. However, with this assertion the applicant provides limited evidence of a high quality plan to address these areas of concern.

<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
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**(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

It is difficult to ascertain if the proposed performance measures are ambitious yet achievable due to the lack of subgroup data.

The applicant does not provide a sufficient rationale as to why the percent increase in highly effective teachers/principals (table a) over the grant period is lower in Cliffside Park High School than projected for Bergenfield High School. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain if the proposed performance measures are ambitious yet achievable.

<b>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
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**(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant presents a high quality plan for program evaluation. An external evaluator will be hired who will possess the necessary experience and skills to perform program evaluation of education programs. Appropriate and timely reports will be generated to inform data-driven program improvement decisions.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>

**(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant presents an appropriate personnel budget proposal for two full time guidance counselors per district to decrease the student to counselor ratio in Project 1.

The proposed budget allocation for teachers to attend UDL conferences is not appropriate since additional funding is already allocated for university professors to train teachers on UDL principals. It is unclear what value-added is there for teachers to attend additional UDL training when the university professors are contracted to meet this professional development need.

The applicant asserted in the application that the district will provide additional funds to the public libraries to increase resource accessibility to parents. This assertion contradicts the proposed grant funded budget allocation for public libraries. It is unclear if the public libraries will receive district funding or grant funding.

The proposed budget allocation for educators to attend conferences related to evaluation is not appropriate since additional funding is already allocated for vendor training from McCrel and Danielson. It is unclear what value-added is there for educators to attend additional these conferences when the vendors will be contracted to meet this professional development need.

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

**10**

**7**

**(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant provides sufficient evidence of past performance in sustaining grant funded programs. Via established partnerships, the applicant is confident that many of the grant proposed activities will be sustained. The applicant also asserts the it will continue grant writing efforts to secure additional funds.

Although the applicant provides sufficient evidence of support from State and local governments as indicated in the letters of support, the applicant does not provide a high quality plan of financial support. Detail funding allocations from the state and local government is not presented for the sustainability of the proposed reform model.

**Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)**

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

Although the applicant lists many potential partners, such as Autism Speaks, Americorp, and America's Promise, the application is lacking letters of support from most of them. Furthermore, the application lacks details as to how each potential partner will individually augment the schools' resources in support of the proposed reform model. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain if the applicant has sustainable partnership to support the plan described in Absolute Priority 1.

The population-level desired results provided are the same measures/outcomes projected for the reform model and not augmented measures per proposed partner.

**Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments**

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>		<b>Met</b>

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant presents a proposal for building on the core education assurance areas via the adoption of the Common Core standards, implementing a longitudinal data system (RenLearning), recruiting and developing teachers through strategic partners, and the turning around of low performing schools.

The proposed task of hiring two additional career coaches for the two participating high schools as a part of Project 1's implementation will allow for increased contact time with the participating high school students. The inclusion of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principals in the classroom as the primary focus of Project 2 will increase inclusion of all students.

The applicant proposes to increase the effectiveness of educators by contractor local university professors to train on UDL principals.

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>136</b>
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## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

Application #0242NJ-4 for Bergenfield Public Schools

#### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b> The applicant did not articulate a clear vision. The assurance of personalized learning was not clear and the approaches were not seamless and did not ensure that the acceleration of student achievement could occur. Due to the lack of clarity of the vision and program it made it difficult to visualize what the classroom experience that the student and teacher would encounter.		
<b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b> The applicant will work as a consortium of two district. The applicant will have the Sharing What Accelerates Performance (SWAP) to serve 2,287 high school students in grades 9-12. Cliffside Park School District has 63.17% or on free and reduced lunch, while Bergenfield School District has 28.85%. Both districts have a large English language learners who are not achieving at the level of the other students. There is not a clear understanding of the rationale for strictly working with the high school level and not the younger grades.  The score reflects a program not clearly connected to the goals of this grant. There were programs within the application which did not link a connection to college and career programming. For example, the applicant did not rationale why the hiring of two additional counselors, while the needs of the students were academic in nature.		
<b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b> The applicant included ideas, rather than a concise plan that showed uniformity and individualized learning. The applicant will be "swapping" ideas which have been successful in their district. The applicant does discuss the need to purchase additional technologies and each district will use different tools for teacher's evaluation. The use of different evaluations may be a concern if they are not evaluating the same items. There was little flow to how the programs will be carried out into a significant reform going beyond the high schools. The applicant did not include a logic model or theory of change to serve as an explanation for how student learnings will result from the plan.		
<b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b> The applicant did provide targets to increase student's taking AP classes, increase SAT scores, add a minimum of one new		

business/industry to collaboration, and personalized learning. The applicant will create: Transformation Teams charged with Action Research to identify obstacles preventing students with disabilities and Limited English Proficiency from attaining goals.

The score reflections that lack of vision and strategies for improving student learning. The applicant indicated the need was centered around meeting the needs of a large non-English student population, however the programming did not relate to providing needed serves around that need. The applicant did not explain how taking AP classes would assist these students.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>
<p><b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant provided a clear and strong record of success in the past four years for Bergenfield School District. These improvements includes: providing more AP courses, increased students taking AP, increase in students scoring 3 or higher on AP, decreasing drop-out rates and increasing graduation and college entry. However, this application consists of two districts and must compare both district's. Cliffside Park School District appears to lack evidence of success in accelerating learning for the current students. The applicant included many current and future endeavors, but minimum success. The applicant receives a low score due to the lack of evidence.</p>		
<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant is required to state law to post and publish the salaries of all staff employed in the district. The districts web page is also available and includes monthly expenditures. The applicant has a large English learning community but did not share how this information is provided to this large community. The applicant communicated the strong need to reach out to the LEA families, however this would be a ideal area to illustrate programs or plans to keep this communities engaged.</p>		
<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
<p><b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant demonstrated strong evidence that the state grants great autonomy for the operations of district. The autonomy includes hiring of teachers and flexibility to create curriculum to meet the needs of students. The autonomy granted to the applicants would be a flexibility to implements reform.</p>		
<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>
<p><b>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant provided evidence that stakeholders were engaged in the development of the proposal. There were no letters of supports from any of the ethnic communities in which this proposal aims to support. The application did not appear sufficiently developed and the score reflections this analysis.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9</b>
<p><b>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant's approach to learning that engages and empowers all learners, in particular high-need students. The following is one strategy the applicant will implement:</p> <p>1) Improving College and Career Readiness: changing the guidance system with more counselors per students, with the ability to meet the needs of all students. This strategy was not fully developed and parental involvement is important to</p>		

emphasize what needs to occur outside of the classroom in order to promote college and career preparation. While some of the activities were appropriate, they were not at a level of high-quality which also entails best-practices in college and career preparation. The applicant will hire additional counselors who will provide students and teachers with information on the college process and career possibilities.

This applicant provide limited opportunity for parents to learn how to support their child in the areas of college- and career-ready graduation.

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

**20**

**12**

**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant has a plan which focuses a great deal on Personal Learning Communities (PLC) and investment into staff development. The applicant appears to have a strong desire to focus on evaluation. Teacher support in this area is important and the application might included recommendations intentional and strategic planning with teacher leaders in the develop of this plan. In it's current state I was not certain that enough planning was placed into this area.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b> This collaboration is new and unique for both districts. These are small districts and the memorandum of understanding should clearly explain how this partnership will work. However, in the Memorandum the transition team will be responsible for those details. This team has yet to be formed. The applicant might want to spend additional planning time to strengthen the collaboration. For example, the applicant indicates a great deal of oversight by the superintendent. The applicant did not demonstrate that leadership for the program would have autonomy.		
<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b> The applicant has indicated the need to purchase technologies that can and will be accessible to both students and children. The technology support will be involved, but the concern is how families will have access to the technology. Additionally, due to the language barriers how wouldt the districts ensure equity in use and learning using technology?		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b> The applicant has created a plan in which both internal and external evaluations are provided. The continuous improvement plan did not adequately address how often evaluations will take place outside of the quarter external evaluation. Additionally, a high-quality plan would be intentional and strategic and explain which tools will be used for evaluations and why this particular tool is the best fit and what will be the process for improving. The plan should also include what will happen if benchmarks are not made, who will be communicated of the evaluations and who will decided on what the changes will take place within the program.		

<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant provides a organization plan which speaks to the internal communication linkage and ensures that due to the size of both districts mis-communication is not a issue. The applicant does not have a strong parental communication component and acknowledges that they need to improve in this area.</p>		
<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant provided a plan to address measures selected to be evualate educational growth. The applicant lacked infromation connecting the evaluation with the actual plan.</p>		
<b>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The SWAP Advisory team and the transition team will work closely to ensure that the plan is monitored and moved forward in a effective and affection matter. The communication line is open and I feel a commitment to transparency.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<p><b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant's budget and narrative are reasonable and sufficient to successfully implement.The applicant does not provide any outside sources of funding for this plan. The scoring reflects the extent to which the applicant provided the requested information. The assurance of long-term of personalized learning environments was not strong in it's narrative to adequately support the given answer.</p>		
<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
<p><b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant has demonstrated that it will be able to sustain the project goals after the term of the grant. The plan may look different just from natural lesson learned with partnerships, but if there is concern it would be about gathering broader support.</p>		

**Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)**

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>
<p><b>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant has ongoing partnerships with the Jewish Family Services Bergen County, Rutger University, William Paterson University, Fairliegh Dickinson and various foundations. The applicant is also implementing a state grant which provides access to best practices form other LEA throughout the state. The identified population desired results. The desired results align with the broader application and the specific needs of English learners. The applicant provided a chart identifying performance measures for proposed population-levels, however the desired results were not in the form of specific numbers.</p>		

**Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments**

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	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>		<b>Not Met</b>
<p><b>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant met the priority at a minimum level to meet the overall objectives of the grant. This application was from two districts who had very different needs. The plan did not adequately explain how all participants from both schools could benefit from this plan. For example, one district problems centered around English learners, but most of the programs were directed at students learning college and career options.</p>		
<b>Total</b>	210	110