



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0240CO-1 for Boulder Valley School District RE-2

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Overall, a comprehensive and coherent reform vision is provided; it includes five overarching goals and four major focus areas (AKA Objectives) and the Race four assurance areas (crit. a). These are well aligned. As a single LEA, they are unique in proposing to serve 12 of their highest need P-8 schools.</p> <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crit. a and b are generally well addressed for grades P-8 because they provide credible approaches for student achievement accelerating, deepening student learning and increasing equity. <p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that no high schools are included, raises questions as to how coherent and comprehensive their vision is, particularly when the college/career ready outcomes must be included. They do not provide convincing evidence that improving early childhood education and/or middle schools will positively meet college and career ready standards, such as college enrollment and increased high school graduation. • In responding to core assurance 3 (recruitment, development and retaining teachers and principals) they only focus on developing “teachers”; the assurance also includes principals which they do not discuss. Crit. a. • There are no descriptions of what personalized learning environments in grades 9-12 classrooms will be like for students and teachers. Crit. c. <p>Summary: They provide a clear, coherent and comprehensive reform vision by targeting 12 high need schools. They do not present convincing rationale why their vision does not include at least one high need high school, especially since many of the outcome measures (college ready, college enrollment, HS graduation, etc) are significantly impacted by experiences and education that students have in grades 9-12.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Overall, their implementation approach is noteworthy because it emphasizes early childhood, literacy and extended school time. The rationale for exclusion of of schools in grades 9-12 is unclear.</p> <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crit. a, selection of schools, is convincing because they appear to meet the eligibility requirements. • The list of schools and participating students and sub groups are provided. Crit. b and c. <p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-income data for 3 schools do not appear to be particularly low; they range from 33 to 38 percent. This raises questions as to wheter they fully meet the definition of high need students, Crit. c. 		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A high quality plan and table describing how their proposal will be scaled up to support district wide change is provided. All</p>		

required plan components were not located. These components were vague: responsible parties and deliverables .

Strengths:

- They do provide convincing strategies that support the likelihood that many of their grades PK-8 outcomes at the partner schools may be scaled up.
- The Project Organizational Structure (Chart) has the potential to positively contribute to some scaling up because at least two Asst. superintendents will oversee the implementation
- They do have a detailed project management plan with most of the major high quality plan components, such as timelines, annual activities, and rationale

Weaknesses

- The Scale up plan does not include a clear strategy about how their proposed reforms will be expanded LEA-wide.
- The absence of the Asst. super of high schools in the project organizational structure further diminishes the potential impact on college/career ready outcomes.

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

10

5

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

- Detailed charts are provided for all of the specific student performance outcomes. These include modest, positive annual and achievable goals (criteria a, b, c and d).

Weaknesses:

- Overall, the student performance goals are projected to increase about 2 percent annually. These do not appear to be ambitious.
- College/career ready outcome goals are less likely to be achieved because of the absence of specific 9-12 level grant-funded schools and interventions.
- One of their district-wide goals states they will eliminate graduation rate gaps (Criterion A.2), but the graduation rate data table projects continued gaps as far out as 2018. Crit. c.
- Performance summative assessments for PK-2 levels were not located.
- Data tables (and explanation in Appendix) about their decreasing achievement gap methodology was unclear. Crit. b.
- Crit. d: college enrollment projected increases are only 2 percent annually.

Summary: Overall, the weaknesses cited above lead to the conclusion that the annual goals are not both ambitious and achievable because some of the methodology was unclear and others include only modest increases. Thus, the criterion score is in the medium range.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	10

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Overview: Four years of data are provided for nearly all required student performance categories. Crit. b. Several of the data categories show ambitious and significant reforms district-wide (compared to the state results); these are graduation rates, math and dropout rates. Crit. c: student performance data is made available to identified parties.

Weaknesses:

- The track record of graduation rate data is for only 3 years. Criterion a.
- Crit. b. The data presented appears to be LEA wide. The criterion specifies that it should be for the low performing schools in the LEA.

These weaknesses are significant to some deduct points because the criterion clearly prescribes at least 4 years of data and criterion b specifically asks for evidence about reforms in the lowest achieving schools, not the entire LEA. Because the data is LEA wide rather than for the low performing schools, it is unclear to what extent BVSD has had success in transforming low performing schools in past years. The overall score is still in the high-medium range.

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

They state that LEA-wide budget, teacher and instructional salaries, and non-personnel expenditures are made available. They add that the annual budget has details about school expenses, but no specific examples of any of the 12 participating school building level expenditures are included in the proposal.

Weaknesses:

- Teacher and instructional salaries, and non-personnel expenditures are not made available at the school level. The criterion says that school means actual school-level. This means each elementary, middle and/or high school building.

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

Strengths:

- The LEA has sufficient conditions and autonomy under state laws and policies to implement this project
- The state has shown positive actions to support local reforms by requiring individual career and academic plan for all high schools students, establishing a state Legacy Foundation (with Gates and Ford funding) and forming and extended learning opportunities commission. Each of these is aligned with the applicant proposed plans.

Weaknesses:

- None

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

Strengths:

- Many stakeholder groups had opportunities to be involved in proposal development. Crit. a.
- Crit. a.i: The Assoc. president signed the Application Assurance form approving the proposal.
- Extensive and diverse letters from stakeholders are included. Appendix B. Crit. b.

Weaknesses:

- It is unclear to what extent students and parents were engaged in the proposal development. Crit. b

Summary: Overall, stakeholder engagement and support are well documented because stakeholders had several involvement opportunities, the union president approves the proposal and there are support letter provided. The total score is reduced slightly because student and parent engagement and support were not as evident.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	14

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- An excellent table is included that summarizes many key student learning goals, crit. a. The table is appropriate and

comprehensive because it describes their standards-based teaching and learning cycle with actions to be taken if teaching strategies are not producing projected learning outcomes. It also include their 3-tiers for student interventions. Thus, their approach is intended to be engaging and empower high need learners.

- Detailed descriptions are provided for the personalized learning that will be provided for ECE, Literacy and summer program and counselors at the elementary schools. Crit. b.
- Crit. b.v, accommodations for high need students, was provided. Crit. a, b, and c.

Weaknesses:

- A high quality plan with all required components was not located. These components were not clearly located and/or vague: deliverables for each of their major focus areas, and responsible persons for each area and deliverable.
- The proposed implementation priorities are not highly aligned with providing rigorous courses/programs for college and career ready outcomes (Crit. a.i, ii and v and b.i, ii, iii and c).
- Crit a.ii is about having goals linked to college and career-ready standards. Because their entire proposal is aimed a grades PK-8 and essentially excludes any schools or grades 9-12, their ability meet college-career standards is lessened.
- The new personalized/individualized school readiness plans are noteworthy, but the description consists of many actions that “will” be defined after grant funding. These include surveying teachers, establishing a design team, engaging an IT contractor. Many of these should have been completed and described in the grant application. Crit. b.i.
- Evidence related to Crit. a.iv, diverse cultures/contexts, and b.v, accommodations for high need students, were sparse.

Summary: the final score is in the medium range because points were deducted for several weaknesses.

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

Strengths:

- Most of the proposed professional development and training plans are thorough and appropriate because they are well aligned with planned ECE, Literacy and summer program enhancements (Crit. a.) and most of the participating educators will have access to project tools, data and resources.
- Criteria a, b (access to tools, data and resources for student progress), c (quality training), c.i (using evaluation system results and d (increasing highly effective teachers) are convincing and appropriate because they are complete and convincing and several are research-based. Examples of these that are promising are: detailed descriptions of the professional learning community training, the preschool standards based curriculum training and tools, several summer literacy institutes,, new ACHIEVE software, and training in ICAP (Individual Career & Academic Plan).

Weaknesses:

- A high quality plan, crit. d, is incomplete. These critical components of a HQP were not located and/or vague: deliverables, goals, rationale and persons responsible.
- Many of the professional development activities are not clearly aligned with ensuring rigorous course of study to be college/career ready (C.2. Overview). These are ECE strategies and extended time for grade K-8 students. No evidence or research was provided supporting the correlation of these with post HS outcomes. No professional development is planned for grade 9-12 teachers who should be targeted because they will be directly helping students with their rigorous course of study to be college or career ready.

Summary: Despite several weaknesses outline above, the overall score is in the medium range because of the major strengths detailed above.

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:

Strengths:

- Crit a: The central office is well organized to facilitate the success of the grant application because of the following: clear organizational and relationship structures are provided, responsibilities for governance and oversight are appropriate, and a steering committee will include several key central office managers, as well as principals from participating schools. They include several specific examples of how high school students have alternative mastery opportunities (but they do not propose to serve any 9-12 schools).

Weaknesses:

- Crit b: They do not provide evidence that school leadership teams are composed of the membership (and specific autonomy) as defined in the Notice.
- A high quality plan with all required components was lacking these; persons responsible, detailed timeline, specific deliverables and goals for this particular plan and not merely the overall grant goals, Crit. D.
- Crit c: Although there are some credit and/or mixed schedule alternatives and/or self-pacing opportunities in some classes, they do not have clear descriptions of how elementary and/or middle school students have consistent policies and/or practices for mastery of standards multiple times and opportunities to demonstrate mastery and earn credit,
- They state that their curriculum may **not** be fully accessible to all students (special education, etc.) and needs improvement in this area: Crit. e (resources/practices accessible for all students)

Summary: The rationale for the overall score being in the medium range is because of the several criteria related weaknesses that result in points being lowered.

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

10

7

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- The passage of a four-year district-wide technology bond is a positive example of providing state of the art learning resources, Crit. a.
- Crit. d: they do have an interoperable data system
- Crit. b. Their description of how their IT department provides support and access to students, parents and educators is clear and comprehensive because it consists of these effective components: access by all stakeholders to IT support, extensive professional development for staff, support to building IT staff, a well-functioning Infinite Campus, parent engagement support and network of media specialists.

Weaknesses:

- They do not have a written, clearly identified high quality plan to support grant implementation. These specific components were either not located or vague: goals, rationale, responsible parties and deliverables.
- Crit. c. They acknowledge that students and parents cannot currently export data from their IT system.
- Their student information system does not have interactive capability with the LEA Learning Management System nor the state student plans system. Crit. c

Summary: Because there are several major weaknesses, points have been deducted and the criteria score is in the medium range.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- A comprehensive, detailed and thorough high quality plan is provided, Crit. E.1
- They do present a detailed chart about what students need to know, how to teach, how students learn, etc. This is to support their process for monitoring student progress.
- They describe their evaluation purposes and major components and these are convincing because they clearly describe their instruments, evaluation questions, who will conduct the analysis and the planned timeline/frequency.
- They do present a clear alignment of the evaluation purposes and the five major project objectives and overarching student goals

Weaknesses:

- A specific high quality plan (with all required components) was not described. These elements were vague or not found: timelines for formative and summative reports and data collection, key parties responsible, and deliverables.

Summary: The significant number of strengths clearly outweigh the one weakness. Therefore the criterion score is in the high range.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)

5

3

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- Generally, they describe convincing actions for on-going communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders, such as: preparing formal formative and summative reports, communicating regularly with the Steering Committee and the Instructional cabinet. Reports will also be provided to the Board, school leadership teams, the design team and partner organizations, and posting on the district web site.

Weaknesses:

- A high quality communications plan that clearly describes how they will continuously improve, adjust and revise (as needed) the grant project was difficult to identify.
- These HQ Plan components were particularly difficult to locate: roles of specific parties, plan goals, more specific timelines, and detailed plan activities.

Summary: overall, the project is rated at in the medium range. The absence of a comprehensive high quality communications plan causes some points to be deducted.

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

5

3

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- Several of the target performance measures are ambitious and achievable, such as (grades 4-8) Reading, Writing, and Science and grade 3 reading, writing and math because some consist of significant annual increases, such as Grade PK-3 Literacy (low income) increases from baseline of 50% to 63% in one year and to 76% in third year. Similar large increases are projected for other measures. Crit. a and b.

Weaknesses:

- Some of the performance measures are not rigorous or clearly relevant. For example, one is an increase in the number of students with a Career/Academic Plan. This is a soft measure because it does not include specific, measurable academic outcomes. Students who have such a Plan may still be underachieving on test measures. Crit. a
- These sub criteria were not well addressed for all performance measures: rationale (crit. a) and how they will review and improve measures over time (crit. c).
- They include attendance measures but provide no rationale. This is confusing because this measure was not addressed in earlier sections.
- There are several data cells that simply say TBD. These are incomplete.
- For several tables they use some confusing sub-group titles, such as minority instead of listing the usual sub-groups, such as African-Americans, ELL, etc.

Summary: The overall score is in the medium range. A few points were deducted because of the weaknesses cited.

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

5

3

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- Their description and details of how they will evaluate the effectiveness of their investments is generally complete and comprehensive (as presented in their Evaluation Instruments and Questions chart) because it includes the following: specific parties responsible, precise and detailed data sources, what will be measured, how often and the related evaluation question.

Weaknesses:

- None of the evaluation questions (cited in their Chart) include these grant priorities: college/career ready outcomes; graduation rates, college enrollment, and improving persistently low achieving schools.
- It does not appear that the plan clearly includes how they will evaluate the effectiveness of activities that employ technology.
- All components of a high quality plan not located. These were vague or unclear: deliverables, rationale, and evaluation plan goals.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- The budget includes excellent, detailed descriptions and thoughtful rationales for each of their five major Focus areas, crit. c.
- Costs are reasonable, crit. b.
- Detailed and clear information is provided about grant and other funds to support the project, such as: separate budgets for Literacy, Summer School, Personalization, and Evaluation/Project Management. Crit. a
- The decision to concentrate on their 12 highest need schools (and not all schools in the LEA) is highly reasonable.
- Crit. c.ii: They provide evidence and details for a total of \$1.2 million from non-grant sources.

Weaknesses:

- None

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

10

10

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

- Extensive, thoughtful and comprehensive details are provided about various practical, specific and multiple sustainability strategies, such as: school restructuring, absorption of project management costs, possible fall state amendment (to increase school funding), a fall 2017 local mill levy, and charging summer school tuition on a pay as you can basis.

Weaknesses:

- None

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	9
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crit. 1: They have a comprehensive and exhaustive partnership of six organizations with letters of support from each. They each demonstrate the ability and characteristics to contribute positively to the project outcomes • Crit 2: Three desired results are identified with appropriate descriptions and they thoroughly address social, emotional and/or behavioral student needs • Crit. 5 and 3a: One of the most promising tools is the plan to develop a unique, bilingual school readiness guide for other pre-school providers and parents • Crit.4: They will integrate education and other services by high quality training and significant and meaningful parent involvement strategies. <p>Weaknesses: Crit. 6: Their annual student performance desired results for the three outcomes are not very precise or quantifiable. For example, they use general targets such as “increase” and “a high percentage”.</p> <p>Summary: Because nearly all criteria are well met and there is only one weakness, the final score is in the high range</p>		

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Overall, the applicant met the absolute priority because they provide a coherent and comprehensive plan, design and vision for implementation. Their plan is most credible when they describe their student achievement plans for grades PK-8. It is less coherent and comprehensive when describing how they discuss college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements.</p>		

Total	210	156
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0240CO-3 for Boulder Valley School District RE-2

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform vision. The applicant in 2010 adopted the state Common Core standards. The state will switch from its own assessment system to PARCC. The district participates in state mandated summative and progress monitoring assessments as well as its own diagnostic and formative assessments for mathematics and other core subjects. The vision incorporates data systems to measure growth and success, turning</p>		

around their lowest performing schools and at the school level developing, engaging, rewarding and retaining the best teachers. The district project will focus on early childhood education, the schools with the most need at this time, to fully equip students with the skills needed to succeed in college and life as well as serving students in the district through grade 8. The applicant does articulate a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement through personalization, including flexible competency based structures for learning, extended time and early childhood education.

The thrust to improve early childhood education is supported in the applicant's desire to improve standards, assessment and curriculum and an emphasis on literacy and better articulation between preschool and primary grades with the integration of the pre school learning into a formative position within the Prek-12 spectrum.

The applicant articulates an approach at this juncture to accelerate student achievement and increasing equity through personalized support grounded in common and individual tasks that are based on student academic interests, specifically for this early childhood initiative. They propose to adjust the pace of learning, differentiate the approach and connect to each learner's interest and experiences. This will be strongly child-centered, focused on assets and problem solving rather than limitations, welcoming to, inclusive of, and specific with parents in planing and supporting their children's education with a focus on long term goals for students outcomes. The approach calls for providing elementary counselors at each participating school whose primary mission are to be the change agents for the personalization of learning.

The applicant describes that the classroom experience will be like for students and teachers participating in personalized learning environments at the prek and primary levels. Classrooms will develop literacy focused technology centers with a portable assortment of devices for PreK-2 to be shared among the classes and loaded with early literacy applications, e-reader PK-2 books, audio books and interactive learning games. Some equipment will be available for take home use. Teachers will exhibit high skills in teaching and managing individual, small group and whole-class instruction with finesse. Children's learning will take on a whole new look with their efforts directed towards learning to read with materials that hare inherently engaging and meaningful.

The applicant sets forth a clear comprehensive and coherent reform vision within the narrative of this proposal as described under this criteria and supported in other sections of the narrative proposal.

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

10

9

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant selected 12 schools in the district (8 elementary and 4 middle schools) that contain over 40% of the district's poverty students and 82% of the students that are high need with low performing academic scores and multiple risk factors. They anticipate having the greatest impact on high need students as well as creating a cadre of staff with training and experience in this innovation. Middle school student selection is based on students identified as high need through objective review of risk factors. Educators involved in the project number 399 and the student total number is 4500.

The district does not offer a rationale on how it determined, for example, that 64.41% at Broomfield Heights or 62.23% of students at Angevine Middle School will be served. The same question would also apply to the two remaining middle schools.

The applicant's approach to implementing its reform proposal will support high quality school level implementation considering the academic and high risk needs of the selected schools and their reform vision. The score reflects the need for information on how the percentage of students at middle schools were determined.

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

10

10

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant includes a high quality plan in its description of how the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district wide change beyond the participating schools. Goals are provided as well as strategic objectives that clearly represent the proposal to its targeted schools and beyond. These objectives are noted and include: to Improve the quality of curriculum and instruction in preschools focused on clear, articulated standards for school readiness in the academic realm; as well as create and sustain capacities for personalized teaching and learning in grades PK-8. A management plan is presented with the parties responsible for implementing the activities, including an organizational chart for RTTT, and a timeline for implementation. The description of scale up is detailed and calls for adoption of the PK curriculum for all schools by 2017 with all pre school teachers trained in its use with personalized learning exported through a process similar to PK and literacy by inviting observation by other schools and professional development. The applicant provides an excellent RTTT Scale Up for District Wide Reform chart by year and major objective.

The applicant's high quality plan is well presented for this criteria and will be transferred into meaningful reform to support district wide change beyond the participating schools.

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

10

8

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides for performance on state summative assessments for grades 3-8 in multiple academic subject areas and presents annual goals that are equal to state ESEA targets for LEA's by subgroup. The district indicates achievable goals to decrease achievement gaps and increase high school graduation and college enrollment rates. The academic subject growth rates appear achievable as presented for the project's student population. The applicant does not indicate that it has identified annual goals that go beyond minimum state targets for the population within the district it will be serving. The district does inform in the narrative that high school graduation rates are high and achievement is high in many schools, and that the RTTT funds are directed to those with the most need and identified as so. The applicant, however, does on non state measures anticipate ambitious outcomes for participating students in their evaluation components located in future narrative criteria.

The applicant's vision is achievable for the goals presented, but do not appear ambitious for the identified school district student population to be served within the project. The score for this criteria reflects achievable, but not ambitious annual goals anticipated for RTTT initiative.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant shows a clear record of success in advancing student learning and increasing equity in learning and teaching. High School Graduation Rates have gone in 2010 from 73.90% to 91.3% in 2012 and are presented in chart form. There are increases for high school graduation for all students including the subgroups of Hispanics, ELL-LEP and Special Education students. The applicant in support of these increased performance levels for students, credits personalization of learning strategies as well as alternative and early intervention program for high school students. This growth is also attributed to self-pacing, online and mixed courses, credit for course content proficiency and other measures for secondary students. The district has two out of ten high schools in the Nation Rankings. Reduction in dropout rates, academic achievement in math, reading, writing and science are presented in chart form to support the district's efforts. School climate surveys illustrate a growth in that area.

The applicant provides specific evidence on reforms and improvements in low performing schools; including schools that used turnaround models which succeeded and a recognition they say the role of leadership plays at each school building in bringing about meaningful change. The applicant makes a strong case in making data available to educators in the system with a system called TIES where administrators, parents and educators have been trained for and use according to the applicant. This system is compatible with district student information systems and the CEDAR and SchoolView which are state systems. The district maintains an easy access web portal to Infinite Campus specifically for parents and provide school level training for parents in its use.

The district has represented a clear record of success in the past four years.

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

5

5

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The district illustrates a high level of transparency in LEA practices and investments by making the information readily available to the public. The official web site of the district posts annual proposed and approved amended budgets, quarterly financial statements and the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the current year and for prior years. This is detail specific, down to credit card usage by employee transaction. Salary schedule of teachers and all other categories of regular employees are posted at the district web site and are available to the public with a link found in this narrative section. The district does make available and provide information about individual teacher salaries and qualifications by name. Relevant notices and websites and almost all public materials are translated into Spanish.

The district demonstrates a high level of transparency in making the information readily available to the public.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The LEA demonstrates evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal authority to implement the personalized learning environments described in the applicants proposal. The Colorado State Constitution, according to the applicant, vest control over public education in locally elected school boards. Colorado districts, as indicated by the applicant, enjoy a great degree of de facto autonomy in the day to day operation and management of their schools. In support of the goal of improving education outcomes for students, the legislature passed SB 09-256 requiring all high schools develop Individual Career and Academic Plans for all students in grades 9-12. In addition, additional funding was allocated for secondary level counselors, targeting low performing schools and tracking of high school students beyond grade 12. The district demonstrates sufficient autonomy to implement the project.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	15
(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Meaningful stakeholder engagement throughout the development of the proposal and meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal are supported by the applicant with sufficient detail in 2012 when the process began and evolved to become the RTTT overall goals. The applicant documents the outreach to many stakeholders which evolved to a RTTT Design Team charged with developing concepts and budgets. The team included principals from all the selected schools as well as relevant department heads. The district even went so far as to request that the CO Department of Education designated an Associate Commissioner to review the draft document. The Boulder Valley Teachers Association was involved early on in the process to elicit comments and concerns and have given unqualified support for this application. The district was successful in garnering support from organizations that included: City of Boulder, the City of Lafayette, The Boulder Chamber of Commerce, the Colorado Legacy Foundation, the Boulder County Early Childhood Education Council and other organizations. Parent groups were involved in project planning as described by the applicant.</p> <p>The applicant has made a significant outreach for stakeholder engagement throughout the development of this proposal.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	20
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant describes how it will personalize the learning environment to provide supports for students to graduate high school, college and be career ready. They do this by describing evidence through their main objectives. For improving early childhood education and fostering personalized learning, the district will adopt the Creative Curriculum for use in all its preschools. This is closely aligned to their PK assessment which has been developed by the same company and encourages daily opportunities for customize instruction based upon each child's academic needs and interests and strongest learning approaches. This personalized learning instructional tool will be paired with a technology center with Ipods to laptops and software for student use. For Improving Literacy Learning, objectives uses a balanced literacy approach which supports a differentiated instructional program for each individual student.</p> <p>The applicant takes a positive stand and articulates that the best-first classroom teaching is critical to improving student achievement through core standards-based classroom instruction and that supplemental intervention programs or placement will not be able to make up for and should not supplant less than effective classroom instruction and provide the citation for that statement. The applicant describes the ingredients as to what the classroom will look like and how it will function with specific goals and engagement levels of both staff and parents. The applicant provides similar components of a high quality plan for the remaining objectives such as Increasing Opportunities for Summer Learning, and Personalizing the Learning Experience.</p> <p>The applicant clearly provides the dynamics of personalized learning in the classroom by aiming for true cultural change that establishes this methodology at the heart of the schools. This means that the pace of learning, the approach will be connected to each learners interests and experiences while connecting all key stakeholders to a path toward college and career readiness. The applicant desires to set everyone's sights on the long term goals of college and career and short term goals to move children ahead on their own path.</p>		

The applicant in its high quality plan will augment the elementary school staff with counselors at each participating RTTT elementary school with their role defined at the outset as agents of change for personalization and whom have specific duties inherent in the ICAP of each child. In addition, the counselor will work with the principal, special education and ESL staff to ensure that necessary accommodations are provided and that teaching strategies and activities are accessible and appropriate for all students.

The applicant describes vehicles to provide feedback for student mastery by indicators of mastery that are identified and used to describe the types and levels of performance expected by grade and retaught to students making instructional adjustments as well as creating mastery level work as models for students and providing feedback and guidance to teachers. Access to diverse cultures, contexts and perspectives to help motivate learning will be enhanced by the adoption of the Creative Curriculum in preschools which provides customized instruction and teaching strategies for student development in the cognitive, language, literacy and physical and socio-emotional development areas. Technology centers are slated for the Pre-k containing software and applicants to support digital learning.

The applicant has a high quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the supports to graduate college and career ready. The Plan contains the necessary components to realize personalized learning for the target schools and population.

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

20

20

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a high quality plan that serves and support educators to enable full implementation of personalized learning and teaching for all students, in particular high-need students. The applicant has developed an exciting approach to support students involved in the project. The professional development plan will focus on building resident expertise and capacity at each school as opposed to adding new staff positions or providing all training centrally. This will develop a system of linked resident experts which will be well accepted by teachers. The applicant honestly recognizes that staff in schools may be reluctant to sign on and provides for most elements to allow teachers to join a cohort for training in any year of the project. The district has a plan for training all staff for every major objective area of the project which are named with timing being planned so as not to overwhelm those scheduled for staff development. For each of the objective areas the applicant provides in chart form a Summary of Professional Development that incorporates the variables as defined for a high quality plan and is professionally developed in this reviewers opinion.

The district, after listening to input from teachers and others to put data in one system and that will be a part of RTTT. The ENRICH single portal will promote and creation and regular use of the elementary ICAP. The information in these plans will be valuable in assisting teachers provide for individualized student learning. Teachers will be able to know their students at the beginning of the school year and plan for teaching and learning for each individual. The applicant further states that school wide literacy summits schedule twice annually provide an additional device to render data not only accessible but usable. The district positively has principals participating in professional development and also serve as summer school principals, steering committee team for the entire project providing an avenue to communicate needs, challenges, solutions and innovations between and among schools and the district. This same role is being planned for lead teachers and counselors.

The district is serious about highly qualified teachers and administrators and this RTTT proposal. Clearly stated the evaluation of both teaches and principals will be calculated. The district also has the right to transfer any teacher to meet school needs and each participating schools' RTTT annual implementation evaluation and performance outcomes will be factors in their principal and teacher evaluations. The district's goal is to establish strong leadership, teaching and support in its highest needs schools.

The district has developed and embellished a high quality plan for teaching and leading that will lead to the desired objectives being met.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's vision and structure provides support and services in its governance structure to all participating schools is defined. The top echelons of district instructional leadership is named for direct oversight begins with the Superintendent of Schools, and his instructional cabinet comprised of instructional Assistant Superintendents. The project director, the Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Elementary Education chairs a central RTT Steering Committee which includes the Project Manager, Director of Literacy, Director of Early Childhood Education, Director of Counseling, Director of Federal Programs, and Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services and Equity, Chief of Planning and Assessment, Union President or designee, Summer School Director and the principals of all participant schools. This committee will meet monthly to review schedules, progress and engage in problem solving. This high quality plan is well thought out with additional activities such as the development of RTTT Program Design Teams to provide focused work groups to develop extended time/summer school and personalization. Specific project responsibilities are detail specific with activities and persons responsible designated.

The applicant's structure provides for a realistic mix of school based and central services with agreement on major project elements reached in advance with time devoted at the school level for teachers to participate in orientation, training, collaboration and planning. Principals are able to bring a representative of the building to the steering committee meeting at the central office as well. School level personnel decide what tragedies and content to emphasize, based upon each classrooms needs. Literacy specialists, for example, are brought to the school to wok with the Advisory Model Teacher, chosen from the school, to work with school based staff.

The applicant's plan for giving students the opportunity to progress and earn credit is based on demonstrated mastery. Elementary advancement from grade to grade is not tightly linked to skill/content mastery due to social-behavioral and development concerns. Students are provided with multiple ways to demonstrate what they have learned in the form of portfolios, oral demonstrations and tech based interactive programs. Middle and high school students are also provided with ways to master content and is not always based on the amount spent on the topic. The district is moving towards a mastery based system along with the Carnegie units in all schools. The applicant also provides learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and accessible to all students. The district works with local business to provide low cost recycled computers to families as well as promoting strategies for inclusion as opposed to pull out programs for SWD.

The district provides a credible high quality plan to support project implementation with polices and infrastructure that provide every student and educator with the support and resources they need. The district is honest in its approach to succeed and carryout the detailed objectives of this project.

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

The district presents a high quality plan that supports school infrastructure and supports personalized learning. The district has used a school bond to establish a technology refresh cycle of four years for all individual equipment and to rebuild old schools with adequate facilities for school based technology and internet access. The district is working with internet service providers to develop wireless access and expand low cost access in low income neighborhoods. A priority is to equip primary grade classroom to fund learning labs in primary classrooms that will contain a variety of portable devices for students to use in school and at home. Teaching staff are provided with wireless enabled laptops for access to the Learning Management System. Parents have multiple ways to access student and achievement data and have been provided training to do so, including a mobile application for smart phones. The current interoperable system Infinite Campus houses student information, grades and other student information and is fully interoperable with state data systems and the district's business enterprise system. The system at this time does not have interactive capability with the districts Learning Management System, nor the Instructional Management System, nor the state's individual student plans. Plans are being made over the next 3-5 years to develop such system for user friendly access to and reporting of a broad array of date and will almost, according to the district be based on open source technologies.

The plan is of high quality to support infrastructure and personalized learning as presented by the district.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	14
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant presents a high quality plan for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback on progress meeting program goals. In addition to specific plan details, the applicant will support a comprehensive objective project evaluation to provide feedback to stakeholders. This is an extra measure initiated by the district that deserves mention by this reviewer under this topic. The district is clear in providing a well thought out chart which states in specific detail what students need to know and how that understanding is brought to mastery. Specific activities such as during teacher planning time, in grade level faculty meetings, in teacher evaluations, in the project's professional learning communities, during literacy coach meetings and others that are listed for providing feedback. The district provides a Race to the Top Evaluation Instruments and Questions with the components of Instrument or Data Source, Designed by/Administrated by, What is Measured, Frequency/Implemented When, Analyzed by and Evaluation Questions with who and when these measures are reviewed to support their efforts. The district does provide timely feedback mechanisms for professional development activities.</p> <p>The applicant provides a comprehensive chart with excellent detail for evaluation purposes and timelines and staff responsibility, but in terms of responding to the specific need for how on going corrections and improvements are made during and after the term of the grant for project investments such as technology and staff, the applicant does not specifically address how they would make timely modifications and changes. The applicant does, in prior topic narrative, talk to the ability of local school leadership teams to modify activities and resources as needed. The district does do an excellent job in detailing how it will publicly share information about the project through its extensive evaluation design. The district does address financial investments made for the project.</p> <p>The applicant, except for not specifically addressing how they would make timely modifications and changes, provides an excellent detail plan for providing continuous feedback.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district describes their plan for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders and the need for this communication as an important component of this RTTT initiative. The primary avenue for this to occur, according to the applicant, is the District Accountability Committee which includes representative parents and teachers from every district school, PTO meetings, district board meetings and district communication vehicles. The annual summit is another activity to foster communication among and between stakeholders as well as through Design Teams. A web page is maintained for the duration of the project with a forum that permits comments, criticism, suggestions and proposals with anonymously if desired.</p> <p>The applicant provides for ongoing communication with internal stakeholders. Within the context of the Competitive Preference Priority section, the applicant does provide details of how they directly communicate with external stakeholders and also describe in detail the sustainable partnerships that they have created with partners to improve RTTT outcomes for the most needy of the population. The high quality plan is detailed for internal and external stakeholders.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Performance measures are achievable and ambitious as presented by the applicant. This is found, in addition to measures for other grade levels, in performance measures for grades Prek-3 on the Performance measure Teaching Strategies Gold</p>		

for the percentage of all students who meet State Standards for School Readiness on the annual Spring assessment. The growth rate would be for this current year through 2016-17 where the district shows a movement from 70% to 94% which sets a high bar. ELL students' subset would move from 48% to 93%. Performance measures for other subgroups are commensurate with the ambitious measures proposed for this project for participating students. The measures align with the districts goals and objectives for improvement in literacy in the early childhood and primary grades to other core subjects in middle school grades. The district provides specific details on how they will review and improve the measure over time and if it is insufficient to gage implementation. This is evaluated in the information found in their RTTT Evaluation Instrument chart. The applicant defines the population to be served in this section based on need and elementary school name and specifies high need students identified at the selected middle schools. The applicant defines in a comprehensive chart, under a continuous improvement process column, for example: How to we know students are learning?; and What do we do when students are not learning or reaching mastery by expectations?; and provides for what schools and teachers should be doing on behalf of the student. This is a formula that enhances the desired outcomes for improvement.

The applicant provide a high quality and ambitious approach for each applicant proposed measure.

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

5

5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The district provides a high quality plan to evaluate the effectiveness of RTTT district funded activities that includes professional development. This is enumerated by the applicant in their evaluation design, Evaluation questions include, Do teachers believe that their instruction has improved through participation and what is the self assessed level of skill in implementation and what are their recommendations, has teacher practice improving over time, are project services effective and if not what are recommendation for improvement and the investigation of questions in detail that arise from teacher/staff surveys. The implementation of programs such as preschool, K-8 literacy, summer school and personalization of instruction been implemented with fidelity and depth and its impact on student learning are evaluated. The reviewer did not identify activities in this section directly dealing with the effectiveness of the technology investments from RTTT funding, but under their evaluation plan description for financial accounting it does state that the project evaluator will determine the cost of each project and activity cost per pupil/school/activity and determine whether or not their was measurable benefit to students.

The applicant addresses and provides for a high quality plan to evaluate the effectiveness of RTTT district funded activities.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant in support of the project is funding about 25% of the total project cost over the life of the grant. The applicant provides details on one time expenditures versus those that are ongoing operational costs. The budget narratives per objective are clear and detailed and are reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicants project. The district makes a strong case on how budgetary expenditures focus on strategies that will ensure the long term sustainability of the personalized learning environment that builds capacity district wide with internal staff and a focus on local school personnel to improve literacy and personalization of learning for the target population.

The budget is reasonable and sufficient to carry out the project.

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

10

10

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The district has a history of sustaining programs after funding and cites the changes made at the secondary school level which was mostly started with grant funds. The polices and programs started with the grant initiative are ongoing and successful. The district has redistributed district and school resources and employed strategic scaling. The applicant's goals involves a high quality plan to establish ongoing capacities at the participant schools with the emphasis on staff development with RTTT funding. The intention, the applicant asserts, is to create large groups of trained and experienced teachers who are able to deliver high quality instruction with an emphasis on the primary grades. The district provides a graph that illustrates the commitment of the district to provide for ongoing costs and this data illustrates an impressive

high support level. The applicant provides specific examples of recurring costs and how they district will be able to absorb the expense. They cite, as an example, how schools can restructure to absorb the Advisory Model staff costs without significant impact on class size. In addition there is an amendment to the state constitution which will go to voters this fall and if passed will increase education funding state wide by \$950 million dollars which would assist the district with RTTT reforms in the future. The district has a high quality plan that specifically includes activities, the rationale, the timeline and the deliverables to sustain the goals and objectives for this proposal.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a description of the coherent and sustainable partnerships to support the plan described in Absolute Priority 1 that is formed with public private organizations. These coherent sustainable partnerships are described for several organizations within the project catchment area. They include but are not limited to The Community Foundation Serving Boulder County, the Early Childhood Council of Boulder County, The Colorado Legacy Foundation, The Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition. The thrust for the Community Foundation and Early Childhood Council works to improve care, education and services for children and at risk families. Ancillary organizations support for these initiatives comes from Boulder County Public Health and the Mental Health Center. RTTT related activities will center around the creation of community wide awareness and knowledge of school readiness, training for private pre-school teachers and to maintain financial and community support for expanded preschools.

The population desired results are listed for this competitive preference priority. They include: increased percentages of high needs students entering school ready for school; increased percentages of high needs students who are proficient in reading in grades 1-3; and increased percentage of all students and of high needs students how parents actively support their children's successful path to graduation, college and career. The applicant provides specific measures to monitor the results of partnerships including for literacy will look at Spring DRA-2 results for grades 1,2, and 3 as well as TCAP/PARCC for grade 3. Other measures are also listed. The applicant also creates integrated education and services with the introduction of elementary counselors for core subject improvement and affective domains which are detailed within the project.

The applicant provides thorough information to support this competitive priority. A detailed chart entitled Competitive Preference Priority: Population Level Desired Results lists the population group to be served, the type of result and the desired results for both cognitive areas and affective domains. The applicant builds the capacity of staff to better assess school and community needs through these partnerships and uses specific performance measures to evaluate population level results of these partnerships with measurable outcomes.

The applicant meets the criteria established for this Competitive Preference priority in its ability to integrate public and private resources in a partnership designed to augment school resources that address the social and emotional needs of the target population as described in the RTTT proposal.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The district meets and exceeds absolute priority 1 in its efforts to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve teaching and learning through personalization of strategies as well as the four core assurance areas. The applicant has shown a unique and honest approach to school reform and presents a plan that encourages, promotes, supports and sustains RTTT priority outcomes. The applicant has created a proposal that accelerates student achievement and deepens student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student, increasing the effectiveness of educators and decreasing the achievement gap of high need student populations.

Total	210	205
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0240CO-2 for Boulder Valley School District RE-2

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant 's vision for reform builds on the its work in the four core education assurance areas and a continuous cycle of personalized education, in order to turn around their lowest performing schools in this district. The district is comprised of urban and rural schools, and overall typically performs above the state and national average academically. The district has a large achievement gap-50%- that is higher than the national average.</p> <p>This vision consists of targeting 12 schools that are located in the Denver metropolitan area, which enroll 54% of the district's PreK-8 poverty students, 34% of Special Education Students, and 41% of minority students in order to decrease the achievement gap and build upon its success to to create equity and access to a quality education.</p> <p>The applicant's approach is to build upon successful initiatives that are already in progress. This foundation for this framework, focuses on the critical gaps in services for grades PreK-8, its efforts of personalization, including flexible, competency-based structures for learning, extended time needed for personalization of instruction (individualization) and increasing access to early childhood education in an effort to turnaround their lowest performing schools.</p> <p>All schools have adopted Common Core State Standards and are currently transitioning from the state assessment system (TCAP) to PARCC (2014), and use the state summative and progress monitoring assessments for English language acquisition (WIDA-Access), PK-K school readiness (Learning Strategies Gold), and Literacy (DRA-2 and EDL).</p> <p>Student data is currently available to teachers through Infinite Campus (IC) and teachers and principals are able to readily access data on multiple levels, as well as having access to the state's databases, which provide teachers with opportunities to drill down data through summative reports, and track postsecondary outcomes for students. The district would like to eventually migrate to a data system that comprehensive data management system that houses all learning plans, currently teachers have to access multiple systems to access data.</p> <p>The applicant does not describe what the classroom experience will be for students and teachers participating in the personalized learning environments, however, the narrative articulates how this reform will build on previous reform efforts that have had a positive impact on student student achievement in select schools. The foundational work in several areas that particularly individualization and personalization. This four year reform has resulted in improved attendance as a result of decreased truancy, personalized student planning previously mandated for high school students but (has been adopted for middle school students), extended time for instruction as a result of offering students multiple opportunities (e.g. flexible schedules, extended day/school year), science enrichment summer school, and providing teachers with ongoing professional development opportunities that are linked to school and district priorities. Targeted and ongoing professional development to that will focus on improvements in early childhood education, literacy instruction, extended learning time and personalized learning.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform vision resulting in a high score for this criteria.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

The applicant's approach to implementation was based on examining data from 12 elementary and middle schools that represented the largest number of students with high-needs and their barriers to success. The findings revealed that the majority of these students had multiple risk-factors (poverty, minority, disabilities, immigrant/ELL status, low academic achievement, homelessness/transience, etc.) that were barriers to academic achievement, and stand to benefit from the reforms in this proposal. This school-wide approach also ensures that students will be taught by effective and highly effective teachers, principals and counselors who have experience, support and training with the innovations being proposed in this plan, in order to increase student equity, access and quality for all students:

- 12 elementary and middle schools - grades PreK-8
- Total participating students: 4501
 - Low income students: 2320
 - High needs students: 3682
- Total participating educators: 399

The plan targets elementary and middle school students at selected schools that have been identified as high-needs, low-performing, and at-risk, as well as providing teachers with the training needed to help students succeed. The applicant's approach to implementing its reform proposal will support high-quality LEA- level implementation.

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

10

9

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's plan for LEA-wide reform and change is strong and represents a realistic model and design that can be easily scaled-up to other schools. The scale-up plans for the teachers and principals as agents of change in their schools, which allows this resource strategy to be replicated in other schools, as well as using the teacher evaluation system to appropriately allocate meaningful resources to the targeted schools in order to close achievement gaps and increase student achievement.

The project elements and timeline demonstrates how over the time the plan will be scaled up to include all students, however, it is unclear why only eight schools are included in the year one implementation (2014), yet the proposal specifically targets twelve schools.

Overall, the application includes a high-quality plan describing how the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools has been satisfied, resulting a high-low score.

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

10

10

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The application data for performance on summative assessments provides goals for improved achievement in lowest-achieving and at-risk subgroup populations in the areas of reading, math, science and writing; decreasing achievement gaps, increasing graduation rates, and improving college enrollment rates, are all ambitious and achievable. The applicant did not provide a narrative for this section, however, the proposed performance goals for student outcomes are aligned to components of a personalized learning environments.

- Summative performance data for improved student outcomes demonstrates an ambitious yet achievable approach to decrease achievement gaps for all subgroups in core content (areas, including graduation rates and college enrollment.
- Each subgroup is significant for evaluating the effectiveness of the reforms in this proposal to improve student performance based on equity and access to resources.
- Applicant's approach to decreasing achievement gaps and increasing student achievement are equal to ESEA targets for LEA's by subgroup.
- The goals demonstrate small increases in achievements annually, however, the applicant appears to establish goals in the context of the existing student needs and abilities.

The extent to which the LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable goals has been satisfied, resulting in a high score.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	15
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district has demonstrated a clear track record of success in the areas of graduation rates improved, outperforming the state for an overall increase of 2% in all competing categories. Dropout rates have been cut in for every major subgroup and are 30-60% lower than their peers statewide. Achievement gaps (math, reading, writing and science) have reduced across most of the categories, while the at-risk students performance have increased, there is still room for improvement as most of these successes can be attributed to reform programs - personalization strategies, alternative and early intervention-are a few of the options that will be implemented and/or offered at the middle school level, school climate (includes relationship with adults at schools, bullying and feeling safe) gains have been made in minority students confidence with issues that revolve around school climate such that there is little-to-no gap in positive responses at elementary level.</p> <p>The applicant provides specific evidence to demonstrate its reform on turning around of low-performing schools. The schools were characterized as being the highest poverty, highest ELL, highest minority school in the district and ranked in the lowest achievement -5th percentile- in the state. Both schools adopted a personalization model (extended day/year, extensive student/family supports, teacher collaboration and professional development), which resulted in each of the schools experiencing significant gains for student achievement and decreasing the achievement gaps in reading and writing.</p> <p>The district currently is a leader in how it makes student performance data available. Data is made available through the use of TIES (Tools for Inquiry in Equitable Schools) in order to confront the achievement gap and for carrying out the school improvement process. Principals, teachers and parents have been trained on this process that is designed to improve student achievement, as well as provide parents and students with reports during conferences. The district also maintains web-based Infinite Campus (IC) specifically for parents and provides parent with the appropriate training.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant has demonstrated a clear track record of success for the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant demonstrates a high level of transparency in LEA practices and investments by regularly and routinely providing public access to district budgets (broken out functional categories), finance information through multiple avenues: print, email, internet and public meetings. The district's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the current year and prior year includes information on all budgets, quarterly financial statements, and proposed/approved and amended budgets. The current-year financial reports include detail down to the level of credit card purchases by employee and transaction. Salaries for all personnel, instructional salaries, and teacher salaries are available to the public on the district website are listed for each school. The information is also made available in Spanish.</p> <p>Overall, the LEA has clearly demonstrated evidence of a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices and investments.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's narrative for state context for implementation supports the reform needed to implement the personalized learning environments. The applicant has provided a clear explanation to demonstrate evidence for autonomy under State legal, statutory and regulatory requirements. These conditions will allow the applicant to implement personalized learning environments with confidence and fidelity, to ensure the success of the proposed reforms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant financial and human support for public schools • Local private foundation, Impact on Education, raises funds for in order to increase student access, equity and participation in education process (before, during and afterschool). Most of these projects have a direct impact on student achievements • Locally elected school boards have vested control over public education • Colorado school districts have de facto autonomy in the day-to-day operation and management of schools 		

- LEAs are free to adopt effective methods of instruction and programming
- Staffing decisions, levels and structures are made by schools and districts
- Legislature passed SB 09-256, requires all high schools develop Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAP) for grades 9-12
- Comprehensive data system provides academic achievement and growth data for students from PreK to 12
- Previous recipients of grant funding to pilot programs for Extended Learning Opportunities (includes all elements of personalized learning environments)

Overall, the extent to which the LEA has demonstrated evidence successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments has been satisfied, resulting in a high score.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)

15

12

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant 's proposal supports meaningful stakeholder engagement and support from key stakeholders throughout the development of this process. Online discussions, survey and open discussions was used to solicit feedback, which was used to select the strategies that would be most impactful and feasible for this reform. School personnel were involved as the process evolved. Letters of support were received from key stakeholders such as district's education association parent organizations, local community and civic organizations. The documentation of support from key group of stakeholders is essential for the success of this proposal and reflects the level of participant buy-in for this project.

Although the applicant provides evidence demonstrating key stakeholder support in the narrative, the application lacks letters of support from teachers, students and parents representing the LEA as evidence to fully demonstrate their participation in this application process.

Overall, the applicant has demonstrated strong evidence of meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal and meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's approach for improving teaching and learning for students supports the state's goal to create a seamless educational system that prepares students for personalized instruction and prepares all students for meaningful postsecondary education and the workforce. The approach to master these State standards is rooted in the belief that early intervention is the best measure of success for students who are at risk for failing or dropping out of high-school or college. The narrative states that the district used their own longitudinal data to support how students who struggle throughout their years of schooling often do not graduate: 94% of BVSD's 2011 dropouts, and 68% of 10th graders behind on credits scored below proficient on the 2002 third grade reading assessment as a result they determined that marginal proficiency in elementary school leads to critical failures in high-school or college. This data clearly supports the research that students who lack the fundamental skills and knowledge often are not able to advance to more rigorous courses throughout their school years. The applicant's proposes to improve early childhood education by ensuring all students receive quality instruction in order to improve college-and career-readiness outcomes.

The applicant will provide feedback in order to gauge student performance by indicators of mastery that will be used to describe the types of and levels of performance expected by grade and customize instructional strategies and approaches for reteaching. This instructional model provides feedback and guidance for teachers in order to meet the needs of their diverse classrooms.

The initiatives being proposed by the district foster and support personalized learning in order for students to graduate college-and career-ready. All the strategies being proposed are evidence of the customized classroom and individualized instruction students will need in order to be successful. The plan includes:

- The Creative Curriculum, to provide customized instruction based on the child's academic needs, interest, and strongest learning approaches.
- Improving literacy learning through the implementation of a balanced literacy model, a model that has many

components that complement personalized learning environments, a model that supports the attention often needed for high-needs and at-risk students who often fall below proficiency at end of year assessments.

- Every student will have a School Readiness Plan that will be used to help students understand the importance of their learning expectations.
- Using this transformational model to improve basic classroom literacy instruction from preschool through Grade 8, instruction will become varied, differentiated and intentional with regard to student's needs.
- Increasing opportunities for Summer Learning to accelerate student achievement.
- Personalize the learning experience by adjusting the pace of learning, differentiate the approach, and connect to learner's interests and experiences in order to guide students to a path toward college and career readiness.
- Preschool students will work on a progression of skills and content and move toward mastery based on student's needs.
- Redesign the School Readiness Plan (ICAP) in order to include elementary students.
- Each classroom will have devices ranging from iPods to laptops and age/grade appropriate software.
- Feedback and guidance will regularly be provided to teachers and students and the data will be used to drive instruction and differentiation.
- Expand the positions of counseling staff to elementary schools in order to support the personalized learning plans for elementary students.
- Transition supports in place to address the needs of students who may be vulnerable or lack social resiliency.
- Use of technology iPods and laptops and appropriate software for student use to support digital learning and content.
- Specific strategies to involve parents in their child's personalized learning plan.
- Integrating 21st Century skills provides for students access and exposure to content that includes diverse cultures.

Overall, the applicant has a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the supports to graduate college- and career-ready.

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

The applicant's plan places a great deal of emphasis on ensuring that students are taught by effective and highly effective teachers to be able to implement and assess student achievement in personalized learning environments. The plan propose's to train teachers to improve their teaching practices in a manner that focuses on modeling professional practices for teachers the practices they will develop for children in their classrooms. The applicant is taking a unique approach to implementing personalized learning environments plan training provide all teachers with their own personalized learning environment as a way to help them understand how to support students - offer differentiated approaches, allow individual pacing in learning, implement new learning, and build on strengths and experiences, in essence model the practices needed for their classrooms. Training will be provided in each of the major focus areas of the proposal and teachers will be offered multiple options and opportunities professional development. For example, formal training via face-to-face classes, workshops or institutes, embedded coaching, professional learning communities and reflective/ planning time. The plan will conduct grade specific Summer Institutes for teachers and buildings based on the feedback from the semi-annual Literacy Summits for teachers of early learners.

The district will train all teachers for grades 3-8 on Achieve 3000 and offer training sessions over the first three years to ensure teachers know how to use the program for instruction, assessment, intervention and enrichment, this program provides teachers with tools for student monitoring and data to differentiate instruction based on student's needs. Teachers currently have access a great deal of data, however, the data is not accessible in one place. The district is plans to put the data in one portal, ENRICH, that will be used to promote creation and regular use of ICAP. This information will help teachers as they move toward high quality personalized teaching in their classrooms, and assist in reducing the time it takes teachers to get to know students in the beginning of the school year.

Principals and leadership teams will be supported through professional development offered during the annual Summit meetings and prior to the development of School Improvement Plans. The time will allow RTTT schools to development school plans that include RTTT goals, objectives and strategies. The professional development also gives principals take a more active role in the coaching of teachers, leading study and work groups and reviewing data and plans with individual instructors.

The district's evaluation system conforms to state law that uses a combined score to determine teacher effectiveness. The district will use teacher and student performance data to rate teachers and principals, and the expectation is that educators must earn a minimal "effective" rating in order to be retained and reserves the right to transfer any teacher to meet school needs. This policy ensures that schools are placing highly effective teachers and principals in their highest-needs schools, thus ensuring strong leadership and teacher support. The district project evaluation will include performance objectives to

measure the growth in percentages of effective and highly effective teachers. The plan does not specify if this measurement is also applicable to principals.

Overall, the applicant has demonstrated a plan of high-quality for improving teaching and leading by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide students the supports to graduate college-and career-ready.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	15
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's plan has practices, policies and rules that facilitate personalized learning environments by ensuring students, educators and parents have the resources they need, when and where they are needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Office will support implementation in all participating schools. • Schools have great deal of flexibility and autonomy in how they carry out many aspects of this project. • School Leadership Teams are currently in place. • Mastery based learning progressions are encouraged as important part of instructional practice. • A holistic approach to demonstrate mastery gives students will have multiple ways to demonstrate what they have learned (e.g. portfolios, oral demonstrations, projects, tech-based interactive programs). • Adaptable and flexible learning resources for students with disabilities, ELL, and students identified as disenfranchised. The technologies and resources include: adaptive technologies, co-teaching, strategies for inclusion. provisions for parents to have access to low cost computers. <p>The applicant's plan to support project implementation and practices, policies and rules that facilitate personalized learning is of high-quality. Although, the applicant does not provide a chart or graph to accompany the timeline, the narrative identifies the activities , rationale, deliverables, timeline and persons responsible to support project implementation.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	9
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has set forth a plan that supports equal access by students to content, existing school-based technology, and learning resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District has a school bond to establish technology "refresh" cycle every four years and provide old schools with adequate facilities in order to support internet access. • District is working with local government and internet service providers to develop wireless access to expand low-cost access to low income neighborhoods. • Mobile application is available for smartphones. • Priority to equip primary grade classrooms with portable devices for students to use in school and at home. • Technical support is provided remotely, training in person and via Help desk. • IT support is provided through the Family Literacy initiative which provides training classes for parents (basic computer classes, literacy, Infinite Campus (IC)). • Parents and students are able to access student data through Infinite Campus (IC), which is a accessible via district's website and have been provided training. • Teaching staff are provided with wireless laptops. • District current system is fully interoperable with state data systems, district's business enterprise systems and Infinite Campus. These systems are not interoperable with the Learning Management System (which house their content and blended courses), nor the Instructional Management System (contains curriculum linked instructional assessment and resources). The goal is to develop a comprehensive Data Management System, that will link all systems and allow for a more user friendly access to a broad array of data within the next 3-5 years. <p>Plans are being made to upgrade the current interoperable data system over the next 3-5 years and to replace it with a single system that is user friendly. The current interoperable data system does provide parents,students and teachers, although the system lacks the interactive capabilities between all the current existing data systems. However, this does not diminish the plan in anyway. Overall, the district's plan is of high quality to support the personalized learning by ensuring that the LEA and school infrastructure support project implementation.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	14
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's plan for continuous improvement process builds upon the Standards-Based Teaching and Learning framework. This process creates an ongoing cycle of inquiry, data analysis, responsive instruction and improvement. The results will be used to conduct summative and formative evaluations to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the effectiveness of the project's strategies to improve student achievement and decrease achievement gaps. • Evaluate the impact on curriculum and instructional practices. • Monitor and assess program implementation(meeting targets, timelines and benchmarks, reaching program participation targets for both teachers and students). • Both formative and summative evaluation practices are stressed to ensure the project goals, objectives, and annual performance are being met in order to assess the potential for expanding • Determine the cost to benefit ratio for each major program. • Make recommendation for program improvement, maintenance and scale-up. <p>Overall, the applicant's plan for continuous improvement is of high quality as it provides all the details on how it will publicly share information, the purpose, timelines and staff responsibility.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's proposal includes plans to provide ongoing communications and engagement through the District's website and will include a dedicated webpage for RTTD news, information, a discussion forum for answering questions, posting comments, and suggestions, as well as an annual summit that will be follow-up on the distribution and dissemination of information on the progress of this plan. The strategies represent a process of continuous information and feedback on the program is being made available to all internal and external stakeholders. The applicant does provide a high-quality plan for ongoing communication and engagement, however, it is located within the narrative for the Competitive Preference Priority. The details for how they will communicate with internal and external stakeholders are described in great detail as well as how partnerships will be sustained in order to improve outcomes for the most needy of the targeted groups.</p> <p>Overall, the extent to which the applicant has a high-quality plan for ongoing communication has not been fully demonstrated.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The measures selected by applicant are aligned with their progress initiatives. The measures all align with the district's goals and vision to improve student achievement, decrease achievement gaps, and ensure students are on track to graduate college- and career-ready. The measures support the the district's goals and objectives to improve the outcomes for student success in later years by providing high-quality instruction during grades PreK to 8.</p> <p>The district provide specific details on how it will use the data to determine if it is insufficient to gauge implementation. The evaluation chart identifies the students based on needs, and the evaluation instruments and questions are used to determine if the student's needs are being met and the next steps to take based on the response. This evaluation tool ensures that student outcomes are consistently evaluated under this continuous improvement process.</p> <p>The district has set high growth targets for subgroups ELL, from 48% to 93% over the next three years, and PreK-3, from 50% to 76%.Performance measures for the subgroups are aligned with the ambitious measures proposed in this plan for the targeted students. The measures align with the districts goal and and objectives to improve achievement in grades PreK-8, improve literacy in grades PreK to 3, and core subjects in middle school grades.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant has presented an ambitious yet achievable plan with annual targets for each measure that are strategically aligned with the goals of the proposal.</p>		

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's plans to evaluate the effectiveness of RTTD funded activities will be used to evaluate the achievement of project goals, objectives and performance as it pertains to the strategies such as professional development, project strategies, design, and products/materials. The applicant did not address this criteria separately, however, the plan's evaluation will include formative and summative evaluations to inform the continuation, evolution, development and scale-up of project components and using the information to identify areas for refinement, improvement, focus or redirection in order to adjust the plan to ensure performance objectives are being met.</p> <p>Overall, the extent to which the applicant has demonstrated a high-quality plan to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of RTTD funded activities has been met, resulting in a high score.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's budget , including the budget narrative and tables identify all funds that will support the project and is reasonable and sufficient to support the implementation of the proposal. The applicant provided a comprehensive description for the funds, including funds from other sources, such as local funding and project partners. The applicant states that a significant portion of the funding will be dedicated to strategies that incur one-time investment, and they will use general funding to absorb operational costs that will be incurred after the grant period. The grant funding will be used to support the projects that will be used the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant has demonstrated a realistic budget that is able to sustain this project after the term of the grant, resulting in a high score.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	9
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's plan for sustainability is clear and demonstrates the State and Local support for this project after the term of this grant. The applicant anticipates the need for support to diminish after 2020, as fewer students will need the services, because ongoing achievement and instructional practices will have the desired impact. The applicant does not specifically mention the sources for additional and future funding for this proposal.</p> <p>The applicant plan is sound and based on previous experience with sustaining reforms. As a result of the experienced success with the previous initiatives, the applicant has made provisions to evaluate the sustainability of strategies during the life of this grant, and to replicate successes based on the building of capacity in participating schools. Funding to continue these initiatives will be provided at the state and local levels, and ongoing partnerships. However, the applicant anticipates a decrease in remediation services as the instruction improves and personalized environments are fully implemented.</p> <p>The applicant's proposal includes all the components of a high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant.</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 's plan for competitive preference priority outlines specific goals for these existing partnerships, which are central to the core goals of this proposal. These partnerships provide a supportive network of service for multiple high need populations in order to impact student learning. The populations targeted for this reform proposal are students and families who have been identified as low income, minority, students with disabilities, ELL, homeless students and preschool. The</p>		

performance measures align directly with the proposal's goals: increase the number of students who are ready for school, increase the number of students in grades 1-3 who are proficient in reading, and increase the number of parents who participate in the development of student's ICAP.

Partnering with community resources for this proposal will ensure the success of proposal by giving students and their families the supports many of them may need and ensure their ability to be scaled up and implemented across the district because the resources are aligned with the focal areas of the proposal. For example Boulder School Readiness already aims for a regional impact and can expand its work to serve additional schools and Colorado Statewide Parents to assist with increasing parent engagement in more schools.

The district will monitor the results of the partnerships through the use of their existing assessments systems, as well RTT Steering Committee, Design Teams and PLCs to engage discussions in order to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies. These partnerships will build capacity by providing educator training and resources directly to principals, teachers and counselors. This process of will strengthen the goals of this proposal as well as help students and families acquire the needed services and supports in order to improve student outcomes based on performance measures, and provide the schools with

Overall, the applicant has met the criteria for competitive preference priority, resulting in a high score.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has met the criteria for Absolute Priority by addressing the four core educational assurance areas to create personalized learning environments to improve learning teaching through the use of several interventions and projects aimed at improving student achievement by decreasing achievement gaps for low income, high needs and at-risk students. The applicant has consistently demonstrated and supported an ambitious yet achievable plan to implement and sustain personalized learning environments for students n grades PreK-8 who attend schools that have been identified as low performing. The proposal will give students learning opportunities and resources. The proposal will also increase students who are taught by highly trained effective and effective teachers and principals.

Total	210	201
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