



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0052NC-1 for Burke County Public Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

For A1, the applicant fully meets the criterion by setting forth a comprehensive and coherent vision that builds upon previous work in the four core educational assurance areas (criteria A1a), and does articulate a clear and credible approach to the goal of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support (criteria A1b). Evidence for this comes from their overview of what has already taken place in reference to the adoption of the common core, new assessment tools, data tracking systems, teacher evaluation systems, and their career and college readiness efforts. Their goals of transforming their education model from a teacher-driven model into a student-driven learning model (their goal 1); institutionalizing personalized instruction (their goal 2); cultivating 21st century highly effective educators (their goal 3); and shifting from a proficiency to mastery model of learning (their goal 4), do express how they plan to implement their Project Detail (Digital Education-Teaching and Individualized Learning).

Specially, the applicant nicely addresses the four core educational assurance areas. For the first area of standards and assessment, they offer information on how their state has adopted the common core standards and the smarter balanced assessments, as well as measures to gauge career and college readiness via the American College Test (ACT) assessments. They are also planning to use interim and formative assessments that will help teachers assess student progress toward the standards throughout the year and will help drive personalized education plans. For the second area of building data systems that measure student growth and success, they describe how they use their state's education value-added assessment system, and the state's student information system. They also note how they will be using these systems to match an individual teacher identifier with a teacher-student match in order to provide timely data back to educators and their supervisors on student growth. For the third area of recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, they detail how they are using the state's new teacher and principal evaluation process, and will be using the data to better support teachers in need, and to place highly effective teachers with students of highest need. For the fourth area of turning around lowest-achieving schools, they detail their previous success in turning around one of their lowest performing schools (moving their graduation rate from 40.8% in 2008-09 to 89% in 2012-13), and how they will be using some of their success strategies with their other schools as part of this grant.

The applicant also offers details to describe what the classroom experience will be like for students and teachers participating in personalized learning environments. They describe how the focus will change from proficiency to mastery, and that each student will have their own individualized learning plan. They describe how they will build upon the state's computer-adaptive tests to also include student portfolios, rubrics and project-based learning products. They also describe the training support to be received by teachers and how student achievement outcomes are being incorporated into teacher evaluations and decisions. In their appendix, they also offer a description of "a day in the life of a 21st century student, and teacher."

Overall, the applicant has clearly, and with high quality, articulated a comprehensive and coherent reform vision. The response is rated in the high range.

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

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

For A2, the applicant fully meets the criterion by offering good information on how the decision was made to include all of their schools in the grant, with a focus on all students in grades 6-12, and then later replicating successful reforms within grades 3-5. They offer detail that 62.41% of the participating students qualify for free or reduced lunch (thus meeting the minimum requirement of 40%). The rationale they offer for starting with the middle and high school grades and then moving to the upper elementary grades is detailed and convincing in that this will allow them to meet their implementation goals of having all of their students be college and career ready upon graduation from high school.

The applicant also lists each school that would participate in the grant activities (criteria A2b), as well as the total number of participating students, those students who are low-income, and/or high-need, and the number of participating educators. This information provides evidence of the applicant fully meeting criteria A2c.

Overall, the applicant has clearly, and with high quality, articulated its approach to implementation which will support high quality reforms in their district. The applicant scores in the high range.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	9
--	-----------	----------

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

For A3, the applicant almost fully meets this criteria by offering nearly every aspect of a high quality plan which reveals how they plan to both scale-up their efforts to serve all students in grades 3-12 in their district, as well as meeting their outcome goals. They detail their logic model which clearly shows the links between their four major goals, nine major strategies, and nine major outcomes. They offer a detailed table which includes key goals and activities, timeliness, and responsible parties. For example, within their first year, their project director will be responsible for starting the professional learning communities at the administrative levels, including a 5 day training covering aspects of 21st century teaching and learning. The only aspect of a high quality plan that is missing is that of identifying specific deliverables (although these are implied within the activities to be accomplished by a specific timeline and as overseen by a specific responsible party).

Not only does the applicant offer a high quality plan, but this plan as described is logical and if implemented as planned, would support them reaching their outcome goals. They describe how they plan to build upon existing supports, and redirect (and retrain) existing personnel to support this overall initiative. They also describe the new personnel to be acquired and the role they would play in supporting this effort.

Overall, despite one minor concern (that of labeling all deliverables), the applicant has clearly, and with high quality, offered a plan which describes how this proposal will help them meet their outcome goals. The applicant scores in the high range.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	9
--	-----------	----------

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

For A4a, the applicant almost fully meets the criterion by detailing annual goals for students in grades 3-8 by using the state end-of grade reading comprehensive test and the state end-of-grade math assessments, and the states' end-of-course tests for English I and Algebra I. These assessments include both a percent of students who are proficient or above, as well as a mean growth percentile. The baseline data is offered for each assessment measure, and the projected increases for all students as well as individual subgroups do appear thoughtfully done (whereby the increases are a bit slower for the first two years, and greater for the last two years. In addition they do grow more substantially for those subgroups who are furthest behind on the baseline data, to allow greater equity outcomes by the end of the grant. The one minor concern is that the projected growth targets for limited English proficiency and for students with disabilities are very ambitious, but the narrative does not offer adequate detail to ascertain whether such targets are achievable. For example, students with disabilities would go from 50.1% (2012/13) to 72.3% (2016/17) for Algebra I, a large increase.

For A4b, the applicant almost fully meets the criterion by detailing annual goals for decreasing the achievement gaps for their minority populations, as well as for economically disadvantaged students, limited English proficient students, and students with disabilities. The applicant nicely offers the current achievement gap percentages (using all of the core measures they plan to track for the grant as noted for criteria A4a), and offers very ambitious goals for decreasing those gap by half or more within the four year grant period. The applicant also summarizes the key activities they will be utilizing to help decrease these gaps, which if implemented well, should also allow these ambitious goals to be achievable. The one minor concern is that the projected targeted decreased achievement gaps for limited English proficiency and for students with disabilities are very ambitious, but the narrative does not offer adequate detail to ascertain whether such targets are achievable. For example, limited English proficient students compared to non-LEP students would decrease from a gap of 38.7(2012/13) to 16.3 (2016/17) for 6th grade Reading, a large decrease.

For A4c, the applicant fully meets the criterion by detailing annual goals for increasing the graduation rate for all students, and for individual subgroups. The applicant begins with baseline data, and offers ambitious goals for each subgroup and overall. Again, they summarize the key strategies they will be implementing to focus on these goals, which helps to also make them appear achievable as well.

For A4d, the applicant fully meets the criterion by detailing annual goals for increasing the college enrollment rate overall, and for the minority subgroups. They noted the current absence of baseline data for economically disadvantaged students, limited English proficient students, and students with disabilities, and that goals will be established for those subgroups once such baseline data is obtained during 2013-14. Again, they summarize the key strategies they will be implementing to focus on these goals, which helps to also make them appear achievable as well.

For the optional criterion A4e, the applicant notes that no baseline data is currently available regarding postsecondary degree attainment, but that the state is in the process of implementing a data tracking system for grades P-20W (from preschool into the workforce). They noted that postsecondary degree attainment goals will be established once such baseline data is obtained (which they note in their table as being during 2013-14). Again, they summarize the key strategies they will be implementing to support enhanced postsecondary degree attainment.

Overall, with the exception of minor concerns regarding the targets set for two subgroups for a small number of indicators, the applicant has clearly, and with high quality, articulated their goals for improved student outcomes. The applicant scores in the high 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	14
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>For B1a, the applicant almost fully meets the criterion by offering data which reveals clear increases in the past four years for overall percentages of students at or above proficiency on the state assessments (overall and for each subgroup), as well as significantly improved high school graduation rate for each of their school serving high school students. For example, between 2008-09 and 2011-12, they increased their student achievement for Hispanic students by 9.6% and economically disadvantaged by 7.4%. As another example, they increased their 5-year cohort graduation rate from 40.8% to 83.9% within their Hallyburton alternative school. They also describe the efforts they have put into place to help explain such increases, and offered information on their decreased learning gaps among subgroups. The one concern is that the applicant only offered data on increases for college enrollment rates for two years (going from 83.3% to 84.5%), but not for a full four years. They did describe efforts for students to obtain college credit while still in high school, but did not offer four years of data on college enrollment rates.</p> <p>For B1b, the applicant fully meets the criterion by detailing their efforts to make significant improvements at their one state-identified lowest performing school, in which high school graduation rates increased from 64.5% in 2009-10 to 89% in 2012-13. This alternative high school had received a school improvement grant, and the applicant summarizes the efforts made with students and teachers to accomplish these improvements. Some interesting monetary incentives for teachers based on achieved goals were summarized, revealing success in implementing some traditionally difficult to implement reforms.</p> <p>For B1c, the applicant fully meets the criterion by describing previous efforts to make data available to parents, teachers, and students for the purposes of improved student outcomes. During Fall 2013 the district implemented PowerSchool, an on-line viewer which allows parents and students to see their individual education plan, grades, and resources for all coursework. They also indicate that teachers have access to the pre and post-testing for all end-of course graded courses. Later in the applicant, good information is provided on how all such data is being used in ways to inform and improve participation, instruction and services.</p> <p>Despite one minor concern with the college enrollment data, the applicant offers high quality information, and has clearly demonstrated a track record of success in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning. The applicant scores in the high range.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>For B2, the applicant fully meets the criterion by offering information as to how they currently have a high level of transparency in reference to their budgets and costs, reporting the minimally required items (salaries for all instructional and support staff; salaries for instructional staff only; and salaries for teachers only) down to the school-level in both the local newspaper and on their website. Actual non-personnel expenditures as broken down to the school level are reported in the annual external financial audit, which is made available to the public. Their district policy manual is also available on the web, and they also have a Public Relations Officer whose job it is to share information with the public through social media, newspapers, and the internet.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant has clearly, and with high quality, demonstrated evidence of a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments. The applicant scores in the high range.</p>		

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>For B3, the applicant fully meets the criterion by offering evidence that they do have successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under state legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in their application. They noted that this builds upon several existing grants which have helped set the stage for these proposed reforms, and that their state statute actually includes authority and the obligation to customize learning for students. The applicant's plan is in alignment with their state's Race To The Top plan, that includes new a testing and accountability model and a new Teacher/Principal evaluation system, as well as their state's Career & College Ready Set Go! plan which includes a focus on local capacity building, and customized approaches to local settings and needs. The state systems will provide the applicant with essential educator and student data, and systems to manage such data, allowing the local systems to focus on the teaching and learning aspect.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant has clearly, and with high quality, demonstrated evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy to implement the personalized learning environments described in the applicant's proposal. The applicant receives a high score for this section.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	14
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>For B4a, the applicant almost fully meets the criteria by describing their many efforts to include teachers, families, and principals in the development of their proposal reform efforts. These included numerous meeting and public forums, as well as information in the newspaper and via local radio. They indicate how revisions were made based upon input (i.e., the creation of digital portfolio). Nothing was specifically mentioned as to how students were engaged in this process (other than they were part of the public), although individual student letters of support were included.</p> <p>Since this LEA does not have collective bargaining representation, they provided evidence of a survey taken by their teachers to ascertain their level of support for the plan. Overall, the plan is supported by nearly all of the responding teachers in most schools, but there are a few schools in which the response rate was less than 70%, and of those responding, not all supported the plan (for example, in Alpine Elementary, 69% of teachers responded, and only 73% of those supported the plan. The applicant did not provide an overall % of teachers who support the plan, but most schools had response rates well over 70% and had support rates in the ninety or 100% range.</p> <p>For B4b, the applicant almost fully meets this criteria by including letters of support from most of the key stakeholder groups, including the mayor, parent groups, individual students and parents, state legislator, chamber of commerce, the state's science and math high school, and the state department. Although not specifically required, the one key group not included was a letter from any specific higher education entity.</p> <p>Overall, with one very minor exception (no letter of support from a higher education entity), the applicant has clearly, and with high quality, offered good evidence of stakeholder engagement and support. The applicant scores in the high range for this section.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	19
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>For C1a (i), the applicant fully meets the criterion by detailing 10 top influences research has found to impact student achievement, and based on such research, the strategies the schools would be using to implement such practices via this grant, with a key goal of helping students understand that learning is key to their success. This information was of high quality, and helped support their overall efforts to prepare students for college and careers.</p> <p>For C1a(ii), the applicant fully meets the criterion by detailing strong efforts to help students identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college-and-career ready standards. This information was of high quality, and helped support their overall efforts to prepare students for college and careers.</p> <p>For C1a(iii), the applicant fully meets the criterion by describing a variety of personalized resources which will be customized for each student, and also profiles the schooling options (both traditional and alternative, face-to-face and on-line) available as options to best fit student needs. These included their enhanced STEAM Academy, their Burke Middle</p>		

Academy, their Hallyburton academy, career and technology programing, dual enrollment, digital classrooms, and their traditional middle and high schools. The partnership to better utilize the facilities and technological supports of a nearby state facility for the deaf for all students is a great example of a cutting edge partnership to do more with existing resources. This information was of high quality, and helped support their overall efforts to prepare students for college and careers.

For C1a(iv), the applicant fully meets the criterion by noting that their implementation of the common core and essential standards during 2012-13, along with the personalized learning environments proposed through this project will result in a deeper understanding of the curriculum, and more opportunities to solve real world problems within the context of becoming career and college ready. This information was of high quality, and helped support their overall efforts to prepare students for college and careers.

For C1a(v), the applicant fully meets the criterion by noting that their state is engaged in a Preschool through Age 21 (P-21) initiative in which all students are to learn the four key 21st Century Learning skills, including creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication, and that these are built into the new common core and essential standards adopted by the state. This information was of high quality, and helped support their overall efforts to prepare students for college and careers.

For C1b(i and ii), the applicant fully meets these criteria by noting how the students' personalized learning devices will allow access to limitless content and tools, allowing students to refer daily to their personalized learning plans. Special note was also made of how e-books will provide great support for meeting their reading goals (and referred to recent research to support such claims). This information was of high quality, and helped support their overall efforts to prepare students for college and careers.

For C1b(iii), the applicant fully meets the criterion by offering evidence that the district is already engaged in providing digital learning opportunities for many of its students and that the grant will enhance such efforts. Students are currently able to take online courses from a number of entities, and their middle school students can take an on-line course which prepares them to take on-line high school courses. The district also has a cadre of teachers trained to create on-line and/or hybrid learning to support student needs, and has already implemented a bring-your-own-device program. The grant will enhance these efforts by making sure all students have such devices, and video conference labs will be installed at every high school. This information was of high quality, and helped support their overall efforts to prepare students for college and careers.

For C1b(iv), the applicant almost fully meets the criterion by noting that college and career ready standards will be evaluated throughout middle and high school, and then identified several commercial tests to be used at various grades (e.g., Explorer, PLAN, PSAT, ACT). While such periodic information is good, absent is information as to how on-going feedback will be provided to students about their progress. This information was of high quality, and helped support their overall efforts to prepare students for college and careers.

For C1b(v), the applicant fully meets the criteria by offering good evidence as to how they propose to provide accommodations and high quality strategies for high-need students. They plan to use Graduation Coaches to monitor and work with higher risk high school students, and to work with middle schools on transition strategies. They also plan to use e-books to assist with bilingual students and other students with lower reading levels. Again they offered some research evidence that such e-books have many advantages for older students with reading concerns. This information was of high quality, and helped support their overall efforts to prepare students for college and careers.

For C1c, the applicant fully meets the criterion by describing some training for students and parents as to how to use Power School to track student learning. This information was of high quality, and helped support their overall efforts to prepare students for college and careers.

Overall, the applicant summarized this section within a high quality plan that includes six overall goals, and associated activities, deliverables, timelines, and responsible parties. For example, one goal is that every student has a personalized learning plan in the form of a digital portfolio in use by students and teachers. The activities associated with this include purchasing the digital devices, training the teachers, and developing the portfolios, all being completed by summer 2014 for the high schools, summer 2015 for the middle schools, and summer 2016 for the elementary schools. The responsible parties are the personalized learning coaches, and teachers. With only one minor missing piece (as noted within this description), the applicant has offered strong responses and evidence in this section, and receives a score in the high range.

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

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

For C2a (i-ii), the applicant fully meets this criterion by detailing how all teachers and leaders will engage in professional

learning communities focused on the best use of technology to support individualized teaching and learning, and other means to improve student outcomes. There will also be personalized learning coaches available for all teachers to support them as needed, as they work to adapt their content and instruction to become mastery, rather than proficiency, based, with the 1:1 technology support basis in mind. This information was of high quality, and helped support their overall efforts for improving teaching and leading in their district.

For C2a (iii), the applicant fully meets this criterion by detailing how they will be using an array of state assessments to measure to what extent each student is on track to be college and career ready, as augmented by other formative and benchmark exams. The state's longitudinal database also tracks transcript, attendance, and behavioral data, as well as summative and formative assessment information to provide immediate information for teachers. This information was of high quality, and helped support their overall efforts for improving teaching and leading in their district.

For C2a(iv), the applicant fully meets this criterion by detailing how they will be using data from the state's new teachers and administrator evaluation systems, which integrate measures of student growth. Data from these systems will be used to help improve educator effectiveness for teachers not deemed effective or highly effective (using the personalized learning coaches and various forms of professional development). This information was of high quality, and helped support their overall efforts for improving teaching and leading in their district.

For C2b(i-iii), the applicant fully meets these criteria by detailing the many types of state and local assessments which will be used to help teachers monitor student progress and take action as needed to better support such growth (criterion C2bi). A variety of learning resources are listed that are already in place or will be developed as learning resources for teachers including standards and curriculum, learner profiles and work samples, instructional design, practice and resources, assessment tools, and dashboards and analytics (criterion C2bii). They also note the state's implementation of additional measures of student learning exams, in which 22 subjects will be eventually tested on-line for immediate feedback to teachers on student outcomes (criterion C2biii). This information was of high quality, and helped support their overall efforts for improving teaching and leading in their district.

For C2c(i-ii), the applicant fully meets these criteria by detailing the state educator evaluation system, that includes a value-added student-growth model that ties classroom artifacts, student surveys, peer-reviews, teacher portfolios, and a classroom observation tool. Results from these evaluations are entered into an on-line system which will flag teacher weaknesses allowing for immediate identification of the need for targeted professional learning. Aggregate data will provide leaders with overall school-level strengths and concerns regarding school climate and culture (criterion C2ci). Information is also offered regarding the training that all teachers and leaders will be participating in related to tiered instruction using personalized instruction, as well as literacy development. Using e-books to support differentiated learning is also noted as a key support (criterion C2cii). This information was of high quality, and helped support their overall efforts for improving teaching and leading in their district.

For C2d, the applicant fully meets this criterion by detailing how they will use the data from the new state teacher evaluation system to identify their most highly effective teachers and work to place them in the areas of highest need. This information was of high quality, and helped support their overall efforts for improving teaching and leading in their district.

The applicant summarizes this section with a table identifying the key elements of their high quality plan for teaching and leading, including five major goals, and associated activities, deliverables, timelines, and responsible parties. For example, one of their goals is to build the capacity of teachers to institute personalized instruction in the classroom. The activities associated with this goal are to have their instructional support staff cross trained as personalized learning coaches (by summer 2014), to train their teachers in the methods of teaching and learning using personalized instruction (by the summer before implementation at each school level), and to have their personalized learning coaches provide on-going support to teachers. The responsible parties include the project director, instructional support staff, the personalized learning coaches, and teachers.

Overall the applicant has offered a high quality and very credible plan to help educators personalize the learning environment to help all students graduate college- and career-ready. The applicant receives a score in the high range.

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:

For D1a, the applicant fully meets this criterion by describing how their central office leaders will be working to support this grant, using both existing supports and the creation of new ones. They also note their previous successes in launching and

supporting their middle college and their STEAM Academy (criteria D1a).

For D1b, the applicant fully meets this criterion by describing how each school has a school leadership team with the autonomy to choose which blended learning strategies are most appropriate for their school. In addition, each school will have a personalized learning coach who will work with the leadership team and individual teachers to create instructional modules, lessons plans, and authentic assessments. The school principal and school leadership team is noted to have the authority and decision-making power over school personnel decisions and staff models and responsibilities for educators and non-educators.

For D1c, the applicant fully meets this criterion by noting that they will be exploring how best to eliminate seat-time requirements for courses and replace them with assessments that determine mastery. They will be seeking approval from their state department to provide this option for students within case-by-case waivers.

For D1d, the applicant fully meets this criterion by describing how students will be able to demonstrate mastery in multiple ways and at multiple times via their digital portfolio. Their new technology platform, called Homebase, will allow teachers to search for assessment items/tasks, as well as create, administer and score assessments, and it provides formative assessment strategies and resources.

For D1e, the applicant fully meets this criterion by noting how every student will have a digital device, and for those without internet at home, their devices will be equipped with mobile broadband cards allowing them to access the learning platform. Such digital devices will be used to access online courses and digital textbooks, and for completing assignments and assessments.

The applicant summarizes their key efforts to meet the D1 criteria within a summary table depicting the elements of a high quality plan, following their descriptions for the entire section D criteria. For example, one goal is to ensure that their school leadership teams have the flexibility and autonomy to implement personalized learning in their schools, with a key activity involving such teams deciding on the support to be provided by personalized learning coaches on an on-going basis, with the teams and coaches being the responsible parties.

Overall, they provide high quality evidence that they do have practices, policies, and rules that will facilitate personalized learning, and the applicant scores in the high range.

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

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

For D2a-b, the applicant fully meets these criteria by describing how all teachers and students will have their own digital device, and the significant training efforts (for students, parents, and teachers), as well as the employment of five technology engineers. They note that the devices will be loaded with mobile broadband cards for those without internet at home, and that students will have adequate time at school to download needed resources to continue their learning at home. Prior to the rollout of the devices, the personalized learning coaches will provide teachers and administrators with five days of intensive training regarding best instructional practices within a 1:1 environment, and such coaches will be available at each school to provide ongoing support. There will also be an annual technology summit for all students and parents, and additional technical support for students taking hybrid courses and courses taught through the video conference labs.

For D2c-d, the applicant fully meets these criteria by describing their PowerSchool parent portal which allows parents access to key outcome data and resources, including the use of inter-operable data systems, and the ability for parents and students to export their information in an open data format. For those without computers or internet at home, each school will provide open times at the schools so parents can use the equipment there. In addition, the district plans to procure a learning management system, which in conjunction with Homebase, will provide additional information needed to support instructional and personal decisions.

The applicant summarizes their key efforts to meet the D2 criteria within a summary table depicting the elements of a high quality plan, which details how their infrastructure will support personalized learning. For example, one goal is to have their students progress based on mastery of content. An associated activity to accomplish this goal is to revise their policies based on seat time versus mastery of course content, with the responsible party for this being the school board.

Overall, the applicant has clearly, and with high quality, offered evidence to demonstrate they have the LEA and school infrastructure to support personalized learning, and scores in the high range.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)



	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>For E1, the applicant fully meets the criterion by describing the leadership structure to oversee the implementation of the state, both on the day-to-day basis, and as part of broader periodic review. All layers of key leadership will be involved, as well as groups of teachers, parents, and students. An external evaluation will be contracted with a nearby university, and data from those evaluation efforts will be used to continuously revise and strengthen their efforts as needed. This external evaluation will also produce cost-benefit analysis results, including a return on their educational investments rating. The applicant noted several areas for which they believe continuously learning and revisions will be occurring (e.g., Digital Portfolios for students' personalized learning plans). They note how their public relations office will be sharing information with the public regarding grant activities and outcomes.</p> <p>The applicant summarizes their key efforts to meet the E1 criteria within a summary table depicting the elements of a high quality plan, following their descriptions for the section E1 & E2 criteria. This summary plan list 3 key goals, 9 associated activities to accomplish those goals, and numerous deliverables, the timelines, and responsible parties. Overall, the applicant has provided a high quality plan for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process that provided feedback on progress and opportunities for ongoing corrects during and after the term of the grant.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant has clearly, and with high quality, offered evidence of a high quality and credible plan for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process, and scores in the high range.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>For E2, the applicant fully meets this criterion by noting that key internal communication will be occurring via their professional learning communities, the personalized learning coaches, and the school improvement teams. External communication with key partners will occur via planned monthly meetings, and via a new part-time Distance Learning Coordinator. All stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and students, will have opportunities for engagement on a regular basis. Their public relations officer will also be sharing information with parents and the public on a regular basis.</p> <p>The applicant summarizes their key efforts to meet the E1-2 criteria within a summary table depicting the elements of a high quality plan. Overall, the applicant has clearly offered a high quality and credible plan for implementing ensuring ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders, and scores in the high range.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>For E3, the applicant fully meets the criterion, by providing ambitious yet achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroups, with annual targets for required and their own proposed performance measures. For each grouping of goals, they offered the rationale for selecting the measures and how it will provide good data supporting the overall implementation of the reform efforts.</p> <p>For the overall measures of the number of students with highly effective or effective teachers and principals, the applicant noted that a new evaluation system is being used, and that 2013-14 will provide the baseline data from which targets will then be established. (Note: the guidance offered to applicants, via the frequently asked question E-27, noted that an applicant could choose to enter "to be determined" for future targets, and that this "could" affect the scoring of this criterion. However, in this case, the applicant offered a very credible rationale for not being able to include such data, and for this reason, it did not impact the scoring for this criterion.)</p> <p>Data for their K-3 area, will only include 3rd graders (since that is all the grant is covering), and again, baseline student outcome data from state testing is not available until this year (following which targets would be established). They will also be measuring the number of disciplinary referrals by subgroups for aggressive and violent acts (to gauge the social and emotional development).</p> <p>For grades 4-8, they include four measures, meeting the requirements established, setting targets for (a) data from the <i>ACT Explore</i> assessment given to 8th graders (to track career and college readiness), (b) data from the state subject tests for grades 4-8, (c) data depicting the number of disciplinary referrals by subgroups for aggressive and violent acts (to gauge the social and emotional development), and (d) data depicting the percentage of electronic portfolios/individualized learning plans created for students by subgroups.</p>		

For grades 9-12, they propose to track overall and by subgroup those who complete the FAFSA, the percentage of 9th graders who are promoted, the math and reading end-of-subject exams for 9-12, the number of disciplinary referrals for aggressive and violent acts (to gauge the social and emotional development), and percentage of electronic portfolios/individualized learning plans created for students.

The applicant noted how they will review and improve these measures over time as needed, with input gathered from the external evaluators as well as individual school improvement teams.

Overall, the applicant has clearly, and with high quality, offered ambitious, yet achievable, performance measures. The applicant scores in the high range.

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

5

5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

For E4, the applicant fully meets the criterion by offering details on how their plans for their program as a whole will be evaluated by an external evaluation unit. This external evaluator will focus on each aspect of the grant, as well as calculate a cost-benefit analysis resulting in a return on educational investment rating to calculate how much learning their district produces for every dollar spent through the grant. In addition, their external evaluation will examine in great detail several of the newer initiatives within the grant, including the pre-engineering curriculum being developed.

The applicant summarizes their key efforts to meet the E4 criteria within a summary table depicting the elements of a high quality plan. For example, one goal is to establish systems to collect and monitor data. Key activities include creating databases for all performance measures (by October 2014), and establishing baseline data those measures in which baseline data was not initially available (by June 2015). Responsible parties for these deliverables include the external evaluator (The Friday Institute), the project director, and the assistant director of student information.

Overall, the applicant has clearly offered a credible high quality plan to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of their grant activities, and scores in the high range.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

For F1 a, b, c(i-ii), the applicant fully meets the criteria by offering budget narrative and tables that identify all grant, local, state and other federal funds needed to support their proposal reform activities. A thoughtful rationale was provided for each major project budget, including how they will ensure the long-term sustainability of personalized learning environments. The budget as a whole aligns with all reform activities previously described in the grant proposal. Funds which are one time versus on-going are identified, and all proposed items seem reasonable to support their proposed efforts. For example, their cost-sharing plan (based on state department of education estimates) will save their district approximately \$217,000 per year in current technology infrastructure costs, which they will be using to continue the support of the district's new technology infrastructure to support the grant's goals.

Overall, the applicant has clearly offered a credible budget to implement the proposed activities in this grant, and scores in the high range.

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

10

10

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

For F2, the applicant fully meets the criterion by detailing the primary budget items which are one-time in nature (to help support their new pre-engineering and enhanced STEAM Academy), and that they will be seeking alternative forms of funding to sustain the leasing of the 1:1 devices. They share how they will be creating a sustainability committee to focus on this task from the very beginning of the grant, and to review the results regarding the "return on investments" analysis being conducted by the external evaluation group. They also summarized their activities by including a table that offered all elements of a high quality plan.

Overall, the applicant has clearly offered a credible high quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant, and scores in the high range.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

For item 1, the applicant fully meets this criterion by offering details of some significant partnerships already in place with mental health providers, the juvenile justice system, the sheriff's office, county health department, department of social services, and many nonprofit support agencies. Given the strong partnerships and programs already in place, sustainability of any new initiatives is more likely. Two new Graduation Coaches will serve as the major addition to support students through these partnerships.

For items 2 and 3, the applicant fully meets these criteria by offering three goal/indicators for this competitive preference priority area (items 2 and 6), including a required one focused on educational results and one focused on family and community supports. These goals are articulated both for students as a whole, as well as for subgroups (item 3a). They describe how they use data and their Behavior Specialists work to identify students in need of special services, and work to target such support (item 3b). They described a strategy for scaling this support from the high school to the middle school (item 3c), and how they plan to improve results over time (item 3c).

For items 4 and 5, the applicant fully meets these criteria by offering details on how they will be integrating education and other services (item 4), and how the capacity of the staff is being built and additional tools provided (items 5a-b). They also describe their decision-making process and infrastructure (item 5c) and how parents and families are engaged in the process (item 5d).

For item 6, the applicant identifies performance measures that would track the number of students who receive out of school suspensions who complete community service, as well as the increased identification of students who need, and receive, social support services.

Overall, the applicant has proposed credible partnerships that will indeed support their plan as described in the Absolute Priority 1, and scores in the high range.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has fully met this absolute priority 1 focused on personalized learning environment. As previously described, the applicant does coherently and comprehensively address how it will create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards.

Their overall plan is called Project DETAIL: Digital Education-Teaching and Individualized Learning, and the applicant offered high quality plans as to how they will meet their expressed goals of transforming their education model from a teacher-driven model into a student-driven learning model (their goal 1); institutionalizing personalized instruction (their goal 2); cultivating 21st century highly effective educators (their goal 3); and shifting from a proficiency to mastery model of learning (their goal 4).

Their general approach for expanding college- and career- ready opportunities involves expanding their STEAM Academy to include three pre-engineering programs, and developing a capacity-building professional development model of co-teaching between the teachers from their state school of science and math and their district teachers. Additionally, three new CTE programs will be created as options for students. Their approach for implementing personalized learning will be to repurpose and retrain their currently employed instructional coaches and instructional technology positions to become personalized learning coaches to support teachers as they institute personalized teaching and learning in the classroom. Every student will have a personalized learning plan in the form of a digital portfolio and a 1:1 digital device strategy will be implemented. Students will have choices in showing mastery on core content using interest-based and project-based learning.

Total	210	205
-------	-----	-----



Race to the Top - District Technical Review Form

Application #0052NC-2 for Burke County Public Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Overall the applicant has demonstrated that their proposal includes the key elements required in this segment of the grant application.

Based on information contained in the grant the district has demonstrated success in implementing programs addressing the 4 core assurance areas.

1. Standards and assessment- 2010 North Carolina adopted Common Core standards in math, ELA, science and social studies. The district implemented these standards in 2012-13. They are also adopting and implementing the new state assessment program, revising curriculum standards for all grade levels and subject areas and implementing teacher/administrator evaluation system revisions. The district also uses nationally normed assessments to determine student proficiency. For example during the first semester each year, the district administers the PLAN (an ACT assessment) to all 10th graders. This data is used to assess gaps, adjust instruction etc. Through this initiative the district will include the use of student portfolios, rubrics and project-based learning products. Students will have more input into and more flexibility in demonstrating student learning outcomes.

2. Building data systems to measure student growth and success- Since 2012-13 the district has utilized the new North Carolina teacher and principal evaluation system. They have also implemented the North Carolina Education value-added Assessment System. They plan to participate in the state longitudinal data system that will link student data from early childhood education through the work force. This will be introduced in the year ahead. Applicant demonstrates effective use of state designed data systems that measure student growth; they articulate adoption and use of standards and assessment that focus on student college and career readiness

3. Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals- The district plans to use data from the North Carolina new Teacher and Principal Evaluation Process to identify their highly effective teachers and principals. Year around professional development will be offered to all staff. It will be tailored to their rating and student data results. Currently the district has an established team of educators who serve as Instructional Coaches, Academically Gifted Coaches, Exceptional Children's Coaches and Instructional Technology Facilitators they will be repurposed to be Personalized Learning Coaches. The current system appears to offer some rewards and advancement in a segmented way. As the Project DETAIL plan has outlined it could offer significant reward and opportunity to teachers and principals.

4. Turning around lowest achieving schools-

Examples of past initiatives were cited building a successful track record for the district. (ex. District was a recipient of a Tech Prep grant that allowed the creation of Burke Middle College, a program with a graduation rate that has remained at 95% or above over the past five years.)

The district completely transformed the educational program and dramatically increased student success rate at Hallyburton Academy. In 2010-11 Hallyburton Academy was identified by North Carolina as a low achieving school. The school was reconfigured to offer an alternative educational program to students who were at risk of not graduating, had dropped out and/or was removed from their home school due to discipline issues.

"Hallyburton Academy showed quite impressive gains in the graduation rate over the past 4 years; increasing from 40.8% in 2008-09 to 83.8% in 2012-13. Hallyburton is a non-traditional school serving middle and high school students who either dropped out of school and returned to complete their high school education; students who prefer an extended day schedule with courses offered in the late afternoon and evening; and students who are in need of credit recovery."

Burke County Public Schools proposes to implement Project DETAIL: Digital Education-Teaching and Individualized Learning so students will learn through personalized instruction across all educational arenas within the school system. This includes all students in grades 3-12, phasing in grades 3-5 in the latter years of the grant. The district provides a chart with demographic profiles of each school.

4. Goals are outlined: Transform the current education model from a teacher-driven model to a student driven model; Institutionalize personalized instruction where every student has a personalized learning plan and uses that plan on a daily basis; Cultivate 21st century highly effective educators and expand student access to excellent teachers; Shift from a proficiency to a mastery model of student learning where students advance based on a personalized learning plan.

They propose to use a systems-based continuous improvement approach that will address challenges in implementation and replicate successes. Digital learning content along with open access to technology will build a network of resources and staff throughout the district, thus breaking down isolation or independence that appears to exist among the 27 school buildings.

The appendix contains documents "A Day in the Life" that outline the new instructional system that will occur from a student's and a teacher's perspective. The concept of the proposal to provide personalized learning opportunities for grades 3-12 is not fully developed with the example provided. Adding examples of an elementary (gr 3-5), and middle school (gr 6-8) experience to provide a more complete description of classroom experiences, as the HS example provides that perspective only, would have been more comprehensive.

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

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant met all the requirements of A2

a) Applicant provided details of the process used to select schools who will participate, implementation timelines and goals. Project DETAIL Leadership Team was established to develop the concepts and implementation plan. This is a diverse team of teachers, students, parents, principals, administrators, and community representatives. All traditional and non-traditional students, grades 3-12 will participate in Project DETAIL. Success from reform in grades 6-12 will be replicated in the grades 3-5 band in the later years of the grant. The following rationale was used when deciding not to push initiatives down to the Kg-2nd grade band "The rationale for this decision is informed by several factors: strong community support for grades 6-12 reform, these schools have the oldest technology, they have a lower ratio of instructional support personnel to students in the elementary level, district historically has used Title I federal funding for elementary schools only; therefore funding is substantially lower at these schools as in comparison to elementary schools."

The process used and rationale shared does support a high quality implementation for 6-12 and the extension to grades 3-5. It is shared that Kg-2 students have had access to technology and enhanced programs through grant initiatives such as Title 1 funds, that were targeted for early elementary students.

b) The applicant provides narrative that indicates that 100% of the schools housing students grades 3-12 will participate in this initiative. They also note that each school will have autonomy in their approach to implementation based on building level data. This is further discussed in section D.

c) The applicant has provided required information regarding students. School demographic data is provided on all participating schools. Information shared: number of students enrolled, number of educators, % of students from low income families. Low income students are students who qualify for the federal free and reduced lunch program (appendix A). High need students are defined as students who are not proficient in reading or math based on the State end-of-grade, end-of course tests.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	9
--	-----------	----------

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant meets the requirements of A3 as they note that all schools and students grades 3-12 will be served and that the 3-5 grades will be part of the program in the latter years of the grant. All grant documents reflect this intention and demonstrate implementation strategies. The overarching goal of this proposal is to implement and sustain Project DETAIL: Digital Education-Teaching and Individualized Learning, an initiative designed to transform the system from teacher-led instruction to student-driven, interest based learning. They discuss scaling up current initiatives and implementing districtwide reforms that will have long term impact. The district will realign staff to provide "graduation coaches" for students, and "personalized learning coaches" to assist staff during implementation. These additional resources will create an informal safety net for struggling students. Re-deploying existing staff provides a resource that is already embedded into the school culture would be an asset for change. Their plan to employ additional technology engineers during the course of the grant will provide a comprehensive implementation of new technology. They also share their intent to expand the programs offered through the STEAM Academy and intent to add a 6-8 component. The district provides a table that indicates key goals, activities of the scale-up plan and the timeframe for each component. Example Year 1: [01/2014-](#)

06/2014; Feb-June Key Goal: Cross train instructional support staff as Personalized Learning Coaches using COBALT model; Responsible Party: Friday Institute, Instructional Support Staff.

The applicant states technology will provide equal access and further describes it in this way, "Every teacher and student will have a digital learning device in order to implement personalized learning. Digital learning devices will be leased for every teacher and every student. By leasing these devices, BCPS will have four years to establish a sustainable capital outlay budget for digital devices." The practical approach outlined to implement technology and training will provide students open access to technology.

The proposal also exhibits resourcefulness by utilizing key local and state resources to accomplish goals. For example: The district will rely heavily on statewide initiatives such as the North Carolina Technology Initiative and local institutions of higher education, Western Piedmont Community College, North Carolina School of Science and Math. These components demonstrate the applicant has established a means to obtain their outcome goals.

Plans for establishing professional learning communities at the building level along with extensive teacher and principal training are shared. The applicant states that this is a critical component for reform.

What is not shared are details of how the Grades 3-5 program will be brought on line in the latter years of the grant. They do share building reforms such as teacher training and establishing a professional learning community that will occur in these buildings throughout the grant period.

The Logic Model included in the grant application, Appendix B, is complete. The level of detail is very intricate. Further clarification could be attained by breaking out segments into additional pages, making it easier for the reader to follow the progression outlined. Specific deliverables are noted in segments of A3. Their addition provides assurance that elements are attainable. The applicant scored in the high range in this section of the grant.

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

10

9

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The vision articulated in the proposal addresses the LEA's intent to increase performance on summative assessments, decrease achievement gaps, improve graduation rates and college enrollment rates. Applicant demonstrates how they will achieve these goals by providing narrative and tables that detail key goals, timelines and resource allocation. Information regarding outside resources used is also given, for example "The Friday Institute will provide external evaluation services. The North Carolina Learning Technology initiative will drive the implementation plan". An area that was not reported on was college enrollment results. The applicant does note that North Carolina is implementing a new initiative to track student success post college, but it is in start up mode at the present time.

Student proficiency is also outlined including overall group and sub group targets. Targets established overall are ambitious. The applicant states "The goals established either meet or exceed targets set by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction." Specific summative assessments being used are noted as North Carolina End-of -Grade reading comprehensive test grades 3-8; End-of-Year math tests, grades 3-8; End-of-Course tests- English 1 and Algebra 1.

The stated goal: "Our goal is not only to increase proficiency, but decrease disparities between subgroups" may provide insight into set subgroup goals. But, subgroup targets may not be attainable, for example, the sub group: Special Education: 44.2 % success rate to 74.1% in grade 3 reading and 62.8% to 82.6% in math in four years; Gr 6 reading- 55.5% to 79.4%, math 56.5% to 81.3%; Algebra 1- 45.6% to 77.8%. These are very ambitious targets that are probably not realistic based on the information contained in this application.

To support student success and decrease the achievement gaps the proposal outlines strategies that will be employed including "Every students will have a personalized learning plan in the form of a digital portfolio; in addition graduation coaches will closely monitor progress and implement interventions for those who are unsuccessful. The intention is to make learning more relevant for low performing/high need students". A seven part plan was shared in the proposal. The focus is to provide opportunity for individual choice, cultural sensitivity, and exposure to a variety of careers and college fields, authentic learning experiences, interaction with role models.

The applicant has laid out a plan that will result in improved student learning and performance. Strategies such as an electronic personalized learning plan available 24/7, graduation coaches for students in danger of dropping out, more authentic learning opportunities selected by a student based on personal interest are effective in closing achievement gaps.

College enrollment will be affected in a positive way through offering the ACT test to sophomores at no charge. In addition a middle school test "EXPLORE" will be administered as a measure of academic progress toward college and career. College enrollment rate data is currently collected by the state. At the present time it is desegregated by ethnicity only. The methodology for postsecondary degree attainment has been established by the state. North Carolina is in the process of developing a new Kg-22 longitudinal data system. Data from this regarding postsecondary degree attainment is not available at this time.

The applicant met the criteria in the high 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	14
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>a) Applicant shared its 3-12 record of success for the past years both in narrative and chart form which indicates student achievement by subgroup was raised in all grades by at least 1.5% (students with disabilities) and as high as 12.4% (multi-racial). Hispanic and Asian sub groups also saw a significant increase. As these appear to be the largest subgroup populations, with the exception of SWD students, this indicates significant gain in proficiency.</p> <p>Applicant shares that one way BCPS has made great gains is by offering digital courses. These credits have helped improve the graduation rate significantly going from 71.1% to 87.9 % overall (16.8% gain). Many courses are offered from outside school vendors. The district has worked on developing local expertise in different segments of the district over the past four years particularly at Hallyburton Academy, Burke Middle College, and STEAM Academy. This proposal would allow for expansion of teacher training in digital and blended courses district wide. This will increase equity in teaching and learning.</p> <p>High school graduation rates are improving at BCPS from 71.1% to 87.9%, a 16.8% gain overall. Applicant shared data by school showing a 4 year view. The most dramatic increase occurred at Hallyburton Academy with 43.1% increase. The newest addition to innovative programming is STEAM Academy. It is clear that the district has experienced significant success in closing achievement gaps as indicated by raising graduation rates and student achievement. They also shared a steady increase in college enrollment. In 2011-2012 the overall enrollment rate was 83.3% going up to 84.5% in 2012-2013.</p> <p>These examples indicate that BCPS has a proven track record of success in advancing student learning and achievement. As outlined in this proposal these systemic changes will impact all students.</p> <p>b) Hallyburton Academy showed quite impressive gains in the graduation rate over the past 4 years; increasing from 40.8% in 2008-09 to 83.8% in 2012-13. "Four key reform interventions were implemented through the Drop and Prevention School Improvement grants". These key strategies turned this school around. One of the most compelling is the implementation of teacher evaluation, reward and removal procedure. In a very direct manner the district changed the culture of this school by assigning teaching staff based on positive evaluations and proven skill in raising student achievement.</p> <p>The district shared it resourcefulness to resolving major problems such as the lack of a full blown tech prep programs. BCPS established "Burke Middle College (BMC) utilizing USDOE funding to offer unique educational opportunities for 11th and 12th grade students. BMC established seamless curricula between high school and community college where students can earn dual credit.</p> <p>Each of the programs noted above have an enrollment of around 120 students. The applicant does not indicate the enrollment pattern for these specialized programs. The selection criteria used to enroll in the STEAM academy was not shared, nor if there is a limit on number of students who may attend each year, prerequisites to specific programs, entrance or placement tests etc. The district does not share plans to replicate or expand program based on student interest. Distance Learning or blended classroom alternatives for some of the courses may be possible but this was not noted.</p> <p>c) Access to student data: BCPS began using PowerSchool in the fall, 2013. PowerSchool includes a student portal where students can access personalized learning plans, grades, and resources and Parent Portal that allows families to check academic performance of their children. There is no cost for parent or student use.</p> <p>The applicant provided ample information by school that shows they have been successful in reducing achievement gaps and improving student outcomes, achieved significant reforms in their lowest achieving schools, and provided access to student performance data to inform and improve instruction/services. The methodology used was described and aligns with North Carolina State requirements. These practices are critical when assessing progress in the future. This was well planned and executed.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant demonstrates that they have achieved a high level of transparency in LEA processes, procedures and investments. For example the District posts annual personnel salaries in the local newspaper and on the district website, actual school level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration are accessible. The district cash management plan and external audit documents are available for public review. The district also employs a public relations officer to share information with the public through social media, newspapers etc. All personnel salaries and expenditures are posted by school in the local newspaper and on the district website. The application includes in Appendix C - school level audit report, 2012 and Appendix D- cash management plan for the district. This creates a comprehensive plan for oversight and ample opportunity for public scrutiny.</p>		

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>"Currently, North Carolina does not restrict school districts' ability to customize students' learning. In fact, North Carolina General Statute 115C-105.41 states that local administrative units shall identify students at risk of academic failure beginning at Kindergarten and must include focused interventions. This general statute gives districts the statutory authority and obligation to customize learning for students. There is no legislation that prevents districts from taking this action." This is noteworthy as this will provide flexibility and autonomy when making decisions regarding establishing personalized learning opportunities K-12.</p> <p>The district has indicated throughout this application their intent to align and utilize various state level initiatives and resources during implementation. For example: "Burke's plan is in line with the Career and College: Ready Set Go! Initiative—North Carolina's RttT plan, as well as North Carolina's READY initiative, the state's revamped testing and accountability model."</p> <p>The applicant has demonstrated through evidence that successful conditions exist for sufficient autonomy to implement a personalized learning environment.</p>		

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	14
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>An extensive description of how each stakeholder group was engaged in the process of developing this proposal was included. The district spent significant time developing the Project DETAIL initiative and then sharing it with the community stakeholders in many ways-publications, Website, face-to-face meetings, community forums, radio broadcasts, roundtable discussions etc. As evidenced here, planning has been done on several levels, using a variety of strategies to share ideas and gather input on what personalized education means for Burke County and what it should look like in order to most effectively prepare students for college and the workforce." The one stakeholder group that was not mentioned in this process was the college or higher education partners.</p> <p>Early on the district established a steering committee, the Project DETAIL Leadership Team. Planning involved all stakeholders with the Project DETAIL Leadership Team taking the lead. In early September a planning meeting was held and included local business representatives and interested members of the public.</p> <p>To fully assess the level of educator support of the project at every school, a survey (Appendix E) was developed describing the key goals of Project DETAIL. Teachers were provided a written description of the project. 100% of the teachers took the survey and 97-100% support was received from all respondents, depending on the building location. Artifacts such as the teacher survey and letters of support from key stakeholders such as parents, students, collaboration partners, the mayor and other public officials are found in the appendices.</p> <p>The plan design reflects the feedback attained from stakeholder groups and as a result their is strong support for Project DETAIL. For example the applicant writes "The most common feedback we received from teachers and principals was concern regarding how to make personalized learning relevant and authentic for students. This was incorporated into the plan through the idea of Digital Portfolios that are personalized, giving students opportunities to demonstrate mastery in a variety of ways,...".</p> <p>Overall the applicant has met all the criteria of this section, based on review of these documents and the narrative. They have provided thorough description of the process used and the results are charted for easy review. In addition the appendices includes copies of letters of support mentioned in the narrative.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	19
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal is designed to offer multiple options for high school students that all lead to career and college readiness. Students can choose to attend a traditional high school program or one the innovative specialized programs such as Burke Middle College or STEAM Academy.</p> <p>The applicant has outlined a high quality plan that contains key goals, activities that respond to the goals based on rationale and data driven decisions. They include a timeline that identifies those responsible for implementing the activities, notes the deliverables. This proposal is</p>		

resourceful as it draws on existing resources to achieve the goal of individualized learning. The proposal fails to outline how these strategies will be implemented at the Grade 3-5 level in the later years of the grant.

a) The narrative provides numerous examples of how a learner centered model will be put into action. For example: "In addition to Career and Technical Education programs, diverse learning options include dual enrollment, and digital classrooms. A major approach to learning will be a shift from a "proficiency" to "mastery" model of student learning. By moving to a 1:1 learner centered model, student learning can happen 24/7 both inside and outside the classroom walls."

The proposal creates a pathway for students "to experience deep learning in areas of academic interest". The proposal intends to offer more opportunities for college readiness through the new STEAM Academy. Plans are shared to replicate this program in the western part of the state by re-purposing the underused School for the Deaf campus and partnering with the North Carolina School for the Deaf, School of Science and Mathematics, and the Western Piedmont Community College.

College Ready Institutes are planned for all high schools within the district. These information sessions will help both students and parents prepare for college. Students preparing to go into a career from high school will have an expansion of career cluster programming available. The hallmark of these courses will be authentic learning experiences that allow students to apply the theory and skills learned.

These programs will offer training in critical academic content and skills related to goal setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking. This is in the formative stage according to the applicant. Teachers are "learning how to better incorporate these skills in lessons at the elementary, middle and high school levels". This may be an area to that needs close oversight as it progresses since it is a foundational piece of these programs.

There is a basic concept shared in the proposal that through personalized learning environments access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, perspectives will happen when students work collaboratively to solve real world problems. More explicit plans would anchor this idea and provide guidance in actually developing these opportunities.

b) This 1:1 learner center instructional model will require extensive training for the teachers and students, as well as their parents. The grant proposal outlines a variety of strategies to support this transition. Flexible time for learning, self-monitoring of personalize learning plans, and use of personal learning devices are discussed. This training will be essential for success at school and at home.

Reading proficiency, students reading on grade level, is a state goal that is emphasized in this proposal. The district has implemented an e-books initiative to support reading excellence. "Personal learning devices will give alternative reading options as students will be able to select and load both instructional and leisure e-books on their digital device". In order to move forward in this important initiative, BCPS invested \$16,000 in e-Books and purchased 775 books in Spring, 2013. This has added a foundational resource that this initiative can draw upon.

High quality digital learning is an essential resource for success of this grant. The district states "BCPS has a thriving program for digital learning with a broad variety of options for students." They have partnered with a number of vendors. There is no cost to the student and each high school has a Distance Learning Advisor to support students taking on line courses. The program recently expanded to include middle school students. Before taking a course students must participate in a seminar on how to take online courses. They have expanded capacity by establishing a Hybrid Institute which trains teachers on how to create "hybrid" courses. Again, evidence of responsive planning and implementation is apparent in this district.

The grant proposes to replicate two strategies that proved very successful with high needs students: establish graduation coaches positions to work with these at risk students and employ an early warning system to predict success of students. Use of digital devices and eBooks will be a priority for the high risk student population. The applicant is basing decisions on past practice and data which results in a more robust plan of action. The applicant shares extensive plans to assess, monitor and counsel students as they progress through their studies. The EXPLORE, PSAT, PLAN, SAT and ACT tests are listed as resources that will be used to assess readiness. These assessments produce individual and aggregate reports that determine students strengths and weaknesses. Each high school will hold parent nights and offer support to the parents in gaining information and applying for higher education grants, loans etc. Middle school offers information and support for parents when planning for high school.

The applicant was very effective in developing strategies to address high needs students. High need students and their families will be able to take advantage of two critical resources that previously were shown to be very effective with high needs students: Graduation Coaching and the Early Warning System. These two resources provide timely feedback related to academic progress and student success. Parents and students form a partnership with the coach to stay on track. This innovation provides just in time support while allowing the student to be self sufficient and responsible for their own learning.

c) Examples of innovative family engagement strategies are shared -Family tech nights will be hosted to share with students and family how digital tools can be used to enhance instruction, track student progress, basic trouble shooting etc. Libraries and tech labs will be open after hours for parent/family access. Activities such as these build community support for this initiative that will continue over time.

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

20

20

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has demonstrated intent for all teachers to engage in training, and in professional communities, that support their individual and collective capacity to improve instruction and provide quality 1:1 instruction. They propose to do this by establishing Personalized Learning Coaches who will work with teachers to support, model, guide, and facilitate their progression to a 1:1 learner environment. These staff will be cross trained, currently serving as instructional coaches, tech specialists etc. This is a smart way to insure support is readily available when needed.

The district also will be establishing professional learning communities at each building and professional learning networks at the district level. The addition of online communication among teachers is innovative. The grant states that book talks will be initiated at the building level across the district. This provides common "language" among the building faculties, as ideas are created and shared. This is an effective way to develop infrastructure for communication and collaboration among professionals at all levels. These concepts will have a significant impact on the progress of change and success of the initiatives outlined. They directly support the requirement to support teaching and leading that is effective in developing a personalized learning environment focused on student career and college readiness.

Another component of this proposal is tiered instruction in which students are grouped into three tiers. Tiered instruction addresses the needs of at-risk students and creates a bridge between exceptional children and regular education. Through differentiation of instruction teachers can adapt content and instruction to meet the needs of students. There is a possibility that a "tracked program" could develop, based on tiers, if criteria and procedures are not established for student assignment to the various tiers. The narrative describes how professional coaches will work with teachers to insure that student performance data and analysis is the basis of these decisions. This along with frequent review and revision will guard against this occurring.

The proposal also states that -Project DETAIL will have an intensive focus on literacy; particularly with the goal of reducing the achievement gap in reading and language arts for middle and high school students. All middle and high school teachers will attend the Reading Foundations course. The decision was made to train all teachers in reading foundations. This is a prudent decision as it will provide a common context for all instruction at the middle and high school level so a comprehensive approach will be established.

Extensive information is shared regarding the teacher and administrator evaluation process. The district lists the LEA Teacher and Principal Evaluation System as the evaluation instrument used, as prescribed by North Carolina. Earlier in the grant document the applicant mentions using this data to place teachers in specific programs such as Hallyburton Academy. The district has been diligent in its approach and the results at Hallyburton Academy have shown the effectiveness of such decision making. Their actions also establish this as a critical factor when establishing strong instructional teams at each school.

The applicant met the requirements for a high quality plan by presenting key goals and activities backed up by rationale, timeline, deliverables and responsible parties identified. They also included helpful charts in addition to the narrative to help the reader visualize their intent.

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 proposal denotes the district's intent to support the concept that each school is different and therefore should have autonomy and authority to implement and administer the program on a daily basis so Project DETAIL can be effective. School Leadership Teams were identified as having one teacher representative from each grade level, special area representatives, teacher assistants, and the principal. Each school will decide which blended learning strategies are most appropriate for their school. Data driven decision making will be an essential foundation necessary to guard against staff resistance and complacency at the building level.

A supportive feature of this plan that is noted is the intent to allow students to progress based on their mastery of content, not course "seat time". The district currently grants credit through virtual course work, the Burke Middle College and STEAM Academy. A weakness to note is at the current time there are no established common assessment or project based learning to demonstrate mastery of specific content. This is a resource to be developed in the future according to the application narrative.

The applicant provides flexibility that is very responsive to individual student progress and skill development through the information portal which has 24/7 access for both students and parents. They also ensure that special student populations such as students with disabilities and English language learners will be provided alternate instructional formats and accessible materials through the use of 1:1 technology.

The proposal outlines multiple formats for students to demonstrate standards mastery as noted in this example- Students will have more input into and more flexibility over demonstrating student learning outcomes and student mastery will be determined through a variety of formats so that

students will have options of ways to show their success and accomplishments. Assessment methods will include the use of student portfolios, rubrics, live presentations and project-based learning products throughout the semester or school year.

Both narrative and charts included outline the specific goals, activities and rationale for them, timeline for implementation, and responsible parties. Overall the applicant has met the requirements for a high quality plan when considering the components of teaching and learning outlined.

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

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has demonstrated access to necessary content, tools and resources both in school and outside of school. They will accomplish this using a myriad of options including after school opportunities for parents to participate in programs and services that support their child's quest for career and college preparation. Examples include assisting parents with financial paperwork for college, partnering with community based services such as counseling and health services to offer assistance in the student's neighborhood, providing a Graduation Coach who will work closely with parents and students to insure the student realizes their personalized learning plan.

The applicant has provided options for access. Students will have anytime; anywhere access both in and out of the classroom to their individualized learning plan. The applicant effectively addresses lack of internet access at home by stating -Because the District serves many low income students and families, parents who do not have internet access at home must be accommodated so they also have access to student information. Every school will be open at designated times each week for parents to visit the school, use the PowerSchool Parent Portal and have access to the information described above. The district also plans to have student-parent technology summits at the beginning of each year to provide orientation to use and care of digital devices and Internet use. Student performance data and student portfolios will be accessible to parents and students from home, school classrooms and computer labs. Additional details are noted in the Competitive Preference Priority narrative and the budget detail of this proposal.

The applicant also proposes setting aside some resources to keep the new hardware in good working order. The applicant outlines how the district will address the technical user problems that will crop up and the deployment of software/hardware updates etc.

The applicant outlines an extensive training program that will be implemented for teachers and administrators. This will be supported by Professional Coaches that will be assigned to work at the building level with faculty on "implementing "instructional best practice within 1:1 environment and basic technical operation of devices".

The applicant outlines the intent to align LEA policies, rules and procedures to support implementation of personalized learning. They already have school leadership teams that function at the building level. They have both flexibility and autonomy to implement personalized learning in the most effective manner for their school. Coupled with this is student progress will be based on mastery of content and demonstration of these skills. Parents and students have access to student data through the parent portal that will be opened.

The applicant met the requirements of this grant component and rates a high score.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant shows evidence of a high quality plan for continuous improvement. Components include all that are required in this application- plans to monitor, measure and publicly share information on the quality of these investments funded by RTTT-D are described. For example, the District proposes to hire key personnel to provide leadership, project oversight for implementation and continuous improvement. Some leadership team members will be recruited internally others hired from outside the system. This is positive as it provides both objective and historic perspectives. Proposal states they will partner with groups like the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation in conjunction with the NC State Univ. College of Education for external evaluation services.

The applicant provides details regarding the STEAM Academy communications strategy. The STEAM Academy project partners the District with the North Carolina School of Science and Math, and the North Carolina School for the Deaf. The proposal lays out the innovation of using resources from the partners to create a new educational opportunity for the districts' students. It effectively partners public education and special education with higher education, offering a comprehensive alternative to the districts students.

To support continuous improvement the applicant notes that focus groups will be convened at the end of each school year, including focus groups

with principals, teachers, parents and students. Focus groups will gather input from these parties on the strengths of Project DETAIL, weaknesses, and areas for improvement." The proposed regular onsite visits to see things in action and more informal reviews will provide insight to small problems to be addressed to maximize the program during the year. Considering technology trends and innovation do not occur on an annual basis, but evolve continuously, by collecting feedback more often- from focus groups, soliciting informal input through questionnaires, surveys, etc., the applicant will be able to anticipate areas of concern and address them.

The applicant also notes there are plans to continue the continuous improvement process established following the grant's end. This will provide continuous feedback and historical perspective regarding the success of this initiative. These data will be very important when evaluating progress and establishing long range plans. The applicant has demonstrated success in meeting the requirements for establishing a continuous improvement process that establishes a high- quality plan of action.

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

5

5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Internally, communication at the school level between teachers will occur through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs); allowing teachers to share successes and get colleague input on implementing personalized instruction. PLCs will expand out to become Professional Learning Networks where teachers from one school are connected with teachers at other BCPS schools and will have the potential to network nationally with other teachers. The Personalized Learning Coaches will be in constant communication with teachers as the project is rolled out and throughout the project as they provide support to teachers on personalized instruction.

The application also describes an effective method to continue communication with the public through newspaper articles and BOE reports. Communication with community partners will occur through face-to-face meetings, phone calls, email. Overall the applicant had met the criteria of ongoing communication and engagement.

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

5

5

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant met all the requirements of this section of the grant.

The applicant determined they would use North Carolina's new teacher/principal evaluation tool to identify highly effective and effective staff. Since this is a new program, 2013-14 will be the baseline year. The applicant notes in the narrative that 99.29% of their teachers are considered Highly Qualified according to the NCLB federal legislation requirements. The applicant intends to use the new baseline data to determine teacher and principal placement following the baseline year, assigning the most effective staff to the most challenging school/program settings. This is evidenced in the narrative as follows "To increase access to highly effective teachers and principals, educators with this distinction (highly effective, effective) will be reassigned to BCPS' lowest achieving schools..."

The performance indicators selected were used for all grade level bands with rationale given for specific instruments selected. This provides a very comprehensive picture that indicates a spiral effect of the data collected and used to revamp initiatives when necessary to improve program effectiveness over the course of the grant.

The applicant developed performance measures with rationale, for 12 performance indicators stratified by grade level bands: PK-3, 4-8, 9-12. Applicant notes they will use data for grade 3 only from the K-3 data as this is the only grade in the band included in this project. For third grade they propose to use North Carolina state end of grade test "3rd Grade Reading End-of-Grade" test to indicate proficiency in reading as reading is a critical measure of success in all subjects and literacy is a major focus in the proposed Project DETAIL. To gauge the social and emotional development of students the applicant will use a review of disciplinary referrals by sub group. Their intent is to engage students in academics through personalized learning and reduce aggressive/violent behaviors that are impeding their progress. Graduation Coaches play a critical role to help engage these students and link them with support and services necessary to address social and emotional issues.

North Carolina state end-of -year tests in reading and math will be used as benchmark data for grades 4-8 and 9-12 as it indicates student achievement of state standard of proficiency. In addition grade 8 students will take the "Explore" test, as it is a foundational measure of progress toward college success and career readiness. The district will also use a formative measure assessing the percentage of electronic portfolios/individualized learning plans created for students by sub group, grades 4-8 and 9-12. This measure was chosen as the digital portfolio will provide a road map for individual student participation in personalized learning.

For students in grades 9-12 the district intends to measure the number and percentage of participating students who complete and file the FAFSA form. It appears that ample assistance from the school is available to parents and students to navigate this process through college readiness events, counselor services, Graduation Coach support etc. The district intends to identify ninth graders who do not or are in danger of not meeting minimum competency to be promoted to 10th grade. These students will be monitored and supported by the Graduation Coaches. The results of Work Keys exams and percentage of students receiving a Work Keys Exam certificate will be used as a measure of career readiness.

The district intends to monitor these indicators over time and analyze if they effectively measure implementation progress of grant proposal

initiatives. They will adjust as needed.

The applicant scored in the high range on this section of the proposal.

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

5

5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Extensive external evaluation processes are outlined in the grant proposal. For example, "The Friday Institute's mission goes beyond research and evaluation; this firm will help drive the continuous improvement process as they advocate improving teaching and learning at BCPS. The Friday Institute will conduct focus groups; create stakeholder surveys, and other methods to evaluate the effectiveness of professional development activities for teachers and Personalized Learning Coaches. They will evaluate the use of digital devices and digital portfolios related to academic achievement and student engagement. These data will be reviewed on an on-going basis to inform the continuous improvement process."

Also included is a plan to assess cost-benefit analysis, "An additional component of our independent, third-party evaluation will be calculation of a cost-benefit analysis that will produce a Return on Educational Investment rating to calculate how much learning our district produces for every dollar spent through the grant. This will also allow us to further pinpoint the best ways in which to target our spending effort so that the reform with the most impact on student learning will receive the most funding and inefficient and costly reforms are eliminated." This is a critical piece of this project. It will provide data to support continuation of grant functions. This will also provide credible data to make informed decisions regarding future program additions or reconfigurations. All elements of a high quality plan are evident in this section of the proposal.

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 developed budget documents that are thorough and descriptive.

The applicant notes that a key component that will sustain their efforts to create a system focused on mastery education and the use of interest-based and project-based learning is professional development opportunities and practices including the establishment of professional development communities and learning networks. These initiatives are the key work of the Professional coaches.

The grant budget document is broken out into multi-year, by program in addition to the budget overview. Significant funding from other sources is noted and details regarding state support are noted in the narrative.

The budget development process is shared and the goals, activities, deliverables, timeline and responsible parties are outlined in the chart included in the narrative. The applicant mentions that a Project DETAIL Sustainability Committee will be established in year 2 to ensure sustainability planning is conducted. The committee will be responsible for long-term financial planning for the project. they will identify alternate funding sources and resources. The committee will work closely with the district grant management office. The applicant also states they will use a continuous improvement practices termed, ROI, return On Investment, to evaluate and monitor various grant components, reviewing them in terms of importance to program operations and cost of continuing crucial practices. They will identify the cost effective interventions and evaluate expenditures throughout the grant period.

This is a straightforward budget that appears to adequately support this initiative. Detail regarding one time investments is clearly marked. For example, category-Technology Infrastructure is defined as: funds are needed to build infrastructure and capacity...; "The following is a one-time expense" is noted in bold print, and then noted are the cost per year for four years. Each part of the budget is defined under a header that defines the category. It is not difficult to assess if the proposed expenditures are realistic as all the information needed is easily accessed.

Applicant scored in the high range.

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

10

10

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a multi step approach to sustainability as evidenced by the following: "BCPS will create a Project DETAIL Sustainability Committee in Year 2 of the project that will meet quarterly in Years 2 and 3; then more frequently during Year 4, so sustainability planning can be conducted throughout Project DETAIL. The Sustainability Committee will be responsible for producing a completed long-term financing plan for

Project DETAIL once grant funding ends. The Sustainability Committee will also work to continuously identify potential funding from a variety of sources..”

The applicant considers professional development opportunities and practices implemented through this project a major component of sustainability. Also expanding CTE offerings will greatly enhance the student offerings within the district for years to come. The district's innovations: to study the feasibility of creating a western campus for the School of Science and Math in the upcoming year, leasing rather than purchasing all digital devices and using other resources to continue activities such as "HomeBase" platform demonstrate the effective planning and thoroughness on the part of the district.

The district has shared their long range planning beyond the grant years. For example, to continue support for technology infrastructure, they plan to use a cost sharing plan available from North Carolina that results in significant savings at the district level.

Applicant has met the criteria of sustainability.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The intent of this proposal is to transform the educational system of Burke County from a teacher driven system to a student driven learning system. The foundation of the proposal is to expand career and college readiness of students through expanding personalized learning opportunities and providing individual choice. The new 3 CTE programs planned, expansion of the STEAM Academy, digital personalized learning plans for every student, and social and community supports such as Graduation Counselor, are major component included. Staff capacity will be dramatically improved through professional development and professional learning communities.

The proposal outlines how the initiatives will be implemented, monitored, and realigned if needed based on data collected. The focus of this proposal are the high needs students throughout the district. The applicant also indicates how they coalesced resources to establish the outlined services, such as community health activities and after school options. These program components are very essential as they address emotional and physical well being of students and their families. This is a fully developed, comprehensive plan. For example, the district shared a listing of working with community partners and provided detail of their projects and described how programs such as the alternative to suspension program (BATS) functions and then provided data indicating rate of success. The applicant proposes creating community "hot spots" for internet access in local church community centers. This is very creative as it provides access to parents and students close to home.

The applicant outlines how data will be used to track student academic progress and assess if additional support is needed. In addition to graduation coaches, behavior coaches will be established to work with students and families on social/emotional issues that hinder academic progress. There is a building up of these resource as coaches will train staff to recognize signs of problems and link students to appropriate interventions.

The following excerpt indicates a comprehensive approach to emotional social issues- The frequency and intensity of services provided by Social Workers, Behavior Specialists, Mental Health Therapists, and Counselors drives decision making at the beginning of each school year, regarding staffing patterns for these support staff. Coaches will also active community partners serving on county Children Task Forces etc.

The district recognizes and supports the role of the parent and builds strategies with this in mind as evidenced by-As part of these Student Support Teams, parents have a large role in the decision making process regarding services for their children. All these assets will provide a foundation for program longevity and indicate a successful track record in acquiring grant funds and then establishing new programs that are successful.

The applicant also provides information about scaling up this project. They propose that the first two years of the project include implementation of coaches at the 8-12 level. In years 3-4, once tracking systems are established at the 8-12 level the coaches will begin to work with grades 6-7.

The district is relying on infrastructure to select, implement and evaluate supports for students that was developed through the Safe Schools Healthy Students program. The building level student support teams are the conduit for this activity. It is effective to use the existing service and build in the established model as it has been successful, is familiar to everyone and has community credibility.

Progress is routinely assessed through surveys of key stakeholders (ex parents), and graduation coach analysis of student information

as well as reports and professional opinions of key personnel such as the social workers, counselors, and behavior specialists. Performance indicators identified align with the priorities noted. For example priority 1 : Increase the number of placements of students without of school suspensions who complete community service. The BATS program provides this voluntary option for students. There are many positive benefits for the student as they learn about "soft skills' and volunteerism and potential career paths. It is clear that the applicant has provided comprehensive plan for a sustainable partnership "designed to augment the schools' resources by providing additional student and family supports to schools that address the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of the participating students."

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Throughout this proposal the applicant has addressed the priorities outlined in Absolute Priority 1. The extensive planning, assessing and evaluating of current program and resources was an integral component of the overall plan development. Significant efforts were made to insure that all requirements were met and details provided to support their proposal. The district made the initial decision to offer program opportunities to all students grader 3-12 and provided the rationale for this decision. They also devoted significant effort and time communicating with stakeholder groups, gathering input, analyzing it and incorporating suggestions into this proposal. Their plan for sustainability appears sound. The budget is clear and reasonable.

Without hesitation, this applicant has met the requirements of Absolute Priority 1.

Total	210	204
--------------	------------	------------



Race to the Top - District Technical Review Form

Application #0052NC-3 for Burke County Public Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a comprehensive and reform coherent vision to transform its school system beyond a one-size fits all model to one that offers a portfolio of distinct schools and learning opportunities in order to meet the individual learning needs of every student and prepare them for college and careers. The application describes a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support that will be driven by four major goals that will build upon its work in the four core educational assurance areas in order to provide personalized instruction in all of the identified districts schools. The goals include:

- transforming its education model from a teacher-driven into a model where student-driven learning is in place, facilitated and supported by teachers and administrators;

- institutionalizing and personalizing instruction where every student has a personalized learning plan, and uses that plan daily;
- Cultivating 21st Century highly effective educators and expanding student access to excellent teachers;
- Shifting from proficiency to mastery model of learning where each student advances based on their personalized learning plan

In addition, the applicant’s comprehensive and coherent reform vision clearly builds on the four core educational assurance areas as follows:

- Relative to adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace, and to compete in the global economy, the applicant boasts a revamped testing and accountability model and revised state curriculum standards for every grade level and subject area. The new accountability model focuses on student readiness for education, and opportunities after high school and on improved formative assessments to help teachers address student learning needs throughout the year. The model, built on a mixture of state developed and nationally reported assessments, allows the public schools to measure how well teachers are covering the Standard Course of Study and also how well North Carolina students perform when compared nationally to their peers.
- Relative to building data systems that measure student growth and success and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction, beginning in 2013-14, the state moved to an official state-wide student information system for all LEAs that uses a unique identifier system to link students and staff, and matches data across various sources such as teacher licensure programs, student information, and testing data. The information system will help ensure that state longitudinal data systems are more accessible and useful to stakeholders. The applicant will use the data system to match an individual teacher identifier with a teacher-student match and will have the capability to provide timely data back to educators and their supervisors on student growth.
- Relative to recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most, the applicants former evaluation system required educators to demonstrate proficiency in leadership, establishment of a respectful learning environment, content knowledge, facilitation of learning, and reflection on practice. In July 2011, the State Board of Education formally adopted an additional standard to the evaluation system to explicitly factor student growth data into the evaluation process and to require annual evaluations for all teachers in North Carolina. Data from the North Carolina new Teacher and Principal Evaluation Process, Truenorthlogic will be used to identify the most highly effective teachers and principals. At BCPS and across the state, the evaluation tool and process will be used as a primary factor in teacher and principal development plans and decisions related to promotion, retention and removal. As a result of this new process, teachers who are not highly effective will be provided professional development opportunities. Student performance test score data and data on growth will be used to identify the areas of highest needs and staffing strategies will be used to place those teachers in areas of highest need.
- Relative to turning around the nation’s lowest-achieving schools, in 2010-11 Hallyburton Academy was identified as a “lowest achieving school. Hallyburton Academy serves students in Burke County who have either been removed from their home school due to discipline issues; failed classes and are in need of credit recovery; wanted to drop out of school and were encouraged to enroll in Hallyburton; or already dropped out of school and returned to earn their high school diploma. In 2010 due to a graduation rate below 60%, Hallyburton received a U.S. Department of Education School Improvement Grant. The grant has been very successful, and the graduation rate has gradually increased from a rate in 2008-09 of 40.8% to a rate of 89% in 2012-13. The successes of the School Improvement grant will be described in the Prior Record of Success section of this application. At the present time, BCPS has no schools identified as a lowest-achieving school.

This section was assigned a score in the high range because the applicant clearly evidences a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that clearly builds on the four core educational assurance areas. However, the applicant does not clearly articulate what the classroom experiences will be like for students and teachers participating in personalized learning environments. Greater focus is placed on student learning outcomes via assessment results rather than student classroom learning experiences.

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

10

10

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant articulates a clear and methodical approach to implementing its reform proposal as indicated and provides a clear process for how all of the schools will be included in the project. The proposal also includes a list of all of the participating schools. All traditional and non-traditional elementary, middle, and high schools were chosen to participate in the initiative. All grade bands at the middle school level (6-8) including 100% of students, and all grade bands at the high

school level (9-12), including 100% of students will be included in this reform. At the elementary level, only students in grades 3-5 will participate. First, a grades 6-12 reform initiative received strong support from the community. Strong support was also received via school board meetings and surveys. Second, grade bands 6-12 were chosen because these schools lack 21st Century classrooms and have the oldest technological equipment. Third, 6-12th grade schools have a lower ratio of instructional support personnel (instructional coaches, reading specialists, instructional technology facilitators) to students than at the elementary level. Fourth, the District historically has utilized Title I federal funding for elementary schools only; creating limited resources for middle and high schools.

In addition, the total number of participating students from low-income families, participating students who are high-need students and participating educators, are clearly demonstrated. All elementary, middle and high schools meet the poverty requirement based on free and reduced lunch criteria.

The applicant scored in the high range in this section.

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

10

9

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant clearly evidences a plan describing how the project will be scaled up and translated into a meaningful reform to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools inclusive of goals, strategies and outcomes that promises improved student learning outcomes for all students who would be served by the applicant.

Specifically, Project DETAIL will expand educational choices for high school students so they can explore and pursue studies in areas that closely match their interests and plans for the future. This RttT-D plan will expand the STEAM Academy, a new program that began in the Fall of 2013 to create new educational opportunities for Burke County high school students. The purpose of this program is to prepare students for careers and college relevant to the 21st Century, expanding both career ready and college preparedness opportunities. This will expand student access to the most effective education.

Additionally, relative to meaningful reform, the applicant promises to demonstrate meaningful reform as it proposes to build on six inputs that will ultimately transform teacher-led instruction into student-led learning, facilitated and supported by teachers. This transformation will require investments in teacher training; reforming administrator roles; and bringing curriculum into the 21st Century. The six inputs include: 1) effective and accessible teachers, 2) rigorous career and college-ready 21st Century curriculum, 3) 21st Century digital teaching and learning, 4) using quantitative and qualitative data to improve assessment, 5) transparent policies and systems, and 6) family and community partnerships.

The Project Director will be responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operation of the program, collaborating with evaluators and partners, developing dissemination and sustainability plans, and guiding the strategic direction and implementation of strategies with a focus on developing a model of best practice and scalability. Reporting to the Director will be nine Personalized Learning Coaches. The applicant proposes to repurpose instructional support staff, who are current members of the school district by providing cross training to these individuals. Four Technology Engineers will be employed during the course of the grant to build capacity of the technology infrastructure and maintain all technology at every school. Personalized Learning Teams at each school will serve as guides to the ongoing analysis and design plan that will fit the needs of each school. External evaluation services will be provided and expert consultants will provide specialized services including capacity building, professional development.

The plan clearly defined associated activities, deliverables, timelines and persons responsible for carrying out specific tasks associated with the project that would support district-wide change.

The plan evidences teacher professional development, but does not clearly articulate how the professional development will directly impact student learning outcomes.

The applicant scored in the high range in this section.

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

10

7

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The district provides tables that clearly describe ambitious performance goals based on achievement gap performance between subgroups within the LEA and the LEA's highest achieving subgroup in reading or Language Arts and math as measured by State End of Grade and End of Course Achievement tests. The summative assessments being used to

identify performance measures include the state's End-of-Grade Reading Comprehension Test, Grades 3-8; North Carolina End-of-Grade Mathematics Test, Grades 3-8; North Carolina End-of-Course Tests – English I and Algebra I.

The gaps exist between the economically disadvantaged, limited English proficient students and students with disabilities as compared to their white counterparts. Based on the applicants proposed strategies, that includes all students engaging in “self-appropriated learning” and will learn how to become self-learners; personalized Learning Coaches will concentrate on low performing/high need students in order to provide intensive support for teachers and students; all students will engage in project-based learning that allows them to follow their own interests and pursue culturally based interests; learning and teaching will honor culture/ethnicity by linking students with diverse professionals/leaders in the community; and students will be exposed to a variety of careers and college. Based on the aforementioned strategies, the goal to decrease the achievement gap by an average of three percent each year up until one year beyond the grant is ambitious and attainable.

The applicant's strategies for closing the achievement gap also include students being taught to be 21st Century, globally and culturally aware citizens. In addition, the applicant proposes to involve students being in leadership roles over their own learning and will be empowered to take charge of their own learning by helping the students to learn how they (i.e. the students themselves) learn and making choices about what they learn.

Institutionalizing personalized, interest learning as well as a shift to a mastery model of assessment are strategies that will be used to increase academic performance and ultimately, graduation rates between subgroups. Additionally, giving students more specific educational options including Burke Middle College, the STEAM Academy, and an array of Career and Technical Education options will make learning more relevant for students with the intent of increasing graduation rate and graduating students who are college and career-ready. Graduation Coaches will be hired through Project DETAIL to work with at-risk students, tracking their progress and linking them with services within their schools their families, and their community.

The applicant's goal is not only to increase proficiency, but decrease disparities between subgroups. However, the average baseline proficiency percent for students with disabilities is 40%. The applicant proposes a 30% average proficiency increase for students with disabilities by the end of the grant period. Based on the overall goals, strategies and activities of the proposal, this goal is ambitious, but it is highly unlikely that it would be attainable because the applicant does not evidence strategies specific to meeting this challenge for students with disabilities that would assist them in achieving this ambitious goal. In addition, the applicant has only experienced a 1.5% gain in student achievement for students with disabilities over the previous four years.

The applicant communicates that Graduation Coaches will be hired through Project DETAIL to work with at-risk students, tracking their progress and linking them with services within their schools their families, and their community. Although the applicant evidences ambitious, yet achievable goals to increase graduation rate, the applicant does not evidence strategies regarding what the services to at-risk students would be and how these services anticipate effecting increased graduation for said at-risk students.

Increasing college enrollment rates will be facilitated at all high schools as all 10th grade students take the PLAN test, the ACT practice test. Constructive feedback will be provided to students regarding results from these tests, and the results will guide courses taken for 11th and 12th grade students based on needs identified in the test results. High school students at every high school will also receive assistance with completing the FAFSA, through evening sessions with parents and students. Student attendance at the STEAM Academy, with courses with advanced rigor offered, will have an impact on college enrollment rates. This concrete approach shows promise for preparing more students for college-readiness. The above strategies are likely to have an impact on the applicants ambitious, yet achievable goals relative to college-enrollment as well.

Overall, the applicant demonstrates a clear vision that is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity that is demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goals that are equal to or exceed State ESEA targets and overall by subgroup.

The applicant scored in the medium range in this section.

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

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

Data provided clearly evidences that over a four-year period, student learning outcomes have improved, achievement gaps have narrowed, and student achievement has increased.

Student achievement increased for all identified subgroups in grades 3-12. The percentage of students who were proficient at or above grade level for all of the applicant's identified subgroups increased by an average of 5.6 % for all subjects over the past four years.

The applicant provides clear evidence that the district has realized significant gains in proficiency for multi-racial (+12.4%), Hispanic (+9.6%), Asian (+8.2%), and economically disadvantaged students (+7.4%) and credible gains for the African American (+5.6%) students in relation to closing the achievement gap. The applicant showed an overall average of 6.4 % decrease in closing the achievement gap among the aforementioned sub-groups and their White counterparts.

The applicant has also clearly demonstrated impressive proposed improvements in its 5-Year Cohort Graduation Rate. Graduation rate overall increased from 84.9% in 2011-12 to 86.2% in 2012-13.

The applicant clearly evidences achieving ambitious and significant reforms in its low-performing school as indicated by the following: Hallyburton is a non-traditional school that serves middle and high school students who either dropped out of school or returned to complete their high school education. This school showed the greatest gains in the graduation rate over the past 4 years; increasing from 40.8% in 2008-09 to 83.8% in 2012-13.

The District has taken significant steps in reforming its non-traditional, alternative school, Hallyburton Academy by implementing four key reform interventions. Hallyburton Academy, an alternative education program that serves approximately 100 students per year, is a high poverty school with a free and reduced lunch rate of 86%. This school has the challenge of serving both middle and high school students, receives students from all five middle schools, all four high schools and serves a very high risk population.

The District has taken significant steps in reforming its non-traditional, alternative school, Hallyburton.

The District provides student data to parents and students through its PowerSchool student and parent portal. Teachers also receive pre and post-performance data to define student growth and improve instruction. The applicant was vague in describing how the information provided to students, parents and educators would improve participation, instruction and services.

The college enrollment rate for the district for 2011-12 was 83.3% and increased to 84.5%. The applicant indicated that no data relative to the college enrollment rate for economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and limited English proficiency students is available. Therefore, the true degree of success for overall increased graduation cannot adequately be determined due to lack of graduation data for its identified subgroups.

Overall, the applicant sufficiently demonstrated a clear record of success over the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equality in learning and teaching.

The applicant scored in the medium range in this section.

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

5

5

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant indicates that the LEA makes public, by school, actual school level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration. In addition, all actual personnel salaries and position descriptions for instructional and support staff at the school level (based on the U.S. Census Bureau's classification used in the F-33 survey of local government finances) are listed annually in the News Herald, the local newspaper and are also posted on the Burke County Public School's website. Personnel salaries are listed annually in the News Herald, the local newspaper and are also posted on the BCPS website. This includes actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff only as well as actual personnel salaries at the school level for teachers only. Actual non-personnel

expenditures at the school level by function level are reported annually in the annual external financial audit.

Overall, the applicant clearly demonstrates a high level of transparency in its processes, practices, and investments, including by making public school expenditures as required by criteria within this section of the proposal.

The applicant scored in the high range in this section.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
--	-----------	-----------

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

It is clearly evident that the applicant has sufficient conditions and autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in this proposal. Burke's plan is in line with the Career and College: Ready Set Go! Initiative—North Carolina's Race to the Top plan, as well as the state's revamped testing and accountability model. Currently, North Carolina does not restrict school districts' ability to customize students' learning. As indicated by the applicant, North Carolina General Statute 115C-105.41 states that local administrative units shall identify students at risk of academic failure beginning at Kindergarten and must include focused interventions. This general statute gives districts the statutory authority and obligation to customize learning for students.

The applicant scored in the high range in this section.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	12
--	-----------	-----------

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The district provided sufficient meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal and had meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal as indicated by the following: Principals were involved through ongoing input and feedback as the model was developed and they were encouraged over the past several months as the grant proposal was developed, to provide feedback during meetings, email and face-to-face. Teachers were given a survey that included a description of the project and key components of the model to gather input and solicit ideas on the plan. Parents and the community were involved by sharing the plan through an article in the local newspaper. The Chamber of Commerce and business representatives were given a special invitation to attend a planning meeting, and public notice was also issued for any member of the community to attend this open meeting.

The School Board enthusiastically supports the plan; in particular, the idea of moving to personalized learning. This proposal also has strong support at the local and state levels. The mayor reviewed the application and was given 10 days to provide comment. Letters of Support from parents and from Parent Teacher Organizations at one of the participating middle schools and students are also clearly evidenced.

The applicant did not provide letters of support from such key stakeholders as student organizations, the business community, civil rights organizations, advocacy groups, and community-based organizations, and institutions of higher education.

The proposal indicated that parents and the community were involved by sharing the plan through an article in the local newspaper. Positing an article in the newspaper is not a clear indication of parental and community involvement and or engagement in the development of the proposal. Therefore their level of involvement in the development of the proposal cannot be determined.

The applicant demonstrated clear evidence via survey results where teachers were provided a written description of the project, then were asked in a Yes/No format whether they support (Yes) or do not support (No) the goals and strategies of Project DETAIL. The results revealed that more than 70 percent of teachers from participating schools' overall responses were in support of the proposal.

The applicant scored in the medium range in this section.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has provided a plan of reasonable quality for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning

environment in order to provide all students with the support to graduate and be ready to pursue rigorous study and accelerate according to need.

The applicant proposes a learner-centered model that would be a major component of its approach to reform that allows for increased customization of enrollment options and personalized pathways, with an emphasis on the development of college- and career-readiness skills that work for each individual student. This approach is designed to address the diversity of students' individual interests and backgrounds so each student can achieve their learning goals within a variety of environments.

However, the proposal does not clearly communicate how the strategies are specific to high-need students other than learning disabled students.

The applicant proposes to use the research based on Hattie's top 10 rankings that were identified as having the highest influences on students' achievement as a framework for transforming education in the classroom and as a guide for helping students understand that learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals. Some of the influences include: student self-reported grades/student expectations; response to intervention; teacher credibility; comprehensive interventions for learning disabled students; teacher clarity; and feedback. This credible approach clearly supports the concept of helping students understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals. The plan, however, does not indicate what expected role the parents would play in assisting the students to understand that what they are learning is key to them accomplishing their goals.

Identifying and pursuing learning and development goals linked to college- and career-ready standards is clearly evidenced. The applicant proposed to move to 1:1 learner centered instruction and offer students the opportunity to more effectively monitor their progress towards graduation. The career and college planning process begins in the 6th grade with the Future for Kids Program; an online career exploration program. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction provides the ACT Explore Assessment (student readiness assessment) in the 8th grade, the ACT PLAN (preliminary ACT test) assessment in the 10th grade, the ACT College Admissions Assessment for all 11th grade students, and ACT WorkKeys for all career and technical education concentrators and also encourage university tours, financial aid workshops, and post-secondary academic programs at colleges and universities in LEA's region.

Deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest are well demonstrated. This includes an approach that uses a variety of personalized resources customized for each student responding to their own unique learning styles, abilities, and interests. Students in middle schools will have an opportunity at least once per week to participate in a course based on their interests. These interests will help students and their parents, along with teachers and guidance counselors, create an individualized college or career plan. The applicant's STEAM Academy enriches high school opportunities and provides courses with advanced rigor for students to better prepare them for college and careers in science, technology, engineering, agriculture and math. The STEAM Academy offers advanced math and science courses and college transfer honors courses.

The district clearly evidences a strong career and technical education program for students headed towards a career rather than college that offers 13 of the 16 available federal career clusters. Project DETAIL will further expand options for career bound students that will include welding, electrical trades, and criminal justice. The applicant does not sufficiently address how the expansion of these career options assist students in developing goals linked to career-ready graduation requirements.

The applicant mentions that with personalized learning environments, students can use problem and project based learning to create a deeper understanding of the curriculum, thus increasing their opportunity to work collaboratively to solve real world problems. The applicant does not explain how this type of personalized learning environment will provide students access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts and perspectives to motivate and deepen their learning.

The applicant makes mention that the state is sponsoring a P21 initiative. P21 is based upon students learning the following four skills of 21st Century Learning including creativity, collaboration, critical thinking and communication and that the new common core and essential standards adopted by North Carolina stresses skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork. The applicant does not communicate how or the degree to which students would master critical academic content and develop the skills of goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving relative to the 21st Century Learning skills or the new common core standards.

The applicant clearly demonstrates a variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments based on the following: On a daily basis, students will attend their core courses and electives, and within these classes a variety of instructional approaches will be offered to individualize student learning needs. Instructional approaches can include direct instruction, student driven learning and blended learning environments. Personalized learning devices will be used to access limitless content to develop, design, display and share a deeper understanding of the content. Students will be guided to enrichment experiences or accelerated learning based on choices and mastery through the curriculum. Students

will refer daily to their personalized learning plans; developed at the beginning of the school year and the digital device will allow access for assessing progress. Additionally, one instructional approach will be the use of flexible time for learning. Learning opportunities will be able to be accessed anywhere, at any time, beyond the walls of the school building; as students will be able to access course, grade and progress information using their digital device.

The applicant does not clearly demonstrate a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable students to achieve their individual learning goals and ensure that the student graduate on time and are college and career ready.

The applicant clearly demonstrates high-quality content, including digital learning that is aligned with college and career-ready standards or college and career-ready graduation requirements as evidenced by the following: The program for digital learning offers a broad variety of options for students. Online learning expands the number and variety of course offerings that include online coursework from the North Carolina Virtual Public School, APEX Learning, North Carolina School of Science and Math, Western Piedmont Community College and other North Carolina community colleges. For virtual school courses, students take primarily advanced placement courses, but have begun to take some Honors and regular credit courses as well. Through Project DETAIL, video conference labs will be installed at every high school and enable students to take courses from colleges and universities and beyond. The BOLT online course was first offered to 8th grade students has now been expanded to all 7th grade students and the course is being developed for 6th grade students as well. After students complete the course, they can take online high school classes for credit; The Hybrid Institute teaches teachers on how to create "hybrid" classrooms. A hybrid course uses a blend of face-to-face instruction and online instruction.

The applicant did not sufficiently provide evidence regarding frequently updating student individual data that can be used to determine progress toward mastery of college and career ready standards or college and career-ready standards for graduation. In the middle school, the Explore test is given. The applicant does not provide evidence regarding student feedback on the Explore test. The PSAT (preliminary SAT test) and the PLAN (preliminary ACT test) will be administered to all 10th grade students and constructive feedback will be provided to students regarding these results. The applicant does not indicate what kind of constructive feedback would be given and by whom. The results of these tests will also guide courses taken for 11th and 12th grade students based on needs identified in the test results. The ACT will be administered to all 11th grade students. The applicant does not indicate whether feedback would be given to the students.

The applicant did not provide supporting evidence relative to personalized learning recommendations based on the student's current knowledge and skills, college and career-ready standards or career-ready standards, college and career-ready graduation requirements and available content, instructional approaches. The applicant provides minimal support relative to the results of the PSAT and PLAN to guide courses 10th graders will take in their 11th and 12th grade year.

The applicant evidences appropriate accommodations and high-quality strategies for accommodating high-need students to help ensure that they are on track toward meeting college and career-ready graduation requirements based on the following: Two Graduation Coaches will be hired through Project DETAIL to monitor student progress for BCPS' highest risk students who attend Hallyburton Academy. The Graduation Coaches will track course credits earned as well as attendance requirements, and monitor attendance daily, following up on absences. Second, an "early warning system" is used by the Graduation Coaches where the Testing/Accountability Department provides predictor scores for high school students who have not yet taken an end of course test and major remediation will be needed. Also, the Graduation Coaches will work with individual students to create an "After Graduation Plan" including personal goals for students following high school graduation. The Coaches will monitor the 9th, 10th, and 11th grade students who are not progressing to the next grade level, and will develop a tracking system for students who are potential failures based on 9-week grades. Students will also be linked to credit recovery programs, as needed, that are currently available in their schools. The use of digital devices and e-books will be another important tool to assist in closing the achievement gap for high need students. E-books designed for reluctant readers, including read aloud books and books with animation; and e-book collections are built specifically for at-risk and reluctant readers. Read-aloud e-books are a good tool to help students in elementary school who are reading below grade level. For English language learners, bi-lingual books are available as e-books. Additionally, e-books can be used by teachers as instructional tools.

The applicant does not indicate what role parents would play in ensuring high-need students having access to accommodations and high-quality strategies for being on track toward meeting college and career-ready graduation requirements.

The applicant indicates that each school will host a family night to share with students and family members how the tools will be used to enhance instruction. On those nights, engineers from the Technology Department will also share some basic troubleshooting and the Graduation and Personalized Learning Coaches will share basic information on tracking a student's progress using Home-base and PowerSchool student data bases. The applicant does not adequately meet the criteria for putting mechanisms in place to provide training and support to students as one night of instruction is insufficient to address on-going challenges that may occur relative to troubleshooting. In addition, one night is also insufficient for

coaches to share basic information on tracking student's progress.

The applicant scored in the medium range in this section.

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

20

19

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) (i) The applicant well documents that all participating educators will engage in training and in professional teams or communities that support their individual and collective capacity to support the effective implementation of the personalized learning environment and strategies that meet each student's academic need. For example a support team for teachers will be built via using personalized learning coaches. Instructional coaches, instructional technology facilitators, academically gifted coaches and exceptional children's coaches, will be cross trained to become personalized learning coaches. Blended learning training was conducted on how to administer the School Technology Needs Assessment (STNA) that includes instruction on how to evaluate the data to better support implementation, capacity building and technology integration at the school or district level. Professional learning communities (PLC) will be broadened to create an online environment for teachers to communicate. Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) is a framework that identifies the knowledge teachers need to teach effectively with technology. PLC members will work together to clarify exactly what each student must learn, monitor each student's learning on a timely basis, provide systematic interventions that ensure students receive additional time and support for learning when they struggle, and extend and enrich learning when students have already mastered the intended outcomes. PLC members will work together to clarify exactly what each student must learn, monitor each student's learning on a timely basis, provide systematic interventions that ensure students receive additional time and support for learning when they struggle, and extend and enrich learning when students have already mastered the intended outcomes. Face to face instruction time will be used to develop higher-order thinking skills and competencies with project-based assignments given to students to demonstrate mastery of content. The applicant proposes to provide time to support high-need students and to meet all students' diverse learning styles and needs through small-group or one-to-one instruction including teacher feedback and support. These strategies demonstrate a strong aspect of the proposal that promise to ensure each student's academic needs are met and help ensure all students can graduate on time and college- and career-ready.

(ii) The following strategies are appropriate and clearly address how the applicant proposes to respond to student's academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches. For example, students will be engaged in common and individual tasks based on mastery of the content area and learning styles; instructional approaches will include face-to-face, blended, student guided, small-group, large group and collaboratively; students may be working on interdisciplinary themed units or problem or project-based assignments; students will be guided to enrichment experiences or accelerated; learning based on choices and progress through the curriculum. Staff will identify and develop activities that support the curriculum including redesigning assessments to include digital content that will assist students in creating enriched student products of learning.

(iii) The applicant clearly demonstrates that all participating educators engage in training and professional teams that support their capacity to frequently measure student progress and use data to inform both the acceleration of student progress and the improvement of the individual and collective practice of educators. One example is the use of PLAN, which is administered by ACT, is designed to measure students' current academic development in English, mathematics, reading and science. Students are now taking the Plan during the first semester of their 10th grade year, and teachers are using PLAN results to address deficits and gaps in learning; an accomplishment that is moving teachers and students towards personalized learning. Students use results from the test to help guide them in exploring career/training options and to make plans for the remaining years of high school and post-graduation years. The applicant will use summative, formative and benchmark exams to gauge student progress towards college and career readiness. Students also take the ACT during their Junior year and receive benchmark measures in English, math, science information from the ACT will help educators determine how well individual students are prepared for college and careers.

(iv) The applicant evidences a clear and coherent approach relative to how it intends to improve teachers' and principals' effectiveness as supported by the following examples. North Carolina began using Truenorthlogic, a new Teacher, Principal, and Superintendent evaluation. As part of this evaluation system, student growth data will be integrated into teacher and principal evaluations. Data is used to assess and take steps to improve educator effectiveness for teachers who are not deemed effective or highly effective through professional development and technical assistance. Appropriate strategies will be designed to address teacher growth. The Personalized Learning Coaches will work collaboratively with the teacher to redesign their individual learning plan. Professional development for teachers will be offered in a variety of formats from one on one to online modules. Relative to principal and leader effectiveness, the applicant also provides specific information regarding how engaging in book studies at the administrative level will translate into supporting implementation of the proposal.

(b) (i) This plan demonstrates how all participating educators have access to actionable information to identify optimal learning approaches to meet individual student academic needs. For example, the applicant proposes to use assessments aligned with college- and career-ready standards and assessments such as scores from EXPLORE, PLAN, and ACT assessments and data from students' personalized education plans that will produce information on the student's current level of mastery on standards, benchmarks, objectives or skills in a specific course. Educators will participate in professional development opportunities by the Personalized Learning Coaches. This approach is an added assurance that will equip each teacher and leader with the ability to use formal and information student data to refine instructional strategies and provide appropriate interventions. The applicant, however, does not clearly provide evidence regarding assessing and addressing student's interests.

(b)(ii) The applicant clearly demonstrates participating educators have access to high-quality learning resources such as the following things that are aligned with college and career-ready standards or college and career-ready graduation requirements. For example, teachers will have access to student learner profiles to assist in instructional planning, and details regarding students' current level of mastery on course standards, benchmarks, objectives and skills for instructional planning and monitoring.

(b)(iii) The applicant also communicates an Instructional Improvement System (IIS/Homebase) that will feature tools to create and build multiple levels of assessment aligned to the Common Core and North Carolina Essential Standards. This Instructional Improvement System (IIS/Homebase) will provide customized displays and reports including multiple data comparisons for use by educators, school leaders, as well as parents and students, including the ability to view student performance against standards.

(C) The applicant clearly evidences a high-quality approach to provide all participating school leaders and school leadership teams with training, policies, tools data, and resources that enable them to structure an effective learning environment that meets individual student academic needs. Exams will be given to high school students at the end of each semester and given to middle school students at the end of the school year and will cover 22 subjects such as American History I and II, English Language Arts I, III, and IV, pre-calculus. This innovate approach to improving student achievement proposes to allow teachers to be able to find out if their students are showing academic growth and channel assessment feedback that will allow teachers the opportunity to match students with appropriate challenges for student growth.

(C)(i) The applicant has a high-quality plan to retrieve information, from such sources as the district's teacher evaluation system that helps school leaders and school leadership teams assess, and take steps to improve, individual and collective educator effectiveness and school culture and climate, for the purpose of continuous school improvement. The evaluation tool will flag teacher weaknesses allowing for immediate identification of specific areas for targeted professional learning. Aggregate data will provide valuable information including identification of common issues and strengths as well as information regarding school climate and culture. These efforts will promote increased effectiveness that will inform and improve student performance.

(C) (ii) The applicant clearly evidences training, systems, and practices to continuously improve school progress toward the goals of increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps. For example, one strategy will involve instructional staff and administration receiving training in personalized learning communities, tiered instruction and differentiated instruction. All middle and high school teachers will attend a reading foundations course that will introduce them to the knowledge, skills, and procedures needed to provide effective instruction for students with persistent reading difficulties. These robust strategies will likely enable the applicant to structure an effective learning environment that meets individual student academic needs and accelerates student progress.

(d) The applicant clearly evidences a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals, including in hard-to-staff schools and subjects. The plan is inclusive of increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teacher. The plan is high-quality because its evaluation tool and student performance data will used to identify the most highly effective teachers. The applicant's evaluation tool will also be utilized for teacher development plans, promotion and retention and to inform removal decisions. A compelling aspect to the plan is its goal that aims to build capacity of teachers to institute personalized instruction in the classroom. Additionally, in order for teachers to be highly effective, professional development will be provided for all teachers and leaders throughout the school year to increase competency in the new Common Core and Essential Standards. Teacher/principal evaluation tool will pull student test data on student performance into the teacher evaluation system.

Overall, the applicant evidences a credible and high-quality plan with all of the necessary elements (goals, activities, a timeline, deliverables, and parties responsible for implementing the activities) for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment, placing effective teachers in the areas of highest need and providing increased opportunities for all students to graduate college- and career-ready.

The applicant scored in the high range in this section.

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:

(a) The applicant clearly evidences a high-quality approach to support project implementation through district practices, policies, and rules that will facilitate personalized learning by organizing the LEA central office to provide support and services to all participating schools. The support includes the following: The DETAIL Leadership Team includes Central Office administrators, principals, teachers, and community representatives that will provide guidance to program implementation at the participating schools relative to transforming teaching and learning into personalized learning environments. Central Office's purchasing and finance departments will assist with all purchases of equipment and supplies as well as contracts for professional development providers and the external evaluation firm. The Technology Department will be responsible for establishing advanced infrastructure to support the 1:1 digital device program at each school including broadband, wireless, power, and networking as well as ordering and distributing digital devices. The Technology Department will also oversee maintenance of devices and will provide instructional support and direction for Personalized Learning Coaches.

(b) The applicant clearly evidences practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning by providing school leadership teams in participating schools (as defined in this notice) with sufficient flexibility and autonomy as indicated by the following: School Leadership Teams consist of one teacher representative from each grade level, special area representatives, teacher assistants, and the principal. Each school will have autonomy in choosing which blended learning strategies are most appropriate for their school. One Personalized Learning Coach will be assigned to every school, and they will work with the School Leadership Teams to determine how the Coaches can best support instructional staff within their schools. Coaches will provide support to teachers as they learn new skills to provide personalized education in the classroom. They will work with teachers to create instructional modules, lesson plans, and authentic assessments to assess student progress in attaining key learning goals. The Principals and the School Leadership Teams will have authority and decision making power over school personnel decisions and staffing models and responsibilities for educators and non-educators.

(c) The applicant clearly evidences practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning by giving students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic based on the following: The district supports a virtual learning model which allows student to earn credit through distance learning, as well as earn college credit through Burke Middle College and the STEAM Academy. This alternative will require the development of a common assessment or project of learning to demonstrate mastery of specific content.

(d) The applicant clearly evidences practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning by giving students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways based on the following: Students will have more input into and more flexibility over demonstrating student learning outcomes and student mastery will be determined through a variety of formats so that students will have options of ways to show their success and accomplishments. Assessment methods will include the use of student portfolios, rubrics, live presentations and project-based learning products throughout the semester or school year. These formats will allow students to explore interdisciplinary approaches to learning; and in addition to mastery of core content areas, students will be able to master 21st Century skills including critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, innovation, communication and collaboration.

(e) The applicant well documents a high-quality plan for providing learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners based on the following: Project DETAIL will implement 1:1 technology so that each student is paired with a digital device to access online courses, use digital textbooks and retrieve, collaborate and complete assignments and assessments. For students without home internet access, these devices will be equipped with mobile broadband cards to access the learning platform. The use of 1:1 technology allows our special student populations such as students with disabilities and English language learners with alternate formats or accessible material such as audio, magnified, or large print versions of documents.

Overall, the applicant clearly evidences a high-quality plan with all of the necessary elements (goals, activities, a timeline, deliverables, and parties responsible for implementing the activities) to support project implementation through

comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator, and level of the education system (classroom, school, and LEA) with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed.

The applicant scored in the high range in this section.

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

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) It is clearly evident that the applicant has a high-quality plan containing all of the elements (goals, activities, a timeline, deliverables, and parties responsible for implementing the activities) for ensuring that all participating students parents, educators and other stakeholders, regardless of income, have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of the applicant's proposal as indicated by the following: Mobile broadband cards will be provided for devices for students who do not have access to internet in their homes. Additionally students will be provided adequate time during school hours to download any instructional materials needed to their devices. Students will be able to access learning resources both in and out of school. The 1:1 technology initiative will also provide each teacher with a digital device, providing access to content, tools, and learning resources both in and out of school. To support a move to digital learning, the applicant will ensure appropriate internet connectivity for each classroom and will provide 1:1 technology for students through the assignment of their own personal device at the beginning of the school year. Students will have anytime, anywhere access both in and out of the classroom to their individualized learning plan to see information about current courses such as pending assignments and teacher feedback. Students will also be able to upload their school work. They will be able to access their own student profile including their interest inventory and learning plan, assessment history, student transcript, College/Career Planner, and links to their school's webpage. Parents will be able to communicate with teachers, see their child's attendance and discipline reports, student progress reports and access resources. The portal will also show student progress in attainment of key learning concepts in a course.

Parents will be able to communicate with teachers, see their child's attendance and discipline reports, student progress reports and access resources. The portal will also show student progress in attainment of key learning concepts in a course.

Teachers will have access to professional learning resources, student profiles, lesson plans, classroom organizational tools, student performance data and professional learning community activities. Administrators will be able to access teacher evaluations and observations, school wide student-level data, communication tools, professional development and progress reports.

(b) The applicant has a high-quality plan for ensuring that students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders have appropriate levels of technical support, which may be provided through a range of strategies as indicated by the following: Prior to roll-out of the 1:1digital device program at each grade level, teachers will participate in a week-long summer training where Personalized Learning Coaches work with teachers to create learning modules and identify materials and resources. Annually, each school will host a Technology Summit for all students and parents. At this event, devices will be distributed to students and guidelines to technology policies will be provided including training on: basic care and maintenance of the device, recognizing and troubleshooting common problems, repair resources, and procedures to obtain help/assistance with questions and issues. Students and parents will also receive training on safe and ethical use of the Internet, the BCPS Acceptable Use Policy, and how to access the tools and software available to support student learning. Coaches will also provide learning opportunities throughout the school year for students and parents on how to use these devices.

(c) The applicant has a high-quality plan for using information technology systems that allow parents and students to export their information in an open data format and to use the data in other electronic learning systems as indicated by the following: Every school will be open at designated times each week for parents to visit the school, use the PowerSchool Parent Portal and have access to online resources relative to information on the Common Core State Standards, the NC Essential standards, Future Reading Project and the Career & College: Ready Set Go! initiative. The Parent Portal is used to improve the effectiveness of communication between parents and teachers, increase parent involvement, and offer real-time access. This allows parents to view information including student attendance, assessments, credit earned to date, current progress and grades, school schedules, personal demographics and emergency contact information. One benefit of this portal is that it allows both parents and students to determine at what level the student is progressing in a particular class in terms of grades.

(d) It is clearly evident that the applicant has a high-quality plan inclusive of the necessary elements (goals, activities, a timeline, deliverables, and parties responsible for implementing the activities) for ensuring that LEAs and schools use interoperable data systems as indicated by the following: The district will procure a learning management system which in combination with Homebase, will provide information on (1) productivity, (2) teacher/leader knowledge (accumulation of PD

including amount, quality, content) and (3) multiple assessment measures for educators and students (evaluations, observations, student assessment results, other measures of academic achievement). This system provides user-friendly access to high-quality data metrics from multiple sources, including producing student profile reports that provide detailed information for teachers and principals to support instructional decision-making. It also enhances the district's ability to make data-based decisions related to human capital and to allocate resources strategically within the district.

Overall, the applicant clearly demonstrates a high-quality plan containing all of the elements (goals, activities, a timeline, deliverables, and parties responsible for implementing the activities) to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator, and level of the education system (classroom, school, and LEA) with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed.

The applicant scored in the high range in this section.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not provide supporting evidence relative personalized learning recommendations based on the student's current knowledge and skills, college and career-ready standards or career-ready standards, college and career-ready graduation requirements and available content, instructional approaches. The applicant provides minimal support relative to the results of the PSAT and PLAN to guide courses 10th graders will take in their 11th and 12th grade year. The applicant evidences appropriate accommodations and high-quality strategies for accommodating high-need students to help ensure that they are on track toward meeting college and career-ready graduation requirements based on the following: Two Graduation Coaches will be hired through Project DETAIL to monitor student progress for BCPS' highest risk students who attend Hallyburton Academy. The Graduation Coaches will track course credits earned as well as attendance requirements, and monitor attendance daily, following up on absences. Second, an "early warning system" is used by the Graduation Coaches where the Testing/Accountability Department provides predictor scores for high school students who have not yet taken an end of course test and major remediation will be needed. Also, the Graduation Coaches will work with individual students to create an "After Graduation Plan" including personal goals for students following high school graduation. The Coaches will monitor the 9th, 10th, and 11th grade students who are not progressing to the next grade level, and will develop a tracking system for students who are potential failures based on 9-week grades. Students will also be linked to credit recovery programs, as needed, that are currently available in their schools. The use of digital devices and e-books will be another important tool to assist in closing the achievement gap for high need students. E-books designed for reluctant readers, including read aloud books and books with animation; and e-book collections are built specifically for at-risk and reluctant readers. Read-aloud e-books are a good tool to help students in elementary school who are reading below grade level. For English language learners, bi-lingual books are available as e-books. Additionally, e-books can be used by teachers as instructional tools. The applicant does not indicate what role parents would play in ensuring high-need students having access to accommodations and high-quality strategies for being on track toward meeting college and career-ready graduation requirements. The applicant provides a clear and high-quality approach to continuously improve its plan by providing a rigorous, continuous improvement process based on the following: BCPS will implement a rigorous continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals and objectives. Staff will be put in place to monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of investments funded by the RttT-D opportunity. Implementation will continue to evolve based on performance measure results and other project results, and as society, research, and technology continue to offer new thinking and methods in the field of education. Key personnel will be hired to provide leadership, oversee project implementation and oversee the continuous improvement processes. An Assistant Director will be hired to oversee the day to day implementation of Project DETAIL; provide support to all participating schools; communicate with collaborating organizations; organize professional development activities; order equipment, supplies and materials; and ensure the project is carried out day-to-day according to the plan. The Friday Institute for Educational Innovation in conjunction with North Carolina State University's College of Education will provide external evaluation services.

The Project DETAIL Management Team will be charged with monitoring project progress and results on this RttT-D program. This team will meet on a quarterly basis to review progress of the project, review data, resolve barriers, and address areas where a change in course is needed. Focus groups will be done at the end of each school year, including focus groups with principals, teachers, parents and students. Focus groups will gather input from these parties on the strengths of Project DETAIL, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. An external evaluation firm will conduct focus

groups and analyze these data. This committee will study what NC industries look for in well-qualified candidates for employment as it pertains to education, certification and skill level and study the Career and Technical Education Pathway to determine if the program is meeting the unique needs of students seeking to enter the workforce after completing high school. As a result of its comprehensive approach to this feedback, the project will have an opportunity to find continued success

The applicant demonstrates a clear method for publicly sharing information on the quality of its investment as indicated by the following: The grant's assistant director will be charged with sharing information publicly, at BCPS school board meetings, and will work with BCPS' Public Relations Officer to share information publicly through newspaper articles and the BCPS website.

Overall, the applicant well documents a high-quality plan with essential elements for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the term of the grant. This high-quality plan is inclusive of goals, activities, a timeline, deliverables, and parties responsible for implementing the activities.

The applicant scored in the high range in this section.

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

5

5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant clearly demonstrates a high-quality plan for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders as evidenced by the following: The Personalized Learning Coaches will be in constant communication with teachers as the project is rolled out and throughout the project as they provide support to teachers on personalized instruction. Internal communication will occur on the school level through School Improvement Teams and principal and instructional staff meetings. The Project DETAIL Management Team will meet on a quarterly basis so that results can be shared and to discuss progress and obstacles. Externally, as the STEAM Academy is a joint venture between the North Carolina School of Science and Math (NCSSM), the North Carolina School for the Deaf (NCSD), and BCPS, it is imperative that the three institutions are in close contact, particularly during the first eight months of Project DETAIL as plans are made for the new pre-engineering strands to be rolled out at the STEAM Academy. Representatives from these institutions and the Project DETAIL Director and Assistant Director will meet on a monthly basis between January 2014 and August 2014 to plan for this STEAM expansion. To facilitate communication between BCPS and NCSSM, a part time Distance Learning Coordinator will be hired / assigned by the NCSSM to provide ongoing communication for the project, primarily with the Project Director. Conference calls will continue during the expansion phase on a weekly or monthly basis, as needed. The Director will be in contact with NCSD on an on-going basis during the first year of the project, as the STEAM Academy undergoes expansion. Phone calls, face to face meetings and email will facilitate this process. External communication for Project DETAIL via newspapers is ongoing. Presentations to boards will take place bi-annually.

It is clearly evident that the proposal is designed to implement plans of action for communication and to encourage the engagement of stakeholders ensuring continuous improvement.

Overall, the applicant clearly demonstrates a high-quality plan for on-going communication and engagement that includes goals, activities to be undertaken, a timeline, deliverables, and parties responsible for implementing the activities.

The applicant scored in the high range in this section.

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

5

4

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant clearly describes its rationale for the identified measures selected. The applicant also sufficiently described how the measures would provide rigorous, timely and formative information leading to it proposed plan as indicated by the following: The applicant identified performance measures for identifying highly effective teachers and administrators to serve in its lowest performing schools. BCPS' performance measures will include students only in grade 3 as pre-K through 2nd grade students will not participate in Project DETAIL. BCPS' measure of performance to gauge improved student outcomes will be the percentage of 3rd grade students, by subgroups who are proficient at or above grade level in reading, measured by the State 3rd grade Reading End-of-Grade test.

The assessment rates teachers/administrators into five categories including developing, proficient, accomplished, distinguished, and not demonstrated. Educators identified as distinguished, will be deemed highly effective and teachers deemed accomplished will be identified as effective educators.

The applicant indicated that data is not yet available as the first year of evaluation data is currently being collected and will be available at the end of the 2013-2014 school year.

Highly effective teachers and principals, educators with this distinction will be reassigned to BCPS' lowest achieving schools in order to increase proficiency and decrease the achievement gap between subgroups, particularly with our high need students.

It cannot be determined if the performance measure relative to highly effective teachers and administrators is ambitious or attainable. There is not baseline data for comparison. In addition, the applicant does not indicate how many highly effective educators would be assigned to the lowest performing schools; no subject areas or grade levels were identified.

The first performance measure for students in grades 9-12 is the number and percentage of participating students who complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form. The performance measure of career readiness to assess whether students are on track to be career-ready will be the number and percentage of students on the Career and Technical Education track who earn a Work Keys Exam certificate. BCPS' measure of performance to gauge improved student outcomes will be the percentage of students grades 9-12, by subgroup who are proficient at or above grade level, measured by the State end-of-grade Reading or Math test. Finally, an additional performance measure for student's grades 9 - 12 will be the percentage of electronic portfolios/ individualized learning plans created for students by subgroup. The performance measures for 9-12 are ambitious and achievable because individualized learning plans would be created for students by subgroup. Digital portfolios will provide the road map for each student to engage in personalized instruction that guides and progressively monitors their success, towards being college and career ready.

The performance measures for 3-5 student performance are ambitious. It cannot be determined if they are attainable as the project focuses primarily on grades 6-12; then will move down to grades 3-5 in the final year of the project. The project does not clearly indicate what services and resources would be provided for grades 3-5 throughout the course of the project up to its last year of implementation.

The applicant evidences a clear approach for how it will review and improve measures of the proposal over time as indicated by the following: An external evaluation firm will collect data on all performance measures on a biannual basis to assess whether targets are being met. If performance measures are not met, a plan of action will be developed, including a plan to adopt new performance measures, as appropriate that will be more meaningful in gauging the project's success. A sustainability committee will also review results to determine the components of the project that will be most important to sustain.

Overall, the applicant clearly demonstrated ambitious yet achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures.

The applicant scored in the high range in this section.

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

5

5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has detailed a comprehensive plan to evaluate its approach to reform. They have formulated seven goals under their program evaluation strategy that once addressed, will lead to a comprehensive framework for ensuring their reform efforts are successful or need restructuring. This is clearly evident based on the following: The Friday Institute for Educational Innovation, in conjunction with the North Carolina State University will provide external evaluation services. The independent, third-party evaluation will include a cost-benefit analysis that will produce a Return on Educational Investment rating to calculate how much learning the district produces for every dollar spent through the grant. The applicant will evaluate the effectiveness of its investments relative to the pre-engineering curriculum developed and delivered to Burke County students through an interactive video conference mode. The evaluation will seek to understand how clear, accessible, and usable the course curricula are for students and instructors and identify areas for improvement. The applicant will receive informal feedback from students, conduct focus groups and interviews with students and instructors to gain more insight into the effective parts of the curriculum and how it can be strengthened.

Overall, the applicant demonstrates a clear and high-quality plan evidencing all of the elements necessary to continuously improve its reform plans inclusive of goals, activities, deliverables, timeline, and responsibilities for evaluating the effectiveness of investments.

The applicant scored in the high range in this section.

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 clearly identifies all funds that will support the project to include the grant funds, external foundation support, LEA and State funds.</p> <p>The budget appears to be reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal. The project will concentrate its efforts on grades 3-12, throughout the grant period and grades 3-5 in the final year of the project. The project will also serve approximately 9,976 students in grades 6-12. With a total four-year project cost request of \$19,996,488, this amounts to approximately \$2004.50 in annual program costs, per student participant. The total cost is also inclusive of the following defined line items: personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractals, training stipends and indirect costs.</p> <p>The applicant's budget clearly evidences the identification of funds that will be used for one-time investments versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs that will be incurred during and after the grant period.</p> <p>The applicant provides a rationale for the investments and priorities that includes a description of all of the funds that the applicant will use to support the implementation of the proposal.</p> <p>The applicant scored in the high range in this section..</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	9
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant scored in the high range in this section. A thorough analysis was performed by the applicant in the development of a high-quality plan for sustainability that included participant support (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, mayor, state legislator, participating schools and local chamber of commerce), high quality project management consisting of a leadership team, leadership accessible curriculum systems, a data warehouse, common assessments, teacher professional development and interactive learning and teaching resources.</p> <p>The applicant identified other support funds from other sources during the life of the grant and beyond.</p> <p>Sustainability components will include professional development opportunities and practices that will be implemented through Project DETAIL and the use of Professional Learning Communities and Professional Learning Networks. The project's sustainability will also include a strategy for repurposing current personnel by cross training instructional support staff to become Personalized Learning Coaches. These Coaches will continue to provide support to teachers as they provide personalized learning for students after Federal funding ends.</p> <p>At the end of the 4-year grant period, the new CTE programs will also be fully established, offering career readiness opportunities in three new career fields. Also self-sustaining, by the end of the project, all four high schools will be equipped with video conference capabilities to expand the number and range of course offerings as well as the quality of instruction beyond the walls of the high schools.</p> <p>The District will phase in new equipment, in order to avoid any large expenses in one year. Meetings with BCPS and the Burke County Commissioners have been on-going during the summer and fall to discuss sustainability of the 1:1 technology initiative. Another option will be for BCPS to purchase the leased devices after the leases expire.</p> <p>Funding from the NC Department of Public Instruction Federal Race to the Top Grant will provide several ongoing components the applicant's sustainability plan that involves using a Homebase platform, which includes portals for teachers, administrators, students, and parents including the Learning Object Repository (LOR). The Instructional Improvement System (IIS) components will integrate with the district's current data warehouse and will provide data analysis and reporting tools, online professional learning components, tools and resources to support standards and assessments, the educator evaluation system, and other teaching and learning resources.</p> <p>NC Department of Public Instruction developed a cost-sharing model of technology and future spending distribution to support long term implementation and functionality of IIS and LOR.</p> <p>One component of Project DETAIL is to increase college- and career-ready options for students that will expand CTE offerings, and expand the STEAM Academy, BCPS' state-of-the-art STEM school. This project component will be easily sustained, as the majority of federal funds requested for this program (89.26%) are one-time investments.</p>		

The applicant does not indicate who would be responsible for maintaining the video conferencing capabilities beyond the grant period.

Overall, the applicant clearly demonstrates elements of a high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant inclusive of keygoals, activities a timeline, deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities.

The applicant scored in the high range in this section

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant well demonstrates a clear explanation of its partnerships and how they will help to expand opportunities for participating students.

1. A description of the applicant's coherent and sustainable partnership to support the plan is clearly described as indicated by the following: BCPS has formed very strong community partnerships through its Safe Schools Healthy Students grant; now beginning its final year. This grant focuses on integrating public and private resources and creating partnerships that now augment the District's resources and services for at-risk students. The Safe Schools grant has developed a strong Core Management Team that includes the Executive Director of the Juvenile Court Prevention Council; the Executive Director of the Local Mental Health Authority; the Executive Director of Mental Health Partners; Burke County's Juvenile Court Judge; the Director of Public Safety and the Burke County Sheriff. One of the goals of this team is to continuously collaborate to identify needs of at-risk students and their families and problem solve solutions in order for the needs of at-risk students and families to be met. Hallyburton Academy and BCPS' Day Treatment program provide services to many of the highest risk students. Hallyburton Academy serves students who have been removed from their school due to disciplinary issues, for example aggression, or use of drugs or alcohol. Hallyburton has a Social Worker, newly assigned to this school due to the high needs of the student population. Day Treatment serves students with very severe social, emotional, or behavioral issues. Burke County Schools contracts with a community Mental Health/Behavioral Health provider in the community to carry out this program.

2. The applicant identified performance measures for identifying highly effective teachers and administrators to serve in its lowest performing schools. Selected indicators for the competitive preference will be: (1) increase the number of suspended students who participate in the program; (2) increase the number of students identified and receiving services for social, behavioral, and emotional services; (3) increase the number of 6th – 11th grade students who are promoted to the next grade level.

3. (a) The applicant well documents how it will track the selected indicators that measure each result at the aggregate level for all children within the LEA or consortium and at the student level for the participating students based on the following evidence: BCPS created systems to track student referrals and services provided by staff members who serve our at-risk students, including Social Workers, Behavior Specialists, Mental Health Therapists, and the Burke Alternative to Suspension Counselor. These staff collects data on the type and intensity of services they provide. Reports on these data are shared with school system administration, the Safe Schools Director, and the Safe Schools Core Management Team.

(b) The district clearly demonstrates how it will use the data to target its resources in order to improve results for participating students with special emphasis on students facing significant challenges, such as students with disabilities, English learners, and students affected by poverty (including highly mobile students), family instability, or other child welfare issues as evidenced by the following: The frequency and intensity of services provided by Social Workers, Behavior Specialists, Mental Health Therapists, and Counselors drives decision making at the beginning of each school year, regarding staffing patterns for these support staff. The Graduation Coaches will be poised to monitor the need for services of our high-risk students and whether or not resources are available, either within the school system, or in the community.

(c) The applicant well describes how it will develop a strategy to scale the model beyond the participating students to at least other high-need students and communities in the LEA or consortium over time as indicated by the following: Graduation Coaches will begin their work with 8th- 12th grade students, in Years 1 and 2 of the grant to track students who are behind academically and not proficient on state exams or not progressing to the next grade level. In Years 3 and 4, once tracking systems are in place at the middle and high school levels, the Coaches will scale down to the 6th and 7th grade levels to begin tracking systems in these grade levels as well. In order to reach as many at-risk students as possible, and will continue to improve systems to identify and refer students and families in need of services for social,

behavioral, or emotional issues.

(d) The applicant provides adequate evidence improved results over time. In order to reach as many at-risk students as possible, they will continue to improve systems to identify and refer students and families in need of services for social, behavioral, or emotional issues.

(4) The district clearly describes how the partnership would, within participating schools, integrate education and other services (e.g., services that address social-emotional, and behavioral needs, acculturation for immigrants and refugees) for participating students based on the following services. Students needing mental health services are primarily identified through School Support Teams, school Counselor referrals, Social Workers, and Behavior Specialists. For students with mental health needs, the therapists provide therapy to students during the school day to ensure that services are received. Therapists are employees of local mental health provider agencies and the management of the mental health therapist services falls under the supervision of the School Nursing Program. When students are suspended and parents give permission for student to participate in the Burke Alternative to Suspension program (BATS), they are assigned a work site. The BATS coordinator works to facilitate the student receiving homework so students do not fall behind academically while they are suspended.

(5) (a) The applicant clearly describes how it will assess the needs and assets of participating students that are aligned with the partnership's goals for improving the education and family and community supports identified by the partnership as evidenced by the following: Counselors continue to provide training to teachers on how to recognize social and emotional needs of students and Graduation Coaches will assist with this process. Through the Safe School grant, teachers received training on how to assess the mental health needs of students. Principals and School Counselors are trained at the beginning of each school year on how to use the BATS program. Graduation Coaches will continuously assess the needs of at-risk students who are behind academically and link them with the services they need.

(b) The applicant's plan sufficiently indicates how it will identify and inventory the needs and assets of the school and community that are aligned with those goals for improving the education and family and community supports identified by the applicant.

(c) The applicant clearly demonstrates how it will create a decision-making process and infrastructure to select, implement, and evaluate supports that address the individual needs of participating students and support improved results as evidenced by the following: Student Support Teams consist of Social Workers, School Counselors, School Administrators, other school staff, and parents. These teams have decision-making power to select and implement supports needed at their school. Graduation Coaches will work with Student Support Teams at the schools where they are assigned.

(d) The applicant well documents how it will engage parents and families of participating in both decision-making about solutions to improve results over time and in addressing student, family, and school needs based on the following: Parents must give consent and have full decision making power in order for students to receive mental health services, to receive services from the social workers, and to participate in the BATS program. Parents complete surveys at the completion of services of both programs in order to provide feedback and be part of the process of continuous improvement.

(e) The applicant provides clear evidence that it will routinely assess the applicant's progress in implementing its plan to maximize impact and resolve challenges and problems as evidenced by the following: BCPS is continuously assessing its strategies to address the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of at-risk students. The Nursing Director who oversees the mental health program is in contact with the mental health provider agencies to resolve challenges and problems. The BATS coordinator and Social Workers are in contact with principals, assistant principals and counselors to discuss and resolve any challenges with the BATS program. Social Workers, Counselors and Behavior Specialists receive supervision from the Associate Superintendent who assesses their performance.

(6) The applicant provides a clear plan to identify its annual ambitious and achievable performance measures for the proposed population-level and describes the desired results for students. The applicant aligns the student population to the assessment and/or targeted result. The performance measures are as follows:

1. Increase number of placements of students with out of school suspensions who complete community service.
2. Increase number of at-risk students identified in need of mental health, counseling, social work, behavioral, social, or emotional services and receiving services
3. Increase the number of students who progress from the 6th-12th grades.

The applicant described a comprehensive description of the coherent and sustainable partnership that it has formed with public organizations.

The Competitive Preference Priority is scored in the very high range.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Overall, the district's grant application is comprehensive and well organized. Within the body of the proposal, an abundance of documentation is evidenced. The appendix is also inclusive of an abundance of supporting documentation. The documentation includes highly-quality plans that clearly evidence the applicant's goals, activities, timelines, and deliverables, which focuses on increasing personalized learning environments that are aimed to increase student achievement, close achievement gaps and increase student preparedness for college-and career-readiness.</p> <p>In addition, the applicant provides concrete and supporting evidence relative to activities that will result in improved student progress based on the district's previous track record of success. Student achievement data, student achievement needs and teacher and administrator effectiveness was clearly demonstrated and focused on overall district achievement improvement initiatives. All of the aforementioned resulted in Absolute Priority 1 being infused throughout the proposal embedded throughout the application and being met.</p>		

Total	210	189
--------------	------------	------------