



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0205VA-1 for Cumberland County Public Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant presents a sound reform vision that builds on its work in the core educational assurance areas. The applicant plans to provide services as part of a ten member consortium. The applicant plans to serve 13,712 students in 11 middle and 11 high schools. The applicant plans to partner with Lumen Learning to provide access to content including: etextbooks, videos, problem sets and assessments. The applicant plans to develop a personal learning plan for each student. Every 7th grade student will receive a mobile device. The applicant also plans to utilize math coaches. The applicant presents 3 project goals aligned with objectives and outcomes. However, none are stated in measurable terms. Although the applicant articulates a clear and credible approach to accelerating student achievement, further details regarding its plan to achieve personalization based upon student academic interests are needed. The applicant provides an overview of the characteristics of a personalized learning environment, but does not directly describe the classroom environments will look in 22 schools. The applicant also does not describe monitoring efforts to achieve some degree of standardization in all of its classrooms.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant describes an adequate approach to project implementation. The applicant plans to serve rural school districts in Virginia. The consortium is made up of schools in the following divisions: Cumberland, Amelia, Appomattox, Buckingham, Charlotte, Halifax, Lunenburg, Meckleburg, Nottoway and Prince Edward. The applicant provides the number of students from low income families and the number of students who are high need in each school. The applicant plans to serve approximately 55% of students who are from low income families, and 51% are students who have high-need. The applicant's description of its approach to project implementation is not comprehensive. The applicant describes neither its process or rationale for selecting the schools to participate.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant presents a high quality plan that is likely to result in district wide change. The applicant describes its implementation plan with outcomes and persons responsible for implementation. This plan is aligned with both implementation objectives and goals. The applicant also provides a timeline to guide successful project implementation. The applicant provides a well-developed logic model with inputs and outcomes. The applicant's long term outcomes consist of: closing the achievement gap, supporting student achievement, increasing the number of dual enrollment credits, increasing graduation rates, and preparing students for college and career readiness. The applicant's inputs include: implementing project based learning, partnering with Southside Community College for dual enrollment, and researching personalized learning and school reform.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	4
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's vision is aligned with achieving the following project goals: providing a technology rich grades 6-12 education, developing a cadre of teachers to implement personalized learning supports, and improving school/division systems that support personalized learning. The applicant presents some ambitious project goals. However, neither the goals nor the objectives specifically address decreasing achievement gaps, increasing graduation and improving college enrollment rates. As written, the goals and objectives are not sufficiently aligned with an adequate vision to improve</p>		

student learning and performance and increase equity among all subgroups.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	10
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides data to demonstrate some degree of prior success. For school year 2010-2011, all of the schools served by project were fully accredited. However, in 2011 only 2 schools made AYP. The school district has been successful in implementing a rigorous assessment of student achievement, known as the Standards of Learning. The applicant states that schools are on the trajectory for implementing personal learning communities. The applicant describes some schools' efforts in implementing such reforms. The applicant has also successfully implemented dual college enrollment for some of its students. The applicant does not specifically address how it makes student performance data available to students, educators, and parents. The applicant does not provide current data from school years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. Current data is needed to demonstrate a four-year track record of success.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant ensures that the operating budget, which includes salaries for instructional and non-instructional staff, for each school is published in the newspaper and circulated at public hearings. The applicant also lists the website that contains the relevant information for each school division.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	4
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not provide a sufficient description of the legal, statutory and regulatory requirements. The applicant does not sufficiently address matters relating to its autonomy to implement the project. The applicant merely states that it will comply with all accountability, transparency and reporting requirements for the project.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	7
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant utilized a steering committee with a variety of stakeholders. The applicant states that in each division 70% of teachers supported the project. However, there is no evidence of this assertion. The applicant has attached 41 letters of support. The applicant does not sufficiently describe how parents and students were involved in project planning.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	14
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant presents a high quality plan for learning and teaching. The applicant plans to create a personalized learning environment for science and math. The applicant plans to use a platform from Lumen Learning to provide access to digital content. The Consortium Curriculum Tem is responsible for developing standards based content. The Lumen Learning Content will incorporate open educational resources, and students progress through the digital resources at their own pace. The applicant describes the benefits of using open educational resources which include the rights to reuse, revise, remix and redistribute content. The includes a plan for implementation. The timelines, however, are too broad. They are on an annual basis. The applicant does not describe high quality strategies for high needs students to ensure that they are on track toward meeting college and career ready standards and graduation requirements. The applicant does not describe how its students have access to diverse cultures, contexts and perspectives that deepen student learning. Further details regarding the applicant's plan to incorporate the attainment of cultural competency skills would strengthen the application.</p>		

The applicant also does not make reference to how students will develop 21st Century Skills including: team work, problem solving, perseverance and goal setting.

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

The applicant presents a high quality plan for teaching and leading. The applicant plans to invest in professional development and use data to drive instruction. Lumen Learning will provide face to face and online professional development workshops. The professional development component will consist of sessions on: personalized teaching; and data informed teaching. The applicant provides an implementation plan with a timeline. However, the dates are on an annual basis which will not aid in successful project implementation. The applicant has planned to develop the following deliverables: fifty modules aligned with state standards, four professional development sessions, skilled trainers, and sustainable professional development activities. The applicant does not sufficiently describe how it plans to improve teacher and principal effectiveness. The applicant also does not address its hard to staff areas.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

To a limited extent, the applicant describes a plan to promote successful project implementation through policies and infrastructure. The applicant presents its organizational chart. However, most of it is illegible. The applicant plans to utilize a steering committee with representatives from key stakeholder groups. The applicant's staffing plan includes the following positions: Project Director; Data/Administrative Specialist and a Technology Specialist. The applicant provides key milestones to be accomplished on an annual basis. The applicant describes the mission, vision and duties of the Board of Education and Superintendent of Public Instruction. However, the applicant does not specifically describe its resources and practices for serving students with disabilities and English Language Learners. The applicant also does not sufficiently describe its plan to have students earn credit based on mastery rather than seat hours. The applicant also does not specify the persons responsible for implementing each milestone.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	3
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

To a rather limited extent, the applicant presents its plan to support project implementation through LEA policy and school infrastructure. Further details regarding a well-conceived plan are needed. The applicant has developed technology plans that provide for the use of educational technology in the classroom. The project will enable each 7th grade student to receive an electronic learning device. The applicant does not sufficiently describe how teachers and parents will have access to technology and technical support. The applicant does not address its system to allow parents and students information in an open data format. The applicant also does not sufficiently address its interoperable data systems.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	7

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant briefly describes its continuous improvement model that includes: defining the problem; gathering data; refining the problem based on data; identifying root causes; researching and piloting evidence based solutions; and evaluating the results. The applicant does not sufficiently describe its process to ensure timely and regular feedback regarding the attainment of project goals and objectives. Further details regarding the applicant's continuous improvement process are needed. The applicant does not present a high quality plan for a rigorous continuous improvement process. The applicant does not provide a timeline, key tasks or persons responsible for implementation. The applicant also does not address how it will monitor, measure and publicly share information.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides only a brief description of its plan for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. The applicant merely states that each member school district has a communication and engagement plan. The applicant also provides a broad overview of its members having a shared vision. The applicant does not provide a high quality plan for ongoing communication and engagement with its stakeholders. Further details are needed regarding the activities to be implemented, a timeline, inputs, and outputs are needed.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>To only a limited extent, the applicant describes its approach to ensuring continuous improvement. The applicant provides performance measures for each school district. There are approximately 6 performance measures for each school district. The performance measures presented are ambitious and achievable. The applicant does not describe its rationale for selecting its performance measures. The applicant does not address its rationale for varying performance measures among its member school districts. The applicant does not describe how it will provide information tailored to its plan and theory of action and assess/determine any areas of concern. The applicant does not describe how it will review and refine measure to gauge implementation, where appropriate.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not provide a high quality plan to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of its project. The applicant plans to engage an external evaluation and research consultant. The applicant plans to use the Kirkpatrick Four Levels for Evaluation Model. The applicant does not provide a detailed evaluation plan. It is not aligned with measurable project outcomes. It does not list sufficient qualitative and quantitative data sources. The applicant does not describe any evaluation questions nor does it address how it plans to disseminate evaluation data.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	7
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a detailed budget narrative. The budget is reasonable and the costs are adequate. However, the applicant does not clearly delineate or distinguish its one time expenditures versus its ongoing costs.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	0
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not describe its plan to achieve the sustainability of project goals. There is no post award budget nor is there a list of potential funding sources.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not specifically address this competitive preference priority.</p>		

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Not Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: The applicant does not provide a coherent and comprehensive description on how it will build on the core educational assurance areas.		

Total	210	115
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0205VA-2 for Cumberland County Public Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant articulated a very comprehensive vision for implementing personalized learning within 10 school districts that will make up a consortium called the Rural Route to Post-secondary Education (RRPE). Memorandums of Understanding signed by each district in the consortium clearly identify the target groups across all districts. The vision of the consortium is clearly explained and aligned with preparing students to be college and career ready; clear and appropriate goals for ensuring the success of its lowest performing students and accelerating learning are included. The vision is meaningful with an emphasis on technology and personalized learning, including strategies to blend learning inside and outside the classroom. A meaningful and aligned explanation is included for the primary focus of RRPE that enables the reader to get a good picture of what the classroom experience will be like for students and teachers; the foci are reasonable and attainable. Digital learning; ongoing monitoring of student progress in authentic ways; the use of personalized learning devices; and the development of personalized learning plans in middle school are also included. A clear and effective approach (vision) for preparing and training teachers to deepen student learning is included, along with an explanation of how the training will be phased in over a four year period and sustained. Measureable implementation goals and intermediate outcomes that will impact learning for students and teachers further explains how the vision will become reality. As a result, this section received a score in the high point range.		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant clearly articulated its approach to implementation that allowed the reader to visualize the process for selecting schools. Appropriate initial methods were used that included: a meeting with the consortium superintendents and local colleges to discuss options for expanding personalized learning and the project based approach; opportunities for dual enrollment; and how to align the math grade six curriculum to post secondary education. The applicant includes the required information about the participating schools; number of students; number from low income families; number of high-needs students; and the number of educators. The data is well organized and provides clarity on the population that will be served. As a result, this section received a score in the high point range.		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant includes a very clear logic model that helps the reader to understand how it plans to address school-wide reform within all schools in the consortium. The logic model is easy to read and a useful visual that would make sense to staff, parents and students. It summarizes student needs, inputs, outputs, targeted areas, and intermediate, long and short term goals. What would enhance this section is more information on how the proposal would be scaled up to address meaningful reform beyond the participating schools. It attempts to address this by providing an example of how a strategy could be applied at the elementary level; however, additional information and an explanation of how the plan, not just one strategy, could be scaled up would have enhanced this section. As a result, this section received a score in the low-high point range.

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

10

8

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant includes three district goals for the consortium with specific objectives, a timeline, persons responsible and intermediate outcomes. The goals and objectives seem attainable and reasonable; and demonstrate how the personalized learning environment connects to student learning, teacher learning, and achievement to reduce gaps, increase graduation rates, and college enrollment. The objectives also address performance on summative assessments; however, the inclusion of specific goals that stated the number and/or percentage of students that they wanted to see as evidence of gap reduction, improved graduation rates, and college enrollment would have made this section stronger. The chart that is included is helpful to stakeholders for understanding the consortiums vision for student and teacher success. As a result of the above, this section received points in the middle score 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	13
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant included data for all districts in the consortium that demonstrates a clear track record of success; sufficient data is included. Rigorous standards have been set by the State which include standards for accreditation at 70 to 75%. The inclusion of information on the transition of State accountability measures used for reporting summative progress of student learning is helpful and provides a context for variability in progress over time. Demographic data is included, but could have been formatted better to clearly see and have the ability to analyze progress over time; this data is not separated into sections or columns, so some of the information overlaps. The applicant provides a wealth of useful additional information for each district for where they are in implementing personalized learning and their long range goals. A good variety of strategies and pathways are explained. The one piece of information that appears to be lacking is how student performance data was made available to students, educators, and parents in ways that informed and improved participation, instruction and services. As a result, this section received points in the high score range.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant articulates meaningful system and strategies districts in the consortium use for making information public. The methods stated allow for access in a variety of ways: local newspapers, public hearings; posting on school or district websites; Freedom of Information Act requests; and/or the superintendents web page. A chart is included that tells where the information about personnel salaries for all the expected categories identified in this section can be found, for each district. As a result, this section received a score in the high point range.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	1
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant includes a summary of what districts will do to implement personalized learning, but does not directly address the criteria for this section. The information provided does not explain the state context for implementation. Thus, this section received a score in the low point range.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	11

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided brief information about stakeholder engagement, but the information does not demonstrate a thorough, ongoing process for sharing information with stakeholders and gaining feedback; there is no explanation of how the plan was refined based on feedback, nor a timeline that was implemented for gathering input. The applicant states that a steering committee of superintendents, instructors, and college administrators met to discuss options and goals; then shared this information with educators about opportunities to be part of the consortium; then the proposal was shared with the school board, administrators, local education associations, and teachers, but how the information was shared and the frequency is not provided. The lack of information makes one assume that discussions only took place at the beginning phase of the grant development. The applicant does include letters of approval/support from appropriate stakeholders in the appendix section of the grant. As a result, this section received a score in the middle point range.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	17

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Overall the applicant articulates a high quality plan for ensuring student learning through the implementation of a personalized learning environment. The approach to learning addresses most of the criteria. The plan includes:

- A consortium model to replace the existing STEM personalized learning experience at middle and high school; model will incorporate a lab approach that delivers content digitally via ebooks, videos, problem solving, and assessments with immediate feedback; this interactive approach is meaningful and highly engaging to students rather than stand and deliver
- Ability for students to self pace their instruction instead of being on a standard path; this allows for a personalized study plan to meet individual student interest
- Open education resources will be housed in a public domain and students will have a choice of what they want to access with guidance from their teacher; existing math and science resources will have the ability to adapt to this environment; this technique will promote student engagement because students will not be relying solely on their teacher to tell them what they have to learn-make their own judgments based on performance and have access to choices that align to the standards and interests
- Alignment of the district curriculum to the local college curriculum; this is a plus and will allow students to earn college credit along with accessing project based learning
- Formative, interactive assessments that provide immediate feedback; built in they system to provide on-going performance data so that instruction can be tailored to students current level of performance; this will provide instruction that is matched to students current level of performance which is how data should be used
- Ability for parents to log-in to the database to view their child's progress; this is good so that parents stay informed and can ask teachers specific questions based on information in the database
- Specific goals, activities, persons responsible, and a timeline that further elaborates on the high quality plan for the consortium

The cost for the developing and assessing student learning is included and is reasonable (\$5.00) per student; this amount demonstrates the each district's ability to sustain the strategies using local funds after the grant expires.

Two areas that do not appear to be fully addressed, if at all, in this section are accommodations and high-quality strategies for high needs students; and mechanisms for providing training and support to students so that they know how to use the tools appropriately and efficiently. As a result of the above information, the applicant received a score in the high point range.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	17
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant includes clear, relevant goals and strategies for strengthening teachers ability to implement personalized learning. An excellent focus is described for how teachers will become facilitators of learning rather than dictators of learning; this places more ownership and accountability on students. This section of the plan includes:

- An adequate description for how student data will be used to plan learning opportunities for students
- Roles and responsibility of a consultant to draft a learning plan for the district to guide professional development; this

- will assist with monitoring implementation and impact on student outcomes
- Good flexibility in the structure of PD so that teachers and leaders have access (start with online training and then face to face)
- A description of the gradual release model that will be used which will put ownership for learning on the teachers; moving from the experts as trainers, to trainer-of-trainers, to a supporting role so that teachers can lead professional development
- A clear explanation of how training models will be categorized by standards; this is a very good technique that will ensure alignment of instruction to the standards and provide consistency of training across the consortium
- The use of research based information to drive the development of teacher resources; this will support the validity for why the resources were chosen and how they will enhance teacher practices
- A thorough explanation of a four part professional development series; a detailed explanation of each series is included and they are all aligned with increasing teachers' capacity to implement personalized learning
- A clear explanation of how evaluation tools are built in to assess teacher and student impact
- A detailed table is included that provides very clear information of explicit goals, activities, persons responsible, a timeline, and deliverables

The only information that appears to be missing is a high quality plan for increasing the capacity of principals and strategies for increasing effective teachers for hard to staff areas. Based on the above information, this section received a score in the high point range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	13
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant provides some evidence that it has planned and considered practices, policies and rules that would facilitate personalized learning; however, there are areas that could be further developed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A central office exists for each district of the consortium that supports a cross functional team at the school level (operational and academic staff); good structure for ensuring two-way communication about progress and needs of each district • A project director and data administrative assistant that will support workgroups in each district; great structure so that one person can focus on the grant and oversee all activities associated with the grant and communicate on-going information; the project director will also work with an outside evaluator • Clear and appropriate roles and responsibilities are described for the project director and data assistant • Math coaches will receive ongoing support from a math specialists; good structure for having a direct line of support and someone to problem solve with and help to enhance the school program • Technology specialists will support the technology platform at each school (one for each district) and support the use of the electronic learning devices for seventh graders; this type of support is necessary in light of the amount of technology issues that may occur and also to provide ongoing training to teachers in how to utilize the technology to teach and assess learning in a personalized learning environment • A point of contact will be assigned to each division; good structure for ensuring that information is shared regularly • Monthly updates by a steering committee for each district; committee will get together to assess progress and discuss upgrades; this will help ensure that the strategies implemented are aligned to student data and foster personalized learning • An organization chart is included that is supposed to provide clarity on the connection between positions and who they report too; however, most of the chart is cut off so the information can't be read • Year one through four activities are clearly described in a table which enable the reader to understand the support structure over time. • Equitable means for stakeholders to access information are described <p>Additional information should be provided on how schools will have flexibility and autonomy over school schedules, calendars and personnel. As a result of the above information, the applicant received a score in the high point range.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	1

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not include a well developed plan that articulates its infrastructure for supporting personalized learning. The plan states what technology is available throughout all districts in the consortium, but this is the only information that is provided. It does not address access by stakeholders, technical support, how parents can export information, or an interoperable data system. This information also could not be found in other parts of the grant. As a result, the applicant recieved a score in the low point range.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	2
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant does not articulate a well developed plan that describes its continuous improvement process. The steps of the continuous improvement process that districts and schools use are stated without a description of how the process will be used to gain regular feedback on progress toward the project goals. There is no description or outline for how the process will be applied to ensuring that the strategies and activities are effective in implementing a personalized learning environment. As a result, this section received a score in the low point range.		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	1
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant fails to include a high-quality plan that explains how it will provide ongoing and engagement with stakeholders. This section states that schools and divisions have systems in place for ongoing communication, but does not explain what the systems are or how they function. It states that the RTT plan incorporates shared goals, but lacks explicit information about how stakeholderes are or will be engaged throughout the grant period to provide feedback and assess progress on the goals. As a result, this section recieved a score in the low point range.		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
(E)(3) Reviewer Comments: The applicant includes a variety of performance measures that provide clarity of its targets for improving student performance at the elementary, middle and high school levels. However, further information on the methodology used for calculating the measures is needed, along with how the measures will provide rigorous and timely information, and how it will review and improve the measure over time. A few of the measures are not the same across all districts and there is no explanation as to why this is the case. Some of the measures seem reasonable, such as a few of the academic measures, while the quality of others is questionable because they don't appear measureable. A narrative with more information about the performance measures would have made this section stronger. As a result, this section recieved a score in the low-middle point range.		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
(E)(4) Reviewer Comments: The applicant fails to articulate a well-developed plan that addresses how it will evaluate the effectiveness of its investments. It states that an external evaluator and research consultant will conduct an independent evaluation; and the Project Director and evaluator will gather relevant data and continuously share findings with the consortium and other stakeholders, which are both appropriate means for evaluating effectiveness; however, there is no additional information nor an outline of what this process will look like in action and how other stakeholders will be involved in the evaluation process. As a result, this section received a score in the low-middle point range.		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant includes clear budget tables and embeds narratives that explain the purpose of each expenditure. The narrative is included underneath each budget item in the table; and an explanation of costs that will be covered by the district, external supporters, or the state are included and make sense. Appropriate costs for years 1, 2, 3 and 4 are included; and since a few items only list expenditures for year one, it is assumed that these are one-time investments; however, it would have been helpful to include a narrative or clear description of the one time investments. Clear itemized budgets for each category are included in the budget subpart three. As a result, this section received a score in the high point range.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	0
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Information about the sustainability of the projects goals after the term of the grant could not be located; the information was not found in other sections of the grant either. In reviewing the charts in section F1, it was unclear if this information may have been embedded. As a result, this section did not earn any points.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not include or discuss a competitive preference priority in its application. As a result, no points were given to this section.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Overall, the applicant does address how it will build on the core educational assurance areas to create personalized learning environments within each of the districts that are part of the consortium. The strategies are reasonable and appropriate, and are aligned to college and career standards. There is evidence of a commitment to: deepening and accelerating student learning through personalized approaches; and building teachers' capacity so that a productive personalized learning environment can be implemented. There is also evidence that supports the districts vision of closing gaps in performance amongst the targeted population. The collaborative approach of implementing personalized learning through a consortium model that involves multiple districts is very unique. As a result, the applicant has met absolute priority 1.

Total	210	130
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0205VA-3 for Cumberland 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:

The Rural Route to Postsecondary Education (RRPE) Consortium is comprised of ten school divisions located in rural Southside Virginia, including Cumberland County Public Schools (lead LEA), Amelia, Appomattox, Buckingham, Charlotte, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway and Prince Edward. The applicant’s proposal will impact 13,712 students in 11 middle schools and 11 high schools. Over 40% of area students qualify for free and reduced lunch and unemployment rates exceed state and national averages.

The Virginia Board Of Education’s Comprehensive Plan for 2012-2017 strives to close the achievement gap, promote college and career readiness for all students, raise the graduation rate, and elevate student achievement and well-being through the following measures;

- Accountability for Student Learning (accountability for student achievement at each school)
- Rigorous Standards to Promote College and Career Readiness (pre-K -12 Standards of Learning (SOL) program)
- Expanded Opportunities to Learn (high-quality charter schools, college partnership laboratory schools, online learning programs, and Governor’s Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) academies)
- Nurturing Young Learners (partnerships to help children enter kindergarten with skills to be successful)
- Highly Qualified and Effective Educators (preparation, recruitment, retention, ongoing professional development)
- Sound Policies for Student Success (implementation of laws and regulations by Board of Education)
- Safe and Secure Schools

The RRPE Consortium’s vision is to leverage the state-of-the-art technology to transform a traditional, one-size-fits-all approach into a comprehensive personalized learning experience that will enable and inspire students to achieve regardless of their background, ability, or economic status of their family. The intent is to create a blended approach to learning combining instructional delivery both within and beyond the traditional classroom. A collaborative partnership between teacher, parent, student, and school will result in a tailored learning program to best meet the needs and interests of each individual student.

Due to the rapid pace of change in the information age, RRPE recognizes a need to prepare students to be strong communicators, innovators, and thinkers. To do so, the consortium will apply research-based practices in personalized learning and continuous student, teacher, and parent learning with the benefit of modern technology to help students obtain 21st Century learning skills and achieve college-and career readiness. A new technology platform will be developed. School faculty and staff will be supported with necessary tools and skill development through high-quality professional development, coaching, leadership development, and continuous improvement progression.

Primary foci for the RRPE plan include;

- a digital learning platform enabling all stakeholders to access learning materials and monitor progress
- a personalized learning plan for each student to ensure individual mastery
- educators use of an array of strategies and tools to differentiate and individualize instruction to ensure academic achievement and progress toward graduation and post-secondary education.

STEM instruction will be improved at the middle and high school levels through the implementation of CandelaSTEM from Lumen Learning, the consortium members will introduce a technology-enabled highly interactive “lab” approach, allowing teachers time to engage in personalized interactions with students who progress through instructional content at an individualized pace. Each seventh grade student and teacher will be supplied with a mobile device to access and interact with the content available on the digital learning platform included in CandelaSTEM, providing learning opportunities and equal access to high-quality resources for every child, regardless of socio-economic status. CandelaSTEM will provide assessments and activities that will capture data to show engagement and understanding. This data will be provided to

instructors in a dashboard to inform instruction.

Each high school in the consortium has a part-time College/Career Coach funded by local community colleges. Placing a College/Career Coach in each middle school through grant funding will result in opportunities for these coaches to assist middle school students in the development of personalized learning plans (PLPs), building upon student strengths and interests to create a framework to promote personal engagement. The framework can incorporate project-based learning, inquiry learning, collaborative learning, tutoring, advisories, writing to learn, and other strategies, which will engage students in an active role, working with teachers and parents to be increasingly accountable for their own learning success.

The plan developed by RRPE will require professional development to support a data-informed, personalized instructional approach, shifting the role of the teacher into that of a facilitative guide. Lumen Learning will provide professional development and an online resource center to create a “train-the-trainer” professional development system that will build in on-going professional development supportive of long term sustainability of project activities.

While the application would have benefited from a more thorough description of the classroom experience for students, the RRPE Consortium has established a strong vision of success supported by the Virginia Board Of Education’s Comprehensive Plan for 2012-2017, building its work upon the four core educational assurance areas. As a result the applicant scores high for (A)(1).

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

10

9

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

All but one of the school divisions located in Virginia’s Superintendent’s Region 8 have chosen to participate in the RRPE Consortium. Participating divisions include Cumberland (Lead), Amelia, Appomattox, Buckingham, Charlotte, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway and Prince Edward. A representative from Southside Virginia Community College met with division superintendents and/or designees to discuss the application and the opportunity to expand project based learning in the schools; to increase opportunities for students to take dual enrollment classes at an earlier age, preparing them for college and career readiness; and an opportunity to align the mathematics curriculum grades 6 to postsecondary to better prepare students for college. The applicant provides the number of students and educators per participating school within each division. The number of low income and high needs students for each division is also provided. For the consortium, 55% of impacted students are identified as low income, and 51% are identified as high need. At the high school and middle school levels, data includes the grades and subjects included in the plan.

The applicant provides a thorough listing of divisions, impacted schools, and impacted students and teachers, with student counts broken down to include low-income and high-needs student numbers and percentages. The approach to developing the grant proposal included not only the divisions represented from rural southern Virginia, but also a representative from a local community college. Given the applicant’s approach to implementation, which verifies eligibility requirements; identifies participating divisions, schools, students and teachers; and describes the process used to identify the participating divisions, the applicant scores high for (A)(2).

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

10

7

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a high-quality plan to decrease achievement gaps, increase graduation rates, increase college and career readiness, and address performance concerns that exist at several of the consortia schools.

- 8 middle schools are Accredited with Warning in Mathematics
- 4 high schools are Accredited with Warning in Mathematics
- Nine schools did not make the Annual Measureable Objectives (AMO) in Mathematics for ALL students
- Five only made AMO because of the three year average

The plan includes implementation objectives, a timeline, persons responsible, and immediate outcomes providing significant detail to a plan geared toward improving student learning outcomes for all impacted students. The project goals support increased student directed learning and student ownership of learning, decreasing the achievement gap, increasing student mastery of curriculum standards including college and career readiness standards, increasing on-time graduation rates, and increased opportunities for dual enrollment credits.

While the proposal provides significant detail in a well-developed plan to address its goals relating to the RRPE plan, evidence of plans to scale up the proposal beyond the impacted districts are not evident. As a result, the plan scores at the upper middle range for (A)(3).

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

The applicant's vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity through ambitious yet achievable annual goals. Performance on summative assessments along with expectations for growth into the last year of the grant period are provided and disaggregated by White, SPED, ELL, Disadvantaged, Asian, and Gap Groups 1-3 (see bulleted listings below for group descriptions). This data is provided for VA Standard of Learning Assessments for grades 5-12 in English, Math, Science (no projections for growth are provided), History (no projections for growth are provided), and Science (no projections for growth are provided). High school graduation rate data is similarly disaggregated by subgroup and is included with projections for growth into the post-grant period. College enrollment rate data is provided, which is disaggregated to include data specific to female, male, black, white, disadvantaged, and SPED students with projections for growth into the post grant period. Postsecondary degree attainment data is also provided as collected from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SHEV) and includes projections into the post-grant period. The applicant also established goals for reducing achievement gaps, increasing graduation rates, and increasing college enrollment rates for Gap Group 1, Gap Group 2, and Gap Group 3, whose memberships are identified as follows;

- Gap Group1
 - SWD
 - ELL
 - ED
- Gap Group 2
 - Black
- Gap Group 3
 - Hispanic

The applicant also sets goals of increasing postsecondary degree attainment by 2% per year into the post grant period. The LEA is stated for this goal relating to postsecondary degree attainment, but it is unclear as to why this goal is not established for all of the represented divisions within the consortium.

The applicant's vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goals for each participating LEA. Reasonable goals are established for the provided performance measures to both improve student achievement and narrow achievement gaps. Further establishment of targets for improved student performance in areas for which targets were not provided would strengthen the proposal. As a result, the applicant scores in the lower high range for (A)(4).

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	8

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Several indicators may be used to evaluate the track record of success for schools. One such indicator of the performance of schools in Virginia is accreditation status. High schools are accredited if students achieve pass rates of 75 % or higher in English and 70 % or higher in mathematics, science, and history; and attain a point value of 85 or greater based on the Graduation and Completion Index (GCI). At the middle level, accreditation is achieved with pass rates of 75% or higher on English and 70% or higher on math, science, and history. Accredited with warning ratings are received when pass rates for the core subjects fall below achievement levels required for full accreditation. These schools that fall behind in English and/or mathematics are then required to adopt research based instructional programs to raise student achievement in these areas. High schools earning a GCI less than the provisional benchmark for the year are also rated as Accredited with Warning. Accreditation data reflects that 14 of the consortium's 22 schools are Accredited with Warning. Data provided by the applicant indicates a decline over time in accreditation of the schools impacted by this proposal. Further data that provides evidence of performance concerns is that in 2011, only 2 of the listed schools made AYP. For the 2013-2014 year, Virginia's accountability system has established more rigorous academic standards, the Standards of Learning (SOL). It is possible that accreditation standards slipped as performance expectations of students increased. This sort of decline has been experienced by states adopting new Common Core Learning Standards. Based on information provided by the applicant, Virginia is clearly undergoing this sort of transition.

The federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) requires that states establish Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) for raising overall reading and mathematics achievement and the achievement. Virginia, under ESEA flexibility

waivers granted in spring of 2013, has established AMOs designed to reduce proficiency gaps between students in high-performing and low-performing schools within six years. Because of the waiver, AYP ratings are no longer issued, but reporting on student subgroup success in meeting AMOs is reported. Nine of the impacted schools did not meet AMO in mathematics and must develop and implement plans to raise achievement of student subgroups not meeting AMO.

All school divisions have implemented various stages of ambitious reform involving personalized learning. These efforts are likely to improve learning outcomes and narrow achievement gaps. Project-based learning, inquiry learning, 21st Century Skills collaborative learning, tutoring, advisories, writing to learn, and other strategies that promote personal engagement are employed as part of the effort to personalize learning. A variety of innovative approaches are being employed in several of the schools to support STEM education, technology use, and creative approaches to teaching and learning to best meet student needs and promote student achievement. All school divisions have students taking dual enrollment courses through local community colleges. Virginia has established a plan for dual enrollment that gives a state-wide framework for arrangements between schools and community colleges. Health Sciences Academies will be implemented in all school divisions in the Fall of 2013 through a Virginia Department of Education award. This will offer a program that expands options, helping students acquire skills in the health sciences through partnerships with a local community colleges and health agencies. This opportunity will allow ninth grade students to begin taking dual enrollment courses in preparation for the Health Sciences Academy.

While the consortium divisions have made progress toward achieving success, a clear record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching is unclear across all schools. While the applicant indicates that all consortium divisions have made gains in student learning outcomes, closing achievement gaps, and raising student achievement over the past four years, evidence provided indicates that student performance may have actually slipped in recent years, as evidence by the Accreditation with Warning status of many of the impacted schools. It is clear however, that the schools have made some recent, ambitious reform efforts, including implementation of new SOL standards that “raise the bar” for student achievement, which in turn may have impact upon accreditation status. Many schools in transition to new standards with high expectations have experienced the challenge of decreases in assessment performance. The districts have embarked on many ventures to support student need and interest, personalizing learning experiences. Evidence of the accessibility to and use of student performance data by students and parents to inform and improve participation, instruction, and services is not explained. It is clear however, that such data is used by educators to inform decision making. As a result, the applicant scores in the middle range for (B)(1).

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

The 10 school divisions demonstrate high levels of transparency in their practices. By school, actual school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration are made public. Operating budgets are advertised in local newspapers, posted on division websites, and are shared at public hearings. Salary information is posted in local newspapers. This information may also be requested of districts and is available on district websites, for which addresses are provided in the application.

The information provided in the application does not clarify if actual personnel salaries are made public for all school-level instructional and support staff. As a result, the applicant scores in the mid-range for (B)(2).

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

Each school division in the consortium has already begun to implement personalized learning environments in their middle and high schools. Grant funding will enable these schools, which are now at various stages of implementation, to fully implement PLEs. The Virginia Board Of Education’s Comprehensive Plan for 2012-2017 built its work upon the four core educational assurance areas, paving the way for PLE development and implementation. While it is evident that conditions likely exist in Virginia to support autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the applicant’s proposal, the applicant does not provide a description that would verify that these conditions exist. As a result, the applicant scores low for (B)(3).

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	8
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant’s proposal was developed by a steering committee made up of superintendents, key instructors, leaders, and college administrators. Each steering committee member informed their educators, school board members, county

administrators, and local education association, as well as teachers and administrators about the opportunity to participate in RRPE. The proposal was shared with school board members, county administrators, and the local education association, as well as teachers and administrators. At least 70 percent of teachers from participating schools provided support for the proposal. Additional support from numerous business and community members in each division is also noted. A memo from the Superintendent is provided that indicates unanimous support from the Cumberland County Board of Supervisors. The Virginia Department of Education reviewed the proposal and responded supportively to the LEA superintendent, indicating that the efforts set forth in the applicant's proposal generally comply with state and federal education requirements.

Letters of support are provided by the following organizations and groups;

- Boards of Supervisors
- Education Associations
- Community Colleges
- Chambers of Commerce
- School Boards
- Schools
- County Boards of Supervisors
- Rotarians
- Historical Societies
- Virginia Cooperative Extension
- House of Delegates
- Mecklenburg County Business Education Partnership, Inc.
- Banks
- Adult Learning agencies

Evidence of support at the level of students and parents is not provided in the applicant's proposal. The application would be strengthened by indicators of support and involvement of students, parent, and related groups. Further information regarding the use of data to inform the process of PLP development would also strengthen the application. As a result the applicant scores in the middle range for (B)(4).

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	9

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has developed a plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. This plan includes an approach to implementing instructional strategies for all participating students that enables participating students to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to college- and career-ready standards and college- and career-ready graduation requirements, accelerating student learning through individualized support. This plan includes the implementation of high-quality content, including digital learning content, aligned with college- and career-ready standards.

The applicant plans to create PLEs for math and science education at middle and high school levels. The approach will increase experiential learning, leading to deeper learning and content mastery. A personalized learning platform will be developed for content delivery that is aligned with the Virginia Standards of Learning. The approach will emphasize a "lab" approach that employs the use of technology and high quality digital content to progress through instructional content at each student's own pace, allowing teachers to focus instructional time for targeted personal interactions with students to improve mastery. The project-based and experiential learning experiences will help students apply content while strengthening college and career readiness as students pursue learning goals linked to the Virginia SOL standards. The grant activities will help students master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving.

While the applicant has commendable goals for improving instruction through personalization, it is evident that input from parents is not actively sought as a part of the plan. Parents and students should be working with educators in establishing personalized plans for learning, identifying learning goals, evaluating progress toward these goals, and in helping students understand that learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals.

The plan does not include evidence of student exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives to motivate and

deepen individual student learning. The plan further does not provide evidence of the use of data to inform the educational process for students and parents. As a result, the applicant scores in the lower middle range for (C)(1).

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

The applicant has developed a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. This plan includes an approach to implementing instructional strategies for all participating students, enabling participating students to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to college- and career-ready standards and graduation, accelerating learning through individualized support.

The applicant has established sound goals to improve each teacher's ability to understand student engagement and learning data, and to teach most effectively by using the data to inform teacher-student engagement. Through the applicant's efforts, teachers will likely be prepared to engage students in the deeper learning and application required to achieve the Virginia State Standards of Learning. Implementation efforts will create local experts within the teacher community, who will act as leaders, supporting change and excellence across the consortium. Significant professional development will guide teachers in building their abilities to develop pedagogical approaches that engage students in deeper learning, utilizing experiential learning modules that support deeper learning and application. As a result, the teacher will become a facilitative guide in the educational progress, using student performance data to monitor progress and tailor methods of engaging students both individually and in groups. Teachers will guide the learning process with the benefit of data and proven educational technologies.

Lumen Learning, the CCT will define Deeper Learning and Application Modules (DLAMs) that support the Virginia Standards of Learning. Teachers will be trained in implementation of these modules. A variety of additional professional development offerings will support instruction that is deep and personalized. A train-the-trainer approach will ensure that long term sustainability is developed for implemented changes within the schools.

Parties responsible for the execution of the plans are identified along with a timeline and deliverables for the plan which involves a review of existing lessons, materials, and approaches, development of DLAM modules, and professional development to support grant goals and strategies.

Improvement of teacher and principal practice is addressed through professional development. Feedback from teacher and principal evaluation systems is not included as a driving factor for improving teacher and principal effectiveness. The plan does not include processes and tools to match student needs with specific resources and approaches to provide continuously improving feedback about the effectiveness of the resources in meeting student needs. While one might argue that professional development practices included in the proposal will increase the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals, the plan does not specifically address the use of evaluation systems to maximize student contact with highly effective principals.

While the applicant has the basic elements of a high-quality plan for teaching and leading, the plan would benefit from further development. In particular, the applicant has not addressed a means for staffing the particularly hard to fill positions that impact STEM areas. As a result, the applicant scores at the low end of the high range for (C)(2).

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	10

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has developed a reasonable plan to support project implementation. The consortium envisions that its proposal will be led by a project director and data/administrative assistant with support from cross departmental work groups. These cross-functional teams will be staffed by school, learning community, operational, and academic personnel. To administer the project, a full-time Project Director will oversee all grant activities, including reporting, budgeting, and evaluating progress toward meeting benchmarks, objectives, and goals. The Project Director will work with an external evaluator to develop implementation rubrics. A Data/Administrative Specialist will support the Project Director and assist with the budget, procurement, scheduling, and data collection, manage the digital learning platform and provide technical support to the schools, and other tasks as needed. Two Math Specialists will work with all 10 school divisions to oversee Math Coaches and to work with math teachers. A Technology Specialist will work with the platform delivery at each school

division and will assist with the electronic devices for each 7th grader. Each division will have a designated person to oversee grant activities who will work with the director.

Coordination between the school divisions will occur through monthly updates from the RRPE Steering Committee, which will consist of:

- Two school division superintendents
- School division contact from each school
- Project Director, Data/Administrative Assistant, Technology Specialist and Math Specialists
- Representative from the three community colleges
- Representative from The College of William and Mary
- Representative from Lumen Learning

RRPE students have multiple and varied opportunities to demonstrate mastery of standards through state assessments, division initiatives, classroom measures, and team projects. Efforts will enable schools to differentiate, expand, and enrich learning for special education and ESOL students and their families, both within and outside of the general education classroom. Work with vendors will ensure that materials are available in a variety of languages, that assistive technologies can be used with the digital learning platform, and that all measures are taken to include disabled parents, students, and teachers.

While the applicant has set forth basic components of a high-quality plan, the applicant has not addressed some areas that would strengthen the application. The need and related capacity for flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators, and school-level budgets is not addressed. While students will have multiple means of demonstrating mastery, opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, as opposed to seat time is not evident. As a result, the applicant scores in the upper middle range for (D)(1).

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

The applicant has tried to ensure that all stakeholders have access to technology at each school site. Through technology planning, most classrooms now have interactive whiteboards, laptops, document cameras, integrated sound systems and other tools and resources to promote student engagement and 21st Century skill development. The next phase of the plan is to provide electronic learning devices to all 7th grade students and teachers and to develop and implement the CandelaSTEM platform.

Provisions are not included to ensure that students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders (have appropriate levels of technical support. Information provided does not suggest that parents and students have or will have the ability to export their information in an open data format, enabling the use of data in other electronic learning systems. The use of interoperable data systems is also not described in the applicant's proposal. As a result, the applicant scores low in (D)(2).

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	2

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Schools impacted by RRPE have embraced and embedded a process for ongoing, continuous improvement, which will be followed by the consortium. The applicant describes the basic steps of the cyclical process, but fails to explain how this cyclical process will be applied to support continuous evaluation of progress to inform practices in support of improvement. No details are provided to specify how the applicant will monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of its investments funded by Race to the Top – District.

The applicant has not developed a high-quality plan that includes a timeline, deliverables and responsible parties for a continuous improvement process. As a result, the applicant scores low in (E)(1).

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	1
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The consortium recognizes that optimum student achievement requires ownership from teachers, administrators, students, parents, and community-based stakeholders. School divisions have existing systems in place to ensure that ongoing communication and engagement is occurring with internal and external stakeholders. While the applicant states that a “shared vision” that deliberately engages the community to become an integral element in the process will ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of personalized learning, the applicant fails to provide an explanation of its plan and process for communicating with and engaging stakeholders. As a result, the applicant scores low for (E)(2).

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

The project director and data assistant will monitor student progress on report cards, standardized tests, the Virginia SOLs, and attainment of dual enrollment credits. Student behavior will also be monitored.

The applicant’s implementation plan only impacts middle and high school levels and appropriate performance measures have been selected. Ambitious yet seemingly achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup (in some instances) are provided with goals through the post-grant year. The performance measures to be evaluated include;

- Number and percentage of participating students whose teacher and principal are highly effective (all students)
- Percentage of student scoring proficient or higher on state math assessment (grades 5-8 and 9-12)
- Participation in summer STEM camps (grades 7-8)
- College placement exam (8th grade)
- Technology enhanced instruction based on number of laptops and iPads in the division (grade 7)
- Academic and career planning (grades 6-8)
- FAFSA completion (grades 9-12)
- On-track to college and career readiness (grades 9-12)
- On-track to career readiness based on CTE credentials (grades 9-12)
- Dual enrollment participation (grades 9-12)
- Graduation rate (grades 9-12)
- Postsecondary enrollment (grades 9-12)

A clear approach to continually evaluate and revise plans as needed is not included, nor is a rationale for selecting performance measures. Due to the limited development of section (E)(3), the applicant scores in the middle range.

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

RRPE plans to use an external evaluator and research consultant to evaluate the effectiveness of RRPE initiatives. Data will be collected to assess project toward goals, evaluate implementation of objectives and outcomes both in the long and short term. The evaluator will work with the Project Director and Data Assistant. Data findings will be continuously presented and discussed with the RRPE Consortium and key stakeholders to inform continuous improvement. The Kirkpatrick Four Levels of Evaluation Model (1994, which focuses on training outcomes: reactions, learning, behavior, and results, is proposed as a framework for the evaluation.

The applicant lacks a high quality plan for continuous improvement. Actionable items, a timeline, deliverables, and responsible parties are not delineated to support a rigorous continuous improvement plan. As a result, the applicant scores low for (E)(4).

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The budget seems reasonable and sufficient to support proposal development and implementation. Title II, Part A funds will help support professional development activities. While the funding amounts may seem reasonable and sufficient for the overall budget and project-level budgets, further explanation would strengthen the applicant’s proposal. The proposed budget does not clearly identify which funds will be used for one-time investments and those that will be ongoing

operational costs, incurred during and after the grant period. The nature of the expenses listed may provide some insight in this regard.

Due to a seemingly reasonable budget that would benefit from further description and development, the applicant scores in the lower high range for (F)(1).

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	1
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has not provided evidence of budget planning to support sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. Budget projections are only included for the four year grant term. As a result, the applicant scores low for sustainability of project goals.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	1

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

While the applicant has not addressed the competitive preference priority formally in its application, the applicant has provided evidence of partnerships with local community colleges to support dual enrollment coursework and efforts to promote college and career readiness. As a result, the applicant scores low for the competitive preference priority.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has put forth a reasonable plan to personalize student learning environments and has met Absolute Priority 1. The applicant has built a plan supportive of the four core educational assurance areas, improving learning and teaching, and personalizing learning to support college and career readiness. The applicant has adopted standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy. The applicant is making efforts to turn around its lowest achieving schools, and has shown evidence of the incorporation of data systems that measure student growth and success, informing teachers and principals of how they can improve instruction. While the applicant has met Absolute Priority 1, the application has significant limitations. The applicant has not provided evidence of efforts to recruit, reward, and retain effective teachers and principals. One might argue however, that efforts are indicated to develop existing educators, resulting in increased student access to the most effective educators.

Total	210	110
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