



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0213KY-2 for Henderson County School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Henderson County School District (HCSD) approached the visioning process in a comprehensive fashion bringing together a 40 member community forum comprised of school leaders, teachers, parents, community members, and representatives of the Henderson County Education Association. This group gave input and reviewed the requirements of the RTTD program and reached consensus that there was support for pursuing the grant. Though dates of the meetings are not identified in the response, it is clear that the work yielded specific results----a vision for the district RTTD project, one primary over-arching goal, and four secondary goals.</p> <p>The applicant's reform vision summarized from the response is addressed below: (a) Work in four core educational assurance areas - HCSD is convincing in how it explains the way the project will build on prior work in the four core educational areas. HCSD reports state's pioneering adoption of Common Core and implementation of other state learning standards has the district well positioned to make additional strides with a successful RTTD application. Just as higher standards have been adopted to ensure student success and readiness for the future, the district is using the information yield from its data systems to analyze growth and inform teachers and leaders about how to adapt instruction. The applicant addresses how it recruits for instructional coaches only staff who are (or are willing to become) licensed administrators. The teacher recruitment process is undefined within the response just as there is the omission of a clear description of what occurs to reward and retaining effective teachers and administrators. An evaluation system for assessing student learning/performance and educator knowledge and effectiveness are in place as a result of state mandates and local efforts to improve. Several examples of turning around lowest achieving schools are presented including a mention of the high poverty South Heights Elementary which was once the lowest achieving school in the district and the state for several years now being recognized as a national model for school reform, Henderson High which once struggled is now in the top 10% of state high schools, and South Middle also one a struggling school that is now identified as Proficient/High Proficient. Data systems that merge human resources, finance, student learning and other areas central to a well functioning district exist already and will be improved upon as a result of funding.</p> <p>(b) A clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity - The applicant is clear in its intent. They offer a broad list of of methods and strategies to be employed. There is no scaffolding or prioritized structure identified as part of the process so one is left to wonder how will the applicant implement all identified strategies at the same time and how will each be appropriately assessed as so many will be undertaken at the same time. There is expertise and infrastructure resulting from prior RTT funding that support how personalization should be able to be emphasized.</p> <p>(c) What the classroom experience will be like for students and teachers - The applicant describes an intent to expand availability and use of technology, to provide a more positive school culture as a result of staff who engage students in a more positive manner, and varied methods of teaching that are matched to learner needs. Individualization will be a focal point and classrooms are set to move away from the traditional classroom experience to more personalized learning options as a result of an infusion of technology. Many combinations of learning environments and strategies will be available including blended, traditional instruction with technology based instruction, real world applications and individual learning plans. Teachers, too, will get assistance through professional growth plans that will broaden the understanding of content pedagogy, training on the best uses of technology, and engaging practices that keep students interested. Allowing students to learn in the manner that they prefer and learn best is a reasonable and credible approach to improving student achievement and performance just as aiding teachers to improve their instructional delivery and knowledge of how student interests can impact what methods they use. This presented information is a well articulated, clear and comprehensive vision for reform.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>

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

A 40 member committee comprised of stakeholders from every key group reviewed district data. The committee identified student and school needs helping to establish project goals. A determination was made that all eligible schools should be included in the project to move the district from reformation to transformation. As a result of this determination, all 12 schools were selected to be a part of the project since each school met the RTTD requirements for eligibility. Staffs of the schools were surveyed. The response rate to the surveys was 88% of staff with and 100% of those responding in favor of applying for RTTD funding. A table identified as (A) (2)(b) provides the school names, grade spans, enrollments---total and by RTTD category along with the percentages of students in each category. This information is sufficient and documents that (A) (2) (b) and (A) (2) (c) are present in the applicant's response. HCSD took a very thoughtful approach to implementing reform. Its proposal shows that the district was very deliberate in its thinking. HCSD's RTTD approach is grounded in its district belief statements: (1) believing that all students can achieve college and career readiness and (2) high quality educators are the cornerstone for student achievement. The applicant reports that 7,187 students will be participants of which 4,170 are high need and low income students. The applicant describes a program of continuous development for its leaders, the school administrators. With this project, they intend to position instructional coaches trained in the Rutherford Method of Coaching across the district to work with the 553 participating educators in providing engaging, rigorous, and relevant lessons aligned to the Common Core Standards. Four days of added professional development are to be offered each year of the grant of which 6 hours must be technology training. Select teachers will participate in Laying the Foundation Advanced Placement class instruction and STEM trainings to build capacity for offering AP and dual-credit courses for general education and career /technical courses. The provided data which addresses all areas of (A) (2) criteria is compelling evidence that the applicant's approach will support high quality LEA- and school-level implementation.

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

**10**

**2**

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

A high quality plan must contain the following components: (1) key goals, (2) activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, (3) the timeline, (4) the deliverables, and (5) the parties responsible for implementing the activities. HCSD adequately meets the requirement of having key goals by including that its goal of implementing evidence-based, district-wide reform that will bring meaningful change in how each student receives instruction and support throughout his educational career. While there is an overall plan presented for what the district seeks to accomplish, there is no mention of a "logic model or theory of change" with its description of its plan and not delineation of activities of a rationale for the activities. There is no possibility of the project expanding beyond the participating schools since every school is selected as a participant at the outset of the plan. The response is without evidence of a timeline or any identification of a plan for scaling up the project and is without deliverables .

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

**10**

**7**

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

The applicant reports that its student outcome goals meet or exceed the state of Kentucky's goals. Kentucky, as the response indicates, embarked on the more difficult Common Core Standards before any other state in the union. Therefore, it can be inferred that the higher demands and the changes made to instructional delivery, assessment, and professional development have played a major role in the marked improvements already made and the goals outlined below.

(a) For state and end of course tests, the applicant specifies ambitious goals for proficiency percentage increases in each assessed area. These goals range from slightly over 20% increases (elementary reading) to slightly above a 47% of increase (high school math end of course scores). These are lofty goals that could be very difficult to reach. If progress is made as planned, they could be achievable.

(b) Undetectable in the response is any clear information regarding how the applicant will decrease existing achievement gaps (i.e. nothing specific addressing how any large gaps between subgroups will be addressed to result in closing the gaps. This omission makes it impossible to rate this area for reasonableness.

(c) The applicant reports that the state of Kentucky now requires students to remain in school until age 18. This a change from the original age of 16 when a student used to be able to drop out. This new requirement which will keep kids in school, coupled with students' earlier exposure to more difficult content in varying formats (as a result of higher standards and the efforts to personalize learning), makes it reasonable to expect that improved student learning and performance will be a byproduct of this change in requirements. Given these changes in instruction and the new age attendance mandate, the applicant is convincing in making the case that a higher graduation rate will be the result. Given the backing of the state and the new requirements to teach students they way they learn best, this goal is both ambitious

and achievable.

(d) The applicant's response is lacking in the inclusion of college enrollment information.

The response also lacks any language regarding equity which does not allow this area to be established as addressed or evident.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>
<p><b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The achievement of ambitious and significant reforms are clearly outlined in the applicant's submission. HCSD presents some examples of very obvious successes in advancing student learning and achievement-- an elementary school once low achieving that is now recognized as a national Blue Ribbon School, another elementary who is a national model of school reform, a high school that has raised its percentile ranking from 55th in 2012 to 91st in 2013, a district that has moved from an overall ranking at the 50th percentile in 2012 to the 83rd percentile--as it introduces the progress and achievement gains its schools and students have made. Yet, despite these successes there is no presented evidence of a consecutive four year of success or of four full years of successes, despite there being marked increases in some areas in some years. It is noted that they make the comment that the change in assessment model as a result of Common Core's introduction resulted in the setting of new baselines. However without a method of showing what the ratings would have been had the old model remained in place, it is not possible to pinpoint a past four years of success.</p> <p>There is no specific language in the response addressing increasing equity in learning and teaching.</p> <p>HCSD includes a convincing story of significant reform in its response to (B)(1). They point to four years ago when the three secondary schools were struggling and identified as not meeting the federal Adequate Yearly Progress requirements of No Child Left Behind whereas now they are. They also include the elementary school, South Heights, which is now recognized as a national model of reform based on using the turn around model for school improvement.</p> <p>The applicant informs that multiple methods of communicating student performance data are in use including weekly newsletters sent home to parents, school websites, the district website, One Call automated phone communication, a state-mandated School Report Card, the local cable channel that they share with the community college where parents can tune in to see student projects, hear educational tips, and keep abreast of school and district announcements. Parents and educators receive copies of the MAP reports 3 times per year. Educators appear to have another very clear process for accessing and analyzing student data. Teachers, by requirement, meet once a week in team meetings addressing data, curriculum, strategies, and student engagement.</p>		
<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<p><b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>There is no statement in the response regarding the methods of ensuring a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices and investments and nothing that addresses how the information in items a-d above are made public. HCSD does say the financial reports are made monthly at the board meetings (i.e. public sharing) and they reference a financial audit conducted yearly by an outside auditor (i.e. impartiality and accuracy). HCSD presents as Appendix H the Office of Civil Rights Report for 2011-2012. It is an example of the type of salary information that is available in this report. The example documents that items a, b, and c above are components of the OCR Report. Other than saying that More extensive salary information "can be provided as needed", there is no specific response that addresses item d and no portion of the response that shows if actual non-personnel expenditures at the school level is available or how it is shared if it is available. There is also no delineation of the local process to access the information that can be "provided as needed" included in the response. The response is not as definitive as it should be to establish that there is a high level of transparency regarding these areas.</p>		
<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The state-- through the Kentucky Department of Education---was given the opportunity to review the RTTD project application at least 10 business days prior to submission. An email reply from the KY DOE on September 30</p>		

acknowledges the timely receipt and mentions that comments were sent back to the district by Pat Trotter. This is acceptable evidence to support the state having been given ample time to review the application. From the standpoint of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy being available from a state context for implementation, there is strong justification that both exist. The state of Kentucky has been a pioneer in education reform as evidenced by them being the first one to adopt the more rigorous Common Core Standards. The district's local policies being revised each year to ensure compliance with both federal and state laws is further support. Likewise, the state's passage of Senate Bill 1 which gives the foundation for continuing educational reforms frames the backbone of the existence of successful conditions. Further support of state the granting autonomy are the Kentucky School-Based Decision Making Councils which are found in all schools in Kentucky per the application.

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

**15**

**11**

**(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

HCSD's description of the involvement of the 40 member committee comprised of parents, educators, community members, and other key stakeholders speaks to the sufficiency of their meaningful involvement in the proposal's development. They report a series of five meetings focused on the development of vision statement. Had there been an inclusion of how many meetings the group held to specifically focus on the remainder of the project beyond the vision statement, what the results of each meeting revealed, and the revisions to the project resulting from each meeting, there would have been even more substantive evidence of engagement in this project's development. The district does address that they use an Equity Resource Council that meets regularly to discuss identified achievement gaps, help determine ways to address student needs, help with recruitment of minority teachers, provide support activities for college bound students such as help with college and aid applications, and to support a variety of activities in kindergarten to introduce students to age-appropriate activities. Absent from the response was any mention of collective bargaining representation but earlier in the applicant's responses they did mention that all of the 88% of educators who responded to a survey about whether the district should apply for the RTTD grant were in favor of pursuing it. Two letters of support are provided in the appendices--one from the county judge referencing his support and that of the mayor and alluding to the fact that the groups are working closely together and regularly meeting and another from the Henderson County Chamber of Commerce casting the support of the organization and the 600 members of the Chamber behind the district and its application. Omitted from the examples are letters from parents and parent organizations, student organizations, early learning programs, civil rights organizations, community based organizations and institutions of higher learning.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>

**(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

A high quality plan must contain the following components: (1) key goals, (2) activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, (3) the timelines, (4) the deliverables, and (5) the parties responsible for implementing the activities. Tables located in section A are listed as the mechanism to address HCSD's inclusion of the components of a high quality plan. The table' headings include goals, objectives, activities, and measurement/evaluation data. This serves to validate that some of the components of a high quality plan are present. Omitted from the table is the timeline, specific deliverables, and parties responsible. With three of five required components of a high quality plan being omitted, it is not possible to assess and credit the applicant's approach as clear and complete even though they do provide great detail in their overall approach to personalizing learning.

HCSD is a district that has required Common Core Standards at every grade level since the fall of 2011. This requirement is support for the existence of increased rigor. This district is one with some actual proof that higher demands can result in higher performance. The district approaches the area of learning and preparing students for college and careers through a multi-step process which it painstakingly describes in the various sections of (C) (1) narrative. The process as outlined involves personalizing learning through the use of Individual Learning Plans (ILPS) for all students in grades 6-12. The state of Kentucky is reported to require ILPS. Fourteen career pathways have been identified in Kentucky; Henderson County reports that it is one of the few districts that has adopted and implemented all 14 pathways. Students work with their parents and guidance counselor to complete the ILP---this is evidence of parental support. With approved RTTD funding, HCSD intends to expand the concept of the state-mandated ILP so that it becomes even more comprehensive as a planning tool to guide every student's educational experience across the years of school attendance. The expanded and more comprehensive ILP will include student interest information, learning preferences, learning styles, and learning goals, a data notebook for each student to compile his/her assessment data will be a component. Every kind of

assessment used and response to intervention data will be included. The Pulse Data Management System will be used to assist with data management and organization. Each homeroom teacher will have access and each teacher will share the information with students, parents, and staff at ILP review meetings. A graphic representation of the RTTD project and the processes linked to student learning is included in Appendix A. Documented in the response is the applicant's intent to provide emphasis and intensive support to high needs students, especially those who fall into the category the state refers to as "gap" students. These will be students who score significantly below the district average in reading and math. Students will be taught how to interpret and to use data such as that from the MAP assessment (that is given three times each year) to focus their learning substantiating that there are mechanisms in place to provide training and support to students in the use of tools and resources.

Hands on learning, through such offerings as career/technical education and the STEM Academy, service learning, and the RTTD Learning Plus Academies (where foreign language classes, Thai cooking classes, origami classes, etc. will be available to ensure exposure to diverse culture and heritage. After school programs which already exist will also develop and implement an age-appropriate and active service learning program.

Blended instructional approaches combining computer-based and traditional classroom instruction are planned to be increased district-wide to provide enhanced opportunities for students to accelerate learning through technology. A commercial program called the Leader in Me will be used to address the social emotional area and character development. To improve the response to intervention efforts in differentiated instruction that HCSD like other schools have struggled with, a portion of the RTTD funding will be allocated to schools in per pupil amounts based on the fall 2013 enrollment figures to shore up and strengthen how individual student needs are met. While at the high school students at risk of failing and dropping out may be enrolled in the Intervention Services Program (ISP) which will allow them to take a study skills elective during which time they will be learning how to study effectively and also receiving daily assistance in completing assignments from other classes.

The applicant's response about access and exposure to diverse culture, contexts, and perspectives reveals that foreign language classes are offered at the high school and as of this year Spanish began being taught at the middle school. Social studies and humanities courses are reported to offer exposure to other cultures including the countries of Somalia, Mexico, and China which are some of the native countries of the families of HCSD students. These items are all support for a variety of high quality approaches and environments.

In 2010-2011 HCSD increased graduation standards. A reported 27 of 28 possible credits are required to earn a diploma leaving little room for failure and repeating courses if a student is to graduate on time. Kentucky has a program called Operation Preparation which is a partnership with the Department of Work Force Development where trained volunteer community advisors meet individually with every 8th and 10th grade student during an advising sessions where the focus is on career aspirations, the education and training needed to achieve their goals. High school advisory teachers meet with student individually at least three times during each advisory period each semester. Parents have even received training to help advance the STEM initiative College/career coaches (CCCs) will be available to students beginning in middle school to provide additional training and support to students in readying them for the work force. The alternative school, Central Academy, allows students in grade 11 and above who are in danger of failing or deficient in reading to switch to a computer-based learning plan that allow credits to accumulate at the student's own pace.

It is clearly evident that HCSD is beyond the readiness phase of increasing the rigor of its instruction. They are at the point of adding to an already improving program of teaching and learning. They appear to be positioned to move to the next phases of overall district improvement especially when they can add the time components to their total plan for improving learning.

<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>
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**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

To prove a high plan exists, there must be the following components: (1) key goals, (2) activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, (3) the timeline, (4) the deliverables, and (5) the parties responsible for implementing the activities linked to the requirements of (C)(2). There are sprinklings of information that can fit into some components but clearly missing are a timeline and a comprehensive list of deliverables. There are entries reflecting that certain personnel will be responsible for particular functions within the narrative which is verification that the responsible parties section of the HQ is present. No tables, charts or graphs could be located in the application or the appendices that provided a HQ plan inclusive of all five components. Even after reading the narrative for this section and checking in other parts of the application and appendices, a delineated plan was not locatable resulting in a reduced rating for this section.

HCSD, as reported previously, is a district implementing Common Core Standards at every grade level. This has been a curriculum requirement since the fall of 2011. The district is able to provide some proof that increased learning has occurred by detailing the gains attained at the schools it highlights: Henderson High School, South Heights and North

Heights. This district approaches the area of preparing students for college and careers via teaching and leading from the vantage point of ensuring its professional staff is strong in content knowledge thoroughly trained in Kentucky's new Framework for Teaching which is based on the evidence-based Characteristics of Highly Effective Learning (CHETL) and knowledgeable about how to adjust teaching to learner needs. HCSD plans to create through RTTD funding an even more intensive support system for teachers to assist them in shifting the focus of their instructional practices from one of teaching content to one of teaching students. There is a focus on increasing knowledge and capacity so students may progress toward college and career readiness as a result of authentic strategies that personalize learning for all. To be able to personalize learning for students, they believe they must first personalize professional growth for educators. The RTTD project they propose will bring to the district a governance structure that will include an Advisory Council, a project director and a small staff responsible for ensuring full and accurate implementation. Of the two assistant directors created by the project, one will focus on digital learning experiences/expanded teacher learning opportunities. The Advisory Council is taken to mean the school leadership team mentioned in section c. These efforts and initiatives are sufficient evidence of support and training for educators both individually and in professional learning communities. School culture and climate are not addressed in the applicant's response unless one makes the assumption that professional development will delve into these areas as well. The response would have been stronger had these areas been addressed.

The Individual Learning Plans (ILPS) for all students will help to inform teachers of what they need to do to improve student performance and help teachers adjust their teaching to meet the needs of their learners. How students perform on assessment should be an obvious way of showing that students have learned from highly effective teachers states in the narrative that cannot be the only measure assessing educator effectiveness. The KY Department of Education is reported to have created Framework rubrics that describe teachers as ineffective, developing, accomplished or exemplary. This is tied directly to the teacher and administrator evaluation system in use in the district.

The rubrics are to be used as the basis for teachers in developing their own Individual Growth Plan with their goal being to grow professionally to meet the requirements for the accomplished and exemplary levels. These growth plans will provide the scope and sequence for personal professional growth. Mechanisms including PR 360 professional development videos, workshops, coaching experiential learning personal professional projects, graduate coursework, etc. may all be used to move toward the necessary growth. The PD 360 videos will also help teachers learn specific methods for integrating optimal learning approaches thereby adapting content and instruction. There is no mention of longer contracts for teachers or leaders, extended work days where PD is the focus, of summer or weekend sessions. The RTTD project, if funded, will provide for instructional coaches to be employed. These coaches will receive 32 days of intensive training so they can assist the school leaders ensure a highly effective professional staff is in place and continuously assisting students to accomplish the goals of the new higher Common Core Standards.

The response does not include any mention of hard-to-staff schools, subjects, or specialty areas. So there is no way to validate that there is a high quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals except to assume that the training provided to all will impact these areas as well.

The Pulse Data Management System used to assist with data management and organization can aid teachers in having access to and sharing information with students, parents, and staff at ILP review meetings and to take a close look at the impact of what they have taught and how they have taught it on who well students have learned.

Through the many opportunities for job-embedded professional development for its teachers and leaders, HCSD demonstrates that it is ready to move the district to higher heights ( e.g. greater student performance and higher ratings). This training will ensure teachers have access to and understanding of the appropriate learning approaches to take with individual students and that they know how to select and match the appropriate strategy to the student. The training they will receive will ensure they know a variety of ways to instruct and that they afford a variety of learning approaches students can select from to show that they have learned the content.

The state of Kentucky and HCSD have clearly been reformers not waiting for others but leading the way in innovation. They are at the point of adding to its already improving program of teaching and learning. They appear to be positioned to move to the next phases of overall district improvement especially when they can add the time components to their total plan for improving learning and seem to only be dependent upon additional funding to move faster into their roadmap for district improvement.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		

The applicant reports a primary goal of having 100% of HCSD students graduate college and career ready. To that end, existing administrators and instructional staff along with parents have taken a close look at what has to be in place to achieve this result. What the applicant has in place or planned with regard to LEA policies, practices, and rules should be evident within the response for (D)(1). As this information is reported it should be reflected in a high quality plan which must contain the following components: (1) key goals, (2) activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, (3) the timeline, (4) the deliverables, and (5) the parties responsible for implementing the activities. Portions of the components of a high quality plan are revealed in the response. Despite emphasizing the goal of 100% of students college and career ready, there are no goals related to (D)(1) for policy and infrastructure, no activities and rationale, no timeline, and no deliverables. These omissions impact the reviewer rating. The reference to the district leadership and Shared Decision Making Council is sufficient for the parties responsible. The 7 member district office is reported to have their own prioritized duties/responsibilities. They work as a team in addressing district needs. Every school, as indicated earlier, is to be a participating school. In Kentucky the school leadership teams are known as School Based Decision Making Councils. They have been in operation since the earliest reform effort in 1991. These councils include school staff and parents. They are afforded the autonomy to determine school staff assignments, staffing models, school allocation budgets, curriculum and instructional strategies, and school schedules. Board policy, as it exists or as it needs to be amended to ensure LEA Policy and infrastructure is in place is also absent from the response.

HCSD affords students the opportunity to earn college credit while still in high school and to earn high school credit while in middle school. Early graduation is allowed. However Kentucky has a new law requiring students to remain in school to age 18 to address the challenge of dropouts who are unprepared. No specifics are offered in the response about students having the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the time spent on a topic.

A variety of assessments used in the district are mentioned in the (D)(1) (c) response and a general statement is made that students have the opportunity to master standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways. The response is limited to how a student gets ahead in physical education and computer science or how a student who has not mastered a subject is offered opportunities to show the mastery at other times (such as after school). There are no specific comments included about multiple ways to show mastery from remote settings or through the use of student selected strategies.

The district's response to intervention program and tutoring are identified as mechanisms for assisting struggling learners. The applicant points to the district's Title II and Migrant and Immigrant programs as ways for ELL students to get the resources and instruction they need. Nothing specific about services for students with disabilities is mentioned in the response other than to say "a wide array of learning resources and instructional practices that are fully accessible to all students" is available.

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

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**3**

**(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The HSCD district's response to (D) (2) is presented as strictly narrative information. As such no chart, table, or graph was used to direct the reader to each component of a high quality plan. A high quality plan must contain the following components: (1) key goals, (2) activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, (3) the timeline, (4) the deliverables, and (5) the parties responsible for implementing the activities. Therefore a close review of narrative occurred to assess the presence or absence of these components. There are significant omissions impacting the reviewer rating. Here again, the applicant provides no reference to comprehensive policies though there are fragments of infrastructure that the proposed project will strengthen if funded. The primary goal, as included throughout the application is identified---an example of the existence of a component of a HQ plan. No reference is made to ensuring that regardless of income there will be access to necessary content and tools and other learning materials. Thus, key activities and a rationale are lacking. Also omitted is the inclusion of a timeline, activities/rationale, deliverables, or persons responsible. A great deal of technology will be acquired via RTTD funding. As such, a result access will not be prohibited because of income or affordability. The omitted items which are required to substantiate a high quality plan make it impossible to validate that the applicant had a solid approach to infrastructure, policies, or processes.

The personnel hired through the grant, the Shared decision Making Council and the parents already trained through the Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership will be catalysts for appropriate technical support. Professional development will afford educators with the additional training need to ensure they know how to offer appropriate support. Yet, there is no clear roadmap for how the applicant will approach policy and infrastructure in a logistical order.

HCSD's Parent Portal is reported to be in widely used by parents but there is no inclusion of information to explain whether the system allows parents and students to export their information in an open data format and to use the data in other electronic learning systems such as those mentioned in (D) (2) (c). The Tyler Pulse data system available district-wide is

interoperable data systems for human resource, student data, budget data, and instructional data and clearly matches the expectation of (D)(2) (d)matches. This system is reported to be password protected with the capability to track data in multiple configurations.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>
<p><b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>HCS D reports that it has focused on continuous improvement for many years. The district recognizes that the process is ongoing and incremental rather than one where you attain the 100% goal all at once. As far back at 2006 the district had been discussing the need to improve. In 2009 as part of a long range planning process, the district developed RAISE Goals. RAISE is a plan to guide the district for the next five years. Many of the RAISE goals matched perfectly to RTTD core assurance areas. A high quality plan must contain the following components: (1) key goals, (2) activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, (3) the timeline, (4) the deliverables, and (5) the parties responsible for implementing the activities. This listed components are not as comprehensive as needed to fully address every area of a HQ plan. In earlier sections the applicant's response mentioned RTTD personnel to be employed through the grant having specific responsibilities for implementation, oversight, and monitoring. It reports how the external evaluator will prepare reports and meet with the district's RTTD each quarter and annually report to stakeholders. This information is sufficient for parties responsible. Lacking is information addressing how ongoing corrections and improvements will be identified and implemented (i.e. rationale). A reader learns that evaluator reports will be one of the deliverables. Other deliverables are not clearly specified. The appendices do not contain additional information validating that the missing components are listed elsewhere. The narrative does address how the plan will be reviewed on a quarterly basis and annually (i.e. regular feedback).</p>		
<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The HCS D plan will involve establishing sub-advisory committees for critical areas such as reviewing Highly Effective Teacher criteria, establishing and overseeing expanded learning opportunities, and establishing plans for sustainability. The engagement of parents is planned to be achieved by encouraging more volunteerism, participation in Operation Preparation--- where community leaders and parents assist high school students apply for college and financial aid, assisting in securing continuation funding, and assisting in implementing school-based STEM activities. Print media (newsletters), social media, and websites are to be utilized to provide parents, students, and community information though no frequency of such information is included in the response for this section. Earlier there was a reference to weekly school newsletters in a response for another section. The evaluator and RTTD Team (listed in prior sections) again appear to be responsible parties. A high quality plan must contain the following components: (1) key goals, (2) activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, (3) the timeline, (4) the deliverables, and (5) the parties responsible for implementing the activities. HCS D is thorough in detailing the activities it has done in the past to ensure communication and engagement---formation of a 40 member community forum, approval by a majority of the staff that pursuing the RTTD application through submission of a proposal was appropriate, and gauging the sentiment of the majority with involvement of the community in the development of programs. Though not necessarily listed by the categorical headings tied to a high quality plan, there is demonstrable evidence that the HCS D response sufficiently address each area except the timeline.</p>		
<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Charts to graphically display the required components for (3) (a) and (b). They include moderate, but not</p>		

ambitious, achievable expected increases of 5% each year. High levels of student engagement, as reported by "We" surveys, will be one of the performance measures. An acceptable number of performance measures to meet criteria expectations is included. No baseline data is available for We survey measure and as a result no targets are included. Performance measures listed in the response include 3 goals for the K-3 populations. These measures appropriately address increased reading (as measured by MAP), decreases in the number of discipline notices (tracked through Infinite Campus) and decreases in the number of retainees. Measures for grade spans 4-8 and 9-12 are also delineated in the tables. Where current performance data is available, specific numbers and percentages of expected increase (or decrease) are reflected in the tables. The measures for 3a and 3b were selected as required by the notice. The other measures are indicated to have been selected because they meet the state of Kentucky's Performance requirements. Rationales for their selection are clear and justifiable. The district will use the MAP assessment and the three administrations of the EXPLORE and PLAN to attain the longitudinal data needed for students in grades 9-10. The applicant reports that there is some new Kentucky assessment information that is available to provide baseline data though not enough aid in the identification of effective and highly effective teachers. All selected performance measures are expected to move the district toward its primary goal for increased achievement and 100% college/career preparedness.

Numeric and statistical data that is available will be used to initiate the evaluation process, per the response. The external evaluator will work with project staff and district administrators in determining effectiveness measures and if changes need to be made. The applicant reports a plan to assess qualitatively and quantitatively according to the specified measures of success with the tables but they will go beyond the RTTD proposal to ensure the achievement of the goal of 100% of students being college and career ready. The selected measures will provide leading information and a reasonable amount of rigor. The measures will yield information in a timely way to provide useful and predictive information from their review to foster continuous improvement .

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

HCS D reports in (E) (4) that it intends to use the external evaluator in consultation and collaboration with district leaders as the nucleus of the process for evaluating effectiveness of investments. This combined use of multiple perspectives and levels of qualified expertise is a reasonable approach to evaluating effectiveness. The performance measure selected are appropriate and should yield valid information about whether the work of the grant helps the district to attain the 6 specified goals of this section.

For each goal the applicant presents a bulleted list containing 1 to 4 items that will be the subsets of the broader goal which will help pinpoint attainment. Thus, the applicant is embarking on the use of a sound approach to addressing key goals for evaluating effectiveness. The applicant presents responsible parties as required. The bulleted list of items provides the rationale and support supporting how the goal will be assessed. No evidence of a timeline is specified. However deliverables such as an edited form of the walk through observation checklist, expanded ILPS, rubric, the lists of subgroups that under perform, etc. A totally high quality contains the following components: (1) key goals, (2) activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, (3) the timeline, (4) the deliverables, and (5) the parties responsible for implementing the activities. HCS D's plan contains the vast majority of these components except for #3, the timeline.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>

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

(a) The response specifies that the applicant will use \$1,854,000 in Response to Intervention (RTI) funding from Title I and Extended School Services to be combined with RTTD funds to expand RTI support. They specify salary amounts for the current 11 curriculum specialists that come from a blend of Title I, Title II, and district general funds. They report funding that comes from 21st Century Learning Grant funding that will phase out in 2013-2014 at North and South Middle School but will remain for two more years at the high school which are to be combined with RTTD funding. No other external foundation support is specified in the response. The RTTD request is for \$16,525,429 with the total budget from all sources reported to be \$32,546,876.72.

The requested amount is reasonable for the large number of students and staff to be impacted. The requested amount fits into the allowable range for a population of 5,001-10,000 participating students; BPS will have 7,546 participating students. The requested appears sufficient to support the development and full implementation of the project. It is important to note that the district is not totally reliant on RTTD to get the goals of project in the works since nearly one half of the

projected costs will come from other sources.

Science equipment to be secured with grant funding is specified as a one time investment (spread over two years) costing \$98,400 each of the 1st two years. Costs that will be ongoing are identified in the budget pages within the line items and associated descriptions. No mention of what happens after the grant period is included in this section of the response though there is a 3 year continuation budget included in a later section of the response.

<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
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**(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant presents a chart in this section called "Grant Sustainability Chart". The headings included in the chart are: goals, objective, one time investments, and sustained investment. These headings do not match exactly to the required components of a high quality plan (HQ). The specific components of a HQ plan are: (1) key goals, (2) activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, (3) the timelines, (4) the deliverables, and (5) the parties responsible for implementing the activities. Lacking from the applicant's response are the timelines and deliverables.

The information included in this section of the applicant's response primarily relates to the goals and the activities that will be the result of implementation--- including hiring personnel and certain fund expenditure. The portion of this section says the applicant may address how it will evaluate improvements and outcomes to inform a post grant budget is included. The included 3 year continuation budget has application here. In this section the applicant lists initiatives, sources of continuation funding and activities/processes to be used to ensure progress is sustained after the grant cycle. Omitted from the chart and narrative are any timelines associated with the activities. The district office team, evaluator and RTTD staff specified in earlier sections are taken to be the parties responsible for determining sustainability though neither the narrative for this section nor the chart specifically includes that information.

The response includes a state indicating that the County Judge Executive among others has assured the Superintendent they will work together to find a means of support for funding these positions beyond grant funding". The (E) (4) response regarding evaluating effectiveness and the Continuous Improvement sections in the prior responses apply to this section's expectation for evaluating the effectiveness of past investments and using data to inform future investments.

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

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

While no Competitive Preference narrative nor any tables or charts were located that specifically addressed this criteria, some credit is awarded because there are mentions in prior sections of the application of after school programs and programs addressing social and emotional needs. The applicant needed to present a comprehensive, cohesive and coherent plan that provided details of the extent to which partnerships would be integrated and resources augmented.

**Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments**

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

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

Kentucky has been a front runner in educational reform as the applicant has outlined throughout its responses. They were the first state to take on the Common Core Standards and they have learned much since the implementation began. HCSD has used the gains it has seen in recent years at several of its once struggling schools to frame the emphasis for what it plans to do if successful in attaining RTTD funding. The district intends to build on the work and understandings it has attained in the core assurance areas to continue the improvements in the district and to sustain the gains.

HCSD has a goal of 100% of its students being college and career ready. The district is willing to commit it time, resources, and a sizable portion of the needed funding. The goal to make every student college and career ready is quite lofty but it is

admirable. Whether it is achievable remains to be seen. HCS D is presents a compelling case for reform making a significant, positive difference in schools.

To the Common Core and the other state learning standards the district intends to add personalization, increased technology, focused and intensive professional development focused evaluation and review of what is achieved. The district is well positioned to make additional strides because it has so many things already in place based on past RTT funding and the district's own commitments of local funding. Just as higher standards have been adopted to ensure student success and readiness for the future, the district is using the information yielded from its data systems to analyze growth and inform teachers and leaders about how to adapt instruction to achieve more.

The applicant addresses many of its successful practices including how it recruits for instructional coaches only those staff members who are already or are willing to become licensed administrators. The teacher recruitment process is undefined within the response just as there is the omission of a clear description of what occurs to reward and retaining effective teachers and administrators. An evaluation system for assessing student learning/performance and educator knowledge and effectiveness are in place as a result of state mandates and local efforts to improve. Several examples of turning around lowest achieving schools are presented including a mention of the high poverty South Heights Elementary which was once the lowest achieving school in the district and the state for several years now being recognized as a national model for school reform, Henderson High which once struggled now in the top 10% of state high schools, and South Middle also one a struggling school that is now identified as Proficient/High Proficient. Data systems that merge human resources, finance, student learning and other areas central to a well functioning district exist already and will be improved upon as a result of funding. The applicant is clear in its intent/goals but less clear about how they will reach the struggling portions of the student populations who are markedly behind, especially populations like the disabled. There is expertise and infrastructure resulting from prior RTT funding, and more importantly their is a local commitment that supports personalization and the myriad of strategies to meets learner needs and deepen learning.

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>147</b>
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## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

#### Application #0213KY-3 for Henderson County School District

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

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

#### (A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Henderson County School District has articulated a comprehensive and clear vision that can serve as the foundation for accelerating student learning, deepening student learning, and increasing equity. The vision builds on the four core educational assurance areas. The district's vision is to ensure that each student is college and/or career ready by the end of his/her school career by expanding high-quality learning opportunities and personalizing learning through comprehensive, individual education planning for each student from elementary school through high school graduation. The district plans to have 100% of students college and/or career ready by: (1) the development of personalized learning plans for each sixth through twelfth grade student; (2) providing access to expanded and flexible learning environments; (3) providing access to expanded digital learning experiences; (4) improving teacher efficiency achieved through expanded teacher learning opportunities. Henderson County School District included a bulleted list that described what the classroom experience would be like for students and teachers participating in personalized learning environments, but the application would have been stronger if more detail had been provided.

The described vision is a comprehensive and coherent reform vision. Overall, this places Henderson County in the middle of the high range.

<b>(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Henderson County School District’s reform proposal will support high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation. The district plans to include all schools in the district in grant activities because the goals of its “transformational vision can only be met through systematic, district-wide approach to implementation,” but provided insufficient support for the need to include all schools in the proposed grant activities.</p> <p>The application includes an appropriate list of schools that will participate in grant activities, as well as the number of participating students, including the number of high-needs students.</p> <p>Overall, this places Henderson County in the middle of the high range.</p>		
<b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The plan described by Henderson County School District includes some components of a high-quality plan . The described plan focuses on some appropriate activities. For example, the Applicant describes how it plans to accelerate student achievement through opportunities such as allowing students to earn high school credit while in middle school and college credit while in high school, giving students’ customized schedules, providing opportunities for blended learning experiences, providing integration of digital learning devices for teachers and students that they will be able to use both in and of the classroom, etc.. However, a high quality plan includes more than just activities, and it was ambiguous how all of the pieces will fit together into a coherent plan that the Applicant would be able to translate into meaningful reform,</p> <p>The Applicant did not include details about its theory of action/logic model, and it is unclear how the activities described in this application will lead to improved student performance and the desired outcomes.</p> <p>There will be a limited need for scale up because Henderson County plans to include all schools in grant-related activities.</p> <p>Overall, this places BPS at the middle of the mid-range.</p>		
<b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>
<p><b>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Henderson County School District has ambitious goals for increasing performance on the summative assessments. The goals for increasing performance on summative assessments are realistic—and as described in the vision-- should be achievable. However, it is not clear whether the district will be able to decrease achievement gaps across subgroups since projection data was presented only for low income, special education, and African American combined scores-- so it was impossible to tell if achievement gaps were projected to decrease across subgroups. The district also presented insufficient data to determine if the district was projected to meet its stated goal of having 100% of it’s students college and career ready by the end of the grant. Graduation rate projections were provided for some subgroups—but no graduation rate projections were provided for several subgroups that historically have often had lower graduation rates (e.g., special education, English Learners-EL, economically disadvantaged) in many districts.</p> <p>Inadequate data were provided in regards to college enrollment projections to determine whether all subgroups (e.g., racial/ethnic, economically disadvantaged, special education, EL) were projected to have increased college enrollment rates. College enrollment projections were provided for several “subgroups” defined by the Applicant (i.e., college in-state and out of state, work and part-time college vo-tech school, military, working, not-successful), but they were not the subgroups that are defined in this notice.</p> <p>Overall, this placed Henderson County School District at the low end of the mid-range.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>
<p><b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p>		

Henderson County School District indicates that one of its goals is for **all** students to be college and/or career ready. However, the district does not provide historic trend data for several subgroups (i.e., special education, EL), so it is impossible determine if the district has a clear track record of improving student learning outcomes and closing achievement gaps for all subgroups.

Henderson County adequately described how student learning outcomes have improved across the district in recent years. It was ambiguous in the application which schools were the lowest-achieving schools in the district; and, this made it unclear whether Henderson County had achieved ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools. The Applicant described how the district's high schools were struggling with being identified as not making adequate yearly progress and the efforts made to improve performance. The Applicant also described how it sought to turn around elementary schools via curriculum alignment, curriculum maps, common assessments, grade level meetings across the district, etc.

It is not clear whether Henderson County makes all of the student performance data available to parents and students in ways that are likely to inform and improve instruction, since some data may be available electronically to parents while other data may be available only in paper-based reports. Henderson County School District has a Parent Portal that parents can use to electronically access their student's information regarding classroom grades, attendance, and behavior reports, as well as the calendar of events, etc. It is ambiguous whether assessment results are available through the portal. The applicant states that it sends home the state assessment results report annually, MAP reports three times a year, and annual ACT/EXPLORE/PLAN reports (grades 8-11).

Overall, this places Henderson County School District in the middle of the mid-range.

<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
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**(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

In the application it was unclear how much information the Henderson County School District makes publicly available. The district publishes per student spending at the school level; but, it is ambiguous what "salary information can be provided as needed" means. As shown in the Appendices, Henderson County School District submits aggregate numbers for personnel salaries at the school level in a Office of Civil Right report—but actual salaries were not included in the report. The Civil Rights report does contain non-personnel expenditures at the school level.

Overall, this places Henderson County School District toward the lower end of the mid-range.

<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
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**(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

Henderson County School District provided some information which indicates that the State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements will provide sufficient autonomy to implement personalized learning environments, but information about some details were missing. The Applicant indicated that the school district follows regulations for implementing educational goals and federal guidelines. The application stated that Kentucky passed legislation (Senate Bill 1) which supports educational reform in all districts in the state, but no details were provided about what this entails.

The Kentucky assessment system, longitudinal data system, and teacher evaluation system all will support personalized learning environments. The Applicant described the Kentucky state assessment system, and how the state has a longitudinal data system that should provide data that can be used to help evaluate the effectiveness of the RTT-D investments. Kentucky also has a teacher evaluation system called Next Generation Learners that will provide teacher effectiveness data. The district is also participating in a pilot of the State's new teachers evaluation system (Next Generation Professionals).

Overall, this places Henderson County School District toward the low end of the high range.

<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>
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**(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

Henderson County School District indicates that it has a history of engaging stakeholders in "soliciting input into many areas of governance with the district." For example, the district sought input from parents, students, staff, and community leaders in identifying goals, objectives, and activities within the Comprehensive District Improvement Plan. The district involved the community in a visioning process by holding a community forum with 40 participating stakeholders, including parents, students, community/business leaders, and school and district staff. Forum participants identified programs and educational supports they felt would benefit the students when implemented. This input was used to identify the district's

four RTT-D goals.

A weakness of the application is that only three letters of support were included in the application (Henderson-Henderson Co. Chamber of Commerce, County Judge/Executive, mayor). There were no letters from parents and parent organizations, student organizations, civil rights organizations, local civic and community based organizations, institutions of higher education, early learning programs, or advocacy groups.

A strength of the application is that there was substantial support from teachers in the district for the proposal. The teachers were surveyed, and 88% responded. Of those who responded, 100% supported the application. Another indication of teacher support is that the president of the district's education association signed the application.

Overall, this places Henderson County School District at the low end of the high range.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>

**(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

The plan described by Henderson County School District focuses on implementing Individual Learning Plans (ILP) for all students in grades 6 through 12. Kentucky has 14 college and career pathways with suggested course sequences for each. Henderson was the only district in the state to adopt and implement all 14 paths. ILPs are state-mandated, but the applicant proposes to expand on the concept to create a more comprehensive planning tool that can guide each student's educational experiences. At the elementary level students' learning goals will focus on the development of individual skill areas. Students will use data notebooks to review previous progress and set targets for upcoming years, and teachers will identify strategies that will assist students in reaching those goals.

The Applicant included a schematic in the Appendices which showed goals and activities, but it was difficult to see how all the pieces fit together because the schematic did not link the goals to desired outcomes. The goals were all intermediate goals (i.e., personalized learning environment, expanded and flexible learning, access to digital learning experience, improved efficiency through teacher learning opportunities).

Henderson County School District adequately describes how students will be helped to understand that what they are learning is key to accomplishing their goals, and how students will learn how to identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college and career ready standards. The Applicant proposes to use RTT-D funds to expand opportunities for differentiated instruction, provide improved response to intervention (RTI) services, fully implement an Intervention Services Program which will allow high school students to take a study skills elective class, and provide access for all students to college/career coaches.

The Applicant described how after school and summer learning programs will be coordinated to the programming occurring during the school day to enable students to have learning experiences in areas of academic interest; however it is a concern that there is little description about whether students will be able to also have learning experiences within the traditional school day that are in areas of academic interest. The applicant's plan indicates that students will have additional opportunities for access to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives via new learning opportunities such as language classes and culturally relevant after school programs (Thai cooking classes, origami classes, etc.)

Henderson County School District provides lots of details about what it plans to purchase in its plan, but inadequately describes how these items will support personalized learning environments that will prepare all students to be college and career ready. The Applicant's plans indicate that the district is committed to digital learning, and that RTT-D funds will "allow the district to complete implementation of the district plan for instructional support devices" including interactive boards and document cameras. The board passed a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy, and the district plans to use RTT-D funds to purchase portable digital devices for students from low income families in grades 4-12. All district instructional staff and teachers will be provided with portable digital devices.

Henderson County School District described supports will be provided for high needs students. The district indicated that it will provide supports by expand its Response to Interventions (RTI) program. However, the applicant did not describe how accommodations would be used to enable students with disabilities and English Learners to meaningfully access the curriculum.

Overall, this places Henderson County School District at the upper end of the mid-range.

<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>
<p><b>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Henderson County School District has a plan that includes many elements of a high quality plan for teaching and learning. For example, the plan includes a description of how the district will use the Kentucky Framework for Teaching and the state's teacher evaluation system to provide the basis for teachers to develop their own Individual Growth Plans. The district also plans to offer expanded professional development opportunities to help teachers better understand how to help students master the Common Core Curriculum Standards, and achieve college- and career-ready benchmarks. Teachers will also receive training on developing and implementing Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs). The district will have Instructional Coaches (ICs) who will implement a first-year teacher monitoring program, and who will help other teachers focus on the primary objectives of personalizing learning for students so that the students will achieve college- and career-readiness. The district also will have professional learning communities (PLCs), but little detail is provided about them in the application.</p> <p>The Applicant indicates that "district employs a comprehensive and systematic student assessment program that provides frequent measures of student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards through utilization of the PLAN, EXPLORE, and ACT exams;" however little specific information was provided about the formative, benchmarks and interim measures that will be used.</p> <p>Henderson County School District adequately describes how it plans to use its teacher evaluation system as a "vehicle for teacher instructional improvement;" however, no information is provided about how it to recruit teachers (or otherwise increase the number of effective and highly effective teachers) in hard-to- staff subjects (such as mathematics and science), and specialty areas (such as special education).</p> <p>Overall, this places Henderson County School District toward the upper end of the middle range.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>
<p><b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Henderson County School District has some components of a high-quality plan that will support project implementation. The Applicant describes practices, policies, and rules in place that will facilitate personalized learning (district administrators work as a team in discussing critical district needs and in assisting in finding solutions; school councils are responsible for determining school staff assignments, staffing models, school allocation budgets, curriculum and instructional strategies, and school schedules).</p> <p>Henderson County School District gives students the opportunity to progress and earn credits through demonstrated mastery by the use of OdysseyWare assessments. The Applicant also described how AP credits, summer classes for credit, etc. can accelerate student learning. However, the focus was on courses that allowed acceleration rather than other ways for students to progress and learn credit based on demonstrated mastery. For example, the Applicant stated that, "the high school currently offers Health, Physical Education and Computer Science classes during a four-week summer program to allow students to demonstrate mastery of the content in these classes and earn a high school credit for the class."</p> <p>The Henderson County School District application that indicates that learning resources and instructional practices will be fully accessible to all students including students with disabilities and English Learners (ELs). The Applicant described several programs for ELs that are provided through the district's Title III, Migrant and Immigrant Programs. The Applicant also stated that 100% of students will be included in grant activities. The application described how the response to intervention (RTI) will make instruction and learning more accessible for many students with disabilities, however, a limitation of the application is that it provides no information about how learning resources and instructional practices will be made accessible for the students with more significant disabilities, including students with significant cognitive disabilities.</p> <p>Overall, this places Henderson County School District in the middle portion of the mid-range.</p>		
<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p>		

The infrastructure of Henderson County School District has some pieces of the infrastructure in place, but there are also limitations in regards to the infrastructure needed to ensure that all participating students and parents have access to the necessary content, tools, and learning resources. It is especially a concern that low income students and their families may not have adequate access.

Henderson County School District has a Parent Portal that parents can use to electronically access their student's information regarding classroom grades, attendance, and behavior reports, as well as the calendar of events, etc.; however, the Applicant does not indicate that the system allows parents and students to export their information in an open data format. The Applicant has entered into a contract with a data warehouse company to import all district information regarding assessment data, financial data, human resource data, and student information data into a password protected site that will allow for a student/teacher match for classing classroom effectiveness and longitudinal tracking of student progress; however it is not clear whether the system will be an interoperable data system that stores data in a non-proprietary, open format. (The definition in the notice for interoperable data systems states that the data should be stored in a non-proprietary, open format.)

Overall, this places Henderson County School District towards the lower end of the mid-range.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>
<p><b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Overall, Henderson County School District has elements of a high-quality plan for continuous improvement that will provide timely and regular feedback on progress toward meeting project goals, but there are also several limitations. The described plan clearly described the evaluation activities. The district has a history of using evaluation as part of its long range planning process and has a clear understanding of how to develop and implement a high-quality plan, but provided insufficient detail about how the proposed evaluation activities would be used to make corrections and adjustments to the proposed activities.</p> <p>Feedback on progress will be shared with school and district staff and leaders. Regularly scheduled meetings will be held with community and stakeholder groups to present progress and program status. The applicant also indicated that the evaluator will prepare and present an annual report to stakeholder groups. A minor limitation of the plan was that it was not clear if the reports and other information would be shared with the public.</p> <p>Overall, this placed Henderson County School District at the low end of the high range.</p>		
<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Henderson County School District has a high quality plan for ongoing communication and engagement that will support efforts to continuously improve its plans. For example, the district will establish committees of educators that will oversee the Learning Plus academies, and help guide needed adjustments and revisions during implementation. The district will maintain ongoing communications and engagement efforts through newsletters, websites, etc. The district will also encourage parent volunteerism and participation on advisory committees, including advisory councils for the proposed RTT-D activities.</p> <p>Overall, this places Henderson County School District at the high end of the high range.</p>		
<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Henderson County School District identified an appropriate number of performance measures that will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information. The plan includes appropriate rationales for the selected measures. For students, data will be compiled/disaggregated for all participating students, low income students, students with disabilities, and African – American students. Subgroup data were missing for a subgroup (i.e., White) that would have been expected given the Applicant's goal to close achievement gaps. The Applicant described sound processes that it will use to review</p>		

and improve the measures over time as part of the evaluation process.

Overall this places the applicant at the low end of the high range.

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

**5**

**3**

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

Henderson County School District has a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of RTT-D activities that have many features of a high-quality plan, but it also has some limitations. The Application included a detailed bulleted list of how it will evaluate the effectiveness in six areas: (1) Creation of a learning environment that significantly improves teaching and learning through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that align with College and Career Readiness standards; (2) Acceleration of student achievement and deepening of student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student; (3) Increase the effectiveness of educators; (4) Expansion of student access to highly-effective educators; (5) Decrease in achievement gaps across student groups; (6) increase the rate at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers. These six areas are appropriate to evaluate since they will provide information that can be used to make adjustments and revisions during implementation. However, a limitation of the application is that the Applicant provided no information about how specific components of the RTT-D activities, such as professional development and activities that employ technology, will be evaluated to determine if adjustments and revisions need to be made.

Overall, this places Henderson County School District at the high end of the mid-range.

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

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

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

The budget provided by Henderson County School District is reasonable and sufficient to support development and implementation of the proposal. It also includes thoughtful rationales. The budget identifies all funds that will support the project and includes a narrative and assumptions/description (rationale) for costs. For example, the Applicant describes how it plans to blend current Title I and Extended School Services (ESS) funding with RTT-D funding to expand Response to Intervention (RTI) support for students scoring below the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile in reading and math in grades K-8 to students scoring between the 20<sup>th</sup> and 35<sup>th</sup> percentiles. The budget identifies funds that will be used for one-time investments versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs. The detailed information and narrative places Henderson County School District at the high end of the high range.

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

**10**

**10**

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

Henderson County School District has a strong high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. For example, the Applicant included a detailed three-year post grant estimated budget that included budget assumptions, potential sources and uses of funds. The Applicant adequately described how it would look at data to evaluate the effectiveness of grant activities at the end of the grant—and how this would inform decisions made about how to sustain the project's goals after the end of the grant. The Applicant also discussed items (for example, transportation for after school programs) that it believed might be particularly problematic to find funding for after the end of the grant—and how it would address it.

Overall this placed Henderson County Public Schools at the high end of the high range.

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

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

Henderson County School District did not provide evidence of a coherent and comprehensive partnership that was consistent with the Competitive Preference Priority; therefore, it received a score of zero.

### Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>		<b>Met</b>
<b>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</b> Henderson County School District addressed how it will build on the four core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to improve learning and teaching. Each of the core educational assurance areas are addressed at some point in the application.  The Applicant articulated a vision which guided the development of a comprehensive and coherent plan. The proposed plan has some limitations as described in this review, but overall it is a high-quality plan.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>142</b>



## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

Application #0213KY-5 for Henderson County School District

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

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b> (a) The applicant has proposed to build on its work in four core educational assurance areas as evidenced below.  CCSS - The applicant district is in the first state to adopt the CCSS (Kentucky) and has trained its teachers and is already participating in the new assessment system.  Data system - The applicant has a district wide data collection and reporting system that will import and integrate all district information regarding assessment data, financial data, human resources data and student information data. Tyler Pulse will oversee and maintain the data management system. Of positive note the system has an individual teacher identifier with a teacher-student match which will allow principals to student achievement by teacher.  While the applicant has addressed a few developing teacher strategies (curriculum specialist to help align instruction, and four professional development days per year), the applicant did not address how it is currently recruiting, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed.  As an example of how its success in turning around low performing schools the district sites the success of South Heights Elementary with 89% poverty going from the lowest achieving school to to a nationally recognized model for total school reform. Additionally, the district noted success with the high school and South Middle School.		

(b) The applicant has articulated a credible approach to accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support. This is in part evidenced through successful student achievement improvement efforts and the proposed RTTT-D project goals.

Goal 1: the development of personalized learning plans for each sixth through twelfth grade student.

Goal 2: access to expanded and flexible learning environments.

Goal 3: access to expanded digital learning experiences.

Goal 4: improved teacher efficacy achieved through expanded teacher learning opportunities.

While the applicant states that its goal is "100% of Henderson County students will become college and career ready" -this is a very ambitious goal. It is not entirely clear how and if the applicant will achieve this goal.

(c) The applicant proposed that the classroom experience would include

- more positive culture and interactions
- An ILP for students in grades 6-12
- Expanded technology (i.e Notebooks for students)
- Instructional coaches and professional development for teachers

While these are very viable personalized learning environments approaches, the applicant has not described what the classroom experience would be like for students and teachers. Many of the activities noted in the goals chart were interventions and more remedial in nature rather than strong first learning personalized experiences. The applicant has scored in the high range.

<b>(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
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**(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

(a) The applicant has provided a description of the process that it used to select schools to participate. The participating schools collectively meet the competition's eligibility requirements. The process used is noted below.

- a 40 member committee - included wide representation of the district, schools, parents, and the community.
- reviewed district data, identified student and school needs and helped establish the project goals.
- determined all eligible schools should be included -all district schools meet the competition's eligibility requirements
- all twelve district schools are participating

(b) The applicant did provide a list of the 12 district schools that will participate in the grant activities and has met this criteria.

(c) The applicant has provided the total number of participating students, participating students from low-income families, participating students who are high-need students, and participating educators.

While the applicant has provided the necessary information, it did not provide a specific description of process to select the schools other than a committee made the decision. Nor, did the applicant describe how committee members were selected, the amount of parent and community representation, the process for collecting input, and what specific data was reviewed.

The applicant notes in its budget that all 525 teachers will receive digital devices, though in table (A)(2) the applicant notes a total of 553 educators. It is unclear what accounts for this discrepancy in data.

The applicant has scored in the high range.

<b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>
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**(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant did not provide a high-quality plan describing how the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools and will help the applicant reach its outcome goals. While not an absolute requirement, there was no logic model or theory of change as to how its plan would improve student learning outcomes for all students who would be served by the grant.

The applicant made several well intentioned statements and listed a variety of activities, though, did not provide specifics of

a plan (i.e. timelines, deliverables, persons responsible). The goals charts provided in an earlier section did provide activities and evaluation measurements, though, there were no timelines, deliverables, specific responsible individuals and/or rationale.

The applicant has scored in the low-medium range

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

**10**

**5**

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

The applicant has provided the following.

- Table (A)(4)(a) details the baseline scores and goals for proficiency status and growth determined for each district participating school
- Table (A)(4)(b) details the baseline scores and goals for decreasing achievement gaps for a **combined** subgroup
- Table (A)(4)(c) identifies baseline data and goals for increasing graduation rates with the goal of reaching 90% in 2016-17
- Table (A)(4)(d) identifies baseline data and goals for raising college and career outcomes post high-school graduation
- Table (A)(4)(e) reflects baseline data for the Kentucky Performance Rating for Education Progress (K-PREP) 2012-13 state assessment as KY transitions from the Kentucky Core Content Test to the K-PREP

The goal to have 100% of its students college and career ready is indeed a worthy goal, though given the district's record of success data, it does seem overly ambitious and potentially unreasonable. As another example, of potentially unachievable annual goals, the applicant proposes to move its Hispanic subgroup from 60% -100% in 4 years. This is an ambitious growth goal and it is unclear how the applicant will achieve this goal.

(a) Performance on summative assessments were provided, though, these were combined math and reading scores. Combined targets do not meet the criteria.

(b) The applicant provided targets by combined student subgroups for each participating school for decreasing the achievement gaps for, making it difficult to determine targets for specific subgroups. ELL were not addressed at all. The data are confusing and not clearly laid out making it difficult to determine what the applicant intended.

(c) While the applicant states 100% of its students will be college and career ready, it has as its college enrollment rate 55%, which does not seem ambitious. Though, this does align with the strong CTE career tracks for students. Graduation rates - it is unclear how the applicant determined these targets. As well, they may be overly ambitious at 100% for all targets. Targets were not provided for the subgroups.

(d) The college enrollment rate target was noted at 55%, along with 15% target for military and work for students after graduation. There were no targets for the individual sub groups.

Overall, the applicant did not adequately address mitigating the achievement gap or provide any reference to equity in its results.

The applicant stated that it goals that equal or exceed state targets, overall and by student subgroup, for improved student outcomes though did not provide data to support this statement. Additionally, the state goals provided in Tables (A)(4) are combined Math and Reading goals making it difficult to determine specific goals for Math and or Reading.

Lastly, the combined subgroups (special education, low income and African American) do not respond to the criteria "by subgroup".

The applicant has scored in the medium range.

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

	Available	Score

<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>
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**(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

(1) The applicant has demonstrated a strong 4 year record of success in *some* of its schools based on the Kentucky Core Content Tests. As demonstrated in the chart, reading scores were mostly up, in some instances by as much as 23 points. In 3 of the schools scores dipped. For math the same pattern holds true. Overall, there was some steady growth and or maintaining levels - though not in all schools. These are mixed results.

As a positive note, the district moved from the 50th percentile in 2012, to the 83rd percentile in 2013.

(a) The chart demonstrating growth for "gap students" is unclear as to which students are included. As well this chart shows mixed results with 6 out of 11 schools showing no gains and only covers a 2 year period.

While the high school moved from 12th from bottom to the 91st percentile -the gap chart showed a loss in reading. It would appear that gains are not being met by the high needs students. Overall, the applicant has not demonstrated closing the achievement gaps, including by raising student achievement. High school graduation rates and college enrollment rates were not provided for the subgroups.

(b) The applicant has demonstrated success in achieving significant reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools. This is evidenced by its one National Blue Ribbon School (East Heights Elementary). Additionally, South Heights Elementary has been selected as a National Model School by the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE) for three consecutive years and is a national demonstration site for the Project CHILD initiative

The Raise Achievement in Secondary Education (RAISE) committee as noted earlier has provided a blueprint to improve the schools through the expansion of AP courses, offering more dual credit courses and embedding literacy in the school improvement plans. Of noteworthy mention is the district's yearly Home Blitz where teachers visit homes, offer welcome packets and relevant extracurricular information to parents.

(c) The following are demonstrative of the district's efforts to make student performance data available to students, educators and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and services.

- School methods include:
  - weekly newsletters sent home to parents
  - school websites sharing what is happening in the school
  - One-Call automated phone communication
  - a state-mandated School Report Card published by the state to provide information including assessment scores, attendance rates, behavior data, safe school data, volunteer hours, teacher qualifications, per pupil spending
- District communications with parents and all stakeholders include:
  - Use of the district website to highlight school and district accomplishments
  - A district Public Information Officer who provides information to local radio, television and print media to share activities and updated information regarding district initiatives

While these are noteworthy communication strategies, the items below more aptly address how the district will make student performance data available to parents. Schools are also required to create and follow their Comprehensive School Improvement Plans. While parents and stakeholders are encouraged to provide input the applicant did not describe its outreach strategies or how it would "encourage" input, or more frequent and ongoing progress reporting.

- Parents and students are informed of student educational progress through MAP reports that are sent home three times per year,
- the state assessment report - sent home in September/October of each school year
- the ACT, EXPLORE and PLAN reports sent to 8th – 11th grade students as they complete the assessments.

The applicant has provided a mixed record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching. It is unclear that the successes noted are inclusive of all students, especially the district's high need students. Per the comments above, the applicant has scored in the medium range.

<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
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**(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant notes the following as evidence of its level of transparency in district processes, practices, and investments,

- information is published every year in the school and district report cards -generated by the Kentucky Department of Education
- District finance reports are made monthly at the local board meeting
- a financial audit is conducted by an outside auditor yearly- **though it is unclear if this is posted for anyone to access**
- presentation on the financial status of the district is made to the board following the audit
- the community is informed of the financial information through the district website
- printed copies are available **upon request** at the Henderson Public Library
- the district **salary schedule for certified and classified staff is posted on the district web** site for anyone to access
- the Director of Human Resources submits an Office of Civil Rights report that identifies the requested information in sections (a) through (d) below (See Appendix G). **Though, it is unclear if this information is publicly posted or available upon request**

The applicant notes that more extensive salary information can be provided as needed, though does not indicate how to access this more extensive information. Having constituents have to request public data and information is not a demonstration of transparency and open communication.

The applicant has minimally responded to the criteria, and did not address how it provides and makes public, by school, actual school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration. Given the comments above, the applicant has scored in the medium range.

<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>
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**(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant notes that all Kentucky districts are accountable to Senate Bill 1 which provides the foundation for continuing educational reforms for school districts. Other than the statement that the "State requirements go hand in hand with federal expectations within this application and pose no barrier for implementation.", the applicant did not describe what is specifically required under this bill and how those requirements directly relate to the RTTT-D proposal.

As another example of the state granting autonomy to all districts and schools, the applicant notes is evidenced in the Kentucky's School-Based Decision Making Councils found in all schools. These councils are responsible for oversight of school budgets, curriculum resources, assessment data, program implementation, and RTI strategies.

While the state has been an early adopted of the CCSS and has a RTTT State grant simply stating so does not demonstrate how the applicant will implement its proposal based on this foundation. Statements are insufficient evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in the applicant's proposal. The applicant did not provide specific information on the specific connections of these mandates and how they are relevant to and provide the necessary autonomy for the RTTT-D efforts.

The applicant has scored in the medium range.

<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>
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**(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant has stated that it has a long history of engaging all stakeholders in soliciting input and that it has utilized input from parents, students, staff, and community leaders in identifying goals, objectives and activities within the Comprehensive District Improvement Plan, though it is unclear what that history of engagement looks like as there was no evidence or description of said engagement.

It would have strengthened this proposal to specifically describe HOW the stakeholders were chosen, how often the input is requested, the process for engagement and input and the ways in which the input was incorporated. Other examples of stakeholder involvement include:

- the Equity Resource Council meets regularly, though "regularly" is not defined
- monthly Key Communicators meetings for the past six years to bring community leaders to the table to discuss district initiatives
- Superintendent created a new Parent Advisory Roundtable with monthly meetings beginning in January 2013

(a) While the applicant described its CTE advisory boards and partnerships, the applicant has not provided a description of **how** students, families, teachers, and principals in participating schools were engaged in the development of the proposal and how the proposal was revised based on their engagement and feedback. Overall, the applicant has not adequately addressed **how** all of its parents, students and teachers are or would have opportunities for engagement. As well, there was no specific description of the process for feedback or continuous input.

(i) Teachers were surveyed for support of the RTTT District goals and 88% of the certified staff responded with 100% of those responding in favor of the project. This is not evidence of evidence of **direct** engagement and support for the proposal from its teachers. Other than the statement, the actual teacher survey or other evidence of teacher input was not provided. The Henderson County Education Association has supported the project as evidenced by the signature of the HCEA President, though, there was no letter of support to explain the level of support.

(b) The applicant provided letters of support from key stakeholders as noted below. Absent were letters from parents and parent organizations, student organizations, early learning programs, tribes, the business community, civil rights organizations, advocacy groups, local civic and community-based organizations, the union, and institutions of higher education.

- County Judge
- Chamber of Commerce
- KY Clearinghouse
- State DOE
- Mayor

Per the comments above, the applicant has scored in the medium range.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>

**(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

The district proposes to implement, starting in 2014, Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) which detail the course of classes a student will take. Students may chose from 14 pathways to exit high school. While it is noteworthy that the district plans to implement ILPs starting at 6th grade (the state mandates starting at 8th grade), the applicant did not address an ILP or, how it will individualized learning for students in grades K-5. This is a concern as the applicant has proposed to serve all students in the district with these grant funds.

(i) Understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals

Beginning at grade 6, students will work with their parents and guidance counselors to develop an ILP, which includes a career/interest inventory. The applicant proposes that the ILP is to become a more comprehensive planning tool such that RTTT ILPs will include information on students' interests, learning preferences, learning styles, and learning goals, and a data notebook to compile assessment data, and at a minimum, MAP data, report card data, K-PREP data, Response to Intervention (RTI) data. While this addresses personalized learning for students in grades 6-13, again, the applicant has not addressed students in grades K-5, other than noting that the ILP and a data notebook currently being utilized in *some* elementary schools.

The applicant has noted that parent conferences will be a more focused time to engage parents in the student's future career interest to prepare for high school and beyond verses a past focus on real-time classwork and grades. It is unclear how the district will focus on a student's future with out looking at current efforts.

Of positive note, end-of-year transition meetings will also be held between elementary and middle school staff and middle and high school staff members to facilitate positive transitions for high risk students. This is important to ensuring successful transitions for students.

(ii) the applicant has identified several approaches to how kit will facilitate students' ability to identify and pursue learning and

development goals linked to college- and career-ready standards, or college- and career-ready graduation requirements, and understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals. This is evidenced as follows.

Elementary Level:

- Instructional strategies - including daytime supplemental instruction (though, *specific* instructional strategies will be provided were not addressed)
- Enrichment classes
- After school programs
- Blended instructional approaches
- *Leader in Me* character building/ social emotional learning

Secondary -

- College and career focus
- Identify career pathway
- *Leader in Me*
- RtI - (though, it is not a federal mandate)
- College and Career Coaches
- Choosing targeted Pathways as high school freshmen

While the applicant notes a strong commitment to college visits (even at the elementary level), the narrative appears to be very work and career focused, with fewer college academic options other than AP options. Additionally, there is a strong focus on what the CC Coaches will do at the secondary level - but no real mention of their efforts at the elementary level (other than college visits). It is unclear if CC Coaches will be implemented at the elementary level. Lastly, the above noted approaches are potentially viable strategies and approaches, though they are non-specific in nature. Thus, it is unclear exactly what programs or strategies will be used and how they will personalize learning for all students.

(iii) Are able to be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest

While the applicant proposes to expand learning opportunities through flexible Learning Plus Academies to "provide a wealth of enrichment and supplemental learning to students and families during after-school, evening, weekend, and summer hours", this approach appears to exemplify more not deeper learning. As well, it also appears to be more remedial in nature. As an example, the applicant proposes to use the current 21st CCLC grant model to create After School Academies to all district schools. The applicant proposes to use RTTT-D funding to support school 21st CCLC programs (North and South Middle) as their grants end in June of 2014, yet the applicant provided no evidence or data to demonstrate success of these programs or, how they would be implemented in ALL of its schools and made accessible to ALL of its students. Simply citing research on the value of after school programs is insufficient evidence of program selection in this case where the applicant has school data.

While it is noteworthy that a parent initiative wants "to promote math and science education and has identified twenty projects to implement from STEM for Girls to science fairs, to an Invention Convention.", and that the RTTT project will partner with this group to support their efforts, and that a STEM Academy will be created with a CTE (technical) unit at HCHS by bringing together a team of math, science, language arts and technology teachers, the applicant did not specifically describe how these efforts align to Goal 3 and how ALL students would have access for more personalized learning. As is currently written, these efforts only apply to secondary students.

(iv) The applicant proposes that students will have have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning through the following.

foreign language classes at the high school

- the addition of Spanish classes at both middle schools
- social studies courses, arts/ humanities classes
- interaction with students from other cultures including foreign exchange students and students in district schools that represent countries including Somalia, Mexico, and China
- Thai cooking classes, origami classes

While these are potential approaches to increase access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives, they are very basic surface approaches to understanding diverse cultures and as such could potentially increase misconceptions. The applicant did not describe *deep* learning opportunities, or describe what is different from the district's current efforts, and how will these opportunities will be available to ALL students. Of positive note, the CTE job shadowing is a real world example of relevant access to diverse contexts and perspectives.

(v) The applicant has proposes the *Leader in Me* program as an example of how it will facilitate student mastery of critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving. The *Leader in Me* is a social -emotional skill program and as such it is unclear how much it will address all of the above noted criteria.

(i) The applicant has noted the ILP and the Career Pathway in 8th grade as evidence of how it will personalized a sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable the student to achieve his or her individual learning goals and ensure he or she can graduate on time and college- and career-ready. As noted earlier, the applicant has provided numerous secondary opportunities though has inadequately addressed personalized learning opportunities for ALL students including elementary and high needs students. This section on personalized learning is the crux of the program. In general the applicant has provided generic non-specific strategies as evidenced below.

(ii) A *variety* of high-quality instructional approaches and environments

- "Instruction will be enhanced in *multiple ways* through support and training for teachers
- provision of new classroom technologies
- expansion of teacher and student support services
- a comprehensive and tiered (e.g., personalized) program of professional development will be implemented
- Instructional Coaches will provide support
- expansion of learning opportunities through Learning Plus Academies

This is a list of potentially viable strategies and approaches, though, it is just a list. The applicant never specifically described or explained the strategies and how they would be implemented to personalize learning for ALL students.

(iii) With regard to the provision of high-quality content, including digital learning content as appropriate, aligned with college- and career-ready standards, "The district is committed to digital learning." This is in part evidenced by the "technology plan on June 28, 2012 which seeks to bring all classrooms to a level of technological proficiency." Though, this plan has not been implemented due to a lack of funds. The district's commitment and further action to this effort is somewhat unclear, though, RTTT-D funds will be used to purchase portable digital devices for student loan, install sound field systems. Additionally, grant funds will be used to "complete implementation of the district plan for instructional support devices such as interactive boards and document cameras.

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

(A) The applicant proposes the use of MAPS assessments (3 times a year) and the EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT assessments for grades 8-11, as examples of how it will frequent update individual student data that can be used to determine progress toward mastery of college- and career-ready standards. Additionally, for students who receive intervention services they will receive weekly progress monitoring. While these are valuable assessments they are somewhat summative in nature. It is unclear what ongoing daily and weekly progress monitoring will be used to personalize learning for ALL students so as to continuously inform instruction.

(v) While the applicant noted the following as accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students to help ensure that they are on track toward meeting college- and career-ready standards, these strategies are largely remedial in nature and do not appear to be personalized accommodations for ALL students, rather they are current district recovery programs for secondary students.

- expand the current RTI services
- Freshman Jump Start program
- Summer credit recovery classes
- competency based digital learning
- elective study skills classes
- Freshmen initiative at HCHS
- Central Academy Alternative School
- Switch to a computer based learning plan

(c) Other than noting that the CCC "will conduct a series of workshops" and "work closely with Juniors and seniors", the applicant has minimally addressed how it would ensure that mechanisms are in place to provide training and support to **ALL** students that will ensure that they understand how to use the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning.

The applicant has scored in the medium range.

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

**20**

**12**

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

(a) As examples of how the district supports all participating educators to engage in training, and in professional teams or communities, that supports their individual and collective capacity to (i) effectively implement personalized learning environments and strategies that meet each student's academic needs, the applicant cites the following professional development opportunities.

- technology
- Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)/Project Lead the Way)
- Laying the Foundation, which gives English, math, and science teachers effective strategies for increasing rigor to better prepare students
- Advanced Placement (AP) professional development
- evidence-based practices for RTI interventionists
- assistance in aligning the science curriculum to the Common Core Curriculum
- PLCs

While the plan is for extensive professional development, there was no timeline or plan for how all teachers would access these opportunities, the sequence of the professional development, and how the district would address new teachers.

(ii) The applicant proposes that the ICs will facilitate discussions, based on evidence-based practices, regarding strategies to adapt content and instruction to foster personalization. Teachers will also be given release time to observe in other classrooms. Though again, there were no specific or explicit professional development to support teachers in adapting content and instruction, providing opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks, in response to their academic needs, academic interests and optimal learning approaches for personalized learning.

(iii) The applicant noted its comprehensive and systematic student assessment program that provides *frequent* measures of student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards through the PLAN, EXPLORE and ACT and MAPs assessments, though, these measures are summative in nature. Student progress data will be compiled in individual student data notebooks. As noted earlier, the applicant has not defined "frequent", or, specifically **how** it would support its teachers in more ongoing and continuous formative measures of student progress.

Of positive note, the Instructional Coaches and district Curriculum Specialists will analyze student progress data across classes, grade levels, and at the school level to determine trends and gap areas. They will also review the progress of subgroup populations and compare the rates of progression with total population growth. Though again, this has not addressed how teachers will learn to do this.

(iv) As evidence as to how it will improve teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness the applicant will continue to implement Kentucky's new Framework for Teaching based on the Characteristics of Highly Effective Teaching and Learning (CHETL) and which is administered through the office of Next Generation Learners. This system includes five domains (planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction, professional responsibilities, and student growth). In addition, the professional Growth Effectiveness System (PGES) is already being implemented. Each teacher will now have an annual evaluation that uses the following measures.

- Supervisor and peer observations
- Professional growth
- Self reflection
- Student voice
- Student growth

Teachers will have Professional Growth Plans (PGP) that will provide a scope and sequence for personal professional development (through workshops, coaching, experiential learning, personal professional projects, graduate coursework, etc.).

(b) All participating educators have access to, and know how to use, tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready graduation requirements.

(i) Elsewhere in this proposal, the applicant noted the new data management system will tie individual student achievement data to teachers. As such the teacher would have very current and actionable information that would help identify optimal learning approaches that respond to individual student academic needs and interests. It is unclear why the applicant noted "booklets and a webpage" to help its teachers be aware of "access to new and existing tools, data and resources". It remains unclear how the applicant has defined "frequent" for its collaborative view of student progress.

(ii) The applicant has adequately demonstrated that high-quality learning resources including digital resources and the tools to create and share new resources will be accessible to its teachers as demonstrated by the following.

- the availability of technology-based tools such as Moodle, Skype, Khan Academy
- video-based learning
- blended learning models
- competency-based learning/digital-based instruction
- social networking sites such as YouTube will also be piloted and then disseminated as appropriate
- Teachers will also receive extensive professional development targeted to their individual learning and growth needs
- Every teacher (525) will receive a new digital device (though, this is not the case for every student)

(iii) The applicant stated that the "RTTT project will include specific methods of collecting student progress data which will be analyzed for the purpose of providing feedback regarding the effectiveness of RTTT sponsored resources in meeting student needs.", though never specifically described what these methods were or how they would be implemented. A statement is insufficient evidence of implementation. As such the applicant has inadequately responded to these criteria (Processes and tools to match student needs (see Selection Criterion (C)(2)(b)(i)) with specific resources and approaches to provide continuously improving feedback about the effectiveness of the resources in meeting student needs. This may be due to the lack of a definable plan with timelines, activities, deliverables, etc.

(ii) The applicant notes that each school will add the RTTT-D goals to its Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP). There is a concern that as currently written (proposal and goals target more high school level activities) what adding the goals to its CSIP will look like at the elementary level. As currently described the applicant has not adequately addressed training, systems, and practices to continuously improve school progress toward the goals of increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps.

(d) The applicant proposed the following examples to demonstrate its commitment to effective teachers for its students. While these are viable approaches, they are somewhat generic in nature.

- extensive teacher supports such as:
  - professional development
  - technology
  - additional paid optional days
  - observation opportunities
  - PLCs
- Professional Growth Plans
- Use of the Teacher Evaluation System
- Use of KY Framework for Teaching Rubrics for teacher interviews
- Creation of a Leadership Academy

The applicant did not provide a high-quality plan (as defined in this notice) for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals including in its hard-to-staff schools and subjects (such as mathematics and science), and in particular for specialty areas (such as special education).

Overall, the applicant has provided well intentioned statements and a variety of strategies, though without a coherent high-quality plan the likelihood of meeting the proposed approaches is unclear. Per the comments above, the applicant has scored in the medium range.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>

**(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant has proposed the following practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning for students and educators.

- expanded RtI support
- student access to trained teachers - especially in the areas of math, science and technology; social skills development through
- the *Leader In Me* curriculum
- more classroom technology
- more expanded learning opportunities through
- after-school tutoring and enrichment activities
- after-school and summer Learning Plus Academies
- integrated technology-based
- curriculum and instruction; focus on college and career readiness through the strengthening of Individual Learning Plans for students beginning in the 6th grade
- STEM initiative
- the addition of College and Career Counselors

Teachers will be supported through:

- additional professional development including district, state, national and on-line trainings UNCLER what
- opportunities for peer observations
- the creation of a Teacher Professional Growth Plans
- more time to plan for curricular and instructional needs with colleagues in Professional Learning meetings
- more technology in classroom to expand learning beyond the classroom walls

integration of web-based learning

- Instructional Coaches to help focus on effective and engaging instructional strategies
- more resources, especially in the area of science.

While these are all potentially effective approaches, they are global in nature. The applicant did not tie these approaches to specific personalized learning environments and strategies for implementation.

(a) As evidence of how it will organize the district office to provide support and services to all participating schools the applicant proposes the hiring of a RTTT Project Director, two Assistant Project Coordinators, an outside Evaluator, and clerical support. The RTTT-D grant staff will "work as a team" with the seven district office administrators. The applicant did not specifically describe HOW these two teams (RTTT and district office staff) would collaborate to achieve the proposed goals.

(b) The applicant proposes that the state mandated school councils will have input into decisions, with "latitude", such as deciding to spend Rtl allocations on materials/resources or on tutors and how the tutors will be used (in collaborative classes or pull-out programs). In addition, these School Based Decision Making Councils are responsible for other factors such as school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, and school-level budgets. As such, there appear to have the necessary flexibility and autonomy.

(c) While the applicant cited several examples of how students may earn high school credits in middle school, and college credits in high school, and how the state allows for early graduation, the applicant did not describe how if at all, students may progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic. Thus, it is unclear if students can earn credit based on mastery only.

(d) The following are examples of how the district gives students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways.

- MAPS
- KPREP
- EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT
- Attend a mandatory mid-term week-long "catch-up" program
- Students can work to pass a test and show mastery on the last summative assessment given in class

(e) The applicant proposes to provide learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible through Rtl. Additionally, English language learners will be assisted through the district's Title III, Migrant and Immigrant programs in learning English through tutoring services within the school day. Rtl is not an instructional model, it is a screening process, as well, these are very non specific strategies. The applicant did not describe specific strategies or HOW the district would provide learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to ALL students, including students with disabilities and English Language Learners.

The applicant has scored in the medium range.

<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>
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**(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

(a) The applicant proposes the following as evidence of how it will ensure that all participating students parents, educators, regardless of income, will have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of this proposal.

- Parents will be trained through multiple parent workshops
- A wide range of trainings for both school-wide focus and individual teacher needs will provide individualized personal learning for teachers
- All students will be supported from Kindergarten through high school graduation with a focus on College and/or Career Readiness through:

- o personalized learning with the implementation of Individual Learning Plans
- o resources for science and technology
- o expanded learning opportunities through after school and summer Learning Plus Academies
- o social skills development through *The Leader In Me*
- o RTI intervention strategies for struggling learners

Each of these strategies is generic in nature. The applicant has not provide a specific description of specific content, how it is personalized for students. As an example it is unclear what the "resources for science and technology" will be. As another example, it is unclear what is included in a "wide range of trainings" for teachers. Lastly, there was a focus on extended learning opportunities after school or during the summer verses rigorous and deep "first instruction".

(b) The following are proposed as evidence of how the applicant will ensure that students, parents, educators and other stakeholders have the necessary and appropriate levels of technical support.

- parent workshops such as the Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership
- involvement in school and district committees
- parent workshops for topics such as developmental milestones for pre-school children through college application and federal aid workshops
- through the after-school and summer Learning Plus Academies

Additionally, teachers will have support through:

- extensive professional development
- teacher Professional Growth Plans to foster teacher growth of skills and knowledge toward Highly Effective Teachers benchmarks
- increased technology support through digital learning devices
- equitable classroom technology across all district classroom
- wireless internet connections for expanding learning
- supplies and resources for science teachers

Again, these approaches are very non specific. It is unclear when, how often, what specific content will be presented to teachers as well as the timeline for providing these opportunities.

(c) The applicant has demonstrated some information technology systems that will allow for communication to parents, as noted below.

- Parent Portal where parents can electronically access their student's information regarding classroom grades, attendance, and behavior reports
- Access to school and district web pages to access information regarding activities, programs and calendar of event
- Local Cable TV Channel 12
- YouTube
- Twitter

It is unclear, if these methods are accessible to all parents. Additionally, even though, there will be a "parent portal", the applicant did not describe how it will support parents and students to export their information in an open data format and to use the data in other electronic learning systems such as electronic tutors, tools that make recommendations for additional learning supports, or software that securely stores personal records. As such, the applicant has insufficiently responded to this criteria.

(d) The applicant will be contracting with TylerPulse, a data warehouse company that will import all district information regarding assessment data, financial data, human resources data and student information data. As such, the district appears to have an interoperable data system that includes the necessary data systems.

The applicant has not provided a high-quality plan (as defined in this notice) to support its project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator and level of the education system (classroom, school, and district) with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed. As such, the applicant has scored in the low-medium range.

## E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>

**(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant has proposed the following as evidence of how it will implement a rigorous continuous improvement process. The 2009 series of focus areas (RAISE Goals) that guided the efforts of all district staff will continue as the basis for the development of instructional programming for the next five years. It is noteworthy that the district has stayed committed to these goal areas. These RAISE areas were defined as:

- (1) All Henderson graduates will be college and /or career ready as measured by the Kentucky College and Career Readiness definition
- (2) Parent and community involvement opportunities will be expanded and created
- (3) Henderson County personnel and students will use technology to support learning by gathering information, effectively communicating, and increasing productivity; by understanding safety and ethical/social issues surrounding the use of technology; and by engaging technology for research, inquiry, problem solving, and innovation
- (4) Henderson County Schools will provide multiple opportunities for students to successfully become active and productive citizens in their community
- (5) Henderson County Schools will demonstrate fiscal responsibility in all allocation of resources provided by the federal, state, and county governments, and by the community to increase student achievement

As evidence of its commitment to the use of data for the evaluation of program impact and effectiveness and how it will formalize procedures for the reflection, analysis, and continuous improvement the district has implemented the following actions:

- created the position of Director of Accountability and Assessment Coordinator
- Each school leader and leadership team member conducts a specified number of mandated observations that are used for evaluation, coaching, and data collection
- Members of the district’s leadership team regularly utilize student performance data as a part of the system for school leader evaluations
- Members of the district’s leadership team regularly analyze and share the results of district developed and vendor supplied formative assessments with building leaders and school staff
- Curriculum specialists analyze student achievement data and lead school level analysis discussions
- Instructional Rounds (classroom walk-throughs) are conducted by district staff

The applicant provided a list of evaluator activities, with some generic timelines (quarterly) though, the activities were non-specific.

Overall, while there were some activities and some timelines, the applicant did not provide a high-quality plan (as defined in this notice) 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. Without a coherent and connected plan with specific activities, rationale for those activities, deliverables, a timeline and persons specifically responsible for each activity it is unlikely that the applicant will meet its continuous improvement goals within the grant period.

The applicant did not sufficiently describe **how** it will monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of its investments funded by Race to the Top – District. The applicant has scored in the medium range.

<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
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**(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

As part of its effort to continuously improve its plans, the applicant has proposed a community forum with 40 participating representing parents, students, community/business leaders, and school and district staff, identified programs and educational supports they felt would benefit the students.

While the applicant notes that the process was highly inclusive and well received by the community, there was no evidence of the process, how it was implemented, specifically who participated, how they were selected and the process for input.

Also proposed as support of its continuous improvement efforts, the RTTT-D Project Director and Assistant Project Coordinators will establish sub-advisory committees for critical areas such as:

- reviewing Highly Effective Teacher criteria which will guide teachers in developing their Professional Growth Plans
- establishing and overseeing the expanded learning opportunities through Learning Plus academies 102
- establishing plans for sustainability of the RTTT-D initiatives

Parent involvement would include:

- "Encouraging" more volunteerism in the schools
- participation in activities such as Operation Preparation during which community leaders and parents can assist high school students in college application and examining career choices their senior year
- Serving on Advisory Councils for the RTTT-D initiatives
- Assisting in securing continuation funds
- Assisting in the implementation of the STEM school-based activities

While these appear to be meaningful parent engagement activities, the applicant did not describe specific parental outreach efforts or strategies. As one example, it is unclear how the district will "encourage" more volunteerism.

Overall, the applicant did not provide a high-quality plan (as defined in this notice) for how it would implement a plan for ongoing communication and engagement with its internal and external stakeholders. As such, the applicant has scored in the medium range.

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

**5**

**3**

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

- (a) The applicant listed the measures and noted that they were "established with the state's new Kentucky Performance Report for Educational Progress (K-PREP) but did not describe the rationale for selecting that measure.
- (b) The following describe how the applicant proposes the measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative information. Though, there was no clear proposed plan and theory of action making it difficult to determine how it is aligned to various activities.
- Internal assessment data such as MAP will provide longitudinal data on each student in grades K-8
  - the three administrations of the EXPLORE and PLAN yearly will provide longitudinal data for students in grades 9 and 10
  - --data required for effective and highly effective identification of teachers has not been determined by the state as this point
- (c) In response to how it will review and improve the measure over time if it is insufficient to gage implementation progress the applicant will use selected indicators to begin the evaluation process and collect relevant data for documentation of improvements, though there was no description for HOW this would be accomplished.

The applicant provided most of the required performance measures. Missing measures are noted below.

- Highly effective educators: The applicant notes that new Performance Measure will be determined by the state under the K-PREP assessment system and will be available for the 2014-15 school year to identify the baseline for Effective and Highly Effective Teachers and Principals. It is unavailable at this time to include in section (a) or (b).
- The "We" Surveys will be administered in the spring of 2014 to solicit student, teacher and parent input into the quality of instruction across the district and the relationships between staffs and their students. TBD
- The number and percentage of participating students, by subgroups, who score in spring on or above grade level in reading, as measured by the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) appears to be overly ambitious (100%) for the four year grant period given the districts current record of success. It is unclear how 100% was determined.
- It is unclear why ELL were not addressed as a subgroup.
- Performance Measure (Grades 4-8 – a) The number and percentage of participating students in the All category who are on track to college- and career-readiness based on EXPLORE Tests at Grade 8 projects a 20% increase from 2012-13 to 2013-14. This a huge jump. Additionally, there is a 30% increase for special education and African American. These are very ambitious gains. It is unclear if they are reasonable and achievable.
- Appropriate discipline decreases were provided for educational outcomes

Overall, the applicant provided most of the required indicators. Based on the comments above and the overly ambitious and questionable reasonableness of some of the measures, the applicant has scored in the medium range.

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

**5**

**3**

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

The applicant that the proposed external evaluator has developed a process for the assessment evaluation of grant activities that focuses on the verifiable attainment of desired outcomes. Additionally, a number of the measurable outcomes associated with these target areas have been included in the Performance Measures section of this application. The following are included in the evaluation activities.

1. Creation of a learning environment that significantly improves teaching and learning through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that align with College and Career Readiness standards
  - The district will include in its mandated walk-through observation forms checklists for personalization tools, personalization strategies, and alignment of observed instructional experiences with the Common Core Curriculum Standards
  - expand the access and frequency of support options for students identified through the district's Rtl procedures.
2. Acceleration of student achievement and deepening of student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student
  - expand the state mandated development of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for each student to the district's sixth grades
  - use emerging experiences with the analysis of student work to develop multiple measures to assess student understandings and learning and to update each student's data notebook and ILP
  - develop the analysis protocols during year one of the grant, to reflect the Common Core Curriculum Standards and information relating to the proposed Next Generation Assessments
  - A data notebook for each student will be developed and the results of the student work analysis will be added quarterly to the files associated with the student's ILP.
- Increase the effectiveness of educators
  - utilize a rubric for the placement of teachers on a district developed effectiveness continuum that mirrors state teacher growth expectations
  - teachers will develop a Professional Growth Plan addressing steps needed to move them to the highest effectiveness rating.
  - principals and other educators will collaboratively develop a professional development/support plan
4. Expansion of student access to highly effective educators
  - recruitment and employment of highly effective educators
  - development of educator skills and engagement through personalized professional support systems
5. Decrease in achievement gaps across student groups
6. Increase the rate at which student's graduate from high school prepared for college and careers

While the applicant has noted that the outside evaluator will conduct much of the evaluation and did describe its goals, there was no high quality plan with activities, rationale for those activities, deliverables, etc. The several additional assessment/evaluation activities in the areas designated as Absolute Priority 1, were not all well defined, or described. This is evidenced in the global strategies and or approaches noted above. As one example, in number 4 above, student access to highly effective educator, the applicant proposes the "recruitment and employment of educators with records of high effectiveness" yet does not describe how it proposes to do so. Without specific goals and activities with deliverables and timelines (and rationale and persons responsible for the activities) it is unclear what specifically the evaluator will evaluate and how the applicant will achieve the proposed evaluation.

Overall, the applicant has scored in the medium range.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>

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

(a) The applicant has identified all funds that will support the RTTT-D project as evidenced by the budget narrative. This is also evidenced below.

- The district will blend the current \$1,854,000 in RTI program funds (from Title I and Extended School Services -ESS) with RTTT-D funds to expand RTI support for students scoring below the 20th percentile in reading and math in grades K-8 to students scoring between the 20th and 35th percentiles
- six schools are currently implementing 21st Century Community Learning Centers through state grants
- district general fund provides salaries

(b) Overall, the budget is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal and four goals. There are though, areas of concern as per earlier comments in this review. Without high quality plans to define the specific activities and deliverables and has been noted with the overall approach, some of the expenditures are not specifically connected to specific personalized student learning environments. As one example, the science equipment and STEM teacher training are noteworthy activities and expenditures, though it is still unclear how they specifically relate to the overall implementation of personalized learning environments.

As another example, the estimate of \$400 per student per year for RtI (based on current tutoring costs) is for intervention and or remedial tutoring not rigorous, deep first instruction. As well, it is not specified how this remedial tutoring is personalized to the student.

(c) The applicant has listed all the expenditures, though in most cases has not clearly provided a rationale for its investments and priorities.

(i) As noted above, the applicant has provided a description of all of the funds that the applicant will use to support the implementation of the proposal, though did not provide the specific total revenue from every source. As an example, the applicant proposes to use \$1,854,000 in RTI program funds (from Title I and Extended School Services) though, has not specified the amount of the 21st Century grant funds.

(ii) The applicant has ably provided the 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, as described in the proposed budget and budget narrative.

Overall, the applicant *has* provided a viable budget, though did not provide specific line item detail for its expenditures. This is in part evidenced by the following.

- Project 2:Goal 2 provided line items descriptions for afterschool directors and tutors but not for equipment. It is unclear what the individual costs of the noted equipment is and how many items will be purchased. Also, the supplies don't appear to add up to \$76,500 (\$54,000 kits, materials \$9,000 and \$5,000 for summer academies for 8 elementary and 2 middle schools).
- Other project budgets similarly did not provide line item descriptions of purchases (i.e. contractual it is unclear what the deliverable is, cost per hour or day etc.)

The applicant has scored in the medium range.

<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
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**(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant did include a plan of sorts with budget assumptions and uses of funds. Though the plan did not include the dedicated

source of funds. The three year sustainability included the use of the following find sources cover the proposed activities after the grant at the level that it currently funds the activities. This means that in the case of the Rtl funded activities, the district will revert back to its current level of student support - which is not equal to the support provided over the course of the grant.

- Title I
- General Funds
- 21st CCLC grant

While the plan did address support from State and local government leaders and district financial support, there were several elements missing form a high-quality plan (as defined in this notice) for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. These missing elements include specific committed fund sources, rationale for all the activities, persons responsible and specific timelines (beyond generic yearly budgets). Additionally, there were several activities that currently have sustainability approaches that do not guarantee fund sources (i.e. apply for another 21st Century grant, parents raise funds or pay a fee, and transportation). Thus, it would appear that these activities have a likelihood of not being sustained.

While the applicant stated that it would hire an "RTTT Evaluator to document grant initiative's impact; and RTTT clerical staff to maintain RTTT data, track budget expenses and assist in maintaining project data.", the applicant did not describe *how* it will evaluate the effectiveness of past investments and use this data to inform future investments or, *how* the applicant will evaluate improvements in productivity and outcomes to inform a post-grant budget. Though did not describe how. A statement is insufficient evidence of how this will be accomplished.

Given that parts and components of a sustainability plan were provided, the applicant has scored in the high range.

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</b>		
As currently written, the proposed application does not address the Competitive preference priority. As such, the applicant has scored zero points.		

### Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>		<b>Met</b>
<b>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</b>		
The applicant has minimally met this priority. The proposal has not specifically, coherently and comprehensively addressed how it will build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for ALL of its students and how it will accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student.		
This is evidenced as follows:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rtl is a screening/diagnostic process - not individualized instruction</li> <li>• The applicant did not address PLE for <u>every</u> student</li> <li>• The proposal spoke to remediation and interventions and did not specifically address rigorous instruction and the specifics of PLE</li> <li>• The applicant did not consistently address a personalized learning environments and accommodations and adaptations for ALL students</li> </ul>		



Total	210	122
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