



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0074CT-1 for New Haven, City of

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents a compelling vision for this project that is part of, and integrated with, a larger school reform vision. Three broad statements form the framework for the project.

- Student learning through meaningful, supportive, personalized and coherent learning experiences that support their intellectual, emotional and physical development.
- Schools as the focal point for learning in the city, where teams of adults take collective and empowered responsibility for students, working separately and together to move students from wherever they start to their highest performance levels.
- The district, at all levels and in all things, encouraging both collaboration without fault and continuous improvement through growth, adaptation, and innovation.

The applicant proposes to operationalize these statements through three initiatives

- A Portfolio of Schools initiative,
- A Talent initiative,
- A Community and Parents initiative.

The applicant has already made substantial progress in the four core assurance areas and this progress provides a foundation for the proposed project. The focus of reform efforts has been, and will continue to be according to the applicant, towards early adolescents in order to prepare them for their future in high school and in post-secondary education.

The applicant describes a clear and credible approach to accelerating student achievement and increasing equity through personalized learning environments. Such activities as the Talent Initiative will be useful in accomplishing this. An effective description is also provided regarding what the applicant anticipates the classroom experience being like for students and teachers as a result of this project.

Based on the elements of a clear reform vision the applicant has presented in this section the full amount of points are awarded for this criterion.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	5
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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

According to the applicant, this project will involve all district schools that include the targeted students in grades 6-9 in the project during the grant period. The project will start with 1,460 sixth graders and approximately 1,000 students in the program pilots the first year. Eventually 6,308 students in grades 6-9 will be impacted directly through grant activities. A total of 1644 educators will also participate in the project. Appropriate percentages of low-income and high-need students will also be served by the project. Since all of the applicant's schools that serve the target grades 6-9 a description of how schools were selected is not needed. However, the applicant does make it clear that it believes that the middle school grades are a crucial period for promoting and laying the foundation for career and college readiness and that is why it selected these particular schools as the focus of this project.

Although the applicant does a good job of describing the schools and the student population that will be included in this project, the numbers regarding student participation are inconsistent with those that are included in the range of years addressed and calculated for the budget. In addition, there isn't a clearly defined plan for how and when the various project components will be implemented in the various middle schools. For instance, an explanation is not provided regarding how specific schools will receive certain resources and engaged in certain activities in relation to their specific needs and

challenges. Therefore, the full amount of points is not awarded for this criterion.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a strong plan for how the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform for other schools besides the participating schools. For instance, the district seeks to build the culture and the capacity of its schools and its personnel to enable purposeful, supportive and meaningful learning experiences for each individual student, focusing on early adolescents. According to the applicant, the center of this culture will begin with the student’s individual interests and needs, and this individualization and personalization will drive the learning and support systems. This culture and capacity will allow the benefits of this project to permeate to other schools within the district.

The applicant also describes a viable theory of change that has the potential for success. This theory is based on five major components that will characterize the project's goals and activities.

- Personalized Learning: Engage students in grades 6-9 learning through an individualized interdisciplinary culture of learning comprised of both technological and educator support systems.
- Engage students, families, educators, administrators, and community partners in understanding student needs, through a multi-dimensional (academic and social-emotional-behavioral), dynamic profile for every child.
- Engage schools in innovating through a cycle of technology-forward innovation, simultaneously building the foundation for all schools to meet students on the digital learning landscape and pushing leading edge educator teams and schools to develop examples of engaged learning using technology.
- Wraparound (Competitive Priority) Engage families, educators, and community partners in supporting students, by building capacity and accountability to embed systematic coordination of wraparound services in every school, drawing on district and community resources to ensure that every early adolescent student is ready to engage in learning, and to ensure that the district provides a backbone to support community-driven support of students.
- Provide professional development to teachers and leaders in support of each of the other initiatives, with the ultimate goal of personalizing and differentiating instruction to engage students in learning, especially learning that cuts across disciplines and focuses on student needs and interests.

The applicant's comprehensive discussion of how it will meet this criterion merits the full value of points available.

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

The applicant's plan identifies goals to reduce the performance gap between applicant students and students statewide on state assessments from 10 to 15 percent in math and reading and to increase high school graduation rates by 10 to 12 percent. Appropriate goals are also provided for college enrollment. Starting with a baseline of approximately 62%, the applicant proposes increasing the percentage of students enrolling in college to 70% within five years. These are ambitious goals given the current baseline levels for these areas. The goals should be achievable, in light of the scope and nature of the resources and services the application proposes to implement through this project.

The applicant has established goals that should result in closing the achievement gaps among students. For instance, the gap between the achievement of the applicant's Black students and the achievement of students statewide will decrease from 31% to 21% in reading, with the same decrease indicated for Hispanic students.

Although the applicant describes achievement gaps among special education and ELL students in the (A)(4)(a) table, it does not address those gaps for those subgroups in the remaining tables. As a result, the applicant does not receive the full value of points available for this criterion.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a strong record of success in advancing students' learning and achievement and in ensuring equity in teaching and learning. For instance it has implemented a rigorous curriculum aligned to the state standards in all subject areas and college readiness benchmarks, and has a quarterly assessment system in place across all schools to measure student

progress toward annual learning goals and to highlight gaps in standards mastery in five academic subjects (mathematics, literacy, science, social studies, and world language). It has adopted the Common Core state standards, and has already begun to transition over to the Common Core through a grade-staggered implementation. The applicant also provides evidence of increasing district wide graduation rates from 58% to 70.9%. The applicant attributes this to the district's focus on cutting the dropout rate in half in which it launched programs such as College Summit, which builds college-ready culture and guides students through postsecondary planning, in three of the nine district high schools; and a renewed focus on personalization with rigorous, engaging ways to earn credit through new career pathways and dual-credit options.

The applicant has also made significant investments in its data infrastructure and has strong data systems in place, including SchoolNet and the eLearning Management System. It has also held an annual district wide adult data fair for each school and department to present and share yearly goals, data on success, and best practices and it has focused on building the capacity of teachers to evaluate interim and formative assessment data and to plan re-teaching strategies to address gaps in understanding. This helps ensure that student performance data are made available to students, educators, and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and services.

The applicant has also implemented a teacher and administrator evaluation system that has professional growth at its core. The system considers multiple measures of student growth in determining the effectiveness of teachers and principals and identifies areas of need and individualized development for educators.

The applicant has engineered a contractual turnaround and rehiring process for low-performing schools in collaboration with the local Federation of Teachers, tailored school improvement plans, and differentiated support for each school that has shown substantial effort and strong outcomes. In the past three years, the district has rehired staff in six schools and transformed others, representing almost 20% of the schools in the system, and many Tier III schools have shown substantial improvement.

The school district has outperformed peer districts on both a relative and an absolute basis, and made significant progress toward reducing the achievement gap between the district and the state in math, reading, writing and science, as measured by proficiency rates on state assessments.

Progress has also been made toward closing the achievement gap between sub-groups of students within the district and the state, with improvements across all three core subjects. In elementary school, over the past four years, Hispanic students began to close the gap in all subjects by an average of 2.5 percentage points; Black students made a gain of 1 percentage point.

However, in regard to schools that it has turned around the applicant does not provide data regarding specific subgroups or grade levels. Also, the applicant does not sufficiently document a clear record of success in turning around underperforming schools due to some subgroups not demonstrating a decline in achievement gaps. As a result, the amount of points awarded are in the mid-range of available points.

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

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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant publishes its annual budget on its official website, with school-by-school budgets and staffing. School budgets show spending breakdowns for instruction, operations, and full-time and part-time personnel, including salaries and qualifications. This website is available to the public and indicates that the applicant has met the requirements of this criterion regarding personnel salaries.

Detailed demographics data and performance results are available for each school, including state assessments, credit accumulation, question-by-question responses from each stakeholder group on the Learning Environment Survey, and district-wide teacher ratings. The district works to train parents on the usage of online tools and aims to increase accessibility by ensuring that individual offices answer direct questions from stakeholders.

The student handbook and the parent handbook, distributed to all families through the school orientation process, include detailed descriptions of relevant policies. The district website includes further details on significant processes, including registration, that have been adjusted and updated with parent input. Public board meetings occur twice a month at a district school, allowing for greater community access, and include policy discussion and public participation in every meeting. A citywide parent leadership team meets once a month, with district participation, to discuss key policy issues of interest to parents.

The above information indicates that there is a great deal of transparency in the applicant's processes, practices, and investments, making these data easily accessible to the parents and the public at large. Therefore, the full value of points is awarded for this criterion.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The state has been aggressively pushing education reform, passing bills aimed at closing the achievement gap and helping students become career- and college-ready, while engaging students, teachers, parents, and the community in advancing student learning. The state is working with districts to determine how best to support the transition to new standards, and has already offered short-term coordination help to prepare for the challenges that arise from changing standards with a lagging change in state assessments.</p> <p>The state also passed a comprehensive education reform bill in 2010. The bill instilled, among other things, important stepping stones required for successful implementation of personalized learning. The State Department of Education grants local control, allowing significant autonomy and promoting innovation at the district and school level to support the applicant's change vision. The applicant is one of a dozen Alliance districts that receive funding to support initiatives around the key pieces of the district's improvement plan.</p> <p>The description provided by the applicant for this section, as well as the detailed reform plan included in the appendix, indicates strong evidence of successful conditions for autonomy for the district in implementing the activities described for this project.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	15
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant demonstrates substantial stakeholder involvement in the development of this project. The Teacher Federation contract established a Reform Committee that includes parents, teachers, and administrators in setting the direction of overall school change; and the committee regularly engages students through the Citywide Student Council for input in the priorities and directions of reform. At the same time, the district has made efforts to strengthen parent voice in overall policy, including through the reinvigoration of a Citywide Parent Leadership team. According to the applicant, all of these groups and forums were deeply involved in developing the project plan from the early proposals to the current application.</p> <p>A cross-functional project management team met regularly to generate and debate ideas, often with direct input from a broad array of teachers and principals. The applicant engaged a wide audience through an "open call" to learn about the grant and its development. This was posted to the district website and input was solicited through a website link and a dedicated email address</p> <p>Ideas, feedback, and support were invited through a variety of in-person outreach strategies – public presentations, focus groups, one-on-one interviews, and discussion forums – designed to engage all stakeholder groups. In addition, a memo was distributed to parent groups that described the goals of the grant and the school district's vision for the application, and solicited feedback on ideas parents felt would be most beneficial for their child.</p> <p>The information provided in this section, in addition to the strong letters of support provided in the appendix, indicates that the applicant has met the requirements of this criterion. Therefore, the full value of available points is awarded.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	19
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant proposes a strong plan for implementing instructional strategies for all participating students that enable participating students to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to college- and career-ready standards and college- and career-ready graduation requirements and accelerate his or her learning through support of his or her needs. To make the connection between the classroom and future success explicit for students, the applicant has built the idea of competency or performance based learning into its instructional approach, and linked it tightly to Common Core standards and curriculum.</p> <p>The applicant describes a plan for implementing a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable each student to achieve his or her individual learning goals and ensure he or she can graduate on time and college- and career-ready. For example, the newly created 21st Century Competencies rubric outlines six competencies to guide instructional activities for students: Problem Solving and Critical Thinking; Accessing and Analyzing Information; Collaboration and Communication; Creativity and Innovation; Initiative, Self-Direction and Accountability; and Citizenship and Responsibility. Five high schools are also working closely with the Nellie Mae Educational Foundation and League of</p>		

Innovative Schools to pilot components of personalized learning in order to identify best practices and to deepen educators' understanding of the power of personalized learning.

The applicant has created a program to encourage students to pursue college enrollment. The program, in partnership with Yale, The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, Yale-New Haven Hospital and Wells Fargo Bank is a scholarship and college-support program created to promote college education as an aspiration for all the applicant's students, parents and the community; and to assist graduating students in pursuing education after high school.

The applicant also describes a plan for providing students with access to actionable information to set and pursue goals linked to rigorous standards. An important component of this is student-led goal-setting. Throughout the district, K-8 students regularly meet one-on-one with their teachers and/or reading coaches to address their individual strengths and challenges. Students then set goals linked to the standards with support from their teachers and revisit the goals at each conference. Students are able to link their experiences to a college- and career-ready pathway is through the use of Student Success Plans (SSPs). Launching this year across all of the applicant's schools in grades 6-12, SSPs, by design, are individualized, student-driven plans that capture the interests, aspirations, and aptitude of students and enable them to identify, track, and pursue self-identified goals. With the support of online survey technology and resources such as Naviance, students work with a counselor to identify the steps necessary to take to prepare for their college and career pathways based on career clusters tied to their interests and personality.

The applicant describes how it will develop and implement high-quality strategies for high-need students to help ensure that they are on track toward meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements. This includes the use of mobile devices to individualize learning for special populations. Also proposed by the applicant is the creation of different education technology "funds" that will support innovation to facilitate and complement effective teaching. The intent of this activity is to provide all grade 6-9 students and educators with access to technology (and technology training) as a precursor to innovation and to enable personalization through targeted investments in interactive, adaptive resources.

Through its Portfolio of Schools model the applicant proposes to promote student choice in the areas of academic interest and provide students access and exposure to a variety of pathways that personalize student learning. Currently, over half of the applicant's schools, spanning elementary, middle, and high schools, operate as magnets, offering students non-traditional learning environments to deepen their interest and focus on school. Students and parents can rank order up to three different schools that align with their interests and get placed by lottery. Each school has a range of programs, bridging diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that span from environmental, science, and technology studies to performing arts, multiculturalism, and citizenship.

However, the applicant's plan to support students in the use of technology is not sufficiently proactive, depending more on the student being willing and able to locate and access resources, rather than the applicant identifying and providing needed support.

The activities and resources proposed for this project indicate a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. A number of activities, as summarized above, should result in the implementation of instructional strategies for all participating students that enable those students to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to college- and career-ready standards and college- and career-ready graduation requirements and accelerate their learning through appropriate supports. Based on the information provided in the proposal the applicant is awarded points in the high-range of available points for this criterion.

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

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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a comprehensive plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. It has established a Talent Council to provide oversight and direction to the Professional Educator Program. External funding through a Teacher Incentive Fund grant and a Gates Foundation Innovative Professional Development grant is assisting the applicant in making major changes in its professional development system.

The applicant has established an innovative personalized learning environment across the district, empowering educators with the structures, tools, and resources to adapt instruction for each student and to become facilitators of learning. This will provide a blended learning program that includes in-person workshops, model demonstration sessions, and one-on-one coaching that empower educators to make the shift to create immersive, personalized learning experiences that engage students in ways that ensure their career and life success.

The applicant also describes a plan to equip teachers and administrators to frequently measure student progress toward

meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements and to use data to inform both the acceleration of student progress and the improvement of the individual and collective practice of educators. Summative and formative assessments will be restructured to allow for flexibility in scope, format, and delivery and, therefore, be more responsive to the actual learning experiences of students and teachers, rather than the pre-programmed progress of a district-wide assessment schedule. The applicant proposes to build capacity to manage and deliver multiple assessment formats through ongoing benchmarking. This will require an understanding of how to assess learning on a real-time or daily basis, in addition to an interim basis, to benchmark district-wide progress, how to use technology to facilitate the assessment process, and how to act on sampled data. Rather than measuring where each student is on a particular day, teachers will track when students pass important learning targets.

The applicant will also implement an on-demand, online portal for educators, replete with rich technology-forward tools and learning content. The Professional Educators Program and the Gates Innovative Professional Development Grant will support this work to a large extent. This resource library will have examples of questions, scoring rubrics, and delivery options to enable district-wide norming and best practice sharing, giving teachers a variety of instructional resources to pull into their individual classrooms.

The applicant will also contract with an education technology provider(s) to support a wide range of interactive technology-based tools. This wide range of tools will vary from an e-portfolio accountability mechanism, through which teachers track individual student learning targets against district learning goals to the development and management of video-based examples of effective instructional practices that directly link to the new assessments.

To increase the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals the applicant will implement new improvements to systems that prepare, select, hire, place, retain and compensate effective educators. These improvements will continue to roll out in the 2013-14 school year, through additional federal endorsement from the Teachers Incentive Fund (TIF). Top teaching talent, particularly along the separate dimensions of purposeful, supportive, and meaningful instruction, will be identified and encouraged to participate as expert teachers through the Professional Educator Program.

The elements of the applicant's plan such as its on demand professional development portal and its connections with other ongoing projects from the Teachers Incentive Fund and the Gates Foundation describe an effective plan for meeting the requirements of this criterion. In addition, the process described for using teacher evaluation data to improve educator effectiveness and to increase student access to highly effective educators through its teacher recruitment and mentoring process are elements of a high-quality plan to address the requirements of this section of the application. Therefore, the total amount of points available are awarded.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has adopted a Portfolio of Schools approach to school and district management. Through this Portfolio model, schools are the focal point for learning in the district. Under this model, each school is assigned one of three central office directors who are responsible for a specific set of schools. These directors provide tailored instructional guidance, coaching, and data management support, and adjust their support based on school performance and leadership needs. To rate the effectiveness of central office services such as these, the district conducts an in-house survey of principals and assistant principals, and those ratings are a component of the evaluation for central office staff. The survey provides input on the quality of the management, support, and tools that school-based administrators receive from the central office and supports continuous improvement efforts. This structure and these activities provide strong evidence of the applicant's ability to organize the central office to provide support and services to all participating schools, as well as provide school leadership teams with sufficient flexibility and autonomy over a variety of factors important to the success of this project.

As part of this proposal, through the proposed expansion of wraparound services, the central office will provide an additional layer of support through the establishment of a district-level Student and Staff Support/ Boost! Team, or an equivalent, to coordinate on issues pertaining to students' physical health and wellness, social-emotional-behavioral health, and student and family engagement. This team will support school-level leadership teams and guide implementation of expanded wraparound services. An important component of the applicant's approach to providing district-wide and school-based services is its use of a School Tiering process, which provides guidelines for the levels of support and autonomy granted to each school. School Tiering is intended to mobilize district resources and talent in a way that encourages innovation and experimentation with new high-impact practices at the higher-performing schools, while enabling accelerated progress at the lower-performing schools.

The applicant reports that it gives students the opportunity to progress based on mastery. Given that schools identify the pedagogy, one school is currently pioneering a mastery-based learning approach. At the end of each mastery “stage” students are expected to compile portfolios of their work, and move on only when their comprehensive body of work has indicated mastery. Students are able to demonstrate mastery of standards in multiple ways at multiple times throughout the year, through quarterly interim assessments and end-of-course formative assessments. Each of the district’s curricula includes quarterly significant tasks as well as more standard test-based assessments, which allows for both deeper assessment of student learning and different demonstrations of mastery by students.

To provide learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners, the applicant is currently developing a three-year technology plan to expand the use of communications devices such as iTouches, Kindles, and iPads across the district. This plan will integrate technology in ways that directly engage students with learning deficits and communication challenges, but can apply to all students, since the core of the program involves using technology for personalization.

Base on the information provided by the applicant and summarized above, a high-quality plan is provided to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator, and level of the education system with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed. As a result, the full value of points is awarded for this criterion.

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

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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a strong plan to ensure that all participating students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders, regardless of income, have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of its proposal. Parents and students also have access to the District's Student Information System, PowerSchools, through the Parent Portal web-based interface. It allows families to monitor real-time student information, including student attendance, assessment scores, disciplinary activity, and weekly homework assignments. Additionally, the Naviance Family Connection Portal grants students and families access to Student Success Plans and other tools, including personalized learning plans, career and course planning, and college search and admission information.

Teachers and administrators have on-demand access to learning content and student information through PowerSchools’ PowerTeacher, a web-based classroom management system that tracks classes, rosters, student demographic information, grading periods, standards, rubrics, and grade scales. Educators can collect student-level and aggregated performance data, as well as other cultural and social-emotional indicators, and then either use preset reporting functionality or custom data pulls to manipulate student information. This is then used to discuss individual and class-level instructional strategy during dedicated data days throughout the school year. The applicant plans to further support educators in the collection and interpretation of data through an investment in data warehousing and integration to enable full system interoperability; creation of a single-sign-on, web-based end-user platform to enhance the user experience and increase efficiency with a “one stop shop” environment; and access to reporting tools through data visualization software.

The applicant provides technical support on technology tools that is tailored and differentiated for each stakeholder group. For parents and families, through its partnership with the Public Library, the district offers a number of hands-on technical training sessions to facilitate access to and understanding of the district’s student information systems. In 2013-2014, additional trainings are being rolled out for the new PowerSchools Parent Portal. In addition, the Parent University and other parent initiatives are working with schools on school-based computer training and access. However, a deficiency in this plan is that parents must ask for help and be proactive in accessing support and some parents may not be able or willing to do that.

Based on the evidence provided by the applicant, as illustrated by the examples above, the applicant is awarded points in the high-range of available points.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a detailed plan for continuous project improvement that will provide feedback and guide improvement efforts. A project manager will complement the project management team and oversight committee and be charged with

supporting and conducting a review of the overall program three times a year.

Quantitative and qualitative data will be collected on a regular basis to help determine the effectiveness of reform initiatives, by looking at the impact of each activity, practice, and program on student outcomes and other measures of success such as teacher effectiveness and parent satisfaction. A survey aligned to the core assurances and grant initiatives will be developed and distributed to solicit honest and critical feedback on the change initiatives from students, educators, and families.

The applicant describes a process for bringing together stakeholders at each level of the district, explicitly including both parents and students at the school level and district conversations. These cross-functional teams will review all available inputs to identify programmatic strengths and assets, gaps, and challenges to success. Based on progress inputs and identified strengths and opportunity areas, stakeholders will evaluate program activities and initiatives against original goals and milestones and made revisions and adjustments, as necessary. Individual activity “owners” will track progress against results indicators on an ongoing basis, with the intent of course correcting based on impact, progress/growth, and operational outcomes.

Real-time feedback through student assessments and student-led goal setting will enable each teacher to understand where instruction is effective for the class as a whole and for individual students. Based on this feedback, teachers will be able to define the academic priorities for each classroom and student, accessing resources on a daily basis to improve or modify their practices as needed. Building Leadership Data Teams will leverage data days to review the collective impact of the project on student outcomes, as reflected in their School Improvement Plans. Teacher teams will have time to analyze student-level data and to identify the standards and learning objectives that need instructional focus. This process is an excellent mechanism for funneling real-time student data back into instructional activities to strengthen and expand student learning.

The District Data Team (DDT) will monitor outcomes across all schools and ensure there are focused strategies to support schools in delivering deep, meaningful student learning. The Reform Committee composed of three teachers, three administrators, and two parents, will monitor progress toward the grant goals on a monthly basis during standing meetings, and will recommend practices that should be changed, expanded, or replicated based on student outcomes. The procedures described to monitor and use feedback allows for parents and other stakeholders to have access to information regarding the progress toward project goals and should ensure that the applicant meets and exceeds the requirements of this criterion.

These activities should allow the applicant to effectively monitor progress toward the project goals in manner that will facilitate any needed changes and modification in goals and activities. Based on the quality of the plan described and the evidence presented by the applicant, this criterion is awarded the full value of points available.

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

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4

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a plan for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. A variety of stakeholders contributed input during the proposal development process, and the applicant plans for them to continue to be active participants as implementation begins. Teacher unions will be engaged through their project management team representatives, who will act as conduits for idea generation and feedback. The Reform Committee will be involved in measuring progress toward the grant goals and making recommendations to the Project Team for practices that should be changed, expanded, or replicated.

The applicant will actively solicit teacher input on which pilot programs to fund, and then assist with the design and implementation of those programs. Students and families will be asked to provide input through various formats, including in-person conferences, Learning Environment Surveys, and forums such as the Citywide Parent Leadership Team and Citywide Student Council. Students are expected to also have input in the school-based teams that will be designing the personalized learning environment implementation. The applicant also describes a plan for engaging a select group of community organizations such as the Board of Aldermen’s Education Committee by providing regular status updates and soliciting feedback on progress. Community groups such as United Way that are involved in the wraparound services coordination initiative will be engaged on a regular basis.

A particularly strong component of the applicant's plan is the mechanisms described for engaging a wide variety of stakeholders within the district as well as within the community to assist in the project's implementation. A missing component in the plan presented by the applicant is the lack of details regarding the details of engagement with external stakeholders including when it will take place, what will be shared and how information will be shared and input obtained and used. Due to the applicant's information regarding the various elements of its plan for this criterion, points are awarded in the high-range of possible points.

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

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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant identifies and describes performance measures that provide both a long-term and short-term view of student outcomes as students progress through the schools. The measures are structured to provide information about student performance at key gateways in their academic progression, including 2nd grade strength in reading, 5th grade strength in reading and writing, 8th grade strength in STEM skills, and 10th grade preparation for independent learning and STEM skills. In addition, the applicant has selected indicators that measure culture and behavioral changes as well as academic measures.

Academic measures focus on end-of-year assessments and the social emotional well-being indicator is an anonymous self-report survey completed by each students. Most of the performance measures are appropriately ambitious, but should be achievable, given the level and quality of resources, services, and activities described by the applicant in the proposal. For instance, college enrollment is projected to increase from 67.3% to 84% by the end of this project. This is an ambitious goal, but the applicant has described activities that will align the curriculum to college-ready standards and provide robust program for helping students to achieve those standards. However, some of the measures described do not appear to be realistic. For instance, the percentage of students having access to highly effective teachers is projected to increase from 6% to over 50% for some students. In addition, the applicant does not describe how it will assess all grade levels on all measures provided.

The applicant provides a thorough explanation of the rationale for selecting each measure as well as a description regarding how each measure will provide rigorous and timely information on successful progress toward project goals. It also describes how it will review and improve each specific measures over time. However, the weaknesses in performance measures as described above prevent this criterion from receiving the full amount of points available.

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

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2

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes an effective plan to monitor the effectiveness of project activities, such as professional development and technology. A portal of online professional development resources will allow educators to access tailored professional development content at any time. This will leverage each teacher leader’s time; allowing for the distribution of best practice materials broadly through this tool and for time to be spent on productive, personalized coaching during in-person sessions. Eventually, as this portal and its contents become more comprehensive, every teacher will have a systematized flexible plan to supplement existing training. Since the portal contains a component to collect data to monitor the effectiveness of professional development activities it will provide a mechanism for the applicant to evaluate the effectiveness of professional development activities.

The applicant will attempt to ensure staff time is being utilized productively through teacher responses on the Learning Environment Survey. Survey questions will help project staff understand whether students are satisfied with the new professional development trainings, learning goals, and assessments, and whether they feel the initiatives are improving student academic outcomes. School level and district staff will use Data Days to monitor indicators that correlate the impact to financial investments. Using procedures developed by an outside consultant funded from the TIF grant, current expenditures will be analyzed to identify resources that can be reallocated in order to sustain reform initiatives and ensure the greatest impact of investment. In addition, the project will already be reviewed by a team of outside evaluators, through an evaluation protocol designed by the Rand Corporation for the Promise program. The Rand-designed evaluation will help gauge how well the reform effort is meeting its goals, and that scope will clearly include the impact of the initiatives that are part of this proposed project.

The plan described by the applicant has many strong and effective features. However, it falls short of a high-quality plan by not providing sufficient details regarding the timelines and products that will be addressed by its evaluation plan. Therefore, this criterion is not awarded the full amount of available points.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's budget proposal identifies a range of additional funding sources to support and enhance project activities. These include district funds (\$2.6M), United Way of Greater Funds (\$2.3M), federal Teacher Incentive Fund (\$0.7M). Project expenditures are clearly explained and appear to be reasonable and necessary to implement project activities and achieve proposed objectives. Funds that are to be used primarily as one-time investments are identified and explained. For instance, one-time expenditures will be invested in sustainable professional development and in technology enhancements.

The applicant provides a thoughtful rationale of the budget's investments and priorities, particularly in regard to identification of the funds that will be used for one-time investments versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs incurred during and after the grant period. The applicant's budget demonstrates a focus on strategies that will ensure the long-term sustainability of personalized learning environments. For example, all educators will be supported through intensive training sessions as well as by on-site school-level instructional resources (Teacher Leaders) and technical resources (Education Technology Experts). Foundational and interim trainings will take place over one incremental professional development day during each of the first two years – both before the start of school and at incremental hours throughout the year – and similarly over two incremental days during each of the last two years to coincide with the full roll-out of multi-dimensional student profiles. Professional development is included in the budget for additional teacher stipends, but, according to the applicant, much professional development will take place during the day, and in the collaboration time built into the grant plan.

Based on the information provided in this proposal, as evidenced by the examples above, the applicant is awarded the full number of points available for this criterion.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	8
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a viable plan for sustainability of project activities and objectives after the end of project funding. The district has secured philanthropic and government resources to support specific reform activities from sources such as the Nellie Mae Foundation, Gates Foundation (Innovative Professional Development Fund), United Way of Greater New Haven, the U.S. Department of Education (School Improvement Grants), and the state and local government, and expects that external funding will continue to support long-term reform efforts. For example, the applicant's Professional Educator Program includes a substantial investment in strategic budgeting support to enable the analysis and reprioritization of the district budget to support both career development and professional learning that is important to this project's goals and objectives. The applicant provides documentation of these commitments for ongoing funding. However, the applicant does not adequately address the section of this criterion regarding how it plans to assess the value of past investments and use that data to inform future investments. As a result, the full value of points is not awarded for this criterion.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	8

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a description of a coherent and sustainable partnership with public or private organizations to support the plan described in this application. The Boost! Initiative is a three-way partnership among New Haven Public Schools, United Way of Greater New Haven (UWGNH) and the City of New Haven. This partnership helps broker, monitor, and enhance a wide variety of school-level partnerships, ranging from local arts organizations providing after-school enrichment opportunities to local mental health clinics providing critical social, emotional and behavioral supports to students during the school day. The combination of services varies from school to school and is tailored to respond to the unique needs identified by parents, educators, and community stakeholders. The United Way also connects schools with community partners, and is developing capacity along with the School District and the City to refer community partners to non-Boost! schools. The data warehouse system (nFocus) in development with the school district, the City of New Haven, UWGNH and various community providers will allow for the collection and reporting on data from schools and community organizations using various data sources, employing appropriate confidentiality and privacy measures, as well as the creation of dashboards and reports from community data, the demonstration of progress toward community outcomes, indicators and measures and matching participant achievement to programs that demonstrate academic, social and behavioral growth longitudinally.

The applicant identifies 10 population-level anticipated results for students that align with and support the applicant's broader proposal. These results include both educational results, as well as family and community supports. Results such as, 95% of students will have 95% attendance or better and 95% of students will have post-secondary plans for college or career, are appropriately connected with the activities and objectives described elsewhere in the applicant's proposal.

The applicant effectively describes how it will track the selected indicators that measure each result at the aggregate level for all children within the school district as a whole and at the student level for the participating students. The local United Way and the district compile student-level metrics based on available data from a variety of internal and external reports and survey results. Additionally, Boost! Service Corps members track attendance and progress of students participating in

community partnership programs. Currently, the United Way plays a critical role in this tracking process, with the aim to gradually transfer these capabilities to central Boost! wraparound resources within the school district.

The applicant uses the data to target its resources in order to improve results for participating students with special emphasis on students facing significant challenges, such as students with disabilities, English learners, and students affected by poverty, family instability, or other child welfare issues. The Boost! toolkit includes data on student needs across the partnership's four target domains. Information is taken from the annual School Learning Environment Surveys and other sources and complemented with district data related to health, social-emotional-behavioral wellness, attendance, and parent engagement. The data also links with ongoing physical health and wellness efforts, including the District Wellness Committee, the Yale Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity, the CARE Collaboration with the Yale School of Public Health, the Physical Activity and Wellness (PAW) program (in 18 schools), and school-level Wellness Committees.

The applicant has also developed a strategy to scale the partnership model beyond the participating students to other high-need students and communities in the district over time. The applicant provides a strong plan for how the partnership would, within participating schools, integrate education and other services for participating students. The on-site Boost! coordinator is involved with both the School Planning and Management Team (SPMT) - a decision-making school team with parents, staff and other interest groups represented and based upon the Comer School Development Program and the School Staff Support Team (SSST), a school team dedicated to non-academic student needs. This enables the Boost! coordinator and the school to undertake a full examination of program and individual student needs. The teams each review data and discuss ways to better personalize support for students, educators, and families through classroom interventions, professional development and family outreach; each team has a role and the Boost! aspect is intertwined with the teams.

The applicant effectively describes how the partnership and LEA or consortium would build the capacity of staff in participating schools by providing them with tools and supports to assess the needs and assets of participating students; identify and inventory the needs and assets of the school and community; create a decision-making process and infrastructure to select, implement, and evaluate supports that address the individual needs of participating students; engage parents and families of participating students in both decision-making about solutions to improve results over time and in addressing student, family, and school needs; and routinely assess progress in implementing its plan to maximize its impact and resolve challenges and problems.

The district will add staff to the existing Boost! infrastructure and will expand its training of teachers and administrators on student wraparound needs, aligned with the district's Professional Development and consistent with the "supportive" plank of the district's instructional rubric. The district will also expand training on school-level SSST/ Boost! teams and will add two district-level Boost! coaches, one aligned to K-8 schools and one to high schools; both will report to the Boost! director and they will support each other as necessary. The coaches will be responsible for supporting Boost! coordinators in establishing a clear coordination infrastructure of in every school, including a comprehensive, multi-faceted, and cohesive intervention framework, and defining roles and responsibilities for in-school support staff including counselors and social workers. Boost! Coaches, the Boost! Coordinator of community partnerships and Boost! School coordinators will work closely with school-level SPMTs and SSSTs to conduct needs assessments, identify community partners, broker partnerships, design formative and summative evaluations and accountabilities, and identify areas for improvement.

The applicant describes an effective process to assess and inventory of the needs and assets of students, schools, and the community. The Boost! Model for Resource Coordination sets a systematic approach for school-level Boost! staff to holistically assess service needs and gaps, examine and share relevant research, set goals, and develop action plans. School plans are synthesized into a Resource Guide available on the Boost! website and through hard copy distribution to district schools, meant to inform parents, students, schools, and the community about the breadth of programs and services. At present, a Comprehensive Youth Map is in development with nFocus and the Boost! project management team, to be available by early 2014. It will use a web portal to display and map available programs and services in the community, utilizing inventories and new information from community providers.

The applicant describes a long history of engagement and support from community leaders and stakeholders. A number of collaborative initiatives are identified that indicate that this is a very strong and productive partnership that has significantly improved instructional achievement and educational options for students. However, although the applicant describes many features of an effective program of wrap around services, it does not sufficiently describe the organization and infrastructure of Boost!, a key partner in the project. Nor does it sufficiently describe how the students and parents can independently identify and access programs and services. As described by the applicant, schools will match students with schools and no mechanism is described for parent input into that process. For that reason, the full value of points is not awarded for this Competitive Priority.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant describes a strong plan that address all aspects of this priority. Activities, objectives and processes to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, supports and tools for students and educators are clearly and thoroughly explained.</p> <p>This begins with the overall vision proposed by the applicant which incorporates five major components that will characterize the project's goals and activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalized Learning: Engage students in grades 6-9 learning through an individualized interdisciplinary culture of learning comprised of both technological and educator support systems. • Engage students, families, educators, administrators, and community partners in understanding student needs, through a multi-dimensional (academic and social-emotional-behavioral), dynamic profile for every child. • Engage schools in innovating through a cycle of technology-forward innovation, simultaneously building the foundation for all schools to meet students on the digital learning landscape and pushing leading edge educator teams and schools to develop examples of engaged learning using technology. <p>The applicant has already made significant investments in its data infrastructure and has strong data systems in place, including SchoolNet, eLearning Management System. It has also held an annual district wide adult data fair for each school and department to present and share yearly goals, data on success, and best practices and focused on building the capacity of teachers to evaluate interim and formative assessment data and to plan re-teaching strategies to address gaps in understanding.</p> <p>The applicant has also implemented a teacher and administrator evaluation system that has a strong focus on professional growth. The system considers multiple measures of student growth in determining the effectiveness of teachers and principals and identifies areas of need and individualized development for our educators. The applicant has engineered a contractual turnaround and rehiring process for low-performing schools in collaboration with the local Federation of Teachers, tailored school improvement plans, and differentiated support for each school that has shown substantial effort and strong outcomes. In the past three years, the district has rehired staff in six schools and transformed others, representing almost 20% of the schools in the system, and many Tier III schools have shown substantial improvement.</p> <p>The applicant proposes a strong plan for implementing instructional strategies for all participating students that enable participating students to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to college- and career-ready standards and college- and career-ready graduation requirements and accelerate his or her learning through support of his or her needs. To make the connection between classroom and future success explicit for students, the applicant has built the idea of competency or performance based learning into its instructional approach, and linked it tightly to Common Core standards and curriculum.</p> <p>The applicant's newly created 21st Century Competencies rubric outlines six competencies for students: Problem Solving and Critical Thinking; Accessing and Analyzing Information; Collaboration and Communication; Creativity and Innovation; Initiative, Self-Direction and Accountability; and Citizenship and Responsibility. Five high schools are also working closely with the Nellie Mae Educational Foundation and League of Innovative Schools to pilot components of personalized learning in order to identify best practices and to deepen educators' understanding of the power of personalized learning.</p> <p>Proposed activities have the strong potential to accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning, increase the effectiveness of educators, expand access to the most effective educators and decrease achievement gaps across student groups. Based on the descriptions, explanations and documentation provided in its proposal the applicant has met the requirements of the Absolute Priority.</p>		
Total	210	184

Race to the Top - District Technical Review Form



Application #0074CT-2 for New Haven, City of

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

In it's application, the district presents a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that:

a. Builds on the 4 core assurance areas:

- Adopted Common Core State Standards and participates with Smarter Balance, created partnerships that span P-20 to develop school to post-secondary pipelines and implemented Student Success Plans to monitor on track indicators for college and career ready graduation
- Data warehouse with interfacing and data mining, trains educators in the use of this data through regular 'data days'
- Develops teachers and leaders through comprehensive evaluation system and is implementing a new Teacher Incentive fund to address rewarding and retaining high quality educators
- Implemented School Change Initiative to turn around lowest performing schools by rebuilding school -level collaboration with instruction focus, rehired teachers and utilizes work rule flexibility and extra compensation. Earliest turn around school showed double digit gains. Partnerships in the community provide wrap around services to the neighborhoods in low performing schools.

b. Clear and credible approach to accelerating student achievement, deepening learning and increasing equity through personalized learning based on interest and needs: the district outlines 5 initiatives aimed at achieving these goals-

- Personalization through blended learning
- Engage students, family, educators and community partners in understanding and supporting student needs
- Technology forward innovations with specific programs to support the plan
- Wrap around services with families, educators and the community
- Professional development embedded throughout the other initiatives and as a part of building the capacity of educators

c. The district tells the story of Juan, who is a typical student in the district. Juan's progression from 5th grade through 9th grade is detailed to show how the goals of the grant will be implemented and provide him with engaging experiences both in and out of school to prepare him for his future. Along the way, the partners in his learning are able to help him identify areas of need and provide additional supports to close his achievement gaps.

Overall, the district sets forth a comprehensive and coherent reform for vision for the grant funds that builds on the 4 core assurance areas, will accelerate student achievement, deepen student learning, and increase equity. The district illustrates a clear picture of what the personalized learning environment will look like for a student. The various activities and supports are well integrated and it is reasonable to believe that implementation of this vision will result in personalization of the learning environment with student supports grounded in common and individual tasks based on student interests. The district thus receives full points on indicator A(1).

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9
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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The district outlines it's approach to implementing the proposal for grades 6-9. It plans to do so through a phasing in. In the narrative under indicator A(2), the district explains that the reform will start with 1,460 sixth graders and approximately 1,000 students in program pilots in the first year until eventually approximately 6,308 students will be impacted through grant activities.

a. The district believes that all district schools with students in grades 6-9 will benefit from the reform. Thus all will eventually participate. To determine which schools and students participate in the initial pilot phases, the district

distinguishes the various initiatives and provides a rationale for each. In the initiative surrounding personalization, the district states that 10 schools will participate initially but not how those schools will be chosen. In the data initiative, the district will conduct beta testing in schools based on expressed interest. In the technology indicator, the district plans to first invest in schools with the highest identified need. With wrap around services, the district is already implementing in 16 schools and, with grant funding, could add 10 schools per year until all were served in the final year of the grant.

However, the district does not discuss how it determines which schools are served first. Finally, the professional development initiative will begin with high performing teachers and then they will help train the remainder of the staff in year 2.

b. A list of schools that will participate is provided.

c. Total number of participating students, those from low income and are high need and participating educators are provided. The district states that of all their students, 79% are low income and that updated data can be provided if they are awarded a grant.

The district outlines a rationale to detail why it is important that all students in grades 6-9 participate in the reform measure. The participating schools and student demographics are provided and these demographics are in line with the eligibility requirements for the grant. While the district provides the required data as stated in indicator A(2)(b) and (c), the district fails to provide a thoughtful rationale for how pilot schools will be selected in order to support high-quality implementation of their proposal. Although it did not impact the score it is important to note that in the first year of the grant the district will serve 1,460 sixth graders and approximately 1,000 students for a total of 2,460 students. This only qualifies them for a maximum grant award of \$10 million. In their application, they state they will serve a total of 6,144 students and are requesting \$16.9 million. While the district does plan on serving 6,144 by the end of the grant, they will only be serving 2,460 in the initial year. Thus their budget and plan will need to be adjusted. Therefore, the district earns a score in the high range on indicator A(2).

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

10

9

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

In the appendices, the district provides a detailed chart as evidence of its high quality plan for reform implementation. For each activity within the proposal, the district outlines the year the activity will occur, which objective and goal the activity relates to, the person(s) responsible and the corresponding deliverable for the activity. The plan is comprehensive and describes how the district will move through the planning phase, into the piloting phase and then into full implementation in all schools with grades 6-9. In the narrative for indicator A(1), the district explains how the high schools (grades 9-12) are currently implementing reforms funded by 2 other grants to personalize the learning environment. At the conclusion of both grants, the proposed personalized learning environment will be implemented district wide for grades 6-12. There is no discussion included, however, to detail if there are plans to eventually include the elementary grades and thus extend the reform district wide.

Also in the appendices, the district presents documents that describe their school change process which details their vision, goals and strategies that govern the grant proposal. Overall, these documents demonstrate a comprehensive and reasonable high quality plan describing how the reform proposal will be implemented and scaled up to reach all students in grades 6-12 in the district although grades K-5 are omitted. The district's theory of change is justified and correlates to the proposal in this application. The activities contained in the proposal are comprehensive and are likely to result in the goals set forth by the district. Therefore, the district scores in the high range on indicator A(3).

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

10

6

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The district provides a narrative outlining the initiatives as originally presented in the vision A(1) section of this application, the corresponding goals for each initiative, and charts which detail the baseline and goals for the measures listed above.

a. The district provides baseline data as well as annual targets for students in grades 3-8 and grade 10. No measure is provided for grade 9, which is a grade covered in this reform proposal. In the summative assessments measuring proficiency status and growth, the district does present ambitious yet achievable goals. However, the targets set do not aim to close the achievement gaps among subgroups. For example, in the baseline year in 3rd-8th grade math, the overall % proficient is 43% with Special Ed students proficient at 21% and ELL students proficient at 17%. This indicates a gap of 22% and 26% respectively. In the post grant year, the target is 58% overall, with special ed set at 36% and ELL at 32%. This maintains the gap of 22% and 26% respectfully.

b. The district provides baseline data and annual targets to compare subgroups to the state average. The targets set do aim to decrease the achievement gaps in two subgroups, Black and Hispanic. No other subgroups are provided. In the

subgroups given, the district targets aim to decrease the achievement gap at different rates for different subjects and subgroups. For example, in 3rd-8th grade math, the baseline gap % is 36% and the post grant goal is 26%- a difference of 10%. However, the Hispanic baseline is 31% with a post grant target of 19%- a difference of 12%. However, in 3rd-8th grade reading, the Black baseline is 33% with a target of 21%- a 12% difference but the Hispanic subgroup baseline is 30% with a target of 21%- a 9% difference. No narrative is provided to explain the rationale in setting these annual goals.

c. In setting targets for graduation rates, the district aims to increase the graduation rate in each subgroup and overall by 10% over the 4 year reform period. However, in the data provided for the baseline years, the district increased it's overall graduation rate from 63.9% in 10-11 to 70.9% in 11-12- a growth of 7% in just one year. In one subgroup, ELL students, there was a growth of 20% over just the one year. Therefore, it is not ambitious to target a 10% growth over a 4 year period.

d. College enrollment baseline rates and targets are provided although these are not disaggregated by subgroup. The district aims to increase enrollment by 6% over the 4 year period. As the rate over the 2 baseline years has only increased by 1.5%, this target is ambitious.

Overall, the district provides baseline and target data for the areas required which project overall increases in student achievement. The district does not provide evidence that they expect to internally close the achievement gap in proficiency and growth for summative assessments. No rationale is provided to explain how the district determined the targets and, particularly in the areas of decreasing achievement gaps and graduation rates, the targets set are inconsistent and unjustified. College enrollment targets are provided and are ambitious based on the data provided over the 2 years of baseline data. College enrollment rates are not disaggregated by subgroup. Therefore, some annual goals are ambitious and achievable while others are not. The district scores in the medium range on indicator A(4).

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

a. In demonstrating improved student learning outcomes, the district provides data to show that in all grades and all subjects in aggregate, the average number of students reaching goal or above in the past 4 years has improved in each area from a low of a 2% gain in Math to a high of a 7.7% gain in reading on one measure and a low of 2.8% to a high of 10.8% on another measure. Data is also presented to compare those gains against the state average and 2 other comparison districts. This evidence does demonstrate that the district is improving on average at a greater rate than the 2 comparison districts and the state average. In addressing the achievement gap, the district provides aggregated data to show how Black and Hispanic students in district have performed over the past 4 years in comparison to the state average of Black and Hispanic students. This data shows that these two subgroups are improving at rates greater than the state average in 3rd-8th Math and 10th Reading, but less than the state average in 3rd-8th Reading and 10th Math. Data provided detailing high school graduation rates over the past 3 years (last year's numbers are not yet final) show that all subgroups (overall, Black, Hispanic, Special Ed, ELL and F/R Meals) increased their rates of on time graduation. Finally, aggregated data is again provided to show an overall increase in college enrollment rates over the 4 year period.

However, enrollment rates spiked in year 2 with 1,004 enrolling then dipped to 987. The most recent year provided (2012) shows an increase to 999.

b. Over the past 3 years the district has been working with 9 schools in the turnaround process. The district works closely with the union to complete these transitions. In these schools, the district implemented a rehiring process to rebuild school collaboration and instructional focus and allowed flexibility of certain variables to allow for extended school day/year. This resulted in a rapid shift in culture to one of high expectations and mutual accountability with an emphasis on data-driven strategies, monitoring and evaluating student performance. The district provided 4 years worth of data of Reading and Math scores for 7 of the 9 turn around schools. Of those, 4 schools showed improvements in both subjects, 1 showed improvement in one subject, and 2 decreased in both areas.

c. The district plans to make data available to stakeholders in a more user friendly manner through this grant. In the meantime, they have implemented new software programs to provide parents and students with information on student progress and performance on assessments and to give teachers access to data that can inform instruction on a class wide basis or at the individual student level. The district also engages parents in their student's education through district wide workshops, student lead conferences and on demand data systems. Students are engaged by their teachers in reflection and goal setting based on their individual progress.

Overall, the district provides evidence of increasing student performance over the past 4 years on average. However, evidence that the district is closing the achievement gap is inconclusive. Evidence is presented to demonstrate improved graduation rates both on average and within each subgroup. College enrollment data is provided that shows increasing enrollment on average. Evidence of reforms implemented in the past 4 years in it's lowest performing schools is provided. The reforms listed are ambitious and significant and it is reasonable to assume that these reforms will result in increased student achievement. However, at this time, of the 9 turnaround schools, 4 are demonstrating evidence of positively impacting student achievement on average although no subgroup or grade level data is provided. Details are presented to describe ways in which the district makes performance data available to students, educators and parents in ways that inform participation, instruction and services and the district demonstrates plans to further improve in this area with new software implementation. Because pieces of evidence are inconclusive, including data regarding the turn around of 5 of the 9 schools targeted, the district has shown growth in the past several years but does not demonstrated a clear record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching, the district earns a score in the middle range on indicator B(1).

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

5

5

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The district maintains transparency data on their website to provide the breakdown of salaries and expenditures in all areas at the district levels and each individual school level. Individual teacher salaries, along with their qualifications are also published on the website. Print outs of these webpages are provided in the appendix. Evidence is also provided to demonstrate how the district makes it's policies and practices transparent through the use of parent handbooks, a parent leadership team and a visitor welcome center. As the district maintains a website which lists actual personnel salaries at the school level for school-level instructional and support staff, instructional staff only, teachers only and non-personnel expenditures, the district receives full points on indicator B(2) indicating a high level of transparency in processes, practices and investments.

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

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The district provides evidence of legislation passed in recent years by the state to support educational reform efforts. Most notably, the state passed legislation in which it required schools with low performing students to craft turn around plans aimed at improving student achievement and granted exemptions for low performing schools to pilot innovative programs. The state also grants local control to districts which allows significant autonomy and promotes innovation. Upon petition from one turn around school, the state granted a waiver of the seat time requirement in favor of a competency based system based on demonstration of mastery of skill. The reform bills, local control and past approval of waivers provides sufficient evidence to suggest that successful conditions and sufficient autonomy exists for the district to implement it's proposal. Thus the district earns full points on indicator B(3).

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

15

15

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

a. In developing the proposal, the district formed a Reform Committee which included parents, teachers, and administrators as well as district personnel. Additionally, teachers were engaged through the union and students were engaged through focus groups and formalized committee meetings. The Mayor was given the opportunity to provide feedback as was the state through the Office of Turnaround at the state education department. Open calls were also held to present reform proposals to the public and solicit feedback. Evidence is provided to demonstrate how the district included feedback, particularly from the students, in their final proposal. Letters of support are included in the appendix from the New Haven Federation of Teachers and the School Administrators Association, among other groups.

b. Key partners with the school district were engaged in one-on-one meetings to discuss the proposal. Some provided suggestions. Others provided letters of support. Overall, there are 25 letters of support included in the appendix including those from local universities, business organizations, youth organizations and government offices.

Overall, the district provides sufficient evidence, in the form of letters of support and statements regarding stakeholder suggestions that were written into the proposal, to justify meaningful stakeholder engagement and support throughout the development of the proposal from students, families, teachers, principals, the union, and other key stakeholders. Thus, the district earns full points on indicator B(4).

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	19

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

a. The district has implemented the idea of competency or performance based learning linked closely to Common Core State Standards and created a 21st Century Competencies rubric which outlines 6 competencies in problem solving and critical thinking, accessing and analyzing information, collaboration and communication, creativity and innovation, self-direction and accountability and citizenship and responsibility. Through regular individual meetings with teachers, students analyze their own data, identify their strengths and weaknesses along with their areas of interest, and engage in a goal setting process. This is documented on a student's Student Success Plan. These individual progress meetings occur regularly so students can track their progress on their goals. Students then make choices based on their data and guided by their teachers in the books they read, the projects they choose to complete and mentors they work with in the community. Students have the opportunity to explore college and career pathways through summer exploration programs in middle school and magnet schools of choice. These expanded opportunities also allow them access to diverse cultures, contexts and perspectives. This plan is comprehensive and individualized for each student. Therefore, it is likely to engage students in personalized learning linked to their own interests with a focus on college and career ready outcomes and will empower students to master academic content and 21st Century skills.

b. Students will use their own personal needs, interests and skills to design their own interdisciplinary individualized learning plans and projects. This will provide rigorous rich cross disciplinary experiences culminating in a public presentation of their demonstration of learning via a variety of methods. Time in class will be spent on these projects with teachers serving as facilitators. The projects will link concepts and recurring themes across subjects and allow students choice that is personalized and culturally relevant. The work of skill building will occur through a blended learning platform utilizing technology that allows students to progress at their own pace. Summer programs will assist in the transition from 8th to 9th grades and each program will be tailored to the needs of the student providing either remediation, introduction to blended learning, or mentorships within the community. Assessment software will provide frequent feedback to teachers and students to allow for instructional planning. The software programs are designed to mitigate a student's disability or level of language acquisition and will automatically provide accommodations needed for the student to access the program. A data warehouse will then provide detailed real-time information contributing to a multi-dimensional dynamic student profile. Students will access this profile regularly with their advisory group to monitor progress. Overall, the district has demonstrated how this digital student profile and blended learning tools will work together to ensure a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development. Justification to detail how the community mentorships will play into project based learning is provided. Evidence of how this plan will be adjusted to allow for high need students is provided and all digital formats will be adaptable to meet the needs of all students.

c. In detailing a plan to provide training and support to students in the use of the tools and resources provided, the district states that students will gain practice early on with their guidance counselors and in the classroom. If they need additional support beyond that, they'll have access to different resources including Media and Technology Specialists in the schools and community organizations. However, the district does not provide sufficient evidence of a high quality plan to describe how students will be instructed in the various software programs mentioned in the proposal nor how they will be taught the concept of blended learning and self paced curriculum. Elements of a high quality plan such as timelines and activities are vague.

The district provides evidence of a high quality plan to implement instructional strategies for all participating students enabling them to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to Common Core State Standards and accelerating his/her learning through support of his/her own individual needs and interests. This plan describes how students will understand how their learning links to their future goals related to college and career interests, measure their own progress against those goals, explore interests deeply, gain exposure to various cultures and perspectives, and master 21st Century skills.

Digital learning content will be blended with personalized interdisciplinary projects with public presentations to build a personalized sequence of skill development utilizing high quality instructional approaches. Frequent feedback will be provided to students in the form of assessments and individualized meetings with teachers and advisory groups which include progress monitoring and revision of instructional strategies. Accommodations for high need students will be built in and students can progress at their own pace. These activities are comprehensive and ambitious. When executed, the district will provide a clear link to what students are learning now to their personal goals for the future. This will lead to high levels of engagement and increased student achievement. However, the district fails to provide evidence of a high quality plan to adequately train and support students in the use of these tools and mechanisms. Therefore, the district scores in the high range on indicator C(1).

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	20
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>a & b. The district provides evidence of a robust high quality plan that will engage all participating educators and leaders in training and professional teams through a personalized professional development program. Professional development will include workshops, model demonstrations, and coaching as well as access to online, on demand professional development. The Talent Council, which oversees the Professional Educators Program and the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant, will be responsible for the implementation of the overall plan. Data days will be held quarterly to show educators how to assess data, diagnose need and develop action plans. The development of student profiles/portfolios incorporating projects, assessments and teacher feedback will export into teacher e-folios and assist teachers in matching students' needs and interests with high quality resources that are cross discipline, linked to Common Core State Standards and 21st Century Skills. The Schlechty Engagement Program will provide leaders with professional development to transition from the traditional methods to challenging, engaging, satisfying models. Comer School Development Program teaches educators how to teach the whole student in a personalized setting utilizing the 6 developmental pathways. This will be paired with blended learning software which is adaptable and builds math and literacy skills in students. Educator and leader professional development will center around 3 areas: personalized student learning, socio-emotional educational environment, and technology. The technology trainings will be two fold: dealing with technology and data and incorporating digital content into the classroom. Overall, all components of a high quality plan are presented to address how educators will engage in training to support the effective implementation of the reform proposal including the use of data to inform instruction and methods of personalizing the learning environment for students. The district details how information from the teacher and principal evaluation system will be utilized to personalize the professional development of educators. Additionally, the district describes how educators will receive training on the resources and tools involved in the reform proposal and how to specifically match student needs with the appropriate tools.</p> <p>c & d. The teacher and principal evaluation systems already in place will aid the district in identifying teacher leaders. These leaders will be approached by Talent Council and further trained in coaching and mentoring strategies. These educators will then be matched with schools who demonstrate need in the corresponding areas of strength of that educator. The educator will engage the school in professional development through workshops, model demonstrations, mentoring and coaching. They will be the in house experts. The district partners with pre-service teaching organizations and Teach for America to ensure that the new teachers hired are fully prepared, are culturally diverse and that they are effective from the first day of hire. Evidence is provided to demonstrate that the district has separated ineffective teachers and leaders and has engaged in restaffing of turn around schools. Through their pre-service partnerships, willingness to separate ineffective staff and deep commitment to personalized professional development, the district plans to increase the number of effective and highly effective teachers and principals. The district also offers financial incentives to effective and highly effective teachers and principals to work in hard to staff areas. Overall, the district has demonstrated a comprehensive plan to increase student access to highly effective staff as well as methods to utilize data from the evaluation systems to continuously improve educator performance and by extension, school performance.</p> <p>Overall, the district has shown evidence of a high quality plan (see appendix for elements) to improve learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment for all participating students and educators. It has demonstrated how professional development will support the effective implementation of personalized learning, adapt content and instruction, frequently measure student progress and improve educator practice. Further, evidence is presented to justify that educators will have access to and know how to use the tools, data and resources to accelerate student progress through actionable information pared with high quality learning resources including digital resources that will match the resources to student need. The data from the teacher and principal evaluation systems will be utilized to mobilize continuous improvement at the school level to match needed professional development and support with experts in those areas.</p> <p>Finally, the district has a concrete high quality plan to increase access to effective and highly effective educators and leaders especially in hard to staff areas. These activities form a cohesive plan to improve teaching and leading. These activities are research based and are known to have a positive effect on student achievement. Personalized professional development for educators provides evidence to demonstrate that the district is embracing the concept of personalization at every level of the organization. Therefore, the district earns full points on indicator C(2).</p>		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

- a. The district office is structured in such a way as to provide support to the schools. Each school is assigned a district office director who assists in building prioritized goals and strategies aligned to the district's goals. The level of support provided to each school is differentiated based on the needs of the student population, the leadership and teaching teams. The directors provide instructional guidance, coaching and management support.
- b. Schools are given autonomy over certain items based on their placement on the District Tiering Process. Schools in Tier 1 are high performing. Schools in Tier 3 are low performing and Tier 3 turnaround are persistently low performing. Those turnaround schools have work rule autonomy. All schools have flexibility in scheduling and site based budgets and can work with their assigned director to garner any autonomy needed.
- c. The district is currently piloting mastery based competency at one high school but other high schools are working on implementation and this grant would extend the practice to the middle schools. Students are simply required to receive instruction in each subject area, each year without the seat time requirements. Teachers will develop flexible scheduling as students will be addressing skills and competencies rather than course units. Mastery will be demonstrated based on portfolios.
- d. Students can demonstrate mastery based on assessments and projects that are available as students reach the point of mastery rather than according to a predetermined testing schedule.
- e. The district currently works collaboratively with ELL departments, special ed departments and curriculum departments to ensure fully adaptable learning resources. This grant will extend that work into blended learning environments that are adaptable and mitigate any language needs.

Overall, the district provides sufficient evidence of a high quality plan to demonstrate practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning through the organization of the district office, flexibility and autonomy of school leadership teams, mastery based competency, multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery and adaptable and accessible learning environments. Details are provided to demonstrate that the district is highly structured with clear definitions of who and which departments are responsible for which items. Again, the district provides evidence of personalized supports for the schools through it's tiered support system. This demonstrates the commitment on the part of the district to provide personalization at every level of the organization. Thus, the district earns full points on indicator D(1).

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- a. District provides access to students at the school site, parents as they are able to access internet, and educators on demand access to learning content and student information. With this grant, the district plans to upgrade a data warehouse system to provide one stop shopping for all data. Currently, the district is partnering with community agencies and business to provide access to students and parents who do not have access at home. However, these partnerships require parents and students to go to them- for example, the public library- to access information. This will limit the parent and student access to content and tools outside of school hours and may restrict access to lower income families.
- b. The district currently provides extensive professional development to teachers on the use technology and provides needed technical support. Students can request assistance as needed. Parents can attend trainings at the public library or through the district's Parent University. This puts the responsibility of asking for help and requesting training back on the student and parent rather than on the school. The district does not demonstrate a proactive plan for evaluating access barriers and identifying students who are struggling with the technology.
- c. Currently, parents can access student grades, attendance and progress on homework assignments online and download that information. No other information is currently available to them in a digital format. However, with the implementation of the grant, the district plans to develop an extensive data warehouse that will provide a one-stop shopping for all information regarding the student. Once this is implemented, parents with internet access can easily view and download student achievement data as well as information related to progress monitoring and goal setting. It is unclear at this time if that data warehouse will operate in an open data format allowing the data to be used in other systems.
- d. Currently, the various systems used by the district are not interoperable. They are currently in development with community partners of an interoperable system. Once developed, this information will be available in a certain data warehouse which will be easily searchable.

Overall, the district scores in the high range on indicator D(2). The district states that it plans to make data available in an open data format through the implementation of a robust data warehouse and have all systems be interoperable with the funds from this grant. However, technical support is reliant on the student and parent asking for it and going to get it. Access to blended learning systems and access to data systems is again dependent on students and parents going somewhere to gain access during off school hours. These barriers may limit access to these systems by low income

families.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	14
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district provides elements of a high quality plan for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process. Evidence is provided to demonstrate that a project manager will be established to coordinate and monitor all project related activities. This manager will conduct thrice yearly program evaluations. With the assistance of the various committees that will be established to oversee the various project activities, the manager and the reform committee will analyze quantitative and qualitative data regarding project goals and activities. Stakeholders will be surveyed then engaged in discussions to identify strengths and assets of the project implementation as well as gaps and challenges. These will be evaluated against the project goals and goals will be recalibrated as needed. A diagram is presented to visually detail the district's continuous improvement process. This diagram also demonstrates the details required in a high quality plan. The district states that it will publish a dashboard for the project on its website annually. However, the district fails to provide evidence of what data will be included on the dashboard report.</p> <p>The district provides evidence of a high quality plan including key goals, activities, rationales, timelines, deliverables and responsible parties to implement a rigorous continuous improvement process with timely and regular feedback on project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections. The district demonstrates how it will monitor and measure information. Therefore, the district scores in the high range on indicator E(1).</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district provides evidence of plans to engage internal stakeholders in ongoing communication and engagement with project goals. There are already forums in place for this to occur as part of prior reform efforts. Stakeholders specifically mentioned include: union members, New Haven Citywide Reform Committee, teachers and principals, students and families, and community organizations. However, the district is vague in it's descriptions of exactly how these stakeholders will be engaged. For example, the district states that it will actively solicit teacher input but there is no description provided to detail how this will occur. Elements of a high quality plan in regards to engaging outside stakeholders, meaning those stakeholders who are not involved in the direct implementation of the grant proposal, are lacking including timelines and goals of communication and engagement. The party or parties responsible for engaging outside stakeholders is also vague. While the district provides a high quality plan to engage internal stakeholders in ongoing communication, plans to engage outside stakeholders are limited. Therefore, the district scores in the middle range on indicator E(2).</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>All: The district has provided the breakdown of the baseline and annual targets for students who are taught by highly effective teachers. The baseline ranges from 3%-10% with the post grant targets ranging from 53%-60%. Baselines of those with effective teachers range from 34%-47% with a post grant target of 84%-97%. The grade level with the lowest % of effective/highly effective teachers is 9th. These are extremely ambitious goals and may need to be adjusted as the district evaluates progress throughout the course of the grant. Principal effectiveness data was not yet available at the time of application.</p> <p>4-8:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> College and Career Readiness: Only assessed at grade 8. End of year assessments in Algebra 1 and Reading. Targets include 3% improvement over the course of each year. The same improvement is targeted for subgroups which will not result in closing the achievement gap. Academic: End of year assessments in Math, Reading and Science (grades 7 & 8 only). Again, targets include 3% improvement over the course of each year. The same improvement is targeted for subgroups which will not result in closing the achievement gap. Social-emotional/health: Positive responses on Learning Environment Survey. Each question is targeted to have an increase in positive responses of 2% annually. No subgroup disaggregation is included for this indicator. 		

9:

- FAFSA: Not addressed
- College and Career Readiness: Measured at 9th grade, those who complete 6 credits by end of 9th grade. Targets include 2.5% improvement over the course of each year. The same improvement is targeted for subgroups which will not result in closing the achievement gap.
- Career Readiness: Not addressed
- Academic: 9th graders passing English, scores on quarterly assessments in Math and Science. Again, targets include 3% improvement over the course of each year. The same improvement is targeted for subgroups which will not result in closing the achievement gap.
- Social-emotional/Health: Positive responses on Learning Environment Survey Each question is targeted to have an increase in positive responses of 2% annually. No subgroup disaggregation is included for this indicator.

Overall, the district provides performance measures for the required subgroups. However, the targets set are neither ambitious or achievable. The district has set a target for access to highly effective and effective teachers and leaders that is extraordinarily ambitious but thus not achievable. The targets for academic and college and career readiness indicators demonstrate goals of steady improvement, however no evidence is provided to suggest that the district has goals to close the achievement gap. For the Social-Emotional indicator, no subgroup disaggregation is provided. The district fails to address two required indicators in the high school grade span (9th-12th): FAFSA completion rates and career readiness. For each performance measures, the district identifies a rationale for selecting the measure, how that measure is timely and how the measure will be reviewed over time. However, the descriptions provided are not detailed. For example, in the rationale section for including measures related to access to highly effective and effective teachers, the district indicates that it's inclusion was required with no discussion as to how access to effective educators has a positive correlation to student achievement. Therefore, the district scores in the low range on indicator E(3).

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

5

3

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

In describing plans to rigorously evaluate program activities, the district provides evidence of specific tools that will be engaged. A Rand design evaluation will gauge how well the district is meeting goals and show the impact of activities. Metrics will be employed to evaluate current expenditures that can be reallocated to sustain reform initiatives. The district is currently implementing another grant and has mechanisms and responsible parties in place to evaluate that grant. The district plans to continue with that process if awarded this grant. However, certain aspects of a high quality plan are sparse. Timelines are not given. A rationale detailing how these tools were selected is not provided. Therefore, the district scores in the middle range on indicator E(4).

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- In addition to grant funds, the district will utilize it's own operational funding to continue to fund salaries of existing personnel involved in implementation of this grant. United Way funding will provide funding both during and after the grant to provide the wrap around services discussed in the application. Additional federal grant funds through Teacher Initiative Grant will fund stipends and consulting for teacher leaders, ensuring sustainability of professional development following the grant process.
- Evidence is provided to show that the budget requested is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the proposal. The district plans to invest most heavily in year two of the grant but shows how funds will be spent over the four years. Additional funding sources are available to supplement if needed.
- Details are described to show the thoughtful process utilized by the district to prioritize the use of funds. Greatest emphasis is placed on developing the personalized learning environment (69%) with professional development embedded in each category of funds usage. Evidence is provided in narrative form to identify three additional funding sources listed above as well as the amount garnered from each. Charts are provided to demonstrate which investments are one time and which are ongoing. Ongoing investments expected to be sustained following the grant include: 8th to 9th grade transitions, cycle of tech-forward innovations, wrap around services, professional development and program management.

Overall, the district identifies funds to support the project both from the grant and additional sources. This budget is reasonable and sufficient to support development and implementation. Projects are identified as either one time investments or ongoing objectives. Therefore, the district earns full points on indicator F(1).

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

10

7

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The district provides evidence of components of a high quality plan in relation to the sustainability of the project goals following the grant term. Details are provided to demonstrate the funds to support certain activities within the grant will be available after the grant term from such organizations as Nellie Mae Foundation, Gates Foundation, United Way, Department of Ed and state and local governments.

While there is evidence of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of goals in other areas of the application, there are no indicators provided in the budget section to determine how the district will evaluate the effectiveness of investments to inform future investments. Timelines are not provided to support evaluations and monitoring following the grant term.

While the district outlines it's 4 key areas of projects and provides the amount of funding requested from the grant as well as supplemental funding amounts, it is unclear if these supplemental funding sources will be utilized in conjunction with the 4 years of the grant funding or as post grant sustainability funds. Similarly, while funding is identified for some ongoing costs, it is lacking for others. For example, the district states that of the \$5190K grant funds and \$1360 funds from the Professional Educator Program grant, it will need \$1562K for ongoing digital equipment and supplies. This would not be an allowed expenditure under the Professional Educator Program as the district states that these funds are to be used for Teacher Leaders. Therefore it is unclear how this ongoing expenditure will be funded.

Overall, the district provides evidence that it plans to sustain certain projects and activities after the term of the grant. It has identified funding sources to support some of those projects and states that it has support from both state and local governments as well as philanthropic organizations. However, evidence to demonstrate a high quality plan for evaluating the effectiveness of past investments and using that data to inform future investments is lacking. Narratives are provided to detail which projects will require ongoing funding sources, but funding sources are not provided for all of them. Total dollar amounts are provided to demonstrate needed resources but it is unclear if these figures are solely for the 4 years of the grant or if it included funds needed for the 3 years following the grant. Therefore, the district scores in the high area of the middle range on indicator F(2).

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	6

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The district proposes to ramp up it's Boost Initiative in partnership with United Way and the City of New Haven.

1. The partnership works differently in each school based on the identified needs of that particular area. The goal of the partnership is to broker, monitor and enhance a variety of school-level partnerships ranging from local arts organizations that provide after school enrichment to local mental health clinics. This is meant to provide wrap around services in 4 domains: Physical health and wellness, Social/emotional/behavioral health, student engagement and enrichment and parent engagement. Attending to students and families needs outside of the school day will see carry over in terms of student achievement and engagement at school. The Boost partnership will support the goals and activities in Absolute Priority 1 by matching student need with available resources and engaging community mentors for students.

2. The district identifies more than 10 population level desired results. There are 13 goals identified however 2 are repeated. Those 2 are applied first to students in grade 6-8 and then again to students in grade 9. Of the 13, 2 educational outcomes are applied as results for all students. Five are identified as applying to grades 6-8 and of those 2 are educational, 1 is social-emotional, 1 is family oriented and 1 community oriented. For students in grade 9, there are 3 educational results identified, 1 social-emotional and the family and community indicators are repeated from the previous 6-8 grade span. In these desired results, percentage targets are provided.

3. With this grant, the district plans to develop an interoperable data warehouse through which the Boost Partnership can exchange data in real time. Currently, Boost partners spend a lot of time compiling data, analyzing areas of need and gathering resulting data after intervention. With the new system, data can be gathered at the aggregate level as well as the student level. Currently, the Boost program provides schools with a profile of the needs in the community. The school

then further analyzes community and student level data to match services to areas of need. The impetus is on the school to connect the student/family to the resource. There is no discussion included on how parents can indicate a need for assistance. Boost is currently active in district schools and they are adding an additional 5 schools per year. Obtaining this grant will allow them to increase to 10 schools per year with full implementation in 3 years time. The district presents evidence that details how other communities could partner with their local agencies to implement a Boost program in their areas, thus providing details as to how the district will model the program beyond participating schools and students. While the district does include details as to how the district will measure student outcomes and how United Way will monitor their investments, there is no discussion to document how the partnership as a whole will analyze data to improve results over time. Rather, each agency will be monitoring their own piece.

4. All students in grades 6-9 are included in the school's Absolute Priority 1 application. In assigning students to resources within the Boost partnership, the Boost school coordinator serves on the School Planning and Management Team as well as the School Staff Support Team. The Support team reviews cases of students, staff and families who are struggling. At those meetings, resources can be offered/assigned to individuals as interventions. However, there is no evidence provided to suggest how students who are not brought up at the Support team meeting can gain access to these resources. The evidence provided suggests that the implementation of the Boost program would be limited to the most high need students as opposed to all participating students as identified in Absolute Priority 1.

5. In addressing building the capacity of staff and providing them with tools and supports, the district again refers to the data warehouse that is in development to assess the needs and assets of students and to identify and inventory the needs and assets of the school and community. In discussing the decision-making process and infrastructure of the partnership, the district makes reference to a document entitled the Model for Resource Coordination which outlines all the structures and regarding the functionality of the partnership. However, this document is not provided in the Appendix to reference and insufficient evidence is presented to determine the strength of the decision making structure of the partnership as a whole. In terms of engaging parents and families in both decision making and addressing need, the district makes reference to committees parents can serve on as well as activities such as report card night and newsletters. These activities will provide parents with limited participation in the decision making and assessment of individual needs in relation to the partnership. Finally, the district points to a District Director of the Boost Partnership who will be solely responsible for assessing and monitoring the implementation of the plan. However, there are no timelines provided and no detailed evidence to suggest how this will occur.

6. In identifying ambitious yet achievable goals, the district has provided evidence of the baseline data from the 11 schools currently implementing the program. Each year, new targets are set, but new schools are also added. While the annual targets do increase annually, it's inappropriate to compare them to the baseline as new students with a new baseline are added annually and the baseline for the new students is not provided. Thus, conclusions cannot be drawn regarding whether the measures are achievable and ambitious.

Overall, the district provides a description of a coherent and sustainable partnership with the City of New Haven and the United Way to support the goals and activities in Absolute Priority 1. Population level desired results are provided, more than were allowed in the application, that do include both educational results and family and community supports. Details are provided to show how the partnership will spread throughout the district within 3 years and could then be replicated in other cities/districts around the country. However, it is dependent on school personnel to match students/families with the needed resources and to assess the results. There is no evidence provided as to any other method that gain student/parent access to these resources nor that parents/families can participate in the decision making process aside from serving on committees and attending regular school events such as report card night. The application references a document regarding the guidelines, infrastructure and decision-making process followed by the partnership but this document is not included for review. There is no evidence provided to detail how the plan will be routinely assessed aside from stating that the director of the program will bear this responsibility. Finally, in identifying annual ambitious yet achievable targets, the district provides a baseline for each indicator and annual targets which increase until the post goal year. However, the number of schools and thus participating students increases significantly each year. The new baseline for including these students is not provided. Thus, determinations cannot be made in relation to ambitious yet achievable targets. Thus, the district scores in the middle range for the Competitive Preference Priority.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Overall, the district provides adequate evidence to demonstrate how it will coherently and comprehensively build on the 4

core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools and supports for students and educators. As the district transitions to Common Core State Standards, the learning environment will become more personalized and relevant for students as they are able to use data and software tools to identify their own areas of strength and weakness as well as their interests to set goals. These software tools will assist them in self-monitoring and aid them in identifying how their learning is preparing them for 21st Century Skills as well as self-monitoring to ensure they are on track to graduate College-and-Career Ready. By partnering with mentors in the community as well as providing wrap around services for students and families, student achievement can be accelerated and student learning deepened. Through the use of blended learning software and cross curricular projects, the academic needs of all students will be met. Extensive professional development will be provided to educators which will result in increasing educator effectiveness, expanding access to the most effective teachers and decreasing the achievement gap. It is reasonable to determine that the transition program from 8th to 9th grade will increase the rates at which students graduate prepared for college and careers. The district does demonstrate evidence of meeting the tenets of Absolute Priority 1.

Total	210	179
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0074CT-3 for New Haven, City of

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- Applicant articulated a high quality comprehensive and coherent vision that builds on its work in the four educational assurances using descriptions, charts and other evidence.
- (a) Applicant will adopt standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to complete in the global economy. District has adopted Common Core Standards and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium to align curriculum through a grade-staggered implementation across content areas.
- (b) Applicant will build data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals with data about how they can improve instruction, empower students and parents with a defined perspective of student performance. District will implemented a Learning Management System, a talent management system, Student Information System and new student-facing college and career readiness software to explore and manage college applications.
- (c) Applicant will recruit, develop, reward, and retain effective educators, especially where they are needed most. District will implement a central office evaluation system, with support of teacher and administrator unions. District has established success in this area through a Teacher Incentive Fund grant, which provides personalized learning training, differentiated compensation, and better career advancement opportunities for educators.
- (d) Applicant will turn around lowest-achieving schools. District's School Change Initiative, established a school tiering framework and school improvement planning process to differentiate accountability and support for every school.
- Applicant describes a classroom experience for Juan and how his personalized learning profile follows him from entrance of school to graduation. This description is strong.
- The applicant's plan to articulate a comprehensive vision is strong and is likely to be successful because it provides all the elements of a high quality plan. Personalized learning plan provided in this section of application seems to be a credible approach to goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support. This is because applicant's approach provides different learning opportunities

for different learners.

- Based on the evidence presented in this criterion, the applicant scores in the high range.

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

10

7

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- Applicant's approach to implementation is average because not all elements of the approach to implementation are addressed in a high quality manner.
- Applicant provided the total number of participating schools and the participating students to participate in grant activities, but did not detail a process to select schools to participate in the pilot.
- District states that the targeted students will be in grades 6-9 for the grant period. It will begin with 1,460 6th graders and approximately 1,000 students in program pilots the first year for a total number of 2,460 students. However, the narrative details 6,308 students in grades 6- will be impacted directly through grant activities. Therefore, the total number of students in year 1 does not align with their budget.
- Overall score is in middle range.

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

10

10

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- Applicant supports a high quality plan for reform and change. All required elements of a high quality plan are included.
- District describes closing the proficiency gap and the graduation gap between the district's students and their more affluent peers in the state. It also describes equipping the district's students with the academic ability and financial resources to succeed in college or the career of their choice.
- Applicant's plan includes leveraging talent and development systems to enable educators to effectively act on that information to tailor instruction is positive because it addresses reform and change. Applicant details creating personalized learning environments and projects for middle school students to ensure student learning is more deeply personalized and meaningful and students are prepared for college and career through assessments and student portfolios. Applicant provides student access to highly coordinated wraparound services and support that ensure every student is ready to engage in successful learning. Applicant details encouraging technology-forward innovation within portfolio of schools to deliver new ways of generating breakthrough outcomes for students, including blended learning environments that support deep and rich educational experiences. These strategies are likely to support reform and change because they address many elements of the selection criterion.
- Applicant will reach its outcome goals by including a progression from existing efforts to transform culture, systems, and capacity across the district, to incremental initiatives that will push capacity district-wide, beyond the life of the grant.
- Overall score is high.

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

10

8

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- Applicant describes a plan for goals to maintain achievement gaps. Applicant identified goals that show increases, but not significant ones.
- District set three clear goals for School Change Initiative to improve student outcomes. Goals reflect priorities that community has committed to delivering. Goals include: (1) students being prepared to persist and succeed in college. District will measure student progress towards attaining the goal by ensuring that 90% of students enrolled in college for first year after high school will return for a second year, (2) Eighty four percent of district's high school graduates will enroll in college. District will implement multi-dimensional profiles for every K-12 student as foundation of personalized plan to prepare student for career and college readiness (3) Students will graduate within four years of starting high school, with a targeted 81% district-wide graduation rate, (4) Students will achieve high rates of mastery to close achievement gap with state, (5) Students across all subgroups will close achievement gap against statewide average for state mastery test (CMT) and state aptitude test (CAPT) and (6) Students will demonstrate median 70th percentile growth across all grades, subgroups, and subjects.
- (a) Performance on summative assessments indicate growth by no more than a 3% increase for each year. Applicant did provide data for tested grades 3-8 and 10.
- (b) Decreasing achievement gaps indicate growth by no more than a 2% for each year. Applicant provided subgroup information for Hispanics and for Blacks, but not for Special Education and English Language Learners in

decreasing achievement gaps.

- (c) Graduation rates do not provide data for SY 2012-2013 for subgroups of Blacks and Hispanics. No rationale is provided for graduation rates.
- (d) College enrollment rates indicate growth by an increase of 1% each year, but is missing data for SY 2011-2012 for the percentage enrolled in college any time during first two years after high school.
- (e) Postsecondary degree attainment indicates a 2% annual growth rate.
- Overall score in high range, but the targets do not show significant increases for student achievement and no rationale is provided for graduation rate targets.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- Although significant progress is made, district not successful in some areas of providing a clear record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching. For example, applicant shows different rates of growth across different subgroups and this needs to be addressed in plan.
- (a) Applicant provides data to show its record of success in improving student learning outcomes, closing achievement gaps, including raising student achievement, high school graduation rates, and college enrollment rates. The evidence provided here is strong.
- For decreasing achievement gaps for Blacks and Hispanics, year 09-10 to 12-13, data decreased from 32.9 to 32.7 and for Hispanics and State, year 09-10 to 12-13, data decreased 32.0 to 30.2; and for Black and State, year 09-10 to 12-13, data decreased from 44.1 to 40.2.
- Evidence of Hispanic students closing the gap in all subjects by 2.5% and Black students making a gain of 1% is positive. The track record of closing the gap for Black and Hispanic students is strong. The district credits the transition to the more rigorous Singapore Math for this gain.
- High school graduation rates increased from 58% in 2009 to 70.9% in 2012. District credits the launch of programs such as College Summit, which builds college-ready culture and guides students through postsecondary planning, in three of the nine district high schools is strong.
- College enrollment rates increased from 61.6% in 2009 to 63.8% in 2012. The district credits a partnership with Yale University, Yale-New Haven Hospital, and the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven to launch New Haven Promise as a success. This eight year program provides full scholarships and subsidies for qualifying students.
- (b) Applicant provides data to show its record of success in its persistently lowest-achieving schools in two subject areas of Math and Reading. Each school develops an improvement plan, with low performing schools following a more comprehensive plan to transform outcomes.
- District has seen early success in turnaround school activity. District's School Change Initiative established a school tiering framework of differentiated support for every school, as part of the Portfolio of Schools approach. District systematically assesses and groups schools into three tiers, based on student achievement and growth and the quality of school learning environment as measured by annual surveys.
- (c) Applicant provides a narrative to illustrate how student performance data is made available to students, educators and parents. District uses a student-teacher dialogue, parent-teacher dialogue, SchoolNet data system and PowerSchool student information system to inform and improve participation, instruction, and services.
- A weakness is that there is only subgroup data provided for Black and Hispanic students. Additionally, applicant needs to address inconsistencies in growth pattern.
- Overall score is in high range.

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

- District provided an impressive amount of evidence to support increasing transparency in the district. This information is also made publically available on the district's website. The evidence found in the plan is positive.
- (a) Applicant provided actual personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff in the appendices.
- (b) Applicant provided actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff in the appendices.

- (c) Applicant provided actual personnel salaries at the school level for teachers in the appendices.
- (d) Applicant provided actual non-personnel expenditures at the school level in the appendices.
- Based on the evidence provided in the appendices to show increasing transparency in district, applicant's score in this area is high.

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

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- Applicant has a plan to provide evidence for its State context for implementation.
- Plan has demonstrated evidence of successful conditions to implement personalized learning environments that align with state requirements. This evidence shows successful conditions are in place to provide personalized learning.
- The following elements are strong because they support successful implementation of personalized learning that will benefit the district: linking teacher evaluations to student achievement, requiring identification and monitoring of individual student needs and authorizing parents to have decision making rights.
- Based on the plethora of evidence presented in this criterion, this district ranks in high range. The narrative details comprehensive evidence to support successful conditions and sufficient autonomy for implementation.
- Overall, plan scores high in this criterion.

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

15

15

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- Applicant provides strong evidence of stakeholder engagement throughout the development of the plan.
- (a) District provides direct engagement with how students, families, teachers, and principals were engaged in the development of the proposal and how the proposal was revised based on their engagement and feedback.
- District involved a diverse team in plan, engaged an audience using an "open call" to learn about the grant and intent to apply was reasonable and sufficient. District sought to generate ideas, solicit feedback using public presentations, focus groups, one-on-one interviews, and discussion forums.
- District involved teachers and administrators through the use of the New Haven Federation of Teachers and the School Administrators Association to seek input and provide feedback through open forums is strong. District engaged students from Mayors Youth Council, and Citywide Student Council meeting comprised of high school students and a principal led middle school focus group is strong element to support stakeholder engagement.
- District involved families through the use of forums, to provide engagement and revisions to the proposal.
- (i) The union held an open forum for all teachers to give input and engaged further in two follow-up focus group sessions is a positive element to support stakeholder engagement.
- (b) District collected many letters of support from stakeholders such as United Way of Greater New Haven, New Haven Promise and New Haven Board of Aldermen.
- Many elements of the plan are strong because they comprehensively address stakeholder engagement and support.
- Based on evidence presented in this criterion, district ranks in high range.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	19

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- Applicant's approach to engaging and empowering all learners is high quality because it addresses how their learning will be linked to key goals. Additionally, all elements of a high quality plan are included.
- (a) Plan addresses how the approach will engage and empower high need students by engaging early

adolescent students in learning through personalized learning, engaging all stakeholders through a multi-dimensional (academic, social-emotional dynamic profile for each child) , engaging adults and supporting children through building capacity and accountability of wraparound services, and engaging schools through innovative technology.

- (i) District details how students understand that what they are learning is key to their success. District details how it will engage students in mastering performance skills so that students can track their learning and understand that what they are learning is key to their success.
- (ii) District's description of how students are able to link their experiences to a college-and career-ready pathway through use of Student Success Plans is strong. Student Success Plans will capture interests, aspirations, and aptitude of students and enable students to identify, track, and pursue self-identified goals.
- (iii) District maintains it offers magnet schools as non-traditional learning environments to deepen student's interests. Students and parents ability to choose three schools of interest and a lottery is used for placement is a strong element.
- (iv) District also maintains a portfolio approach that allows students to further deepen learning experiences while building 21st Century Competencies. Magnet schools, technical career pathways, and summer programs will expose students to various career pathways.
- (v) Applicant contends that 21st Century Skills Portfolios have been piloted, as well as The Capstone Experience, engaging students through an integrative, hands-on experience, and The Future Project, is strong. Future Project is a program where students are partnered with a community mentor to affect social change through their Dream Project is a strong and successful element. Students demonstrate their ability to apply key problem solving skills by planning, completing, and presenting a culminating project linked to one or more areas of personal interest, as detailed in their individual Student Success Plan.
- (b)(i) District maintains instructional practices are already in place to enable students to achieve individual learning goals is strong. For example, a rotation model, allows students to move through a variety of learning stations is strong. Teacher serves as an instructor and facilitator, and students receive either remediation or enrichment, with the goal of ensuring they complete the lesson is a strong element. Another example is re-teaching periods, which give students opportunity to work in a group or 1-on-1 with an instructor on the content area of their choice is another strong element. Again this provides students with additional time to gain mastery of standards and helps them to graduate on time and to be college and career ready.
- (ii) District contends that students have access to other high quality instructional approaches and environments that include 1-on-1 tutoring services, New Approaches in Urban Districts program, where schools develop one component of mastery based learning that best aligns with its focus and mission.
- (iii) District maintains students will have access to digital learning content through the adoption of Alpha Smart NEO boards, and interactive whiteboards. Currently, the district is developing a three year assisted-technology plan to expand communication devices to include iTouch, Kindle, and iPads.
- (iv)(A) District makes ongoing and regular feedback by leveraging technology to assess students, giving real time feedback to students, educators, and parents, and by incorporating information in data systems.
- (B) District describes personalized learning recommendations such as implementing individualized learning projects, 21st Century portfolio high school experiences and mastery, and learning-technology rich personalized learning environments. This translates to using “blended learning” software platforms that instruct students on key math and literacy skills, and adapts to their learning pace.
- (v) District will make accommodations and strategies through differentiated technology instruction to help ensure students that they are on track toward meeting college and career ready standards.
- (c) District provides mechanisms that will insure students understand how to use the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning. Students will learn to use technology as a core part of their curriculum. They will have the opportunity to work 1-on-1 with counselors to utilize their profiles as a tool that provides ongoing feedback relevant for long term planning is strong. Students will gain practice in tracking their learning progress early on as they develop their learning goals in their student profiles.
- The only weakness is applicant puts learning back on the students to ask for support, applicant could be more proactive about having a plan in place.
- Many elements of the plan are strong because they comprehensively address improved learning and

teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college and career ready.

- Overall, based on evidence supplied in this criterion, applicant scores high.

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

- Applicant's plan for teaching and leading is strong and its strategies for teaching and leading are reasonable and sufficient because they comprehensively address all the elements for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment.
- (i) Applicant's plan to support effective implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies that meet student's academic needs through the Student Success Plans by identifying their learning and interests is high. Students are placed on a path based on their learning and interests.
- (ii) Applicant's plan to adapt content and instruction by engaging in training. District will provide opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks, in response to their academic needs, interests, and optimal learning approaches. The Schlechty Engagement Program builds capacity in school leaders and facilitates a model that is challenging, and engaging. District will also provide a blended learning program that includes in-person workshops, models demonstration sessions, and one-on-one coaching that empower educators to make the shift to create immersive, personalized learning experiences that engage students in ways that ensure their career and life success.
- (iii) District will measure student progress by building capacity to manage and deliver multiple assessment formats, and leveraging its work with the Smarter Balance Consortium for ongoing benchmarking. These multiple assessment formats will help teachers track when students pass important learning targets.
- (iv) District will improve teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness by using TEVAL, PEVAL and CEVAL systems. Educators access expanded feedback mechanisms from their instructional managers and school leaders. Through the TalentEd professional development platform, teachers monitor their individual progress on an ongoing basis in addition to setting evaluation periods. TalentEd enables teachers and leaders to identify and target individual skill needs and then seek out the appropriate professional development resources and coaching opportunities to meet these needs.
- (b)(i-iii) District maintains that it will build the technical capacity of teachers and leaders through in-depth systems and data analysis trainings so that educators how to use tools, data and resources to accelerate student progress. District will provide high quality learning resources such as Common Core standards, 21st Century Competencies, and the integration of Naviance and PowerSchool. These tools and processes match student needs through Student Success Plans.
- (c)(i) District leaders *can structure effective learning environments using TEVAL*, which contains three phases: a continuous professional feedback process, evaluation, and a fair and consequential decision-making process. Teacher is evaluated and coached on the elements of purposefulness, supportiveness, and meaningfulness of instruction with the aim to continuously improve individual progress and therefore the school's collective progress toward increasing student performance. In addition, PEVAL embeds systems and practices within its five domains of professional competency, to continuously promote school improvement.
- (ii) District maintains The Human Capital Management System will increase the number of effective educators in its hard-to-staff schools. In addition, the district's, *Our School Change Initiative*, has also been intensely focused on schools that have the greatest need to improve their performance through a contractual turnaround process that rebuilds school-level collaboration and instructional focus that rehires teachers in turnaround schools through a mutual consent rehiring process, and providing work rule flexibility and extra compensation for teachers in turnaround schools.
- (d) Applicant's plan for increasing number of students who receive instruction from effective and teachers and principals is through the establishment of Professional *Educator Program* that is grounded in the TEVAL framework as well as information from *TalentEd*. Plan will utilize evaluation systems already in place to personalize professional learning & development, target pre-service screening and sourcing, differentiate career opportunities, and differentiate compensation based on hard to staff schools, subjects and specialty areas.
- Applicant response to this selection criterion is strong because it address all elements of teaching and leading.
- Overall, applicant scores in high in this criterion.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- Applicant has a strong and successful plan for practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning. Applicant's response to selection criteria is strong because it addresses all elements. Additionally, applicant makes a strong description of school autonomy, school tiering program, Comer School Development Program, and a three year program to integrate technology in ways that directly engage students with learning deficits.
- (a) Central office has been organized using a School Tiering Framework (Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 schools), School Improvement Plan based on the District Improvement Plan.
- (b) District has vested in several school-level leadership teams that have autonomy, flexibility, and authority to make decisions related to their school's School Improvement Planning is strong. Additionally, district has implemented a universal team, developed through the Comer School Development Program, and is known as "Comer teams" across the district. These teams empower school-level decision-making over factors including school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators, and school-level discretionary budgets.
- (c) District gives students the opportunity to progress based on mastery. At the end of each mastery "stage," students are expected to compile portfolios of their work, and move on only when their comprehensive body of work has indicated mastery.
- (d) Applicant contends that students take assessments only when they demonstrate that they are ready to do so, and students' work is graded with four "levels". A Level I indicates a student is not yet able to do the work independently, while Level IV indicates mastery.
- (e) District is developing a three year plan to integrate technology in ways that directly engage students with learning deficits and communication challenges, but can apply to all students, since the core of the program involves using technology for personalization.
- Overall, applicant scores high in this criterion.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- Applicant provided a strong and successful plan for school infrastructure to support personalized learning. Applicant's response to selection criteria is strong because it addresses all elements.
- (a) All schools in the targeted grades have an equitable level of technology resources, including wireless access and a sufficient number of computing devices to meet the basic needs of students and staff. Parents and students have access to district's Student Information System, *PowerSchools*, through the *Parent Portal* web-based interface. The *Naviance Family Connection Portal* grants students and families access to Student Success Plans and other tools, including personalized learning plans, career and course planning, and college search and admission information.
- (b) District ensures that technical support is tailored and differentiated for each stakeholder group. For parents and families, through its partnership with the New Haven Public Library, district offers a number of hands-on technical training sessions on the district's student information systems. In addition, educators and students can request hands-on support in the classroom, coordinated by the central Educational Technology Department. District's response to inquiries to roll out nine training areas related to information technology across district schools.
- (c) Technology system, *PowerSchools*, enables student, parent, and teacher portals to house student information – such as grades, attendance records, and progress on homework assignments – can be accessed through a web-based platform and downloaded by end-users in an open data format is strong. Parents can only have access if they come to library. Plan could be more proactive with providing other means to address this.
- (d) Applicant has a plan in place to ensure use of interoperable data systems such as *PowerSchools*, *SchoolNet*, *Naviance*, *TalentEd*, *Munis*, and *nFocus*. District is focused on improving the interoperability of these systems, further utilizing existing functionalities, and leveraging reporting and analytical capabilities in order to fully support the implementation of multi-dimensional, dynamic student profiles, enable teachers to better use data to personalize instruction, and engage students in meaningful learning.
- Based on the plethora of evidence presented in this criterion, the district ranks in high range. The narrative details a clear rationale for the district and school infrastructure to supporting personalized learning. However, a weakness is plan could be more proactive with providing parents choice to access technology in different ways.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- Applicant provided a strong and successful quality plan for continuous improvement that is rigorous and timely.
- Applicant includes three elements in the plan that include classroom continuous improvement, school continuous improvement and district-wide continuous improvement.
- Classroom continuous improvement element provides real time changes to instructional strategies by using data teams and individual and aggregate student profiles, such as TEVAL. School continuous improvement element will provide quarterly adjustments to school-wide initiatives, will use building leadership data teams and using supportive data including TEVAL, PEVAL and a learning environment survey. District wide continuous improvement will be systematic best practice sharing, scaling, and course correction, which will include a district data team and reform committee, and will use a dashboard of aggregate indicators.
- Applicant addresses how it will monitor, measure and share information from grant. District will monitor progress on a monthly basis during standing meetings, and by monitoring the success of pilots lunched through the cycle of technology-forward and innovation fund. Applicant will measure progress using student profiles, the wraparound, and professional development. Applicant will share information on funds by producing an annual publication of a dashboard for the project on the district's website.
- Overall, applicant ranks high in this criterion.

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

5

4

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- Applicant's plan for ongoing communication and engagement is high quality because plan has strong and successful communication with stakeholders. For example, they will hold a variety of forums for different stakeholder groups.
- District maintains it will actively communicate with union members, city wide reform committee, project team that includes teachers and principals, students and families and other community organizations to include United Way, and the Board of Aldermen, on the development of implementation of grant.
- Discript will engage all stakeholders through a variety of forums structured through School Change Initiative.
- Applicant doesn't provide specifics on strategies that will be used and just states generally that it will conduct communication and engagement strategies. Plan lacks timelines and responsibilities.
- Overall score is high in this criterion.

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

5

1

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- Applicant's plan for performance measure targets are not ambitious and achievable. For example, targets show increases but not significant increases.
- District provides performance measures with rationale, measurements and a plan to review and improve over time.
- For the All Populations, district requies the performance measure of all students are participating the number and percentage of students whose teacher and principal are effective, with an annual review and the possibility of calibrating and strengthening growth.
- Weakness is there is no rationale for selecting PreK-3 measure.
- For the 4-8 Populations, applicant selected performance measures for students at goal or above on Degrees of Reading Power, using Common Core as a rationale with students taking DRP three times per year.
- Weakness is there is no mention to test students in grades 6 and 7. Plan only gives performance measures for grade 8.
- For the 9-12 Populations, applicant selected performance measures for students on district's Learning Environment Survey. The questions tie to mission of district and will be measured by reliability because it is an anonymous survey. Survey launched in 2009 and questions are reviewed each year to ensure they asses the right metrics. No mention as to why FAFSA is not addressed in plan.
- Academics show a steady improvement, but no goals are provided for each subgroup.
- Applicant's response to selection criteria is weak because it does not address all elements of plan. For example, for some subgroups there are missing targets for percentage of students with effective teacher/principal.
- Overall, score is low in this criterion.

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

5

3

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- Applicant's plan to evaluate effectiveness of investments is missing aspects of a high quality plan. Missing aspects are the timeline. There is no mention of parties involved and those responsible for carrying out plan.
- District maintains its plan to evaluate the effectiveness of grant activities will be through designing and a planning an evaluation. Applicant describes how the use of embedded professional learning and technology through an enhanced data systems will integrate information from a variety of data sources and organizations, will increase staff effectiveness.
- Applicant's plan will improve its implementation over time because it will use metrics developed by an outside consultant funded from the TIF grant. Additionally, plan will use surveys and data days.
- Overall score is average in this criterion because the high quality plan was not complete.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant's budget is reasonable and sufficient to support the proposal because funds budgeted for plan seem reasonable based on average costs of professional development, equipment and supplies. • Applicant addresses strategies to ensure long term sustainability of personalized learning environments. • (a) Applicant identifies all funds to support the project including not only District Funds, but also outside funds such as United Way, and Teacher Incentive Fund. • (b) Budget is reasonable and sufficient for the four year implementation of the grant. District provides a narrative and table to display the development of funding requirements and sources to ensure that all projects can be resourced appropriately. • (c)(i) District provides a detailed description of all funds that prioritizes and rationalizes grant goals as well as ensures sustainability. District maintains embedded investments in professional development time and capacity-building resources as technology within each initiative, with the greatest emphasis focused on personalized learning. • (c)(ii) Applicant identifies funds used for one time investments (over 2 years) such as revising the personalized learning element and the multi-dimensional dynamic student profiles element. Applicant identifies funds used for ongoing operational costs such as the professional development element, cycle of tech-forward innovation, wraparound services coordination and program management. • Applicant's scores in high area for this criterion. 		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	7
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant's plan to sustain project goals is average and evidence is lacking. Evidence of how plan will be sustained is lacking. • Applicant identifies a financial plan and leader support as evidence to continue after grant, but is missing evaluation piece. • Plan includes support from other philanthropic and government resources to support specific reform activities. Grant names Nellie Mae and Gates Foundations, United Way, and the School Improvement Grant, as other resources to sustain grant. • Plan will hire a one grant director during the life of the grant, who will oversee all grant related activities. Following grant termination, program director will be absorbed into central office organizational structure and district budget. Plan will evaluate effectiveness through use of front load investments in order to redesign, implement, and strengthen the systems and infrastructure to support the vision. • Plan is missing an evaluation to sustain project goals. No mention of indicators in budget section, no timeline, and no deliverables. • Overall score is average. 		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	6
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant describes a feasible partnership with Boost, but plan includes some weaknesses. • Not clear on how parents will be involved in the decision making process based on the information gathered. • Applicant's describes a plan to intergrate public or private resources in a partnership. Applicant describes a three way partnership it has formed with Boost, United Way and the City. The three way partnership will target four domain areas: physical health and wellness, social, emotional and behavioral health, student engagement and enrichment, and parent engagement, including outreach to and support for families. • District details that three way partnership will track selected indicators using attendance and progress of students participating in community partnership programs. District goal is to have a manageable two way data feed with community organizations is strong. This will enable more real time information transfer and focus school based resources on data analysis rather than data capture. • District maintains it will use data from Boost to link ongoing physical health and wellness efforts to guide schools through a needs assessment process is strong. This will help schools create action plans and allow them to strategized purposefully about the types of community partners who align with student needs, identified gaps, and school action plans. • Applicant details how Boost partnership has developed a high quality strategy to scale to other high need students and communities. The district and United Way have secured initial funding through a bank to explore additional funding to allow growth by 10 schools a year, so that in three years, Boost will be in every school. • District is rolling out reporting templates for schools to implement Results Based Accountability metrics and monitor program effectiveness on a regular basis, pending development and availability. Schools will transition from initial implementation to ongoing sustainability by evaluating partners strategically and then optimizing partnerships across district. • District and Boost will involve the school planning and management team (comprised of parents, staff and members from Comer School Development Program), along with school staff support team to partner to address education and other services for students included in the grant. • District will build capacity by adding staff members to Boost infrastructure; however, there is no mention of how the infrastructure will be organized. • District will assess and inventory the needs and assets of students, schools, and community using Boost Model for Resource Coordination. However, there is no mention of a timeline or how information will be gathered. • Applicant describes how the Boost Model details a decision making process for partner organization selection, implementation, and evaluation. • Applicant maintains that parents and families of students volunteer in decision making solutions such as city wide parent leadership team, Parent University New Haven and the Kindergarten Canvass. • District maintains Boost routinely asseses district's progress in implementing its plan to maximize and resolve challenges. One weakness is that Boost does not describe how often it will assess. • District identified measures for the proposed population level of all schools in the district, all students attending Boost schools, 6th-8th grade students attending Boost schools, and 9th grade students attending Boost schools. Performance measures range from educational, social-emotional, family, to community, with baseline school year beginning in 2012 and ending in 2018 (post grant). • No mention of an avenue for parents to participate in activities other than school report card night. • Applicant's score ranks in average range. 		

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

- Applicant provided a high quality plan for personalized learning environments. Plan was solid and comprehensive and cited examples and activities to address how it will build on core educational assurance areas to improve learning and teaching and support students and educators by aligning college and career ready standards.
- Applicant's "Engage New Haven" program will engage students in learning through personalized based learning. This involves integrating rigorous Common Core standards and learning goals, developing student learning targets, establishing provisions for adjusting time for student mastery, creating interim assessments and capstone rubrics.
- Program will use a multi-dimensional (academic and social-emotional) dynamic student profile for every child. Profile

will build on student success plans using the Naviance system to assess current data capabilities and identify gaps to allow for tracking of personal development. nFocus, a new data system being piloted with a partnership with United Way, focuses on collection and reporting on data from schools and community organizations using various data sources and matching participant achievement to programs that demonstrate academic, social and behavioral growth. District has implemented a nationally recognized initiative to implement a teacher, principal and central office evaluation system that considers multiple measures of student growth in determining the effectiveness of all educators, defining clear instructional and leadership competencies, and keeping professional growth at its core by identifying areas of need and individualized development.

- Program will use its three-technology plan to install wireless access in all districts and upgrade others, then roll out additional devices. School's need will determine they type of technology needed. Next step is teams of educators, parents and students will develop criteria and needs as well as be responsible for recommending adoption for targeted grade levels of specific platforms needed to implement learning plans to ensure student mastery in math and literacy skills. Last step is to develop and launch grant process with priority awarded to learding edge educator teams and schools.
- Program will use wraparound services including Boost, which is already in sixteen schools. Wraparound support includes social services and liasons around students' social emotional behavioral needs, coordination of extended day activities, community mentor supports for tutoring, personal development, personalized learning projects, and career and college readiness.
- Applicant's response to selection criterion is strong because it addresses all elements of a high quality plan.
- Based on evidence in plan to support personalized learning, applicant meets absolute priority.

Total	210	183
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