



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0162TX-1 for Pasadena Independent School District

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The Learn My Way Project plan described a comprehensive and coherent reform vision. The four core assurance areas were addressed in detail. The applicant described a technology-based approach to differentiate, accelerate, and deepen student learning. Equity issues were addressed through the use of technology-based lesson plans that can be assigned based on individual student need. Clear needs and gaps, activities, time frames, roles, outcomes, and outcome measures were provided.</p> <p>The classroom experience for students and teachers was very detailed and the e-portal will grow over time providing additional resources for a sustainable personalized learning environment. The vision articulated details how students will be actively making choices to use information to personalize their learning. Teachers will have "one click" access to data that will identify student learning gaps, needs and interests that are then matched to remediation and acceleration resources.</p> <p>The technology infrastructure detailed would increase band-width for more than 54,000 students and their families, provide one-to-one technology, provide a virtual school program, and result in curriculum revisions aligned to state college and career standards. Data portal dashboards will provide teachers with access to real time student data and assessment measures. Plans to streamline/automate teacher data access to expand learning opportunities for students and school administrators demonstrated a high level of organization and planning.</p> <p>No weaknesses were noted.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>The applicant provided a list of schools that will participate and the required demographics in the appendix. Ten of the intermediate schools were chosen for this project to support the districts prior efforts to create a technology infrastructure that supports the Personalized Learning Environment model. These schools were chosen to reach the students most likely to disengage from educational goals and to ensure students develop the foundational math in grades 7-8 that will prepare them for advanced secondary math. The applicant will focus on ELA (literacy) and math and will add science and social studies later in the grant period. All of the schools selected for this project serve high need, high poverty level students. The targeted focus described is likely to engage the student population detailed and have a deep impact for 7th and 8th grade students in the district.</p> <p><b>Weakness</b></p> <p>Students in grades 7 and 8 will be prepared with College Level curriculum and the district has a goal of increasing college and career readiness, however it is unclear what activities take place when students transition to 9-12 grades. The goals for graduation and college enrollment are slightly inconsistent with the grade levels selected for the project. For example, the project will use the REDI Step assessment in the 8th grade to determine if students are on track for being college ready at graduation and students will develop post-secondary planning skills. With the post-secondary goals, it is unclear why only grades 7 and 8 were targeted and what will happen to students in the 8th grade if they are not college and career ready.</p>		

<b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Strengths:</p> <p>The plan to scale up the reform measures is detailed. The project will develop and improve over time as more content is developed. The project will expand first to other subject areas then into the six high schools in the district.</p> <p>Weaknesses:</p> <p>None noted</p>		

<b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>
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<p><b>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Strengths</p> <p>Ambitious goals for most sub-groups are provided and goals would reduce gaps. Students participating in this grant would not transition to college within the grant timelines, however the applicant provided ambitious and achievable goals that they will pursue. Graduation rates seem to be on the rise and the applicant provided goals that continue this success for most subgroups. The vision for the project is likely to result in improved student learning for grades 7 and 8.</p> <p>Weaknesses</p> <p>It is unclear if the academic goals are equal to or exceed State ESEA targets for the LEA(s), overall and by student subgroup. The applicant did not provide data for all grades for all subjects tested. The post-grant goal of 70% proficiency for all students on math and reading assessments does not seem realistic given the subgroup gaps identified in the baseline data. It is unclear if expectations are ambitious for students in the higher achieving sub-groups. Sub-group gap goals for high school graduation are not expected to decrease significantly. It is unclear how the goals for college enrollment will increase during the first four years of the grant, since affected students will not be enrolled in college until at least year four of the grant. Performance on summative assessments including goals was not included for grades 9-12, leaving an unclear gap between performance in grades 7-8 and graduation rates/college enrollment.</p>		
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**B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)**

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>

<p><b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Strengths</p> <p>The district demonstrated double-digit growth in all test scores from 2003 to 2011. Sub-groups have made consistent gains and gaps have decreased. The applicant included charts that demonstrated progress. The district has aligned its curriculum</p>		
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to college readiness standards and the number of students who are college ready has increased by 18%. Evidence was provided that indicated a serious effort to turn around low performing schools. These schools are no longer considered in need of improvement.

Student performance data is available to students, educators, and parents as a strategy to improve participation, instruction, and services. An online parent connect system is available and written reports are provided. College enrollment has increased by 8% and the dropout rate for has been reduced by 53%. Graduation rates have increased based on longitudinal data.

**Weaknesses**

- It is unclear if all parents have access to the technology to available to access the performance data for improved student performance
- Details were not provided by the applicant that indicated the actions and strategies that turned around the previously low performing schools that are now stories of improvement.

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

The district has been recognized by the State of Texas Comptroller's Office for its transparent processes, practices and investments. for the past four years. Actual personnel salaries are publicly available and have been published on both websites and newspapers. The applicant provided screen shots of personnel salaries. Non-personnel district wide expenditures are available on-line and in published documents. Evidence was provided in the appendices of the application.

This section scored high as no weaknesses were noted.

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

**Strengths**

The district has obtained specific waivers from the State of Texas to allow for the autonomy needed to fully implement the project. Waivers will allow for flexible school days including the number of hours each student will attend. Waivers for teacher evaluation will allow PISD to use a locally developed appraisal process that aligns to the My Learning, My Way Project. Teacher evaluations will include student achievement outcomes or student growth data as an element of the evaluation criteria. The students targeted will be intermediate and will be allowed to accelerate learning beyond their grade levels, including taking high school and college credit simultaneously.

The applicant demonstrates a pro-active approach to securing the flexibility that will be needed to implement this project. Articulation agreements are in place for institutions of higher education with options for dual enrollment. College professors, under one of the agreements, will teach high school courses for college credit.

This section scored strongly as no weaknesses were noted.

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

**Strengths**

Pasadena ISD assembled a strong design team that met weekly to create the framework for the grant plan. The reforms proposed addressed the four educational assurances. The proposal framework went to the 10 principals who were implementing one-to-one devices. Site-based teams invested at least 20 hours of work and participated in smaller, defined groups to refine specific components. Stakeholder involvement contributed to the development of the application. Meaningful stakeholder support was demonstrated for administrators and teachers. The mayors of the three cities where schools are located provided feedback.

In addition, surveys were conducted that demonstrated that collective bargaining issues not applicable but still addressed with 90.2% of teachers supporting the application as written. Impressive letters from key stakeholders were included that supported the application. The Partnerships described directly aligned with the plan, and detailed descriptions indicated the roles of the partners. The schools will benefit from collaborations such as the College Readiness Initiative and students will have access to the K16 Bridge Program. Additional letters of organizations interested in developing partnerships were included.

**Weaknesses**

The applicant did not define all stakeholders and the applicant did not demonstrate stakeholder engagement from parents and students. It is unclear if parents and students offered any feedback or how their feedback was used in the design of the proposal. Letters of support from parents, parent organizations, and student organizations were not included.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Compelling descriptions were included to demonstrate how this project might allow students to understand what they are learning and how their experiences with this project might relate to their goals.</p> <p>Deeper learning concepts were demonstrated using contextual frameworks with opportunities for personalizing learning.</p> <p>The project-based environment described content and developmental skills and traits leading to academic success and also addressed the “soft” skills for college success.</p> <p>Teacher training with embedded instructional strategies including the WICOR lessons supported project goals and mastery.</p> <p>A system for addressing learning gaps in a personalized way was demonstrated. A system to ensure attention to on-time graduation was demonstrated. A variety of high quality instructional approaches using flipped classrooms, technology, videos, and content that allowed progress based on mastery was demonstrated.</p> <p>Industry-based content that addressed college and career ready standards were evident.</p> <p>Ongoing and regular feedback loops strengthened the application.</p> <p>Student training will take place on the first day of school. Parent training will take place at open houses.</p> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>The applicant indicated that by high school few students see how their learning has anything to do with their futures. However, it is unclear how this project will affect high school achievement since high school level data and goals were not provided and feedback loops into the secondary grade levels do not seem to be a part of the project plan.</p> <p>It was unclear how parents would be engaged and understand student learning. If parents do not attend open houses, it was unclear how they would access training or student level information.</p> <p>Students would receive training on the first day they attend a PISD School. No plan for follow up training was presented. This may be an issue as this project is detailed and students may not be familiar with the technology, have access on the first day, and language barriers might prevent understanding.</p> <p>The applicant indicated that students have no technology at home. This project seems depended on technology and conductivity at home.</p> <p>It was unclear how students will set goals and how the technology provided will support personalized goals for each student.</p>		

<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>Strengths</p> <p>Training will occur throughout the school year, annually and using PLE on-line portals. During training, support will be provided by campus-based Instructional Technology specialists. Training will focus on personalizing the learning environment and use of the PLE-portals. Support staff to assist with personalizing the learning environment will be available to assist teachers, staff and students. Student interests, gaps, grade levels and curricular goals are specifically addressed. The professional development plan is detailed over the life of the grant. Data will be readily available to support the need for teacher assistance through instructional modeling. Training for counselors is included to ensure student progress is monitored and incorporated as part of the track to succeed in high school and post secondary planning.</p> <p>PISD curriculum is supported by the focus of this project. Teachers will receive extensive training specific to content scope and sequences (examples are included). Student interests directly impact content level instruction. Student grouping functions will allow teachers to assign cross curricular projects, blended assignments, and mastery assignments in a more personalized structure.</p> <p>Attention is being paid to “expert” teachers through a train the trainer model and teacher evaluation components are comprehensive. Actionable information that help educators develop and maintain personalized learning is highly evident. E-learning portals will track students for progress toward graduation and training resources will allow administrators to predict student performance on state STAAR exams.</p> <p>Both teacher and administrator evaluations are based on educators developing leadership skills around themes to support student growth and close achievement gaps. The superintendent evaluation has a strong focus on stakeholder collaboration and leadership development.</p> <p>A plan to address how students will receive instruction from highly effective and effective teachers and principals was provided.</p> <p>Weaknesses</p> <p>The applicant did not address how PISD would staff hard-to-staff schools and hard to fill subject areas. Providing specialty areas with highly effective teachers was not addressed. Teachers that are not effective or highly effective would receive more "walkthroughs". It was unclear how additional "walkthroughs" would increase the number of effective teachers' classrooms with subgroups gaps or in hard to staff schools/classrooms.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>Strengths</p> <p>D1a. An organizational chart was provided as a guide to envision how the grant would be managed. In addition, the applicant detailed the roles of the leadership and support team that will be coordinating the grant. Both the Technology and the Curriculum and Instruction Departments will work on the project under the direction of the Deputy Superintendent of Academic Achievement.</p> <p>D1b. The applicant detailed how school leaders will have some flexibility regarding how they reach implementation timelines and milestones with the support of the grant Project Manager. School leadership teams will be defined by principals and have the support of the grant staff to implement the project with fidelity.</p> <p>D1c. Students will be allowed to progress based on mastery, rather than seat time. PISD will expand existing learning venues and allow students to pursue coursework beyond grade levels.</p>		

D1d. Students with disabilities and English Language Learners will have additional resources. Staffing to support students with disabilities and English Language Learners was detailed to oversee the implementation and support programs detailed.

Each campus will develop milestones and navigate operational adjustments as needed to ensure the program has the desired impact.

**Weaknesses**

It was unclear if the LEA had an organized central office or how the governance structure would support this project. Only one Special Needs /ELL Math and ELA specialist will be added to serve the needs of all schools. It is unclear if this level of support is appropriate given the wide achievement gaps.

<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
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<b>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
Strengths		
<p>All students will have mobile devices to use in and out of school. Support personnel will be hired to provide technology assistance. The data warehousing system demonstrates interoperable data systems. Data from Human Resources, budget, data warehousing systems, and student data such as attendance, performance and interests would be available in a transparent framework, limited only by FERPA requirements. The ITS will work with educators, administrators, students and parents to assist with the use of portals. The majority of information will be exportable in an open data format to ensure parents and students have access during out of school time. Internet towers would be constructed to provide conductivity for rural areas.</p>		
Weaknesses		
<p>It was unclear if the technology staff would provide any training for parents and students beyond the use of portals. The applicant indicated that the majority of information would be in an open data format but did not provide sufficient details to determine how the data would support other learning systems in this format.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>

<b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
Strengths:		
<p>A detailed data collection and measurement system was described. The project will be regularly monitored, evaluated, and refined through a continual improvement process. The applicant will hire an external evaluator to create protocols. The applicant indicates that they will develop an evaluation system for teachers, principals and superintendents. Implementation teams at each site will meet quarterly to review information and determine if the project is on track.</p> <p>Both short and long term measures for continuous improvement are detailed. A plan for sharing information with the Board of Trustees, faculty, parents, and community organizations was provided. The implementation team will work closely with the evaluation team to ensure the high quality plan is implemented with fidelity and to review the process data and objectives. Data will be used to trigger the need for revisions and the evaluation team will determine how revisions remain aligned to the grant vision, purpose, proposed outcomes, and timelines. Extensive survey data will be collected to incorporate student and parent experiencing into the plan for continual improvement.</p>		
Weaknesses:		
<p>The qualifications of the external evaluator are not detailed.</p>		

<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
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**(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

A timeline to share public information was offered and a plan for ongoing communication was provided that included frequency and the strategies that would be used to communicate. Newsletters, meetings, and quarterly updates would address implementation challenges.

Communication plans were clear, however the plan to engage internal and external stakeholders lacked detail regarding how stakeholders would be engaged to continually improve the plan.

<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
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**(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

Strengths

The goals provided were ambitious and performance measure data were disaggregated for all students and subgroups for math and reading. Goals for performance measures were provided for students in grades 7-8 and grades 9-10.

Weaknesses

The applicant did not provide at least 12 performance measures and it was unclear how the goals provided directly related to the performance measures. Rationales for each performance measure were not provided thus it was unclear why the performance measures were selected.

The performance measure goals for some areas do not seem realistic. For example 100% of the students in all subgroups are expected to meet Level II in 8th grade algebra post grant. This section did not provide the detail needed to determine alignment with the plan for the project.

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

Strengths

A logic model for evaluation was included in the application. The logic model provided a frame for the key elements, goals and objectives, and both short and long term goals. The evaluation reports will be comprehensive with extensive data sources to determine progress. An Extended-Term Mixed-Method (ETMM) evaluation design will be used that incorporates the use of both formative and summative measures. The Implementation Team will work closely with the Evaluative team and key personnel during implementation and during the course of the project. Bi-monthly reports will provide ongoing feedback. Feedback will be collected and analyzed using validated instruments to allow comparisons, adjustments, and improvements over time.

No weaknesses were noted.

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

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

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

Strengths

The project will build a sustainable infrastructure for personalized learning and will expand to include other grade and subject areas. Detailed descriptions were included the investments in instruction, educator effectiveness, administration and streamlining data systems. Itemized costs were reasonable and supported personalized learning.

Clear rationales are provided for all costs in the proposal and the budget aligned closely with the project plan. Funds for one time investments were detailed as well as those costs that would be on-going and continue after the project period.

No weaknesses were noted in this section of the project.

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

**10**

**5**

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

Strengths

The applicant will build the infrastructure for personalized learning during the grant period. A framework for tracking performance was detailed by the applicant. Ongoing professional development was described in detail. Some staff positions might not be needed after the grant period and some cost savings might be recognized through the grant.

Weaknesses:

The applicant addressed sustainability, however the plan lacked details. Most staff positions will end and continued progress will depend on PISD committing additional funding. It is unclear how conductivity for the on-line programs will continue. The applicant indicates that if continued costs are under \$1,500,000, the positions will be included. It is unclear how. It is unclear how the project will continue without key staff members.

The applicant proposes a BYOB initiative, however they have already detailed the high poverty. It is unclear if this is realistic.

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

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

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

The connection between poor health and academic achievement was supported by research. Detailed population-level desired results and outcomes were included in alignment with the application. Campus Health Advisory Committees will be involved in decision making processes.

High quality partnerships directly aligned to the project were described. The K16 Bridge Program offered a web-based platform that allowed access to data for students throughout their college careers.

Population groups, results and outcomes aligned with the broader proposal. Results included family, educational and community based outcomes that were expected to improve over time. Partnerships would integrate services with the proposal. Community needs and goals were identified and addressed including assets and community supports.

Descriptions of decision making processes and engagement strategies demonstrated the probability of desired results.

**Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments**

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

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant provided a high quality plan that is likely to personalize learning and raise academic performance. The plan provided details regarding how it would address the educational assurance areas, accelerate student learning, and deepen instruction. The data systems and availability of data for stakeholders was described. Reducing achievement gaps and equity in the instructional program was addressed.

The Vision for the plan addressed personalizing the learning environment and providing students with a deeper

understanding of instruction through the cultivation of student interests and teacher training to address individualized goals. Partnership agreements are in place to provide students with college level experiences prior to graduation and transition to college and career.

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>178</b>
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## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

Application #0162TX-2 for Pasadena Independent School District

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

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant has submitted a bold and innovative vision that is articulated clearly and coherently and which addresses the four core educational assurance areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adoption of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards with additional college readiness standards embedded into the district curriculum framework.</li> <li>2. Building data systems that measure student growth and success in an effort to improve instruction. The use of the new system incorporates linkages and algorithms to interpret data according to the needs of the user. Another example to support this assurance area is the use of the teacher e-dashboard which will match student learning gaps to acceleration resources to aid in closing achievement gaps at an increased pace.</li> <li>3. Applicant participates in teacher and principal performance awards which are based on academic achievement growth. Applicant intends to expand this program and revise evaluation system to create a multi-leveled educator evaluation system that measures student learning growth and identifies the use and promotion of the personalized learning environments as set forth as the primary goal of this application.</li> <li>4. The applicant clearly articulated that through the awarding of two state grants it was able to turn around two of its lowest performing schools through leadership development. Applicant also noted that it was able to assist high schools in meeting annual yearly performance goals through a focus on improving math instruction.</li> </ol> <p>The highest score is awarded because all related criteria are effectively addressed.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant succinctly and clearly describes the approach to be used in the implementation of the project, <i>My Learning, My Way</i>. The district selected its 10 intermediate schools to participate in this project as they have participated in recent reforms related to personalized learning instruction and an upgrading of the one to one technology infrastructure to clearly support this project. The applicant identified 10 intermediate schools including approximately 7,985 students and 274 educators. Among the students, 83% are from low income families, and 37% are identified as high need students. The highest score is being awarded because all related criteria are addressed effectively.</p>		
<b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant clearly describes a well-constructed, high-quality plan inclusive of activities, timelines, deliverables, parties</p>		

responsible, and indicators of credibility within the project, *My Learning, My Way*:

- Creation of an e-Portal for students, teachers, principals, counselors, and parents. E-Portal will aid in identifying learning gaps, resources to accelerate learning, discipline and attendance indicators, enrollment, etc. As the project progresses, additional linkages to scale up the e-Portal will be created that tie specific resources to specific needs with information presented within the e-Portal in a format appropriate to the audience. Additional scale-ups of the project will include alerts for indicators such as student absenteeism, growth or loss of student learning over time, and classroom interest to learning opportunities.
- Educator evaluation reforms will tie into the student academic achievement and to the use and promotion of the professional learning communities developed within the project.
- This project focuses on the intermediate schools and plans are to scale up the *My Learning, My Way* goals to the high schools providing one to one technology and the use of Bring Your Own Device (BYOD). As additional funding is secured the project will also scale to the 5th and 6th grades.

Applicant provides a clear and comprehensive graphic outlining all of the criteria of high quality plan including samples of each of the components.

The highest score is awarded because it effectively addresses all related criteria.

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

**10**

**6**

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

Applicant clearly identifies significant increases in ambitious yet achievable goals over five years for summative assessments of proficiency as well as decreasing achievement gaps (overall and by subgroups), improving graduation rates, and improving college enrollment.

The inclusion of charts in the following categories provided supportive evidence and data related to each of the areas:

- Performance on Summative Assessments: increasing percent performing at satisfactory level (Level II) to 70% in both math and language arts. It is noted that some sub groups make significant gains to 70% while some are just minor increases. More ambitious goals for already higher performing sub groups would have strengthened this sub-criterion.
- Achievement Gaps: Decreases in achievement gaps for each subgroup significantly decreased or eliminated altogether.
- Graduation Rates: increasing high school graduation rates to 90%. It is noted that the gap between overall and English Language Learners in this criteria is not decreased over the five year timeframe.
- College Enrollment: significant increases over time of at least 10%.

While this shortcoming does not impact the overall vision for the reform project, it is noted that data are provided only for the two grades (7th and 8th) served by this project and are not inclusive of all grades for which summative assessments are administered and is required within this criteria. Comparison for the ESEA targets is not noted within the narrative or accompanying charts.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>

**(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

Supported by an accompanying narrative and charted data, the applicant presents clear evidence of a record of success over the course of the past ten years in improving student achievement, decreasing achievement gaps, increasing graduation rates, decreasing drop-out rates, and turning around low performing schools. Examples presented include:

- Double digit growth in academic achievement
- Narrowing of achievement gaps between subgroups White and Hispanic by 47%
- Improvement in identified low performing middle schools and high schools to no longer in need of improvement

The applicant acknowledges it has not made such gains in student performance on college admission tests.

The data is provided to all parties through a web-based portal located within the district's webpage which can also be set

to send alerts to parents when student is absent or achievement falls below a certain set point. Data is also provided in paper format to parents and students.

This scores in the high range as all criteria have been effectively addressed with the exception of a description of significant reforms in its lowest achieving schools and the accessibility to data via the internet when a high-poverty/low socio-economic environment has been described.

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

**5**

**5**

**(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

Applicant presents strong evidence of transparency in making personnel salaries and other expenditures at the district and school level available for public review. Examples of evidence include:

- Recognition by State Comptroller for past four years for transparency in processes, practices, and investments
- Receipt of the Gold Leadership Award for budget transparency
- Receipt of Gold Star for each of access to budgetary materials
- Screenshots of examples of personnel salaries and expenditures by individual schools

This criterion receives the full score as all sub criteria are fully addressed.

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

**10**

**10**

**(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

Applicant describes strong evidence that state legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements provide successful conditions and sufficient autonomy for the implementation of the *My Learning, My Way* project. Evidence includes:

- Optional Flexible School day waiver-- district has autonomy to expand student access to learning venues outside of the school day which is inclusive of student progress depending more on mastery and not seat time as project is scaled up to the high school level
- Waiver for district developed teacher evaluation--evaluation must include student achievement outcomes or student growth data as an element of the evaluation criteria
- Articulation agreements with Institutes of Higher Education--as project is scaled up to high schools, students will have opportunity to take dual-credit classes due to the acceleration of student learning and progress based on mastery and not seat time

The highest score is awarded as all criteria are effectively addressed.

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

**15**

**13**

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

The applicant has documented significant evidence that relates to the compliance and support of stakeholders. In developing support for the plan, meetings and feedback were garnered that included the following groups:

- Design Team: included central office administrators, technology coordinators, and student information systems staff
- Principals of intermediate schools
- Teachers and administrators
- Mayors of local cities

The applicant is not required and does not participate in collective bargaining. To assess support of teachers, the applicant provided the staff with the proposal for review and asked for teachers to complete a survey. It is evident from survey results that nearly 100% of involved educators completed the survey and approximately 90% showed support for the proposal.

Clear evidence of stakeholder support and commitment to the project is provided as evidence in letters of support from:

- PISD Board of Trustees
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Verizon Innovative Learning Schools
- Rice University
- ACT
- Local Action Based Learning Organization

- CATCH Texas
- Think Through Learning
- Memorial Herman Southeast Hospital

It is not clearly evident how families, parents, and students were engaged in the development or revision of this proposal.

This scores in the high range because most criteria were effectively addressed.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>

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

Applicant clearly and comprehensively describes how the proposal, *My Learning, My Way*, will engage learners through a personalized learning experience. The applicant demonstrates that is has a well thought-out and high quality plan by which to create personalized learning through a one-to-one technology initiative using not just technology components but applications and software to track and monitor progress as well as deliver tailored instruction based on student learning preferences, styles, and needs.

Applicant describes a comprehensive scenario to demonstrate how the criteria are addressed by following a sample student through a variety of learning tasks which address student needs, learning styles, and interests which is facilitated through the use of technology. Inclusive in the scenario are diversified materials, goal setting, mastery or progress toward mastery of content standards and college- career-ready standards, and deep levels of learning.

(a)(i) The applicant describes a clear plan through example for students to understand their learning through the use of a digital e-Portal to track, monitor, and learn from others.

(a)(ii) The applicant describes a comprehensive plan through example for students to identify and pursue learning and development of goals linked to college- and career ready curriculum, understand how their learning is personalized to achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals. The description includes a system by which support is provided to students through individual tasks, project based tasks, and a variety of learning modalities that are interconnected from student, teacher, parent, counselor, and administrator.

(a)(iii) The applicant describes through example a clear plan for students to be involved in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest. The applicant describes how personalized learning will aid in driving students deeper into content based upon their needs and their interests.

(a)(iv) Through a variety to learning experiences students will have access to diverse cultures, context and perspectives through the use of personalized learning facilitated by a digital format.

(a)(v) Applicant describes a detailed example whereby students master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal setting, teamwork, and problem solving. Students will work at times in collaborative-based learning teams to solve problems and participate in high quality conversation in order to expand their individual and collective knowledge. These experiences will support perseverance, critical thinking, creativity, communication, and strategy skills.

(b)(i) The applicant demonstrates through example that each student will have access to a personalized learning environment facilitated by the e-Portal so that each student can achieve his/her own learning goals and ensure progress toward college- career-ready standards. The e-Portal model will promote an individual and collaborative learning environment where students understand long-term goals through the completion of activities and the inter-operable nature of the e-Portal.

(b)(ii) The proposal provides evidence that students will benefit from a variety of high-quality instructional approaches and learning tools. Students will be provided clear descriptions of progress and be provided multiple opportunities to accelerate learning.

(b)(iii) The applicant describes through example a clear plan for students to be involved in high-quality content including digital learning content aligned with college- career- ready standards, industry professionals, and virtual learning opportunities.

(b)(iv)(A) The applicant details plans to daily update individual student data that can be used to determine progress toward

mastery of standards. The e-Portal will be interconnected to portals used by parents, teachers, counselors, and administrators.

(b)(iv)(B) The applicant demonstrates plans to create personalized learning environments based on the student's current levels and the requirements for college- and career-readiness. Learning assignments, teaching strategies, and flexible learning opportunities will be tailored to each student's needs.

(b)(v) Due to the very specific and personalized learning nature of this proposal, the needs and accommodations for high-need students are integrated into their tailored learning plan. Specific accommodations for the special needs students or English language learner are not specifically addressed.

(c) The applicant describes a plan by which to provide initial training and support to students that will ensure they know how to use the tools and resources provided through the e-Portal and the *My Learning, My Way* project in order to track and manage their learning. It is not clear how on-going training or make-up training will take place for those that require additional assistance or development of technology skills.

Overall the applicant provides a quality plan for improving learning and teaching through the *My Learning, My Way* project facilitated by an integrated e-Portal design. This criterion scored in the high range because the applicant has a high quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide support for all students to be college and career ready though it is noted that with the heavy technology emphasis of this proposal, it is not fully addressed the accessibility of this technology outside of the scope of a normal school day or the physical school building. Connectivity outside of school for the targeted high needs, low socio-economic participating student is not fully addressed.

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

**20**

**18**

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

The applicant has a coherent and comprehensive plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment through the project *My Learning, My Way*.

(a)(i) The applicant describes the process of developing an implementation timeline. While the project will begin immediately, additional professional development will be provided throughout the summer as the project is scaled up to meet the timeframe for increasing complexity and ability of the e-Portal.

(a)(ii) The applicant demonstrates how teachers will use the e-Portal to provide specific learning tasks based on student needs and how teachers will utilize the data and functions of the e-Portal. Additionally, an Instructional Technology Specialist will provide 'just in time' support.

(a)(iii) The implementation of the e-Portal which is inter-connected between students, teachers, parents, counselors, and administrators will build upon the extensive professional development in the technology arena already expended by the district. The e-Portal is the next phase for professional development. The e-Portal will provide immediate data and alerts to student progress so that adjustments, remediation, acceleration, and resources of learning can be tailored and delivered to the student.

(a)(iv) The applicant will consider student achievement, advancement of personalized learning environments, and participation professional learning communities when evaluating teachers and principals. The applicant describes an evaluation system that will address the framework of college and career readiness, student academic performance on state assessments, and active participation in professional learning communities.

(b)(i) Applicant describes a process whereby the e-Portal provides teachers with actionable information to facilitate personalized learning. Data is disaggregated and provides information to create personal learning environments that are matched to student academic needs and interests.

(b)(ii) Applicant describes a process by which students will be provided a variety of resources based on their specific needs and interests. These resources include but are not limited to: Read Naturally, Think Through Math, Edgenuity, Leveled Readers.

(b)(iii) Applicant clearly describes the process in which teachers will have on-demand reports at the individual and classroom level to build individual personalized learning environments.

(c)(i) Applicant describes how all participating teachers will receive support for the implementation of the project through Professional Learning Communities and one-to-one information technology systems coaching.

(c)(ii) Applicant describes training that will continuously improve personal learning environments including how to use e-Portals, develop learning management skills, and ways to deepen instruction and learning.

(d) The process for increasing high-quality instruction and highly effective educators is described throughout the proposal and is embedded within the educator evaluation system which focuses on increasing student achievement, increasing personalized learning environments, and actively participating in professional learning communities. It is not clear or specific how the applicant will increase the number of students receiving instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals will be implemented in hard to staff schools, subjects, or specialty areas.

Overall this criterion scores in the high range because all criteria have been sufficiently addressed and evidenced.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant has described a high quality plan to support project implementation through a comprehensive approach.</p> <p>(a) Key individuals and their roles and responsibilities have been identified and developed (Program Director, Program Manager, Database Manager, Programmers, Instructional Technology Staff, Curriculum Specialists, Videographer, clerk, additional teachers, Health and Wellness Coordinator, help desk staff).</p> <p>(b) Each school will have a campus based leadership team that will work with and coordinate with the Program Director in developing schedules, establishing professional development, and roll-out plan. Each campus based leadership team will be composed of members who address the needs of each individual campus.</p> <p>(c) Applicant describes process whereby students will have the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on mastery of credit through two venues: Virtual High School and Digitized Classes.</p> <p>(d) The applicant describes a phase-in model to increase the ways and times by which a student can demonstrate mastery: 1) Performance on state assessment and classroom grades; 2) College Readiness as demonstrated on the ReadiStep assessment; and 3) Student academic portfolios.</p> <p>(e) Applicant describes the rationale for the very specific process of identifying learning gaps and tailoring resources and practices for all students as meeting the needs of all students (high need, English Language Learners, and those with disabilities).</p> <p>This criterion scores in the high range as the applicant has demonstrated the practices, policies, and rules are in place to provide support for each educator and student. It is noted that the preponderance of this large proposal falls to the Deputy Superintendent of Academic Achievement who currently oversees two additional departments. The feasibility of this arrangement of the central office for support and services is questioned. It is also not particularly clear that each individual school has clear autonomy over school based decisions involved in this proposal.</p>		

<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
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<b>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant provides a quality plan to support the project implementation of <i>My Learning, My Way</i> through comprehensive policies and infrastructures to provide every student and educator with the support and resources they need.</p> <p>(a) Personalized learning through the e-Portal is supported at each of the participating schools due to recent upgrades within the technology infrastructure ensuring parents, students, and educators have access to the tools and resources appropriate to them. It is not evidenced that there is supported connectivity among the identified population outside of the school setting.</p> <p>(b) The applicant has identified additional resources of help during the initial implementation phase through the Career and Technical Educator help desk as well as with the hiring of additional staff to assist at the technology help desk. Additionally, a campus based technical liaison will be present at each participating school. It is not evident if the help and assistance will be available outside of school operating hours.</p> <p>(c) Applicant acknowledges that final plans have not been made but goal is to have all data available to be exported in an open format.</p>		

(d) The applicant proposes that through the funding of this plan it will ensure that inter-operable systems is established. The data systems will include human resources, student information, budgets, and instructional improvement data.

This criterion scores in the high range. However this criterion would have been strengthened if a clear plan of establishing help and resources had been further developed and if connectivity beyond the school system had been addressed.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>
<p><b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant demonstrates a comprehensive, clear, high quality approach to continuously improving its plan as evidenced by:</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring--An external evaluator will create protocols, spreadsheets, and databases to track and process data. It is noted that qualifications for this evaluator are not provided.</p> <p>Implementation Team--The team will be responsible for analyzing data and revising program activities based upon data and grant objectives</p> <p>Short-term Formative Data--Usage of the e-Portal will be monitored and analyzed. All teachers will be surveyed bimonthly for understanding, use of e-Portal, and value in project. A stratified sampling of students to assess understanding and use of e-Portal. Parents and other stakeholders will be surveyed twice a year. Case studies and focus groups will also be used to assess effectiveness and provide evidence of needed revisions.</p> <p>Summative Data--In addition to the identified performance measures described within the proposal the applicant will also use a multi-leveled analysis technique to analyze the results of the performance measures.</p> <p>Sharing of Information--Central office administrators will provide updates on the implementation of the project through faculty meetings and parent/community events. Additionally, the applicant will publish newsletters describing progress and benefits of projects.</p> <p>This criterion earns a high score because it effectively addresses the criteria with the exception of a clear description of the responsible party (external evaluator).</p>		
<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Applicant appropriately explains the use of the Implementation Team which will meet bi-monthly to look at data from the <i>My Learning, My Way</i> project implementation. Quarterly, this team will provide updates to community and stakeholders based upon the e-Portals linkages, one to one technology initiatives, college and career readiness, growth of highly effective educators, and findings of the external auditor. Applicant indicates that information will also be shared through presentations at school board meetings, faculty meetings, parent and community events.</p> <p>This scores in the high range as the criterion has been sufficiently addressed though it lacked specific detail on how ongoing engagement of parents and stakeholders would be addressed or increased for continuous improvement.</p>		
<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<p><b>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Applicant clearly provides comprehensive evidence for assessing student outcomes as shown in the accompanying charts and narrative discussion of the performance measures and goals. The rationale behind selecting these initial measures is centered on students being college and career ready upon high school completion, however there is not a rationale provided for all measures.</p> <p>The applicant has identified less than twelve performance measures. The measures are organized by grade bands impacted by the goals of this proposal.</p> <p>A high score is awarded for this section because it effectively addresses the criteria though less than twelve performance measures are identified. It is also noted that measures identified within the accompanying tables do not match the goals</p>		

identified within the narrative portion of this section.

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

**5**

**5**

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

Data from this project will be analyzed by an external evaluator using an Extended-Term Mixed Method Evaluation Design. Working with the external evaluator, the Implementation Team will assess needs of the proposal, implementation fidelity and validity, and make recommendations for change as evidenced through the data collection processes. The applicant will evaluate effectiveness of the funded activities through these findings which will be represented in quarterly reports. This criteria scores in the high range because the applicant provides a high quality plan for evaluating the effectiveness of investments.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The budget is organized around three major components and is reasonable and sufficient for project development and implementation. The plan did identify specific capacity building measures that will support the development: Student Learning (e-Portals), Streamlining Data Systems, and Educator Effectiveness. The applicant thoroughly describes the rationale for the investments and priorities, including a description of all of the funds that will be used for one-time investments versus those with ongoing operational costs that will be incurred during and after the grant period.</p> <p>A high score is awarded because it effectively addresses all related criteria.</p>		
<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>Applicant provides argument for sustainability from a three prong approach:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Several positions funded by the proposal will not be needed at the conclusion of five years and will be eliminated. It is noted that some of the positions identified are described as essential roles in the on-going success of this project.</li> <li>2. If proposal is successful, the district should see a cost savings in areas of remediation costs and in staff training costs. These cost savings would be applied to the personnel that are hired as a result of grant funding and would need to remain in place at the conclusion. It is noted that staff turnover and additional training to address upgrades in technology and/or programs is not considered.</li> <li>3. If cost savings do not net the required funding, the superintendent will request funding (up to \$1.5 million) from the Board of Trustees.</li> </ol> <p>The applicant provides a limited description of how to sustain personnel and does not address the sustainability of the technology components required within the proposal. With the heavy emphasis on technology within the project, it is not clear how the applicant will continue to upgrade the components or maintain programs/devices.</p> <p>Applicant provides a detailed description of support from government leaders. Applicant provides a comprehensive explanation of how funding of proposal integrates with and supports the current strategic plan for reform and achievement demonstrating evaluation of past investments and informing future ones.</p> <p>Due to the limited and lacking information regarding the sustainability of the volume of personnel and technology recommended in this proposal, this criteria scores in the medium range.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</b>		

Applicant clearly specifies a number of relationships and partnerships to address three major goals identified within this criterion.

1) Increasing student health

- American Diabetes Association
- Human Kinetics/Fitness Gram--Cooper Institute
- CATCH
- Action Based Learning

2) Reduce the un/under employment of PISD's student's families

- Gulf Coast Workforce Board-Workforce Solution

3) Help students and their families gain vision of post-secondary opportunities

- Rice University
- College Board
- San Jacinto College Central Campus
- College Readiness Initiative
- K16 Bridge Program

Six specific indicators apply to each of these goals which align with or support the measures of the proposal. Indicators are ambitious yet achievable. Indicators include:

1. Reducing student absenteeism
2. Increasing number of students reaching healthy fitness zone
3. Reduce office referrals for behavior
4. Summative assessment performance measures will increase in proficiency
5. Graduation rates will increase
6. Enrollment in post-secondary will increase

Data from each of the identified partnerships will be collected as they relate to the identified indicators.

The applicant describes that focus will be with participating intermediate schools but that all schools will have access to the services of these partnerships.

As such, all partners have provided letters of support and agreed to the plan, and the data they acquire will be utilized and shared with school educators. The expanse and variety of activities are anticipated to further develop students who are college and career ready.

### Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

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

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

Applicant provides sufficient evidence that Absolute Priority 1 is met. The applicant will create personalized learning environments which:

- are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students
- are aligned with college and career ready standards and graduation requirements
- accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs and interests of each student
- increase the effectiveness of educators
- expand the access to highly effective educators
- decrease achievement gaps across student groups
- increase the achievement of all student groups

Total	210	184
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

**Application #0162TX-3 for Pasadena Independent School District**

### A. Vision (40 total points)

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

**(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

Pasadena's reform vision to create an on-line Personal Learning Environment infrastructure that uses a multi-faceted approach to address the individual and collective academic needs of students, enable teachers to develop deeper relationships with their students, and maximizes technology to engage student learning, is both comprehensive and coherent. Supporting evidence includes:

- Applicant thoroughly addresses the four core education assurance areas: (1) with one-to-one technology, PISD's plan will incorporate college- and career-readiness standards aligned to State standards; (2) plan will build on its data warehousing system by developing an e-dashboard for teachers to build a personal learning environment for every student and will measure student growth to inform teachers and principals on how they can improve instruction; (3) an educator evaluation system that measures student learning growth and identifies the use and promotion of personal learning environments that will identify and retain teachers along with a coaching process to support educators in becoming highly effective; and (4) PISD's proposal will build on its successes of turning around low performing schools by developing leadership capacity and establishing campus cultures that embrace continuous and ongoing Professional Learning Environments.
- Applicant articulates a clear and credible approach: identifies goals of accelerating student achievement (enabling e-portals for personal learning); deepening student learning (educators will interact dynamically with students); and increasing equity through personalized student support (personalized learning environments through e-portals that allows teachers to monitor student work and individual student -work portfolios).
- Applicant provided an example of what the classroom experience will be like for an 8th grade student and details how the student will understand her individual learning goals and work in class and outside the classroom based on her interests. Teachers will have immediate access to student data to tailor assignments to specific learning needs.

Overall, PISD's reform vision is thorough and comprehensive which is reflected in the high score.

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

PISD's approach to implementing its reform proposal includes the district's 10 intermediate schools with 7th and 8th grade students and supports high-quality LEA-level implementation. Justification is provided for how they selected participating schools with goals and activities to positively affect each student including:

- Applicant selected participating schools because they have the one-to-one student to technology infrastructure needed to fully implement the project. Participating students identified as "at risk" are at an age when they can still be re-engaged in their educational goals.
- Applicant provided a list of schools was provided that will participate in grant activities.
- Applicant provided an estimated number of participating students (from low-income families and high-need). Total number of participating educators was also included.

The high score for this area reflects the overall approach to implementation and the comprehensive definitions for

identifying participating students and educators.

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

PISD's proposal includes a high-quality plan describing how their reform will be scaled up to support district-wide change and help them reach their outcome goals to improve student learning outcomes for all participating students. Evidence to support their plan includes:

- Timelines for how the e-portal, which is key to their program, will be rolled out to students, teachers, counselors, parents, and administrators.
- Activities to develop and implement the e-portal and program are identified and supported with the rationale of how each activity impacts the program.
- Deliverables for each area (students, teachers, counselors, administrators) are documented in the Appendix.
- Responsible parties are identified for carrying out the activities.

Scale up of the proposed program is well documented with specific activities phased in over the life of the grant and is likely to help PISD reach its outcome goals. Applicant's logic model clearly identifies activities that will be implemented and documents the anticipated outcomes.

A high score is given in this area based on the applicant's extensive supporting evidence.

<b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>
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**(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

PISD's vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance due to their exhaustive analysis of student achievement data and evidence of data supporting success of past programs. Applicant's vision is likely to increase equity by addressing performance gaps between economically disadvantaged, limited English proficient, special education, African American, and White students. PISD provided documentation of how they have already made progress in closing achievement gaps in the last four years between subgroups.

Applicant's annual goals to improve student learning and performance are ambitious yet achievable overall and by student subgroup based on:

- Performance on summative assessments was provided for baseline data (SY 2012 and SY 2013) and aggressive targets were established with significant increases projected for each year of the grant and beyond.
- Subgroups were identified and baseline data and annual targets of increasing performance gaps between the subgroups were established for all four years of the grant and beyond.
- Graduation rates and college enrollment baseline data and annual goals were provided for the years of the grant and beyond.
- Applicant has provided baseline data and annual targets for postsecondary degree attainment for the four years and beyond the life of the grant.

**Weaknesses:**

- Applicant failed to provide evidence of how district scores compare with the State ESEA targets.
- Applicant failed to show a decrease in the overall gap between subgroups for graduation rates.
- Targets for the low-performing subgroups show significant increases but targets for higher performing subgroups are not significant. No rationale was provided on how the targets were determined.
- Graduation and college enrollment rates were provided but it's unclear how the goals will be reached with the applicant's focus on 7th and 8th grade participating students. No data was provided for high school students.

Applicant's goals are likely to result in improved student learning and performance given the ambitious annual goals they have established but a middle range score is given due to the lack of evidence indicated as weaknesses above.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>

**(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

Applicant has provided evidence of a clear record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and closing achievement gaps among subgroups by providing data that reflects consistent gains in the past four years based on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), which measures student growth, for the district in all content areas. However, there is no explanation of activities that were implemented that directly impacted the increases in student growth.

PISD's proposal includes data on high school graduation and college enrollment rates for the district from 2005 - 2012. Rates have increased in most areas and for the areas that have not shown significant increases, the applicant has provided explanations.

Applicant provided evidence that four (1 intermediate, 1 elementary, and 2 high schools) of its low-performing schools have been successfully turned around and are no longer considered low-performing. School-wide reforms were indicated as the reason for success but there were no details on what specific activities or reforms contributed to turning the schools around.

Student performance data (State assessments) is made available to teachers to utilize for instructional planning. Parents and students have access to student report cards, personal graduation plans, and attendance through a Parent Connection tool located on the district's website. Parents receive notifications if the students' grades fall below a minimum value set by parents. Other information is available for parents and students to help them improve their academic performance.

Applicant's score in this area is high due to the level of detail provided to support their record of success in advancing student learning.

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

PISD has demonstrated a high level of transparency in their district processes, practices, and investments with substantial public documentation for each of the participating schools. Detailed expenditures for instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration were provided as appendices and attachments in the proposal. All school-level expenditures from State, local, and private funds are accessible to the public in accordance with the State of Texas' transparency program of which PISD has received high ratings for four years in a row.

Applicant provided actual personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff; personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff and teachers; and data for non-personnel expenditures at the school level.

The high score reflects the thoroughness of the applicant in providing all the supporting evidence.

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

PISD has obtained waivers from the State of Texas that provides the district with the autonomy it needs from State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to fully implement its program for personalized learning. Sufficient evidence provided in the application includes waivers for: optional flexible school days; use of a locally developed appraisal process to support the proposed program; and allowing intermediate students to take classes beyond their grade level.

A high score is given due to the applicant's demonstrated evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy to implement their program.

<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>
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**(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

PISD has submitted a proposal with strong stakeholder engagement and support including:

- A detailed description of how the basic framework was designed by a core team representing key staff from the district.
- Feedback through review of the proposed program and surveys from teachers and administrators.
- 90.2% of teachers support the proposal (PISD does not have collective bargaining representation).
- Letters of support are included as Attachments from local businesses, non-profit organizations, higher education institutions, and community based programs.

Applicant fails to provide evidence of how students and families were engaged in the development of the proposal. There

is no supporting evidence from parents, parent organizations, or student organizations.

A high score is given: while the applicant provided a sufficient level of evidence detailing how teachers and district staff were engaged and support the development of the proposed program, there was a lack of evidence to support student and parent engagement in the proposal.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>

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

PISD provides a detailed discussion of how their plan will implement instructional strategies to personalize learning, enable students to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to college- and career-ready standards and requirements, and accelerates learning and supports the needs of participating students. Timelines, activities, deliverables, and responsible parties are identified and are adequate to implement their plan. Applicant's approach provides evidence that it will engage and empower learners at age-appropriate levels including:

- Personalized learning environments are based on students' individual needs and interests.
- Lessons are linked to college- and career-ready standards and students will have opportunities to explore careers.
- Students are involved in deep academic learning experiences by the teacher identifying areas of need and providing relevant context to assignments. Students are also able to choose academic content area based on their interests.
- Project-based lessons will go beyond the teacher provided content and challenge and motivate students in areas in which they struggle.
- Students will master State standards while participating in collaborative projects that build their goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving.
- Students will be exposed to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives through project-based learning that is personalized based on the students interests.

Applicant provides sufficient evidence on how educators support and are involved in improving student learning through their proposal but fails to sufficiently describe how parents are involved in supporting the program. It is also unclear how students identify goals and how the program helps them understand how what they are learning is key to accomplishing their goals.

Applicant's approach provides evidence that students will have access to a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development through their e-portal program; a variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments through project-based lessons and blended and flipped classes; and digital learning content through their e-portal design of personal learning environments with content aligned to college- and career-ready standards. However, the applicant does not specify how students who lack connectivity at home to the e-portal program will fully take advantage of these virtual learning environments.

Ongoing and continuous feedback is provided from teachers to students through the e-portal on grades, performance on state assessments, and their progress toward meeting college- and career-ready graduation requirements. Teachers will review student academic growth and gaps and utilizing resources within the e-portal to accelerate learning and address gaps in mastery of content.

Training will be provided to students (day 1 of school), parents (during school's open-house in Sept. and throughout the school year), and students and parents will have access to a 'help desk' to ensure they have 24/7 access. However, the applicant does not provide plans for training for parents if they are unable to attend the open-houses.

Accommodations for high-need students will be accomplished through the same e-portal plan for all participating students. For those students with disabilities that are not capable of using a computer, the teacher will have access to relevant data that can meet their needs and improve their learning experiences.

A high score is given based on the evidence provided to support the criteria in this area for a high-quality plan for improving student learning.

<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>
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**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

PISD is proposing a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching that supports a personalized learning environment with a rigorous course of study for all participating students. Timelines for professional development, specific activities, deliverables, and responsible parties for the training have been sufficiently identified. Evidence to support the applicant's high-quality plan includes:

- Lessons are aligned to college- and career-ready standards and graduation requirements.
- Teachers will be able to assign lessons based on students' individual needs and interests to accelerate learning.
- Participating educators will have adequate training on the PLE-portals during the summer, through 'just in time' training at each school site, and ongoing new or additional training as additional components of the portal are added.
- Teachers will be trained to use PLE-portals to adapt content and instruction specific to student common and individual needs; utilize resources recommended within the portal to further instruction; and adjust daily lessons based on the mastery level of performance assessments.
- Using PLE-portals, teachers, counselors, and administrators will frequently measure student progress in meeting college- and career-ready standards and graduation requirements and use data to accelerate students' performance or improvement.
- A detailed explanation of the applicant's teacher, principal, and superintendent evaluation process was provided that is likely to improve effectiveness by using feedback.

Applicant provides sufficient evidence that all participating teachers will have access to and know how to use tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready graduation requirements with continuous training on the e-portal which will house student data (performance, attendance, grades, demographics), tools (assessments, communication), and resources (curriculum, software programs) to drive instruction that is personalized for each student. Evidence to support this area includes:

- Teachers and counselors have access to actionable information about student performance, attendance, participation in college visits, college and career exploration and assessments, college affordability planning, and academic planning for college and career readiness.
- Curriculum aligned with college- and career-readiness standards delivered through an online e-portal with access to resources to support or supplement the curriculum.
- Student academic needs will be linked web-based learning experiences through programming developed in the e-portal with teachers providing feedback on student performance to continuously have information needed to revise and refine students' personalized learning.

PISD's proposal included a detailed framework for an educator evaluation system that will help teachers and school leadership teams assess and take steps to improve individual and collective educator effectiveness tailored to individual student academic needs and interests. Evidence was provided on how the training will occur, systems that will be used, and practices put into place to continuously improve school progress to increase student performance and close achievement gaps.

PISD has provided sufficient evidence of a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals based on the evaluation system described in the application. However, the applicant's plan does not sufficiently address hard-to-staff schools, subjects, or specialty areas for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals.

A high score is given in this area due to the applicant providing sufficient evidence to address the criteria.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>

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

PISD has provided a comprehensive plan to support the implementation of their proposed project. Resources and support will be available to educators and students when and where they are needed through the PLE-portal developed through the project. Evidence to support the high-quality plan include:

- Roles of the LEA central office and project staff are well-defined and seem reasonable to provide support and services to all participating schools with the appropriate level of technology support to implement the e-portal described in the proposal.
- Project Director will work with school leadership teams in participating schools to establish training and roll-out plans

- to meet project timelines and milestones with the flexibility they need to meet the needs of their particular school.
- Participating intermediate schools will have access to a PISD-operated virtual high school and digitized classes that will allow students to work independently and to progress through a class based on mastery rather than seat time.
  - Mastery for participating students will be determined through multiple assessments and in multiple comparable ways over the four years of the grant to measure student learning and growth in academic content and college- and career-ready standards.
  - Resources and instructional practices will be adapted to meet the needs of ELL students and students with disabilities through the PLE-portal being utilized for all participating students to identify gaps and match appropriate resources.

Applicant addressed the criteria in this area at the district level but failed to provide documentation for the criteria at each participating school level.

The applicant receives a high score in this area for providing documentation for a comprehensive infrastructure to support implementation for their plan.

<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
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**(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

PISD presents a high-quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure to support personalized learning. Sufficient evidence is provided for:

- All participating students, parents, and educators have necessary content, tools, and other learning resources by providing each student with a mobile device they can use during the school day and take home with them to access the PLE-portal. PISD is working on getting Internet services for families that can't afford it. Educators will be provided with 24/7 Internet access.
- A full-time campus based technical liaison will be hired, a help desk and repair center will be accessible for all educators, parents, and students, and instructional technology specialists will guide and support the instruction and use of the PLE-portal.
- Final processes will be defined to provide parents and students information that will be exportable in an open data format but applicant fails to provide details on how this the process will work and how the data will be used in other electronic learning systems.
- There is supporting evidence that the proposed plan will use internal and external available data systems to create the technology-driven personal learning environments to ensure LEAs and schools use inter operable data systems.

Applicant does not provide sufficient evidence to support how students and parents lacking connectivity to the Internet will have access to the PLE-portal which is a key element to the program.

Based on the comprehensive program described in this proposal, the score for this area is high.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>

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

PISD's strategy for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process provides timely and regular feedback to guide program modifications throughout and after the grant funding. The strategy addresses how the applicant will monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of its investments.

Evidence to support the continuous improvement process includes:

- Monitoring will lead to continuous improvement by: hiring an external evaluator; data tracking with spreadsheets and databases; an implementation team will review data and make appropriate changes in a timely manner; and reviews will be held quarterly during the grant period and beyond.
- Data collection and measurement will be aligned to performance measures; include short-term, summative, and formative data collection measures; data will be collected bi-monthly, mid-year, and annually; tools used to collect data will include surveys, focus groups, assessments, student grades, promotion and graduation rates, FitnessGram, and college- and career-readiness scores.

Information will be shared publicly by providing updates to the Board of Trustees, faculty, parents, and community organizations through meetings, newsletters, and presentations. Information will include evaluations of grant activities and the quality of its investments in technology (e-portal, one-to-one initiatives), professional development and staff (growth in the number of effective and highly-effective teachers).

The Evaluator will be external but the applicant did not identify or provide qualifications for the Evaluator.

Applicant has presented a high-quality plan with a comprehensive strategy to implement a rigorous continuous improvement process that is ambitious and achievable which is reflected in the high score.

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

Strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders is convincing and supported by evidence. For example the Implementation Team will meet bi-monthly and provide quarterly updates to all stakeholders. Updates will include information on the status and effectiveness of grant investments of the student/educator e-portals and technology linking, one-to-one technology initiatives, student college- and career-readiness, increased instructional rigor, growth in the numbers of effective and highly effective educators, partnerships, student participation, and benefits from activities and strategies addressing students' academic and social needs. Quarterly reports and updates are sufficient and allow adequate time for monitoring and making adjustments if needed. Applicant meets the criteria for this area and receives a high score.

<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
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**(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

Applicant's proposal includes ambitious yet achievable performance measures, overall and by subgroup, with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures. Multiple measures have been identified by PISD for the required performance measures and additional leading indicators have been identified. Rationale behind creating these performance measures is appropriate based on the goals established by the project.

The measures provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to the proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant's implementation success or areas of concern by addressing college- and career-readiness, educator effectiveness, academic performance, and student health. However, it is unclear how many performance measures were identified but it appears the applicant has provided less than 12 which does not meet the criteria of having 12 to 14 measures. Rationale for the performance measures is given as an overall statement and lacks detailed explanations of how each performance measure was developed. There appears to be a disconnect between the goals identified in the narrative for grades 9-12 and the lack of performance measures provided in the tables for these grade levels.

Applicant provides a detailed logic model for evaluation based on key elements of the proposal that sufficiently describes how it will review and improve the measures over time to gauge implementation. The Implementation Team will monitor the fidelity of activities that were designed to result in growth and will analyze data and make adjustments as needed.

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

Applicant provides a detailed logic model for evaluation based on key elements of the proposal that sufficiently describes how it will review and continuously improve its plan. Evaluation plan includes a high-quality plan to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of RTTD funded activities in professional development and those that employ technology with short term, formative, and summative data analysis. In addition the applicant provides a timeline to review and report the information.

The applicant has provided effective documentation to support the elements of this area and received the top score.

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

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

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

The budget proposed by PISD identifies all funds that will support the project. The budget is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the proposal. Applicant provides a thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities with a description indicating all funds that will be used to support the implementation of the proposal will be from RTTD grant. Applicant has identified funds that will be used for one-time investments versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs during the grant period. Detailed documentation is provided in the budget narrative for expenditure of funds.

A high score is given based on the sufficient documentation of the applicant's budget and narrative.

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

**10**

**6**

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

PISD has provided a high-quality plan for sustaining its project's goals after the term of the grant. Evidence to support the plan beyond the grant period includes:

- Framework and systems for the PLE-portal will be established at end of grant period with the district continuing the support of the systems.
- Continued use and expansion of PLE-portals to other content areas and grade levels.
- Tracking of students' progress toward careers and college enrollment and PK-16 student academic performance.
- Ongoing development of educator effectiveness through staff evaluations and coaching to increase the number of effective and highly-effective teachers.
- Continuation of college- and career-ready standards.
- Continued relationships with community support partners.

Weaknesses:

- District will keep some of the key positions from the program however the applicant fails to sufficiently address how these positions will be funded.
- District will commit to funding of personal learning environments post grant period from cost savings or additional funding if needed. Applicant states that funding could come from the Board of Trustees but fails to provide evidence that the Trustees would support the funding.
- It is unclear how technology will be sustained, upgraded, or replaced or how a BYOD will be implemented in the high schools since it is a low-income area.

Sufficient evidence was provided to describe the sustainability for the project but a middle range score was given due to the weaknesses noted above.

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

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

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

PISD meets the competitive preference priority based on:

- Partnerships with public and private organizations, American Diabetes Association, Human Kinetics/FitnessGram Cooper Institute, CATCH, Action Based Learning, Gulf Coast Workforce Board, Rice University, College Board, San Jacinto College Central Campus, College Readiness Initiative, and K16 Bridge Program, are fully documented on how they will support the project.
- Identification of population-level desired results for students in LEA.
- Indicators are identified for each desired outcome and will be tracked at the aggregate level for all children within the LEA.
- FitnessGram results will allow PISD to target health partner services to meet students' health needs.
- Participating schools will have priority but all schools in the district will have access to partner services.
- Partners will work with schools to problem-solve and refine activity implementation as needed.
- Catch curriculum will be used to support healthy eating and physical activity with training coordinated by health partners; American Diabetes Association will support a health literacy intervention program; Action-Based Learning Lab will teach students how the brain works; and Memorial Herman Southeast will offer opportunities for students and parents to participate in weight management programs, support and resources in health and nutrition.

- Applicant provides sufficient details on how they and their partners will provide staff in participating schools with the tools and supports to assess the needs and assets of participating students.
- Applicant has identified and inventoried the needs and assets of the school and community that are aligned with the goals of the project to improve education and family and community supports.
- Sufficient evidence is provided on how the applicant's decision-making process and infrastructure to select, implement, and evaluate supports that address the individual needs of participating students and support improved results.
- Parents and families will be engaged through membership on the Campus Health Advisory Committee and by having access to their child's e-portal.
- Applicant's progress in implementing its plan will be assessed quarterly and bi-monthly PISD will correlate student health to academic performance. Problems will be resolved with leadership teams and health and wellness specialists and activities refined to improve implementation.
- Applicant provided details for each of its ambitious yet achievable performance measures for the proposed population and the sufficiently described the desired results for participating students.

Applicant provides convincing evidence of meeting competitive preference and receives a high score.

### Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>		<b>Met</b>
<p><b>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>As stated in other sections, PISD has comprehensively addressed how it will build on the core educational assurance areas to create personalized learning environments to improve learning. The designed plan has the potential to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards and graduation requirements; accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student; increase the effectiveness of educators; expand student access to the most effective educators; decrease achievement gaps across student groups; and increase the rates at which student graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.</p> <p>The applicant provides sufficient evidence that these areas of concentration will positively affect student learning and ensure goals under this proposal are met. The applicant meets Absolute Priority 1.</p>		

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>188</b>
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