Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0103SD-1 for Rapid City Area School District 51-4

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	**10**	**4**

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a historic evolution of the educational system that is visionary and not directly relevant to the foundation that the proposed reform will be built upon. The applicant successfully communicates a vision that is comprehensive and inclusive of the four core educational assurance areas but fails to provide relevance of how the vision builds on its current work. For example, the applicant states that its vision includes reaching 100% proficiency, closing the achievement gap, and ensuring graduation success in college and career for all students which necessitates drastic reform efforts. The efforts that have been attempted are not clearly described in terms of efforts the applicant has made but vaguely describe national educational reform efforts. It is unclear which specific efforts the applicant has made that have led to current results.

The applicant addresses multiple priorities that comprise its reform vision. These priorities are not clearly linked to the four core educational areas. The applicant does not specifically address the adoption of standards that promote college- and career-readiness instead refers to them as 21st Century learning skills. There is no direct reference made on turning around lowest-achieving schools. The applicant's reform vision does not include how students' academic interests inform their approach.

The applicant provides limited information on what the classroom experience will be like. Some indicators of what the classroom experience may look like can be deducted from the strategies that are proposed. An example of such strategies are the use of blended learning opportunities that allow students to control the time, place, path and pace of their learning.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	**10**	**6**

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a list of schools that will participate in the grant activities. Also provided are a list of schools along with their student population, their demographic information and participating educators. The applicant is vague in stating whether all of its schools will participate in the reform proposal and instead states that each school will be directly impacted by the reform proposal.

The applicant provides insufficient documentation regarding approaches that would support high-quality proposal implementation. One approach that is described is the implementation of professional learning communities which by themselves are inadequate to address high-quality implementation. The applicant describes that the professional learning communities are already in place and that training has been provided in August of 2012 and again in August of 2013. It is not clear whether this reform proposal is a scale-up of what is already in place.

The applicant describes phase one of its proposed reform and two of its four goals focus on strengthening the professional learning communities and the other two goals focus on specific goals of the professional learning communities. Again, the professional learning communities can be part of a system that implements the proposed reform but by itself does not constitute the reform.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	**10**	**2**

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The reform proposal does not include fully developed components that would constitute a high-quality plan. The plan lacks clear key goals, activities to be undertaken, and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities.

The applicant lists six strategies that are supposed to guide the implementation of the reform proposal. The six strategies are visionary in nature and support general leadership approaches. They lack specificity as to what actions are needed so that the applicant will reach its proposed goals. Some of the strategies are in contradiction to the proposed reform. For example, the applicant aspires to undergo a whole system transformation, yet one of the six strategies proposed states that the focus will be on setting a small number of ambitious priorities with each and every school.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	5

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not sufficiently describe its annual goals that would likely result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity.

a) The applicant proposes appropriate performance measures for students' to increase their reading and math scores so that they reach proficiency or above based on the state summative assessment. These performance targets are separately identified for all students and for each of the subgroups. The performance measures are not specified by students' grade levels which makes the applicant's success in improving student learning unlikely as grade-appropriate progress measures are not identified. The anticipated progress for students is ambitious as evident in its anticipated increases, but unlikely to be achieved as the anticipated progress is too high. For example, students with disabilities are anticipated to show an increase on the state's reading/language arts test from a 43% to a 64% after four years of program implementation.

b) The applicant appropriately describes that the wider gap in achievement is found with its Native American population. However, the applicant does not clearly describe the achievement gap for this population in terms of percentages and compared to other subgroups but inappropriately combines all of the subgroups into one combined subgroup. Combining all of the subgroups into one category will not effectively demonstrate growth for each of the subpopulations that is needed to determine improved student learning and performance and equity as set forth in this criterion.

c) The applicant lists several baseline graduation percentages that are significantly higher than the projected baseline for the current year. For example, the baseline for students classified as being of two or more races is stated to be 82% for year 2011/12. The applicant projects a stark decline the following year to 62.5% and increases during the grant period are only projected to be at 74.5%. The applicant does not sufficiently describe this discrepancy that is found across many of the subgroups.

d) The applicant states that it has no data regarding college enrollment which diminishes the applicant's likely hood of achieving improved student learning and performance and increased equity.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	**15**	**2**

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant lists several initiatives it has implemented years ago and fails to address a clear record of success in the past four years. One such effort discussed is Promoting Reflective Inquiry in Mathematics Education. Data depicted for this project ranges from 2003 to 2009 which does not fall within the past four years.

The descriptions of this effort and others does not demonstrate how student learning and achievement as well as increasing equity in learning and teaching was achieved. They lack clear strategies and raw student data that would provide a link between the implemented strategies and student learning outcomes.

The applicant lists other efforts that were made but none demonstrate an ambitious or significant reform and student learning outcomes that have resulted from the efforts. Examples of these efforts are full-day Kindergarten, Jump Start, Building Leadership Teams, General Beadle Community School and Partnership Rapid City. The applicant states that its full-day Kindergarten program was implemented based on a firm belief that starting strong was critical to the future educational success of student. Implementing a program on a belief is not the kind of evidence that supports the improvement of learning outcomes.

The applicant states that one of its school was restructured to become a community school and lists the components that were added to the school. It is not clearly stated whether the school was a persistently lowest-achieving school or a low-performing school. The applicant vaguely notes that the community school meets the needs of its children and families but does not address how it meets the needs, what these needs are, and how the applicant's actions contributed to the

success of transforming the school.

The applicant states that student progress and performance data are made available to the public through websites and that individual student progress is provided to families through the school/teacher. The student performance data that is needed to inform and improve participation, instruction, and service available to students, educators and parents is not described with sufficient detail. In addition, the dissemination of data is not described in terms of frequency and purpose.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	**5**	**1**

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states in general terms that all budgetary considerations are published in the newspaper and on its website, but the applicant does not specifically address whether the publications contain the four categories of school-level expenditures. The applicant notes that transparency is guaranteed by law and regulations but does not describe transparency in relation to its processes and practices.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	**10**	**5**

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant fails to identify and describe possible barriers that would prohibit successful implementation of the proposed reform. The applicant states that the Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Education will collaborate with the applicant to identify and overcome barriers that state policy or regulations may present. This approach will not ensure that successful conditions and sufficient autonomy are in place as the collaboration between the applicant and the Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Education is described to take place at a future date.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	**15**	**8**

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not fully address how stakeholders were engaged in developing this proposal. Instead, the applicant describes how the community helped in establishing a new vision and mission for the district but not the proposed reform. This is evident through the date of the stakeholder meeting that is discussed by the applicant. The date when stakeholders were convened was in the Spring of 2011 which is clearly outside of the scope of this reform proposal.

The applicant states that several stakeholder groups determined the alignment between district priorities and the proposed reform. The applicant is obscure in describing how stakeholders were engaged for the purpose of this proposal alone. The applicant states that upon award, communities of learners will be engaged in information sessions regarding the program and the implications for staff. This approach does not support the engagement of stakeholders that is required for the development of the proposed project as it does not engage stakeholders during the development phase. Engaging stakeholders after the award defeats the purpose of engaging stakeholders.

The applicant appropriately provides letters of support from stakeholders.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	**20**	**4**

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant addresses this section insufficiently. The responses often lack a clear description of how parents and educators support the learning of all students. The applicant does not convincingly address how learning and teaching will be improved with the goal of helping all students to be college- and career-ready.

a)i) Holding a series of community meetings to inform stakeholders about the project and informing them about the importance of learning will provide limited results in helping stakeholders understand why learning is important.

a)ii) The applicant states that customized learning plans will be developed over the course of the project and that these plans will identify learning goals, which insufficiently describes how goals will be identified and how they are linked to college and career-ready standards. The applicant has a feasible plan in place to measure progress toward the goals.

a)iii) The applicant states that students will be engaged in rich learning experiences but fails to describe what they are and how they are facilitated in areas of academic interest. For example, the applicant notes that students will have the opportunities for rich learning experiences. Providing students with opportunities alone is not an instructional strategy that fosters engagement and empowerment of all students.

a)iv) The applicant provides insufficient detail on how the plan determines access and exposure to cultures and to what extent it motivates and deepens individual student learning. The applicant states that it serves a large number of Native American students and will continue with its efforts to give students the opportunity to learn about cultural diversity and context as a contributor to student motivation and learning. A clear link between how learning about cultural diversity and context and an increase in student motivation and a deepening in individual learning is not established.

a)v) The applicant does not convincingly address how students master critical content and develop other skills described in this section. The applicant states that the approach is going to be holistic which is only one indicator of a high quality plan. The applicant makes no reference to how students will develop skills and traits such as goal-setting and creativity.

b)i) The applicant provides an assessment process that is a valuable component of successful student learning. However, the applicant does not provide a description of the personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development that is required in this section.

b)ii) The applicant provides a sparse statement that a variety of instructional approaches will be developed and considered for student use on an individual basis. The applicant does not provide sufficient evidence regarding the quality of the instructional approaches. Students' access to high-quality environments is undocumented.

b)iii) The applicant does not address access to high quality content and only in limited fashion addresses that digital resources will be aligned with college and career-ready standards.

b)iv) The applicant states that after the proposed reform grant is awarded, the applicant will meet with a third party to adapt a software program to meet the requirements of the proposed reform project. This is inadequate to address how students will have access to ongoing and regular feedback.

c) The applicant provides limited evidence on what will take place to help students understand the tools to track and manage their learning. The mechanisms listed do not describe how they will achieve this objective which in turn limits students engagement and empowerment.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	**20**	**8**

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides convincing evidence that all educators will participate in professional learning communities to learn. However, the applicant does not address how the participation in PLCs will support educators in improving instruction and increasing their capacity to support student progress toward meeting college-and career-ready graduation requirements.

a)i) The applicant does not focus the narrative on how teachers support the effective implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies that meet each student's academic needs and help ensure all students can graduate on time and college- and career-ready. Instead the wording in the narrative is general and vague which is a indicator that only limited results can be expected.

a)ii) The applicant does not provide any information regarding the adaptation of content and instruction.

a)iii) The applicant does not provide any information regarding the frequent measure of student progress.

a)iv) The applicant does not provide any information regarding the improvement of teacher' and principal' practice and effectiveness..

b)The applicant describes several approaches that can accelerate student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready graduation requirements. However, the applicant does not describe these approaches with sufficient detail and with sufficient relevance.

b)i) The applicant does not provide any information regarding actionable information.

b)ii) The applicant does not provide any information regarding high quality learning resources.

b)iii) The applicant does not provide any information regarding processes and tools to match students' needs.

c)i) The applicant states that principals and vice-principals will receive training on using the results of teacher evaluations to make recommendations, identify professional development, ad support interventions for improving teaching performance. The applicant makes no reference regarding how this training will enable them to structure an effective

learning environment that meets individual student academic needs and accelerates student progress.

c)ii) The applicant does not provide any information regarding training, systems, and practices to continuously improve school progress.

d) The applicant does not provide a high quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	**15**	**4**

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates a plan to support project implementation which is depicted in the form of a rubric. The plan provides a feasible framework for district practices but is void of policies and rules that facilitate personalized learning.

a) The applicant describes the personnel that will be added to implement the project and also describes the organizational structure that will be created to facilitate this project. The organization of the central office is described inadequately in terms of how it supports personalized learning for all students. The applicant states that one director will be added to its current structure and states that this director will collaborate with the current directors of various departments to promote successful reform implementation. Adding one leadership position to its central office without also revising practices and policies, does not provide sufficient organization to successfully implement the reform.

b) The applicant insufficiently describes the flexibility and autonomy given to school leadership teams. The applicant mentions that PLC teams have twenty-seven early-out Wednesdays to meet. Providing time for PLCs to meet is not sufficient evidence on how flexibility and autonomy is given to school leadership teams to facilitate personalized learning.

c) The applicant states that students may demonstrate mastery of course content by taking the end-of-course exam or through on-line providers. The description lacks detail regarding how students in all grade levels will demonstrate mastery of course content as end-of-course exams are limited to high school courses.

d) The applicant addresses that students are given the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways. The applicant discusses that formative assessment information will be used to determine credit attainment. Formative assessments are used to inform instruction and are less valuable in determining credit earned. Formative assessments are appropriate to demonstrate the mastery of standards, however, the applicant does not describe the use of formative assessments for the purpose of demonstrating mastery of standards.

e) The applicant discusses that the use of an electronic device such as a tablet can be modified to meet all students' needs. The applicant provides only one example of a learning resources and does not address how instructional practices that facilitate personalized learning are provided for all students.

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

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

a) The applicant's description is limited to the use of the personal digital device that will be implemented. The applicant does not describe any other aspects that would form the infrastructure to support personalized learning beside the digital learning tool.

b) The applicant states that teacher training will be provided to trouble-shoot the electronic devices. The applicant is limited in its description on how the trouble-shooting will be conducted.

c) The applicant vaguely describes the use of two data systems that provide feedback for parents and students. The applicant does not describe whether the data systems will allow parents and students to export their information and to use the data in other electronic learning systems.

d) The applicant inadequately states that an inter operable function of the two data systems is desirable but offers no suggestions that this is part of the infrastructure that will support personalized learning as part of this proposed project.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	**15**	**3**

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant discusses the hiring of an outside evaluator to conduct the continuous improvement process. Removing this process from the proposed reform may greatly reduce the effectiveness and future sustainability of this project. The applicant appropriately identifies the need for program evaluation but fails to tie the evaluation process and results back into the improvement process. This is especially evident in the fact that the evaluation team will meet only two times per year to examine the data.

The applicant provides no reference to the rigor of the evaluation and whether the applicant will monitor, measure, and publicly share information.

The applicant does not provide a plan that is of high-quality as it does not include key goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	**5**	**4**

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant appropriately lists several ways through which stakeholders can provide feedback. Some of these include community meetings and web-based data systems that will provide information to stakeholders. The applicant provides a high-quality plan in the form of a matrix that allows teachers to keep track of their practices and provide reflective and evaluative feedback to the evaluation team. The plan lacks clear time lines that are required in a high-quality plan.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	**5**	**1**

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant inadequately addresses this section as evidenced by the following:

The applicant describes in the narrative that performance measures a) and b) for all students is included, but the corresponding charts state that the information regarding the number of students who are served by highly qualified teachers and principals is not available.

The applicant's performance measure for PreK through grade 3 is confusing as the performance measure under this rubric corresponds to students in grades 3 through 5. In addition, the applicant does not describe the methodology for determining the proposed 3% annual increase.

The non-academic performance measure is listed as student mobility rate. The applicant fails to demonstrate how it proposed to reduce the mobility rate of students and their families and what methodology is used to determine a 3% decline in mobility annually.

The applicant does not indicate why the increase for 8th grade GAP students is 5% while the increase for all 8th grade students is 3%. There is a disconnect between the performance measure of college-and career-ready and the applicant's performance measure of reading.

The applicant appropriately stated the performance measure of bullying to be reduced by 1% annually among all students. The applicant did not describe how it determined the 1%.

The applicant indicates that it has no information regarding the number of students who have completed FAFSA forms. Reading and math are listed as measures of college- and career-ready indicators, and the same percentage points of 3% for all students and 5% for GAP students have been assigned without an explanation as to the methodology used.

There is a disconnect between the performance measures listed in the narrative and the performance measures that are charted. The charted measures do not reflect some of the performance measures that are listed in the narrative, and there are some indicators that are listed in the charts that are not reflected in the narrative.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	**5**	**1**

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the RTT-D funded activities that is incompatible with previous sections of the proposed project. The plan includes verbatim questions from the required components of the grant, however, the applicant did not sufficiently address these components in the proposal. For example, the applicant's rubric lists questions that ask in what ways and to what extent the comprehensive assessment system informs teachers, teacher teams, and students regarding mastery of the content and skills required for college and career readiness. This expectation was not fully addressed in prior sections and therefore represents an incompatible and irrelevant approach to evaluating effectiveness.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	**10**	**5**

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant identifies all funds that will support the project, however, in-kind funds that are contributed by the applicant are not clearly described. The amounts of the in-kind contributions and how they support the project are not sufficiently described.

The amount of funds to be used for the proposed project are reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the proposal.

The rationales for investments and priorities provided by the applicant are in some instances described for only broad purposes such as the purchase of software and are not sufficiently thoughtful. The applicant does not specify what software is needed to implement the program. Also not clearly described are the electronic devices that are going to be purchased for each student. The applicant insufficiently describes the types of electronic devices that will be purchased and only mentions that they are devices such as iPads. Not included in this description is the applicant's plan to replenish outdated devices. Insufficiently described in this example is what the applicant's priorities regarding the purchase and dissemination of these tools are. For example, the applicant proposes an annual amount of funds for the purchase of digital devices that extends over the course of four years. It is unclear whether the allotted funds will purchase devices for certain schools or certain grade levels at each year of grant or whether all schools receive a certain amount of devices each year and the number of devices will increase each year.

The applicant appropriately identifies the funds that will be used for one-time investment versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs.

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

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant insufficiently addresses the sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. The applicant states that previous successes and previous sustainability are indicators of the sustainability of the current proposed reform. The applicant confusingly states that it has previously closed the achievement gap which is in contradiction with the student data that is part of this proposed reform.

The applicant does not provide a high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. It does not include key goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities.

The applicant briefly addresses the replacement of personal, digital devices after the term of the grant, and anticipates meeting the cost requirement for replacing digital devices.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	**10**	**3**

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes a community school that has been in operation since 2008/2009. The community school was developed as a result of a restructuring requirement, and has no relevance to this proposal. The applicant reports that the Rapid City Community School Partnership was instrumental in developing the community school, but it is unclear whether the applicant is continuing the partnership because of Rapid Community School Partnership's prior success.

1) The applicant states that the North Rapid Community School Partnership will implement a joint approach to the Promise Neighborhood Program and the North Rapid City planning grant. Again, the connection between these entities and the applicant's proposed reform are unclear. The purpose of the partnership is unclear as the application lacks a description of how the partnership demonstrates coherence and sustainability. The applicant lists several strategies that the North Rapid Community School Partnership will engage in to determine community needs in North Rapid City. Also lacking is an explanation as to why the North Rapid Community School Partnership is proposing the strategies to determine community needs when the partnership is to augment the applicant's efforts.

2)The application does not contain ten results that are aligned to educational results; instead eight results listed are not stated in terms of educational results or educational outcomes. For example, the applicant states a desired result as: Children who use alcohol, drugs or tobacco. The results are not stated in terms of whether children's drug use will be lowered and by how much it will be lowered. The applicant lacks a description of whether it considered giving priority to schools with high need students. This lack of consideration is evident in that all students are to receive the additional support.

3) The applicant states that a data system will be developed and lacks descriptions regarding (a) how the data system will track the indicators, (b) use data to target its resources, (c) develop a strategy to scale up the model, and improve results over time, and (d) improve results over time.

4) The applicant does not address how the partnership would integrate education and other services.

5) The applicant does not address how it would build the capacity of staff.

6) The applicant left this section blank with a statement explaining that baseline data for performance measures is not available and that it will be gathered with goals set during the first project year.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		**Not Met**

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has not addressed coherently and comprehensively addressed how it build on the core educational areas to create learning environments. The applicant's proposal lacks sufficient details regarding how it would address the core educational areas. The applicant provides unclear explanations of how its proposed professional learning communities will result in significant improvements in learning and teaching. The application included very limited descriptions of how teaching will be improved to achieve results. The alignment of the proposed reform with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements is not sufficiently supported by the applicant.

Total	**210**	**70**

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0103SD-2 for Rapid City Area School District 51-4

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	**10**	**6**

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

A 1.Articulating a Comprehensive and Coherent Reform Vision

The Rapid City Area Schools (RCAS) proposes a reform vision titled: Rapid Transformation of Learning through Customization (Rapid TLC). The Rapid TLC proposal is grounded in the acknowledgment that the past thirty years of reform efforts, which have focused on deepening content skills, improved instructional practice, and integrated technology, have failed to improve academic achievement for all students and as such, it is time to undertake a major transformation of the RCAS into a learning system whereby differentiation and customization of learning is available for all students and adults. Evidence presented by the RCAS to substantiate insufficient student success during the past 30 years includes: 1). 25% of RCAS student learners have not yet reached proficiency in reading and math, 2). fewer than 60% of high needs students are proficient in reading and math, and 3). only 70% of student learners complete high school in four years. The Rapid TLC proposal . . .

(a) Builds on its work in four core educational assurance areas:

- The Rapid TLC proposal does an excellent job of building on the District's work in the four core educational assurance areas as evidenced by their engagement with staff, students, families, and the community to revisit its mission and vision which ultimately resulted in the Rapid City School District Board of Education adopting four priorities: 1). Improve organizational capacity and staff effectiveness, 2). Adopt a guaranteed, viable and relevant curriculum, 3). Develop a comprehensive system of assessment, and 4). Ensure diverse opportunities for all students.

(b) Articulates a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support grounded in common and individual tasks that are based on student academic interests

- In addition to the establishment of priority goals, the Rapid TLC proposal identifies their approach with two additional foci to further develop their whole system design. The foci include a field book that extends the work of Schwahn and McGarvey in their publication on *Mass Customized Learning*, and the four communities of learners the project will impact - leaders, educators, student learners, and families/community.

(c)) Describes what the classroom experience will be like for students and teachers participating in personalized learning environments

- The RTC proposal provides an excellent "big picture" of the goals and priorities for the Rapid TLC proposal from which they intend to personalize learning opportunities for all RCAS students, and these priorities are aligned with the elements of the Rapid TLC program.

This section is scored in the mid-range because of the lack of clear evidence that there is a clearly defined approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement and deepening student learning, and increasing equity. In addition, there is no evidence in the proposal that explains what the classroom experiences will be like for students and teachers who participate in a personalized learning environment.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

A 2. Approach to Implementation

The Rapid TLC proposal includes an excellent approach to implementing its reform proposal which supports high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation as evidenced by:

(a) A description of the process that the applicant used or will use to select schools to participate.

- The RCAS proposal states that over a four year period of time, every school, teacher, and student in the district will be directly impacted by the Rapid TLC project if funded. There is sufficient data in the proposal that ensures the RCAS attendance centers collectively meet the RTT-D eligibility requirements.

(b) A list of the schools that will participate in grant activities

- A list of all RCAS schools is included in the Rapid TLC proposal.

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

- The total number of participating students, participating students from low-income families, participating students who are high-need students, and participating educators are clearly delineated as evidenced by school district demographics.

This section is scored in the high range because all of the criteria required in the application have been met. Points have been deducted for the lack of clarity and specificity surrounding the four year implementatin process. For example, the timeframe specified is on an annual basis. A quarterly timeframe whereby activites to be accomplished are delineated for each quarter would help to ensure fidelity of implementation. Another example of lack of specificity is in the activity, "Continue capacity building in PLC classroom staff." A description of this activity would have added specificity to the plan.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	2

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

A 3. LEA-wide Reform and Change

The Rapid TLC proposal includes a high-quality plan describing how the reform proposal will be scaled up and translated into meaningful reform to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools and will help the RCAS reach its outcome goals as evidenced by . . .

- The RCAS Rapid TLC proposal includes a graphic representation of the RCAS priority goals as their Theory of Action, and describes the Professional Learning Communities model as the vehicle to ensure distributive and coordinated leadership in their pursuit of whole system reform. The logic model reflects the work of Fullan (2009) that identified six strategies for reform. 1). Develop the entire teaching profession, 2). Capacity-building - a two-way street between instruction and assessment, 3). Focus on a small number of ambitious priorities, 4). Distributive, coordinated leadership is needed at all levels of the system, 5). Establish a focused, comprehensive. relentless intervention strategy, and 6). Use money to drive reform in the service of the previous five fundamentals.

This section is scored in the low range as only the required goals for a high-quality plan are included in the narrative. The other components of a high-quality plan, activities to be undertaken, rationale for the activities, timeline, deliverables, and parties responsible for implementing the activities, are not included.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	2

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

A 4. LEA-Wide Goals for Improved Student Outcomes

The extent to which the applicant's vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goals that are equal to or exceed State ESEA targets for the RCAS, overall and by student subgroup in the following areas:

(a) Performance on summative assessments (proficiency status and growth).

- Student achievement data on the SPR is included in the proposal for reading/language arts and math. However, **all students K-12 are averaged together** which does not lead to usable data to determine whether or not student learning has improved. At a minimum, student achievement data by grade leve such as grades 4, 8, and 11 l should have been included with accompanying goals.

(b) Decreasing achievement gaps

- This section is weak because student achievement data as evidence for decreasing achievement gaps is presented though it is not identified which assessment was used for the data displayed. Nor is the specific methodology for determing the achievement gaps specified. Again, all students from all grade levels were averaged together.

(c) Graduation rates

- Baseline data and annual goals for graduation rates are delineated in the proposal. However, the goals identified are not ambitious . For example, the goal for 2017-18 (post grant) for all students is a graduation rate of only 84.42%. Moreover, the expectations for students who are in sub-groups are different than for each sub-group., i.e. 2017-18 graduation rates are 65% for African-Americans, and 58.89% for Native Americans, High expections for graduation rate would indicate the graduation rate of all support groups would be the same.

(d) d) College enrollment

- The Rapid TLC proposal does not include any baseline data for the college enrollment rates of its students, therefore, goals were not established. Evaluating whether or not college-career ready goals are being achieved cannot be determined without baseline data. No explanation was included in the proposal for why this data was not available.

This section is scored in the low range as there is no baseline data for college enrollment rates for RCAS students, the required assessment data is not presented for all criteria, and the annual goals listed, while achievable, are not ambitious.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

B 1). Demonstrating a Clear Track Record of Success

(1) The Rapid TLC proposal includes data from the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching, and includes a description, charts/graphs, raw student data, and other evidence to demonstrate the ability of RCAS to:

(a) Improve student learning outcomes and close achievement gaps, including by raising student achievement, high school graduation rates, and college enrollment rates as evidenced by:

- A 20 year track record of a coherent and sustained approach to improvements in teaching and learning is reviewed in the proposal. Chief among the several initiatives was the use of recommendations from the National Reading Panel to design an approach to balanced literacy.
- With the collaboration of two external partners the district adopted a new curriculum for literacy, redesigned instructional practices, and implemented formative assessment procedures. The RCAS proposal states the result of these interventions "showed that significant growth" was attained in reading. The proposal does

not include any achievement data to support this claim, nor provide an operational definition for the term "significant growth."

- The RCAS proposal also reviews similar work done in the discipline of mathematics. Again, working with external partners the model used for balanced literacy was replicated. Focused on elementary school teaching and learning, achievement data from the PRIME project was compared to all other schools in the state of South Dakota. Mean gain scores were similar at the beginning of the project in 2003, and by 2009 the Rapid TLC proposal states a "significant difference" between RCAS and the rest of the state was achieved.
- Sub-groups which showed positives effects from the PRIME project were Native Americans and free/reduced lunch students. Again, the Rapid TLC proposal does not explain the data presented, though graphs are included. The proposal states the effects of the PRIME project have been sustained over time, but does not include any data to substantiate this claim.
- Data presented for graduation rates include an increase in the all student category, 75.53% in 2011-12 to 82.64% in 2013-14, the Native American category from 39.13% to 53.09%, Hispanic 66.67% to 81.05%, economically disadvantaged from 62.22% to 74.58%, ad the students with disabilities 67.74% to 72.47%. The graduation rate for African-Americans fell from 79.62% to 65.00%.
- The Rapid TLC proposal does not include any college enrollment data.

(b) Achieve ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools as evidenced

- Implementation of full-day kindergarten in elementary schools in North Rapid City. The RCAS proposal states that because of the significant gains in literacy and numeracy among children with significant barriers to school readiness, the RCAS Board of Education established full day kindergarten in all 15 RCAS elementary schools. However, the RCAS proposal does not include any data to substantiate the purported gains in literacy and numeracy among children with significant barriers to school readiness. .

(c) Make student performance data available to students, educators and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and services as evidenced by

- District and State Department l student data is provided to families through classroom teachers.
- Local newspapers publish district and school *Report Cards.*

Because the Rapid TLC proposal does not define significant growth or provide data to document the claim of significant growth in reading, and there is no evidence provided that depicts and explains how performance data is used to improve participation, instruction, and services section is scored in the mid-range.

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

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

B 2). Increasing Transparency in Processes, Practices, and Investments

The Rapid TLC proposal provides a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments, including by making public, by school, actual school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration. The information presented includes a description of the extent to which the applicant already makes available the four required categories of school-level expenditures from State and local funds as evidenced by:

(a) Actual personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff, based on the U.S. Census Bureau's classification used in the F-33 survey of local government finances

(b) Actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff only

(c) Actual personnel salaries at the school level for teachers only; and

(d) Actual non-personnel expenditures at the school level (if available).

- All budget categories including individual salaries published in local newspaper
- Negotiated agreements and salary schedules are made available to the public
- Five community listening sessions held through the community because of necessity to cut budget by $4,000,000.

This section receives a perfect score because there are a number of quality initiatives to indicate the RCAS has a practice of providing to all stakeholders the required categories of school-level expenditures for state and local funds.

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

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

B 3). State Context for Implementation

The Rapid TLC proposal documents the conditions to be successful and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in their proposal as evidenced by:

- Assurance from the Secretary of the SDDOE to identify and overcome any unintended barriers that state policy or regulation may present for the RCAS to successfully completed all of the proposed initiatives in the Rapid TLC proposal.
- The Rapid TLC proposal primarily reflects legal,statutory, and regulatory requirements implemented for all South Dakota schools at the state level.
    - A new State Performance Index established to rank schools.
    - Adoption of the Common Core Standards in 2010
    - Pilot of the Smarter Balanced Assessment in 2013
    - Work is underway in the RCAS to develop a teacher and principal evaluation system to be implemented in 2014-15.
    - A new Student Teacher Accountability Reporting System (STARS) customizable at the school and district level to capture student formative assessment information and student progress in customized learning environments.

This section receives a perfect score because all of the necessary evidence to substantiate State, legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements are documented in the proposal at a high level and assures the necessary autonomy to successful implement the Rapid TLC proposal if funded.

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

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

B. 4). Stakeholder Engagement and Support

The RCAS articulates a collaborative goal setting process with stakeholders that was used to provide a focus and plan for whole-system reform which is the context and foundation for the Rapid TLC proposal. Stakeholder groups representing students, families, staff, child and family serving agencies, provided input for the RCAS to identify priorities for teaching and learning as evidenced by:

- To inform the development of the Rapid TLC proposal several stakeholder groups were reconvened to revisit district priority goals and their alignment with the proposal. Eleven priorities emerged from the stakeholder group process.

  (i) Evidence of direct engagement and support for the Rapid TLC proposal from teachers in participating schools is evidenced by groups of teachers and teacher leaders, including the President of the RCEA, met with RCAS leadership through the PLC structure.

(b) Letters of support

- There is excellent evidence of key stakeholder support as evidenced by signed letters of support from parents, students, parent organizations, community groups, higher education partners, and tribes which are included in the proposal.

This section is scored in the high range as much of the required evidence is presented, though it is noted that there was no evidence presented in the proposal to indicate how the proposal was informed or revised based on the engagement of the stakeholder groups.

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

	Available	Score

(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	10

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

C 1).

The Rapid TLC approach to learning is based upon a paradigm shift for educators whereby instruction is driven by the needs of diverse learners, and as such is "learner centered." To achieve this paradigm shift the RCAS acknowledges a process of stages with build upon one another, and recognizes that school transformation takes place over time. The identified stages include: 1). Safe and orderly environment, 2). High-quality instruction, 3). Guaranteed and viable curriculum, 4). Learning needs and progress is assessed and addressed via a technological system that is standards based, 5). Learners' mastery oontent and skills that is learner-centered.

In the Rapid TLC proposal this process is operationalized through the development of Customized Learning Plans for each student with a focus and commitment to learner motivation. The Rapid TLC proposal describes the work of Carol Dweck which will inform the development of strategies. The RTT-D requires an approach that engages and empowers all learners, particularly high-need students in an age-appropriate manner. At a minimum there should be evidence of an approach to learning that is differentiated for elementary, middle school, and high school students. There are no examples in the proposal explaining how a "learner-centered approach" will be different at these levels.

(a) The Rapid TLC proposal asserts, and provides evidence, that with the support of parents and educators, all students will:

(i) Understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals. The RCAS will undertake a series of community meetings to ask for input and receive feedback about learning as a key to student success. A theme of the community meetings will be a shared understanding of college and career ready expectations.

There is no evidence in the Rapid TLC proposal that explains how educators will share in the high quality instructional strategies that will be developed. Moreover, there is no evidence presented to explain how the support of educators and parents will assist students in the development of learner motivation.

(ii) The Rapid TLC proposal specifies that a Customized Learning Plan will be developed for each student and as part of the CLP students will identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college and career-ready expectations.

However, there is no evidence in the proposal to indicate how the RCAS will assess whether or not their students *understand* how to structure their learning to achieve goals. The proposal specifies the use of formative and summative assessments to measure progress toward goals, however, the review of these assessments will only occur annually. Even though a continuous improvement cycle for the CLP is indicated, there needs to be an identified system in place to inform parents more frequently than annually.

(iii) The Rapid TLC proposal indicates the CLP will include discussion of student interests and rich learning experiences, however no specific information is presented to indicate how the District defines deep learning experiences or provides examples of age appropriate deep learning experiences available to their students.

(iv) The Rapid TLC proposal states that the RCAS will maintain its emphasis on activities that afford students to learn about cultural diversity and its context as a contributor to student motivation,however, no evidence is presented to describe the current district emphasis. There is no evidence in the proposal of the cultures, contexts, and perspectives that are - or can be - experienced by RCAS students.

(v) The Rapid TLC proposal states that, as appropriate, students CLP will identify and master critical academic goals, student goals, as well as project goals.

(b) The Rapid TLC proposal asserts, and provides evidence, that with the support of parents and educators, all students will

(i) Be afforded personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable the student to achieve his or her individual learning goals and ensure he or she can graduate on time and college- and career-ready by the use of formative assessments that provides students, teachers, and families consistent information to build the CLP.

(ii) Be provided a variety of learning experiences that will be developed for students, and indicates a diversity of contexts during the school day for students such as interacting with a computers, hand-held

devices, a mentor, instructional coach, etc.

However, in order to provide high-quality instructional approaches the RCA must define what constitutes high-quality. Without this definition, it will be impossible to determine whether or not high-quality approaches are being implemented. There is no evidence to indicate high-quality has been defined.

(iii). Be afforded high quality content. However, there is no evidence in the proposal to indicate what criteria is used to determine if the content is of high-quality. The methods for students accessing high-quality content were not identified.

(iv) Afforded the opportunities provided by a highly regarded software package EDUCATE/EMPOWER as the means of providing regular and ongoing feedback. This Learning Management System offers a user friendly dashboard that summarizes student's progress on learning outcomes and informs student's next steps for instruction. The system will be customized for the RCAS. A timeline and plan for the customization process was included in the proposal and includes:

(A) Frequently updated individual student data that can be used to determine progress toward mastery of college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements ; and

(B) Personalized learning recommendations based on the student's current knowledge and skills, college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements , and available content, instructional approaches, and supports; and

(v) To ensure that accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students are on track toward meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements the RCAS has implemented RTI to accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need learners are available and implemented with fidelity. The EDUCATE/EMPOWER system will track the effectiveness of accommodations.

(c) The Rapid TLC proposal indicates the RCAS will provide awareness materials and sessions for acquainting students with tools and resources made available through this project if funded. In addition, an online module will be made available. There is no evidence of the tools and resources that will be provided through the project.

This section is scored in the mid range because of the lack of evidence identified in the evaluation of the criteria above.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	**20**	**10**

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

C 2) Teaching and Leading:

An approach to teaching and leading that helps educators to improve instruction and increase their capacity to support student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements by enabling the full implementation of personalized learning and teaching for all students, in particular high-need students is proposed in the Rapid TLC project by:

(a) All participating educators engage in training, and in professional teams or communities, that supports their individual and collective capacity to

- To build professional capacity within the RCAS Professional Learning Communities model will be employed. The Rapid TLC proposal states that the main concepts of a PLC are in direct alignment with adopted Board of Education goals. Moreover, the work of a PLC is to ensure learning for each student by answering the critical questions of what students are to learn, how learning will be monitored, and how adults will respond when student do not learn. This work will coordinate strategies for individualized learning for all students. While the Rapid TLC proposal does a good job of explaining the philosophical underpinings of the PLC process, it does not explain where the Rapid City Area Schools are at in the process by explaining what has been accomplished/completed and detailing next steps.

(i) Support the effective implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies that meet

each student's academic needs and help ensure all students can graduate on time and college- and career-ready as evidenced by:

- Establishment of collaborative teams to determine skills and concepts student master
- Determination of how to deliver high-quality instruction aligned to essential outcomes
- This section does not include specific examples of what specific strategies tailored to student academic achievment needs will be employed by district teachers.

(ii) Adapt content and instruction, providing opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks, in response to their academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches (e.g., discussion and collaborative work, project-based learning, videos, audio, manipulatives); as evidenced by:

- Collaborative teams will share common pacing guidelines
- Determination if students are mastering essential learning outcomes
- Determination of how to extend learning experiences for students in need of enrichment.
- No evidence is included to indicate how (time and structure) each of the above bullet points will be accomplished, or examples of how each will be accomplished.

(iii) Frequently measure student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards, or college- and career-ready graduation requirements and use data to inform both the acceleration of student progress and the improvement of the individual and collective practice of educators as evidenced by:

- The PLC Process will be used to monitor student progress. However,
- The Rapid TLC proposal does not provide evidence that through the PLC process college and career ready standards or graduation requirements will be met. It is stated in the proposal that the essential learning outcomes of the district will be monitored, but it is not known if the essential learning outcomes are the same as college and career ready standards.

(iv) Improve teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness by using feedback provided by the LEA's teacher and principal evaluation system including frequent feedback on individual and collective effectiveness, as well as by providing recommendations, supports, and interventions as needed for improvement as evidenced by:

- The RCAS are participating in a pilot program to create a new evaluation system for teachers and principals that will provide feedback on effectiveness.
- There is no evidence in this section (C - 2) that the proposed evaluation system will meet this criteria which calls for an evaluation system that provides recommendations, supports, and interventions as needed for student improvement.

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

- The Rapid TLC proposal identifies a three component professional development plan to be delivered via online and face-to-face delivery via participating cohorts and summer institutes. However, the cohort concept is not explained, or defined. The first two components of the PD plan include: 1). The development of foundational knowledge, 2), Classroom support for teachers.

(i) Actionable information that helps educators identify optimal learning approaches that respond to individual student academic needs and interests as evidenced by:

- A Formative Assessment and Data Analysis. To be used in conjunction with the Learning Management System.
- Differentiated Instruction to address the variety of learning styles, interests, and abilities of all students
- Motivation for Learning. Empowering students with a growth mindset instead of a fixed mindset toward education.
- Learning and Information Management System - All educators in the district will develop a deeper understanding of student information systems and the learning management systems and how the two can work together to customize student learning.

(ii) High-quality learning resources (e.g., instructional content and assessments), including digital resources, as appropriate, that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements , and the tools to create and share new resources as evidenced by:

- The Rapid TLC proposal describes their plans for classroom support for teachers as providing continual technical assistance provided by an outside expert or peer experts.

- The Rapid TLC proposal provides no evidence of what high-quality learning resources will be made available or what tools to create and share new resources will be made available to teachers.

(iii) Processes and tools to match student needs (see Selection Criterion (C)(2)(b)(i)) with specific resources and approaches (see Selection Criterion (C)(2)(b)(ii)) to provide continuously improving feedback about the effectiveness of the resources in meeting student needs as evidenced by:

- No evidence is provided as to what processes and tools to match student need with specific resources will be provided to teachers.

(c) All participating school leaders and school leadership teams have training, policies, tools, data, and resources that enable them to structure an effective learning environment that meets individual student academic needs and accelerates student progress through common and individual tasks toward meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements The training, policies, tools, data, and resources by:

- The third component of the Rapid TLC proposal for staff development is leadership development for building principals and vice-principals. Other than training on the use of the new teacher evaluation system, the proposal does not include specific tools, data and resources they will be able to use to structure the learning environment for individual student academic needs. Moreover, there is no specific staff development program identified for central office administrators.

(i) Information, from such sources as the district's teacher evaluation system that helps school leaders and school leadership teams assess, and take steps to improve, individual and collective educator effectiveness and school culture and climate, for the purpose of continuous school improvement as evidenced by:

- Participating as a pilot school for the SDDOE's new teacher and principal evaluation system. The new system will incorporate both state and federal requirements. A clear set of six objectives have been established as a foundation for evaluations that provide regular opportunities for the engagement of educators in professional conversations focused on improving instructional practice.

(ii) Training, systems, and practices to continuously improve school progress toward the goals of increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps as evidenced by:

- Other than training in the new teacher and principal evaluation systems there is no evidence of other training, systems, and practices to improve school progress toward the goals of increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps. This is insufficient.

(d) The applicant has a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals, including in hard-to-staff schools, subjects (such as mathematics and science), and specialty areas (such as special education) as evidenced by:

- The Rapid TLC proposal indicates the RCAS has implemented Teachscape , a learning management system for educators that will afford the opportunity to have all educators create their own customized learning plan. The system is designed to use data about teaching to guide action. The Teachscape software encompasses three modules: Teachscape Focus (training and assessment), Teachscape Reflect (observation and evaluation), and Teachscape Learn (professional learning.)

Scoring for this section falls in the mid-range because the Rapid TLC proposal does not meet the criteria for a high quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective principals. The proposal does not articulate key goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities to increase the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective principals.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score

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

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

D 1). LEA Pracitcies, Policies, and Rules

The Rapid TLC proposal indiates the RCAS has practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning by:

(a) Organizing the LEA central office, or the consortium governance structure, to provide support and services to all participating schools as evidenced by:

- Central office staff comprised of a superintendent, assistant superintendent, and a Leadership Team of eight directors.
- If funded, the Rapid TLC proposal calls for the employment of a Rapid TLC Director, working collaboratively with district administrators, the employment of a Digital Education Specialist, and eight Customized Learning Coaches. However, there is no explanation as to how central office staff will work with building principals within the Rapid TLC program. (b) Providing school leadership teams in participating schools with sufficient flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators, and school-level budgets as evidenced by:
- The use of the PLC process and structure as the means for developing school leadership teams.
- There is no evidence in the Rapid TLC proposal to indicate if these teams will have flexibility and autonomy in determining school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions, roles and responsibilities and school-level budgets and as such does not meet the required criteria.

(c) Giving students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic as evidenced by:

- Providing opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of course content will be provided through end of course exams. There is no indication of the grade levels for these end of course exams.
- The STARS system is identified as the method by which the opportunity for self-paced mastery will be made available to all students.

(d) Giving students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways

- Providing all students with access to a state of the art personal computing device which will serve unique learner needs and abilities and provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate mastery at multiple time and in multiple comparable ways.

(e) Providing learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners as evidenced by:

- The explanation of the tools to be used in the project, the rationale for each tool, and the purpose/outcome anticipated by use of the tool is presented very well. These tools are adaptable and fully accessible to all students.However, the framework and tools listed are identified as "valued by project leaders", and as such does not reflect tools that are valued by teachers who will participate in the project which limits the potential effectiveness of the tools.

This section is scored in the mid range because the criteria for a high quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective principals is not articulated. Specifically, the proposal does not articulate key goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities to increase the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective principals.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	7

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

D 2). LEA and School Infrastructure

The Rapid TLC proposal indicates the RCAS and school infrastructure supports personalized learning by

(a) Ensuring that all participating students , parents, educators, and other stakeholders , regardless of income, have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of the applicant's proposal as evidenced by:

- A personal computing device for each student, regardless of income, that will support customized learning environments.
- Evidence of the requirements for a high quality plan is not presented

(b) Ensuring that students, parents, educators , and other stakeholders have appropriate levels of technical support, which may be provided through a range of strategies (e.g., peer support, online support, or local support) as evidenced by:

- Nineteen technicians within the IT Department.
- Digital Education Specialists work within the Division of Staff Development
- If funded the Rapid TLC Program will add a staff member to IT and Digital Education for the impact of over 13,000 new devices in the District.
- Evidence of the requirements for a high quality plan is not presented

(c) Using information technology systems that allow parents and students to export their information in an open data format and to use the data in other electronic learning systems (e.g., electronic tutors, tools that make recommendations for additional learning supports, or software that securely stores personal records) as evidenced by:

- The use of *Skyward* for student data management and access to student progress information. *Skyward* can be used for schedules, attendance, discipline, food service accounts, school registration and includes a message center.
- Evidence of the requirements for a high quality plan is not presented

(d) Ensuring that LEAs and schools use interoperable data systems (e.g., systems that include human resources data, student information data, budget data, and instructional improvement system data) as evidenced by:

- The use of *STARS* a statewide longitudinal data system that will link student and teacher unique identifiers, detect increments of progress and growth, and design new approaches to instruction.
- The use of a new Learning Management System. It is unknown whether or not STARS can be linked to the Learning Management System.
- Evidence of the requirements for a high quality plan is not presented

Scoring for D 2 falls in the mid -range because the Rapid TLC proposal does not meet all of the criteria for a high quality plan for the support of personalized learning by the LEA and school infrastructure. The proposal does not articulate key goals, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	**15**	**10**

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

E 1). Continuous Improvement Process

The Rapid TLC proposal indicates an external evaluator will be employed to guide the continuous improvement process through the use of a spiraling cycle based on data. The results of the project will be assessed through the lens of the vision, strategic plan, goals, and framework. Leaders will then make data-based decisions for informing next steps. Primary sources of quantitative data associated with performance measures and student progress will be used to continuously focus teachers, teacher teams, and school leaders on improving student achievement and closing achievement gaps. Specifically, the data used will be form SMART goals and the STARS data system.

This section is scored in the mid range because the continuous improvement plan proposed by RCAS does not meet all of

the criteria for a high quality plan. Goals, timelines, deliverable, and the parties responsible for implementation of activities is not include. Moreover, the plan does not state how the data that is monitored and measured will be shared publicly, nor is information included in the proposal about how the district will share information on the quality of its investments funded by RTT-D.

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

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

E. 2). Ongoing Communication and Engagement

The Rapid TLC proposal includes the use of a Collaborative Evaluation Team as the initiators of communication with constituents. Multiple avenues of communication will be employed including the internet, community meetings held semi-annually, PLC's at the building level, and a quarterly review of program information and progress by the RCAS executive team. An on-line tool created by Technology Innovations in Education incorporating eight separate scales in leadership, teaching and learning, assessment and instruction, human resources, technology will also be employed. The tool is designed to reflect on current practice, present evidence of success, and gage progress in practice. The tool will be used to compile results and comparisons across each community of learners annually.

This section receives a perfect score because there is sufficient evidence to indicate the criteria has been fully met to a high level. Communication will be ongoing and will address internal and external stakeholders.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	**5**	**2**

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

E. 3). Performance Measures

The Rapid TLC proposal identifies 12 performance measures. The RCAS also specifies that several state-wide system changes currently under development will assist in the identification of more robust performance measures that will be incorporated during the grant period. However, these measures were not identified.

The measures listed in the proposal do not include the PreK-3 level, 4-8 level, or the 9-12 level and at least one grade-appropriate measure of a health or social emotional leading indicator of successful implementation.

There is no rationale articulated in the proposal for: a). how the performance measures identified were selected, b).how the performance measures identified will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to the theory of action, and c). the reliance on state mandate performance measures, whatever they are, will not all the district the opportunty to review or improve the identified performance measures over time.

The Performance Measure requirement stated in the application does not include a description of the methodology for calculating each measure. The Rapid TLC proposal also does not include the methodology for determining "proficient".

This section is scored in the low range because of the significant lack of evidence as indicated above.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	**5**	**2**

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

E 4) Evaluating Effectiveness of Investments

The specified grant evaluation process, as proposed by RCAS, is very general in nature, and incorporates spiraling cycles of planning, acting, observing, and reflection. Three lenses have been identified to be used for this analysis: 1). A grant-wide view, 2).The grant's implementation, 3). The grant's impact. In addition the evaluation will include program level indicators. To create an outstanding plan to evaluate and determine effectiveness of investments the program level indicators should have been articulated.

Priority/Process objectives in the proposal are well done with supporting guiding questions for evaluation. Because this section does not contain all of the elements of a high-quality plan - specifically there are not sufficient timelines and there are no parties listed as responsible for evaluating effectiveness - this section is scored in the mid range.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	**10**	**7**

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

F. 1). Budget for the Project

The Rapid TLC budget, including the budget narrative and table .

(a) Identifies all funds that will support the project (e.g., Race to the Top – District grant; external foundation support; LEA, State, and other Federal funds) as evidenced by:

- The Rapid TLC proposal indicates the following funding sources will be used to support the project in addition to the RTT-D grant: 1). South Dakota State DOE funds, and 2). Community contributions.

(b) Is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal; and

- The RTT-D budget as proposed by the RCAS is reasonable and sufficient. The requested budget amount is just under $29,000,000.00 and will provide an additional $450 per student in the district.

(c) Clearly provides a thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities, including--

(i) A description of all of the funds (e.g., Race to the Top – District grant; external foundation support; LEA, State, and other Federal funds) that the applicant will use to support the implementation of the proposal, including total revenue from these sources

- The RCAS will use categorical funding from the US Dept of Education, and the State of South Dakota
- Federal funds include Title I, Title IIA, Title VII, and Special Education funds.
- A clear rationale for the use of these funds is presented.
- Total revenue from state and federal sources RCAS will use in support of the Rapid TLC project are not included.

(ii) Identification of the funds that will be used for one-time investments versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs that will be incurred during and after the grant period, as described in the proposed budget and budget narrative, with a focus on strategies that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the personalized learning environments; and

- There is no evidence presented in the proposal to indicate which funds are one-time investments and which funds will be used for ongoing operational costs.

This section is scored in the mid range because there is no evidence presented in the proposal to indicate which funds are one-time investments and which funds will be used for ongoing operational costs, nor is the total amount of state and federal funds that will be used to assist in the project included.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	**10**	**5**

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

F 2).

The Rapid TLC proposal identifies the NSF PRIME project as an example of how RTT-D funded initiatives will be sustained over time. There is no evidence of an estimated post-grant budget which would include budget assumptions, potential sources, and uses of funds. The proposal does indicate a commitment on the part of the RCAS district to replace technology equipment funded by the RTT-D budget.

This section does not include all of the components of a high quality plan. There are no key goals, timelines or parties

responsible articulated in the proposal, and as such, is scored in the mid range.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	**10**	**2**

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

Competitive Preference Priority:

The RCAS proposes to integrate public resources in a partnership designed to augment the schools' resources by providing additional student and family supports to schools that address the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of the participating students, giving highest priority to students in participating schools with high-need students.

(1) Rapid TLC [provides a description of the coherent and sustainable partnership to support the plan described in Absolute Priority.

- The proposal provides a clear and comprehensive description of a transformation project of a high-need elementary school in the district. A full service community school was envisioned and implemented. In addition to the educational wing of the building, a community wing was built that houses a school-based health clinic, a full service branch of the Public Library, a 21st century community learning center, family resource center, and adult and community education.

(2) Identify not more than 10 population-level desired results for students in the LEA or consortium of LEAs that align with and support the applicant's broader Race to the Top – District proposal. These results must include both (a) educational results or other education outcomes (e.g., children enter kindergarten prepared to succeed in school, children exit third grade reading at grade level, and students graduate from high school college- and career-ready) and (b) family and community support results;

- Population-level desired results are identified for family/safety, wellness and family/education. There are no educational results proposed.

(3) Describe how the partnership would –

(a) Track the selected indicators that measure each result at the aggregate level for all children within the LEA or consortium and at the student level for the participating students

- No evidence is indicated in the proposal. There is no baseline data in the proposal.

(b) Use the data to target its resources in order to improve results for participating students), with special emphasis on students facing significant challenges, such as students with disabilities, English learners, and students affected by poverty (including highly mobile students), family instability, or other child welfare issues;

- No evidence is presented in the proposal that meets this criteria.

(c) Develop a strategy to scale the model beyond the participating students to at least other high-need students and communities in the LEA or consortium over time; and

- There is not strategy in the proposal to scale the North Rapid Community School Partnership.

(d) Improve results over time;

- No evidence is presented as how the Partnership will improve results over time.

(4) Describe how the partnership would, within participating schools integrate education and other services (e.g., services that address social-emotional, and behavioral needs, acculturation for immigrants and refugees) for participating students (as defined in this notice);

- The North Rapid Community Partnership provides services that are integrated in the school in the following categories: Early Learning, Extended Learning. Graduation to College and Careers, Family Engagement and Support, Adult Education, and Health and Wellness.

(5) Describe how the partnership and LEA or consortium would build the capacity of staff in participating schools by providing them with tools and supports to –

(a) The Rapid TLC proposal does not provide evidence of an approach to assess the needs and assets of participating students that are aligned with the partnership's goals for improving the education and family and community supports identified by the partnership;

(b) The Rapid TLC proposal does not provide evidence of an approach to identify and inventory the needs and assets of the school and community that are aligned with those goals for improving the education and family and community supports (as defined in this notice) identified by the applicant;

(c) The Rapid TLC proposal does not provide evidence of an approach to create a decision-making process and infrastructure to select, implement, and evaluate supports that address the individual needs of participating students (as defined in this notice) and support improved results;

(d) The Rapid TLC proposal does not provide evidence of an approach to engage parents and families of participating students (as defined in this notice) in both decision-making about solutions to improve results over time and in addressing student, family, and school needs; and

(e) The Rapid TLC proposal does not provide evidence of an approach to routinely assess the applicant's progress in implementing its plan to maximize impact and resolve challenges and problems; and

(6) There is no evidence in the Rapid TLC proposal that annual ambitious yet achievable performance measures for the proposed population-level and describe desired results for students have been developed.

This section is scored in the low range because of the lack of sufficient evidence as cited above.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		**Met**

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The Rapid Transformation of Learning through Customization, as proposed by the Rapid City Area School District, does a sufficient job of meeting Absolute Priority 1 - Personalized Learning Environments. The vision for the RCAS RTT-D application for the creation of personalized learning environment is to transform their school school system into one that learns characterized by differentiation and customization of learning. Moreover, the RCAS believes the time is right to captialize on the rapid advancement in technology and digitial resources in their development of personalized learning environments. Through these tools, and building collective capacity among the professional educators in the District, the Rapid TLC program will allow the RCAS to meet their four priority goals.

Total	**210**	**124**

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0103SD-3 for Rapid City Area School District 51-4

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	**10**	**7**

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant clearly articulates its comprehensive and coherent reform vision in this section of the application. They give a detailed background of the district's demographics over the last three decades, supported by data in terms of mobility and poverty issues. They talk about the need for improvement in proficiency in Reading and Mathematics. They outline through the work of the four core educational assurance areas the need for a digital system that can follow a student from Pre-K through High School, through their Rapid Transformation of Learning through Customization, or Rapid TLC. This is done through a list of priorities that give the foundation of this program.

They give a summary of the Rapid TLC program in this section through the use of a table, clearly stating the goals to personalize student learning, accelerating student achievement, and and giving two different proposals in which all stakeholders in the system can learn. These goals align with the premise of the RRTP goals, and are the foundation of the reason for the grant itself. The applicant clearly and explicitly gives clear evidence of how they will personalize learning, thus meeting the criteria for this section of the grant.

Although the applicant articulates a detailed and coherent plan for areas A and B, the description of the classroom experience for teachers and students in this new system is not addressed. Section C of this section of the application states that the applicant must describe the classroom experience will be like for both students and teachers who participate in personalized learning environments. This lack of information is the reason that the applicant receives a score of 7.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	**10**	**8**

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant outlines clearly through this section of the application their approach to support high-quality school and district level implementation, through detailed tables that demonstration the roll out plan for a four year window. They give a snapshot of the diversity of their schools, giving demographics as required in the proposal. The total number of participating students in all areas that are required in the proposal are clearly stated in this section.

The applicant plans to involve every school and staff member in this four year period of implementation. The applicant gives in this section details of the Professional Learning Communities work that has been done previously, and the four priority focus areas that have been established for Phase I of the PLC collaborative work. They also give a broad overview of how they will develop their personalized learning environments, with a table attached in this section that gives the five phases and the primary activities that will be occurring during the phases.

They give the total number of students involved in this grant, by school, with a table that gives the number of participating students in the targeted areas (low income families, high need students, and participating educators) plus the percentages of those populations.

The applicant gives a clear picture of the schools that will be involved in this grant, as well as the number and percentages involved. They give a broad overview of the approach to implementing this grant by giving a demographic background of the student population, followed by a broad timeline with primary activities that will occur. This clear picture of the criteria required in this section of the grant gives the applicant a score of 8.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	**10**	**8**

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Relying on the work of Michael Fullan, the applicant discusses and provides evidence of a high quality plan, detailing priorities that describe how the reform proposals are being implemented. There is a through implementation timeline in this section, giving goals, strategic objectives, performance measures, and outcomes. This implementation timeline addresses all facets of a high quality plan. The goals are ambitious; the applicant gives a logic model that also supports their plan for LEA-wide reform and change.

The applicant justifies the six steps that they outline in this portion of the application, giving evidence from well known educational reform strategies for their reasoning. Whole system transformation, involving every stakeholder in learning is

evident. The applicant is prudent in the way they outline this section, stating that it is important to focus on a small number of ambitious priorities; setting measurable, targeted, ongoing goals with each and every school that is a part of this initiative. This gives the applicant a score of 8.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	6

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates ambitious yet achievable annual goals in this section of the application. They outline four strategic actions of how the Rapid TLC system will meet or achieve district goals. A detailed chart outlines the priorities, strategic objectives, timelines, responsible persons, and the performance measures that they are seeking in in their objectives. The strategic objectives and outcomes are simplistic; having a bit more detail added to the objectives would give a stronger idea of the points involved in these objectives. No notice or background is given to why and out the performances measures were selected. They do give a strong statement in the narrative that their goal is to reduce by half the number of students scoring in the basic and below basic levels on state assessments.

The applicant does not have the data available for the the charts that give percentages of highly effective teachers and principals. They state that this information will be added during Phase I of the grant. They do not give an explanation as to why this data does not exist. Since this information is part of the criteria, an explanation to why it does not exist would clarify this missing information. They do give data that outlines baseline and goal information in subgroups with performance measure goals, decreasing achievement gaps, and graduation rates. Data for the goal of increasing college enrollment is not available in this portion of the application. The applicant states that goals will be added during Phase One of the grant as well. Once again, it would be helpful to give the reasoning to why this information does not exist.

The applicant does address the criteria in this section of the grant; however, the reasoning for why the information is missing in two areas is not present, and more detailed objectives and outcomes are not present; giving the applicant an overall score of 6.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	**15**	**12**

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Rapid City Area Schools (RCAS) builds a case that strongly supports the criteria in this section. It shows a clear and detailed record of success through demonstration and evidence in advancing student achievement and learning through the programs that they have built in balanced literacy and mathematics. Evidence in this section clearly shows significant growth through initiatives in mathematics over a six year period, with RCAS achievement scores advancing past the mean math scores in the state of South Dakota. They also narrowed the achievement gap for their Native American and free/reduced lunch populations against the rest of the state as well, as demonstrated through graphs that show improving growth in math for these subpopulations

RCAS also has undertaken initiatives that demonstrate ambitious reforms in lowest-achieving schools and areas, though the implementation of a full day Kindergarten, which they state demonstrated significant gains in literacy and numeracy, although no specific data was given. Jump Start programs were established in targeted high need elementary schools for entering kindergartners. They also built Leadership teams as the precursor of Professional Learning Communities. General Beadle Community School went from a school in the restructuring stage of school improvement, to a new community school building that houses health, library, resources, adult education services.

The district makes achievement data available to the the stakeholders involved in multiple ways; through the DOE website, through schools and teachers,and through the newspaper.

The applicant also mentions partnerships with partner organizations, and working with the Lindsey Unified School District, an RTT-D awardee, having the opportunity to learn about personalized learning.

This district is clearly making gains in student achievement areas, clearly detailing the growth in the area of math. They do mention achievement in the area of literacy and lower performing schools, although there is no evidence of specific data that supports that claim. Evidence of improvement in the areas of high school graduate rates and college enrollment is not addressed.

Overall, the applicant demonstrates a clear record of success in the core areas and addresses reforms that assist lower

performing schools and students. High school graduation rates and college enrollment are not mentioned, giving the applicant an overall score of 12.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	1

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states that since they are a public LEA, transparency is guaranteed by law and regulations, making all budgetary considerations, salaries, and negotiated agreements public. This is done through the local newspaper, and is available on the RCAS website. The district also engages the community through "listening sessions" that are held in community locations, giving the attendees information on budget and shortfalls in budgets.

However, the applicant did not address the specific criteria of this section of the proposal. They did not give the actual personnel salaries at the school level, nor per actual personnel salaries for instructional staff or expenditures. Since the actual salaries and expenditures were the major focus of this section, this gives the applicant a score of 1, since they were absent from this section.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	8

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant is working in partnership with the South Dakota Department of Education; which has assured the RCAS district that they will collaborate and overcome unintended barriers that state policy or regulation may present in having the successful conditions and autonomy to implement the proposals stated in their grant. The South Dakota DOE received a waiver for a new Public School Accountability system, with five key indicators for criteria of success. They outline in this section of the grant the details and how the district is addressing these new goals, along with the implementation of the new STARS data system that will capture student formative assessments and student progress in customized learning environments, which is the cornerstone of this proposal.

The fact that the South Dakota Department of Education has assured this district that they will collaborate with them to overcome any unintended barriers that state policies may present is an strong indication that they will be able to implement this proposal with support and fidelity. The applicant does give examples of how the district efforts to implement this program align with the state initiatives, indicating that this grant will not go against policies and state wide goals as well.

With this support from the state in collaboration and support, it is evident that the applicant will have the successful environment and backing from the state to implement this program without interference or any state road blocks, giving the applicant a score of 8.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	10

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

It is clearly evident that the applicant demonstrates evidence of stakeholder engagement through the development of this proposal, beginning even before the initiative to participate as a candidate for the RTTP grant began. The RCAS district involved stakeholders at school, family, and community level in developing the Mission and Vision of the district, and then again as they convened these groups into establishing priorities for the district, and then aligned this vision with the Rapid TLC program that is the cornerstone for this proposal. Support agreements are in place from every member of the District Leadership team, every building principal, and a teacher representative from every building. Twenty-two community organizations also have a signed agreement for this grant as well. Student support for this grant is evident as well, through information provided to and input sought from student representatives who were members of the Community Collaborative Goal Setting process. There was not evidence of how they would re-align the proposal from community stakeholders.

Although the engagement piece was listed by stakeholders, the applicant did not give specifics for the engagement piece of this proposal. Further detail would have given a clearer picture of the engagement process.

With documentation of support outlined from every stakeholder involved in this proposal, and the process of how they reached consensus to proceed in with the grant, the applicant is given a score of 10.

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

	Available	Score

(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	14

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant gives an overview of their approach to personalized learning; alluding to a "growth mindset" for all stakeholders in this approach, versus a "fixed mindset", which they claim (backed up by research) that has been the mode of typical learners in the past. They believe the key to personalized learning is a learner-centered approach, in which the level of the learner is the key for instruction,and strategies are given that empower and motivate students in a blended learning environment.

The applicant continues through this section of the grant to address each section and subsection meticulously and systematically. The applicant address thoroughly the ways in which the student, parents, and educators will not only understand about the customized learning plans (CLP)but also be active participants in developing the individual plans. This plan not only addresses academic needs, but also includes cultural and and personal/inter-personal skills as well.

The approach that makes the CLP high quality is a formative assessment system that has digital learning, as well as a diversity of learning experiences for the learner. Through collaboration with EDUCATE/EMPOWER software, and the Lindsay Unified School District (an awardee of the RTTP grant) they plan to evolve an electronic tool and resource that gives students, parents, and educators access to ongoing and regular feedback about student progress. This dashboard also will give next steps for student instruction as well. The applicant outlines a timeline for implementation of this software tool in this section of the grant, giving ways they will adapt the tool for younger learners, and their Spanish population. They also state that this tool will allow them to better target the needs of their high-need learners, and give students and their families sessions that will guide them through the process, with online modules to support them as well.

Overall, the applicant addressed thoroughly and systematically each step of this portion of the grant. The proposed plan has an innovative, high quality approach to personalized learning, with support for students and their families in place to be active participants of this CLP. The software system is a tool that can also tailor the needs of the student as they learn, adapting to their needs, using high-quality strategies and accommodations for the learner. Once again, more specific detail would have given a clearer picture of the learning process, giving the applicant a score of 14.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	12

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates through this portion of the application how Professional Learning Communities will address how educators will implement personalized learning systems, adapt to new ways to have all students learn, versus being taught; and how PLCs improve the professional lives of teachers through collaboration and systematic methods of looking at data to improve student learning and instruction. The RCAC district provides support to educators and administrators through this process, adding Digital Learning Leaders that will help implement their personalized learning systems. The professional development plan specified in this area provides assessment , differentiated instruction, motivation for learning, and a learning and informational management system.

The applicant then focuses on the second component of their PD plan, which is classroom support for teachers. They reference research that states that the most effective professional development strategy in this area is peer coaching, and mention that in a customized learning environment, teaching must become more collaborative as teams have to manage many factors to guide learning ; however, they do not go on to describe how this will happen in their district.

A leadership plan is in place for administrators, with with Danielson's Framework for Teaching as a basis to evaluate and improve teacher effectiveness. Based on these evaluations, all educators and leaders will have their own customized learning plans as well, with the Teachscape system serving as the learning management system, offering a complete system of training, assessment, evaluation, and professional learning. The applicant believes that this learning management system addresses the premise in Section D, in which the plan is to increase the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers, especially in hard to staff schools, areas, and subjects.

This section scores in the medium range, for although they outline their plan, it is vaguely written in general terms. With such a big proposal impacting so many students, it needs to be more specific in nature. There are some areas in which the applicant does mention, but does not go into detail of how they will implement their proposal, such as peer mentoring, and increasing effective teachers. This gives the applicant a score of 12.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score

(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	7

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states that the addition of a Rapid TLC Director to the RCAS Leadership team, along with Digital Specialists and Customized Learning Leaders will provide support and services to all schools in the implementation of the customized learning system for their students. The PLC model will serve as the over arching support that drives collaborative and digital instruction as this new system rolls out.

The support of a Director for the leadership team, and support personnel as they roll out this system indicates that not only the district, but each school will have the support they need in implementing their initiatives.

The applicant references the commitment to Professional Learning Communities, and the concepts and definition behind this initiative, but no mention is made of how they will have sufficient flexibility ; except to mention that all school sites will have time on Wednesday afternoons to have the time to work in teacher teams.

Currently the district only has end of course assessments and some on line opportunities to allow students to progress and earn credit; they feel as they implement CCSS , they will be able to capitalize on new ways to better reflect student mastery, although they do not specify how they intend to do this. They also state that the customization of the STARS system and through their customized learning system, students will be able to have multiple ways to demonstrate mastery. The applicant does not have a current plan for how this will occur.

It seems as if although the applicant has a good start in some opportunities for assessments, specific details are missing to how this will happen. A proposal as large and as encompassing as this one is needs more targeted information to succeed.

The applicant demonstrates that their Rapid TLC pogrom will ensure that all students, no matter their level, will be able to access curriculum that is appropriate for their needs and unique learning situations. They do not give more specific information of how it would be accessible and successful for sub populations, such as ELL and Students with Disabilities. A table of this implementation model is listed as well.

The applicant addresses all facets of this section of the application, giving a broad picture of their plans to support implementation of a system that has a supportive infrastructure and means for student learning. Some particulars as to the "how" , and more specific details are absent in this section, giving the applicant an overall score of 7.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has an ambitious but achievable plan, which will deliver over 13,00 new digital devices into the hands of every student in the district. Students will be able to not only use their devices at school, but will have access to them at home as well. The district will complete a full audit that will access current use of devices, and also give assistance in terms of fees associated with the device to students on free/reduced lunch states.

Technical support is provided in this plan through personnel, infrastructure, software development, and training. Digital Education Specialists will work in staff development to ensure that learning and instruction is more engaging, effective,and efficient for staff and students. Families will receive support from the Techs in the form of real life sessions, or they can e-mail questions about technical issues.

Informational technology systems store student data,and give access to student progress information. This system also provides information for parents in grades, schedules, attendance, food service payments, and is a communication tool. Two new data systems will be put in place in conjunction with the Rapid TLC program; one that is a comprehensive, state-wide longitudinal system, and one which is a learning management system.

The applicant addresses all areas of this section, giving a high quality plan, giving an outline of the plan, a rationale, timelines, and deliverables, thoroughly giving steps in place that will ensure that the implementation of this grant has procedures that support everyone involved with the correct resources, garnering a score of 8.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	**15**	**9**

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has hired an outside evaluator that will provide feedback to guide the RCAS district through a process of continuous improvement, using quantitative and qualitative evaluation information, demonstrated by a Spiraling Cycle of Continuous Improvement Model, presented in this section. The external evaluator will help assist in an evaluation that will inform the district, as well as the RTTP funding agency, through studies that will verify the impact of this project through analyzing student learning, and used by PLCS to achieve SMART goals. This evaluation will involve all project leadership, and this team will review twice a year to review all quantitative data, making recommendations for improvement or revisions. It seems as if the applicant would need to review the data more than twice a year.

An outside evaluator, especially with the mandates of such a large project, is an objective entity that will be able to monitor report to the district, plus give support to the leadership team as they progress through the phases of this proposal. It does seem that if an outside evaluator will be providing feedback, meeting more than twice a year would be warranted to ensure recommendations and revisions are timely and on-going.

The applicant's use of a outside evaluator to ensure objectivity, and the continuous cycle of improvement that is planned meets the criteria in this section, addressing al the components in a high quality plan, giving the applicant a score of 9.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	**5**	**3**

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has in place a collaborative Evaluation Team, whose members will be relaying evaluation information to their constituents or staff. Many venues of communication will be utilized to communicate information about the RTT-D grant, such as web based, community meetings, PLC teams, and the RCAS executive team.

Although these ways of communication are typical for school systems, there is no mention of how student communication will be handled, or at the school building level. The applicant did attach a rubric in which teams can examine and evaluate practices gage where they are in their implementation phases. They do mention that if the grant is funded, they will convene collaborative groups from all stakeholders, including the student population, and continue to use this rubric to measure progress.

Overall, the applicant does give a sense of communication and engagement with most of their stakeholders, but there is not an explicit plan in place to keep all stakeholders continuously involved in the progress, giving the applicant a score of 3.

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

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states that although they currently have performance measures in place, system changes that are currently underway in South Dakota (such as Smarter Balance Assessment, STARS system, and the state's new Accountability system) will change the measures and instrumentation that is used over the new few years, impacting the measures of this grant.

They do identify performance measures that provide quantitative evaluation data for their Rapid TLC program.

- Performance measures for highly effective teachers and principals for all students, and specified subgroups, are not available. They state that data will be complied and goals set during Phase I of the grant.
- In Grades PreK-3 grade, they use the South Dakota assessment, with the goals of increasing student achievement by 3%, with the percentage at 5% for noted GAP sub-groups.
- The Age appropriate goal for Pre-K -3 grade is decreasing the mobility rate by 3% each year of the grant.
- In the grades 4-8 group, the same goals are in place as they were for the Pre-K -3 grade group. The same goal is true for the percentage of students who are on track to college and career readiness.
- The health related goals for grades 4-8 are 1% less bullying each year of the grant, and a 3% decrease in mobility as well.
- In grade 9-12, they plan to measure the number and percentage of participating students who turn in a FAFSA form, although they state data is not currently available for this target; it will be set in Phase I of the grant.
- The same goal is in place for grades 9-12 as in the previous grade bands, with a goal of increasing student

achievement by 3%, and percentage at 5% for noted GAP sub-groups.
- The 9-12 group also has 1% less bullying per year, 3% less mobility each year, and a 3%increase in the Learn and Serve Internship program yearly.

The applicant gives clear targets for the areas specified, although the reasoning of why they chose this criteria is not defined within this section. They reference the fact that their outside evaluator will be monitoring this data collection, giving feedback to the district on a consistent basis. The applicant did not indicate in this section how they were going to review the data over time, thus being able to gauger the effectiveness of this grant.

Although the applicant did give a clear picture of their targets for the designated subgroups, the reasoning behind the measures, as well as how they would review the data for effectiveness were not present, giving the applicant a score of 3.

(**Note: wonder how they are going to get people to be less mobile?)**

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	**5**	**2**

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The criteria of this section calls for the applicant to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of their RTT-D activities. The applicant says that they will evaluate the grant in three ways:

1. Through the grant's policies and practices.; and how they allocate resources.
2. The grant's implementation: How did the grant activities do what they said they would do?
3. The grant's impact: If the grant had not happened, what would have occurred?

The applicant goes on to list priorities and guiding questions that will lead the evaluation of these priorities. The priorities seem specific; but the guiding questions do not seem to be detailed enough, or have enough depth in terms of they expect from the 3 ways that they plan to view the grant above. This seems to be a more general way to approach this evaluation ,and not rigorous enough to evaluate effectively what the grant is asking for in a high quality plan. This lack of focus gives the applicant a score of 2.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	**10**	**7**

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant identifies the district resources that will continue to support the focus that is the RTT-D program. State DOE resources will also play a significant role in this effort as well, mostly in the area of CCSS for both district and state resources. The applicant also mentions that community contributions will continue to support the needs of the RCAS student and contribute to the grant's reforms. They state that the community section will be described in greater detail in the Competitive Preference section of this proposal.

The total cost for full implementation of this grant is just under $29 million for four years, impacting almost 14,000 students from Pre-K through 12. Support will also be offered to 1,012 teachers and staff, and 50 building and district leaders. The total cost for each student for this grant is around $450 per year. This cost seems to be reasonable in the large scope of this project.

The applicant utilizes resources that the state can fund, although it would have been informative to have more information about the community involvement in this section. The applicant seems to be utilizing the grant resources in a targeted, useful, but thoughtful way.

C: The applicant gives a compelling rationale for the investment of the Rapid TLC program, mentioning that 50% of their student population is low income. They also rationalize that district wide reform through customized learning will meet the needs of every student in preparation for college and careers. Federal funds will also place a major role in achieving both their district and RTT-D goals, with the applicant outlining the designated funds that will support specific student needs.

Looking at the budget summaries in each specific area, the applicant is clear in the intent and the focus for the investment costs that will come as a result of this grant. They provide thoughtful rationales for each section, but more detail is needed in the resources section of this plan. earning a score of 7.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	**10**	**7**

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant draws from sustainable innovations and projects from the past, demonstrating examples, such as the PRIME project, in which student math scores increased, and the positions created by this project have been absorbed by the district to continue to support effective classroom instruction. They also mention how this project is an example of internal embedding decreasing the level of direct staff support. They also point out the evidence in their district of student success, particularly in the area of closing the achievement gap among high need students, although no data is shown in this section as proof.

The applicant believes that the largest cost associated with this grant comes from computing devices for each student in the district. They feel as if the devices will need to be replaced at regular intervals, but through the funds for technology upgrades that RCAS spends annually, and the decreased costs in personal devices such as tablets, the cost savings will be available after the life of the Rapid TLC program. Although this has most of the components of a high-quality plan, no mention is made, however, of how personnel costs will be addressed from those positions in technology that will support this program after the life of the grant is over. giving the applicant a score of 7.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The impetuous of this section of the grant started when an elementary school, in need of improvement, transformed into a community center in which all areas of a student's social, emotional, educational, and health needs could be met. From this start, the district worked in conjunction with various city agencies (listed in a table in the application) to become the North Rapid City Community School Partnership, which seeks to design a sustainable and cohesive system of child and family services, in much the same manner as their first community center. The applicant plans to use this partnership in conjunction with the grant to provide an intentional approach to conduct assessments, a planning process, to develop action teams,and a data study in which they will evaluate the impact of all the above.

The applicant lists the following as their identification of at least 10 measures of population desired results:

Health, Family and Community Support Measures—Number and Percentage of:
? Children who participate in at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity
? Children who receive routine health and dental care including well child visits
? Children and families that have a permanent home
? Student mobility rate
? Children who use alcohol, drugs or tobacco
? Parents or family members who report that they read to their child
? Parents or family members who report talking to their child about the importance of graduation, college and careers
? Students who have school and home access to broadband internet and a connected computing device

They do not have baseline data, indicating that this will be addressed in the first year of the grant implementation. The issue of how the applicant will scale up this proposal, or improve it over time are also absent from this section. Performance measures are indicated, but they do not indicate exactly what the ambitious yet achievable results will be, however.

Overall, the applicant shows the extent to which community agencies and schools will work together for the sake of the community. Critical information, such as improving results over time, and scaling up the program are not, garnering the applicant a score of 6.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		**Met**

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Overall, the applicants meets the criteria of Absolute Priority 1 in this proposal. They have a high quality and detailed plan that addresses how they plan to build on the core educational areas, and how the Rapid TLC program will significantly improve learning with a customized learning approach for every student in the district. They have outlined a plan that also systematically supports educators in the implementation of this program, and by combining the personalized system and deep professional development and support, will close achievement gaps across student groups, and increase the number of students that leave their district college and career ready.

Total	**210**	**138**