



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0191NY-1 for Rochester City School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a strong, comprehensive, and coherent reform vision. It is clear that their plan does address four core educational assurance areas. For example, the applicant implements college and career programs aligned to Common Core State Standards in grades 7 -12, provides dual enrollment courses, internship opportunities, summer employment, co-ops, and expands career programs aligned with students' academic interest such as high-tech Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs.</p> <p>The applicant plans to have e-Learning platform for credit recovery and AP course and currently participates in the Western New York Regional Information Center Data Warehouse. Other e-learning systems include Naviance and Accuplacer.</p> <p>The applicant asserts that more than 93 percent of teachers in the LEA are highly qualified and they have 8% turnover rate. It also helps that the LEA ensures that first year teachers receive mentoring. The applicant also indicates that they support the hiring of new employees with significant experiences in urban settings and plans to address teachers' understanding of college and career readiness and using data to improve instruction.</p> <p>The applicant has multiple initiatives at the elementary level (pending for high schools), such as expanded learning, an attendance/truancy initiative, master schedule, instructional plan, and central registration to help turn around low-performing schools.</p> <p>The applicant clearly articulates that they have a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support. For example, the applicant states they will implement online assessments such as Accuplacer, utilize Literacy Coaches and College and Career Advisors. The applicant states that there will be deep learning opportunities through new CTE programs, summer robotics campus, internships, co-ops, Naviance's Total Reader, and online PSAT/SAT/ACT prep courses. The applicant indicates that the RTT-D project will increase equity through personalized learning supports such as the implementation of Naviance and its Course Rigor and Planning. The applicant clearly states that the grant project will be aligned to the New York State Board of Regents Reform Agenda which supports accelerating student achievement through personalized learning.</p> <p>Lastly, the applicant provides a clear snapshot of the ideal classroom experience envisioned by their RTT-D reform efforts. For example, they provide a table illustrating the differences between a traditional system and a personalized system. Their description of what the classroom experience will be like includes working the College-Level Literacy Coach on reading comprehension in prep of the PSAT; meeting with the school-based Co-Op Coordinator who identifies a summer job experience in a local tech company; participating in a renewable energy club; parents' attending FAFSA and college financial aid conference in the evening; and a high school senior working on their college application essay.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant provides strong evidence to support their comprehensive and coherent reform vision. Still, what remains unclear is how the applicant approaches rewarding and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and how they increase equity through personalized learning. Indeed, it seems that a plethora of programs and tools seems to be in place and but the narrative of exactly how they are effective, innovative and promote equity in classroom remains unclear.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

The applicant states that six schools (n=5499) in the LEA will participate. Four secondary schools were selected due to their Priority School status; and two schools are career high schools in the poor community. The applicant provides data indicating that the participating schools meet the eligibility requirements: 80% (and above) of the students in the schools are from low-income families. The data and their description make the case that the proposal clearly describes the process of school selection using data from risk assessment surveys, employee feedback surveys, academic performance data and behavioral/incident data, and that the participating schools meet the RTT-D eligibility requirements. However, the narrative does not provide details in describing feedback results. Additionally, although the selection process in the narrative discusses those schools selected and the rationale is not strong. The applicant does not provide clear information about those schools that were not selected.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	5
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides limited evidence that indicates that they have a high quality plan including 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 application states that they use a Common Core with the newly released New York State Common Core Curriculum and trans-disciplinary approach to implement its reform. It further explains that the trans-disciplinary framework is about academic change, and that applicant uses the concepts of personalized learning environments. The rest of the section provides a great detail about the elements of trans-disciplinary framework. Indeed, these elements and related articulation tell about how the reform proposal can produce meaningful student learning. For example, one element, “Integrate Digital curriculum with digital teaching technologies” is quite noble in that the framework calls for the use of digital teaching technologies such as computers, interactive whiteboards, tablets, student response systems, LCD projectors, digital cameras, and digital microscopes to complement the digital curriculum delivery. Nonetheless, the applicant’s narrative is lacking in details describing how their reform will be scaled up and translated to the rest of schools in the LEA and will actually help the applicant reach their outcome goals.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	9
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant’s data indicates that they use summative assessments such New York State Testing Program to set the goals for student performance, decreasing achievement gaps, graduation rates, and college enrollment. For example, the baseline data for 9-12 Math use New York State Effective Annual Measurable Objective (AYP) 2012-13 Algebra Regents exam. It is impressive that the applicant is thorough in categorizing subgroups and provides a great detail in methodology. Although, there is insufficient explanation about what constitute significant gains in student outcomes and exactly how the annual percent increment goals are set, the applicant’s goals are clear and appear credible to be ambitious yet achievable.

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	6

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates some track record of success. However, the applicant’s narrative provides limited evidence as for a comprehensive, longitudinal, and pervasive pattern of increasing student learning in the LEA. The applicant indicates that there is a pattern in their success: winning grant programs and producing successful outcomes. For example, the applicant’s RCSD’s Arts Impact Study of 2006-2009 successfully infused arts into core K-6 curricula and improved student achievement in ELA, Math, Social Studies, and Science. Improvement was also demonstrated across all major K-2 sub-groups including Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, as measured by the CTB Terra Nova and Hi/Scope COR. In addition, the applicant states that it was statistically significant that the higher percentage of high school students taught by Pump Up the Math -trained teachers passed more rigorous mathematics courses and exams compared to non-treatment classes in year 2011. The rest of the section also provides strong evidence that the applicant remains committed to increasing teacher quality and works hard to retain effective first year teachers. Although the narrative shows some snapshot of the success the applicant was able to achieve especially by running successful grant programs, it is unclear as to the extent

of raising graduate rates and college enrollment rates in the past four years. Additionally, the narrative is weak in describing how the applicant ensures that student performance data are available to students, teachers and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and services.

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

The applicant makes a case that they demonstrate transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments; and establish trust among the stakeholders in education. For example, their district policies are developed by a publicly-elected citizens; board policies, board meeting schedules, agendas and meeting minutes are publicly accessible on the district website; hiring practices comply with state law; and position openings are posted publicly. In response to the required evidence, the applicant states that the LEA budget is available for public on the district web site and that all of the salaries of school personnel are posted on the SeeThroughNY website. However, the applicant also indicates that the LEA does not provide school-level expenditures for K—12 instruction and instructional support. Therefore, there is not strong evidence to conclude that the LEA has a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	5
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant implies that they have successful conditions and autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement personalized learning by stating that an Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) waiver granted by the U.S. Education Department for New York can allow flexibility to close the achievement gap with effective academic intervention for at-risk students. The applicant states that the ESEA and Title 1 waivers also afford some degree of flexibility in expenditures related to staffing. Further, it is clear in the narrative that the NYS Education Department allows the LEA to have flexibility in areas such as selection of textbooks, class schedules, class sizes, and staffing. It is, however, noted that it is not clearly described how some conditions described in the narrative such as ‘school-choice’ and ‘traditional course pathway for high school mathematics’ can work in favor of successful implementation of the personalized learning environments.

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

The applicant provides limited evidence of meaningful stakeholder engagement. The applicant states that the applicant collected feedback from stakeholders such as Deputy Superintendent of Administration, CTE Director, Director of Planning, Director of Financial Management and Grants, Executive Director of Instructional Technology, Director of Guidance, Chief of Secondary Schools, Director of Secondary Math, and six participating Principals, and that the proposal was presented to parent, educators and administrators. In addition, the applicant asserts that the LEA has supporting relationships with its local colleges. It is convincing that the LEA has a positive relationship with institutions of higher education and industry. Indeed the supports from various stakeholders are key to successful RTT-D reforms. However, letters of support provided seem to be those from mayor and the commissioner. The letters written by other stakeholders such as teachers, parents and parent organizations, student organizations, early learning programs, tribes, the business community, civil rights organizations, advocacy groups, local civic and community-based organizations, and institutions of higher education are not found. Therefore, it is difficult to evaluate how the applicant achieves meaningful stakeholder engagement. Additionally, it remains unclear in the narrative regarding how aforementioned stakeholders contributed to revision of the proposal if any.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	5

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states that their plan will allow students to have deep learning through their personalized learning environments and strategies. For example, their career-ready programs are impressive; the applicant plans to introduce contemporary CTE programs such as Green Technology and Pre-engineering in collaboration with area

colleges. Other programs seem very rich in content and purposeful: their students will participate in after-school and summer enrichment programs focused on Co-ops, college readiness, internships, and CTE programs. The applicant is also committed to college-ready activities by establishing a College and Career Center, providing service for college testing, college selection, college applications, financial aid, internship assignments, co-op assignments, family information, and student pathway development. It is also clear that they will have appropriate staff (e.g., Co-op Coordinators, College Counselors) in place. It is implicit in the narrative that by implementing aforementioned programs, students will be able to identify and pursue college- and career-focused learning, understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, measure progress, and participate in deep learning experiences based on their academic interest. And it seems that their RTT-D related programs are convincing and credible. For example, ePortfolios seems to be instrumental in enabling the students in the LEA to have opportunities to develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, critical thinking, communication, and creativity.

The applicant states their STEM and CTE curriculum should enable students to identify postsecondary and career pathways and have a personalized learning. Other examples include Naviance and Accuplacer. Indeed, these supports can be instrumental in providing a personalized learning. Additionally, the applicant provides descriptions about how each school plans to implement high-quality instructional approaches and environments, however the descriptions are not thorough and those about East High School and James Monore High School are missing.

With respect to digital learning content, the applicant promises that they will purchase laptops, mobile devices, e-books, software, and online services for content and student assessment. It is impressive that their plan to promote STEM education includes utilizing computers with specialized and professional applications like CAD, CAM, and computer simulations and animations.

Overall, the applicant’s plan may enable students to pursue learning with college- and career- ready standards. However, the narrative is not presenting the key elements of a high quality as defined in the notice and not thorough in describing how the applicant ensures that their students have access and exposure to diverse cultures and contexts; and the opportunities to develop other critical traits such as teamwork, perseverance, and problem-solving. Other concerns include: there is not sufficient explanation for (1) how the applicant assures that students have ongoing and regular feedback on their progress toward mastery of college- and career-ready standards and personalized learning recommendations based on the student’s current knowledge and skills, (2) how the applicant ensures that their high-need students have access to accommodations and high-quality strategies, and (3) how the applicant ensures that their students receive training and support on how to use the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	3
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides limited evidence as for their high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by providing opportunities to increase their educators’ capacity for implementing personalized instruction and to have access to tools, data, and resources to accelerate student learning. For example, the response to (C)(2)(b) is not found. Additionally, the applicant provides limited evidence that educators in the LEA engage in training to help develop their capacity for teaching and leading in the RTT-D reform. It is noticeable that the applicant provides school leaders with a uniform understanding of the Reform Agenda and uses web-based Professional Development modules; the applicant uses the Multidimensional Principal Performance Rubric for administrators. It is also stated that all teachers and administrators are rated as Highly Effective, Effective, Developing, or Ineffective within designated rubrics. But what remains unclear is how teachers’ practice improves thanks to feedback on effectiveness and how the applicant ensures that teachers and principals have recommendations, supports, and interventions as needed for improvement. Other areas that were not clearly articulated include: how participating educators develop their ability to support the effective implementation of personalized learning, to differentiate content and instruction through discussion and collaborative work, project-based learning, videos, audio, and manipulatives, to measure student progress, and to use data to inform both the acceleration of student progress and the improvement of the individual and collective practice of educators.

The LEA has an approved APPR plans and articulation agreements with the Rochester Teacher Association and may benefit from NYS Student, Teacher, Leadership Effectiveness grant in which a Talent Acquisition Module (TAM) and Peoplesoft track and analyze recruitment data, partnerships and performance of candidates. However, it remains unclear how the applicant plans to increase effective teachers and principals in hard-to- staff schools, mathematics and science, and special education.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	6
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides limited evidence as for their practices, policies and rules in support of personalized learning. The narrative provide limited evidence as for the key elements of a high quality plan. The applicant states that decision making at the board level is guided by legal counsel and advised by staff, ad hoc advisory committees and the public, and that they follow a collective bargaining process with regard to compensation, disciplinary action and job descriptions are negotiated for Certified and Credentialed staff. With respect to the RTT-D grant, the CTE director and the director of planning will provide guidance for the selection, implementation and general oversight of the project direction, and the CTE director will hire one Project Manager for the entirety of the grant. It is also stated that the LEA initiatives include supporting school leadership teams with sufficient flexibility to implement programs. However, what remains unclear in the narrative is describing how the applicant ensures that school leadership teams have autonomy over school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing, roles and responsibilities, and school-level budgets. The applicant also provides no evidence regarding how they give students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic and to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways. The narrative is also unresponsive to the need of providing learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to students with disabilities and English learners.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	3
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant identifies their infrastructure that may support personalized learning. For example, the applicant uses Student Performance Analytics (SPA) as their student data warehouse and lists multiple data systems that can serve as strong infrastructure of personalized learning. Counselors and their career center will be equipped with Naviance, a college pathways program. Also provided extensively in the narrative is a list of benchmark assessments. It seems that the applicant makes a case that robust and well-written assessment instruments can produce student performance data, which in turn can inform and improve instruction. Indeed, assessments can play a significant role in identifying student needs and improving instruction. However, the narrative does not appear to address how the applicant ensures (1) students, parents, teachers, and other stakeholders have access to content, tools, and learning resources both in and out of school and have appropriate technical support through peer support, online support, or local support; (2) parents and students export their information in an open data format and use the data in other electronic learning systems; and (3) the LEA schools use interoperable data systems that include human resources data, student information data, budget data, and instructional improvement system data. Lastly, the applicant does not provide details as to the key elements of a high-quality plan.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	5
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>There is limited evidence as for the applicant’s plan to implement a rigorous continuous improvement process and to address how the applicant will monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of its investments funded by RTT-D grant. The applicant indicates that they will use the SPA Dashboards Module which they asserts can enable students, parents, educators, counselors and administrators to track performance against benchmarks associated with postsecondary and career readiness and identify and address individual educational needs in real-time with recommendations. Another noticeable practice is using the Teacher-Child Rating Scale (T-CRS) to benchmark students’ social and emotional growth and involve the parent in assessing their child’s emotional health helps to engage the parents in the child’s growth with the assistance from Parent Engagement Specialists. Although what is implicit in the application is that the applicant is dedicated to building an improvement process that provides feedback on progress toward project goals and opportunities for corrections and improvements possibly during the term of the grant. However, the general lack of timeline and specific and measurable deliverables in their narrative adds little to demonstrate the applicant’s high quality plan. In addition, it</p>		

is also unclear how the applicant plans to conduct an improvement process that provides feedback on progress for corrections and improvements after the term of the grant.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	1
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:
 The applicant states that a communications plan is pending to be available in the project year 1 which will address resources for the LEA and other stakeholders. However, there exist no further information about the communications plan and it is unclear whom the applicants identifies as internal and external stakeholders and precisely what kind of events, meetings, and other activities pertain to communication and to engagement. Overall, the applicant does not provide a high-quality plan.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:
 There is limited evidence as for demonstrating the applicant’s use of ambitious yet achievable performance measures. The applicant’s performance measures include attendance, Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) assessment for Reading and Math, NYS test results in English Language Arts and Math, the percentage of students recognized as college and career ready as reflected in NYS’s Aspirational Goal, Environment Regents examination, PSAT Growth Program to demonstrate their preparedness for college, and The Teacher-Child Rating Scale (T-CRS). The total number of measures is not in the range of the recommended numbers (12 – 14). For each measure, the applicant explains why they selected the measure. For example, with regard to attendance as performance measure, the applicant explains that attendance was selected due to the strong correlation between attendance and student performance and because attendance is an indication of a student’s interest. The applicant also adds that the Teacher-Child Rating Scale (T-CRS) is a validated teacher-rated measure of students’ social-emotional behaviors and competencies. It makes sense. However, overall, the narrative is lacking in describing the ways the measures provide information on the applicant’s implementation success or areas of concern; and how the applicant will review and improve the measures over time.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	1
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:
 The applicant states that they will develop a series of survey for teachers, and parents, students, and that there will be feedback from and to key stakeholders in the LEA including the LEA leadership teams. It is also stated that Project Assistant will collect data so that the LEA’s integrated data systems can indicate effectiveness of their RTT-D reform efforts. However, the narrative does not provide clear information as to key elements of the high-quality plan such as key goals, activities, the rationale for the activities accompanied by the timeline and the deliverables from implementing the activities. Therefore, it is difficult to evaluate as to the feasibility of the applicant conducting the *rigorous* evaluation of the effectiveness of RTT-D activities.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	6

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:
 The applicant’s budget shows all funds and seems reasonable to support the development and implementation of the proposal. However, the applicant does not provide a description of all of the funds and it is not clear about how to identify one-time investments versus ongoing operational costs during and after the grant period. The rationale for investments on project year 1 through 4 is clear. However, the narrative (or lack thereof) is limited in describing specific strategies that ensure the long-term sustainability of the implementation.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:
 Overall, it is clear that the applicant is thinking about the financials for the years after the grant expires. However,

their narrative is not strong enough to demonstrate a high-quality plan. For example: The applicant states that their train-the-trainer approach will help sustain the professional development implementation efforts, and that the NYS CTE Resource Center, WNYRIC, NYSCATE, the State’s Regional STEM HUB’s and ongoing contracts with IB, College Board will contribute to the applicant’s sustainability. Financial supports include: The LEA will use additional existing grants such as the NYS Student, Teacher, Leadership Effectiveness grant and the NYS MSP grant to continue the RTT-D implementations. However, there is no clear description about support from State and local government leaders and their financial support; about how the applicant will evaluate improvements in productivity and outcomes to inform a post-grant (for the three years after the term of the grant) budget. Most of all, the applicant’s narrative provides limited evidence as for the key elements in a high quality plan such as primary goals, activities to achieve sustainability, the rationale for the activities accompanied by the timeline and the deliverables from the efforts to have sustainability after the term of the grant.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides limited evidence that they integrate public or private resources in a partnership to augment the LEA schools’ resources by providing additional student and family supports for the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of students. It is impressive that the LEA has a partnership with post-secondary institutions. For example, the applicant partnered with Monroe Community College (MCC) and Erie Community College (ECC) on their efforts to provide career-ready programs. The new Rochester Early College International High School in the LEA has a partnership with St. John Fisher College to provide an accelerated curriculum to earn college credit in high school. The applicant also asserts that they will continue to develop its partnerships with area colleges (MCC, RIT, Alfred State, Bryant & Stratton) to increase readiness for college and careers through bringing faculties together to develop and deliver foundational STEM curriculum, as well as dual enrollment opportunities.

Indeed, these partnership opportunities have the potential to integrate education and social-emotional and behavioral needs of students and may help to increase the capacity of staff with tools and supports necessary in the execution of the RTT-D reform projects. However, the narrative is substantially lacking in describing how the applicant has coherent and sustainable partnership with not just with local colleges but also with public or private organizations, such as public health, before-school, after-school, and social service providers; integrated student service providers; businesses, philanthropies, civic groups, and other community-based organizations; and early learning programs. The applicant does not provide population-level desired results for students in the LEA including educational results or family and community supports results. Further, the applicant’s narrative provides limited evidence as for how the applicant plans to use data to target its resources in order to improve the results with special emphasis on students with disabilities, English learners, and students affected by poverty, family instability, or other child welfare issues. It seems that the applicant has no clear plan to develop a strategy to scale the model beyond the participating students.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Overall, the applicant addresses core educational assurance areas and demonstrates a commitment to learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies and tools. The applicant provides evidence for their plan to accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning. However, the applicant does not coherently and comprehensively address how they plan to increase the effectiveness of educators, expand student access to the most effective educators, decrease achievement gaps across student groups and increase the graduation rates. In conclusion, the applicant has not presented a plan that demonstrates Absolute Priority 1.



Total	210	85
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0191NY-2 for Rochester City School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) The applicant's response addresses each of the four core areas and provides a global vision of what they have in mind - to improve the high school experience of students by strengthening Career Technical Education (CTE). Providing dual enrollment courses with area colleges and assisting students with internships, summer employment, and expanding the career-building program are presented as strategies to meet college- and career-ready graduation requirements. While the district has initiatives in place at the elementary level to turn around low performing schools, the proposal states more needs to be done at the secondary level. High school initiatives currently in place include master scheduling, central registration, and extended day (in 3 schools). Parts of the response lack clarity. For example, it is not clear what is meant by "making great strides in adopting" college and career standards and graduation requirements. No description of the three data packages to be adopted was found, making it impossible to evaluate their potential contributions to the vision. While the grant will provide six new secondary reading specialists, it is unclear how the funding would develop teachers' understanding of college and career readiness.</p> <p>(b) The applicant proposes to fund seven interventions in its participating schools and to align to the NY State Board of Regents Reform Agenda which includes integrated courses that deliver academic content within a CTE context. All appear worthy of contributing to the global vision.</p> <p>(c) The applicant meets this requirement. A table contrasting the current system with ASCD's personalized learning system is included. Several scenarios are presented to illustrate classroom experiences in a personalized learning environment.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The participating schools are listed and numbers of participating students and educators are provided by appropriate categories. The reasons for choosing the selected schools are listed (four due to their Priority School Status and two because they are career/technical high schools). However, the rationale for the choosing the two selection criteria was not given.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	2
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>No high-quality plan for scaling up the reform proposal beyond the participating schools is presented. Instead, the applicant describes approaches and strategies it would use to implement the reform in the schools included in this proposal. The described strategies are viable mechanisms for achieving the applicant's vision in the selected schools, but the focus of (A)(3) - scaling up the proposal - is not addressed.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

The applicant includes all the required annual goals including the optional "postsecondary degree attainment" category. How the targets were calculated was not explained. The "performance on summative assessment" post-grant targets for ELA grade 7 are all below 50% proficient/above except Asian although most reflect an increase of about 40%. The after-target for Whites, however, is only 32.6%, an increase of only 12 percentage points. Narrative to explain the table depicting achievement gaps is required; it is uncertain what the percents represent and how they were calculated. While graduation rate targets across all groups increase over time, only that for Whites exceeds 70%.

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	3
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) The applicant describes several past initiatives intended to increase equity and close achievement gaps. "Arts Impact Study" occurred only in grades K-6; this proposal is for grades 7-12 schools. While narrative indicating the project's success in raising achievement for the participating elementary students is included, it is unclear how this example meets the criteria of (B)(1). The "Pump Up Math" professional development initiative, started in 2008, shows promise for advancing student learning; supporting achievement gains are included. "Rochester Optics Pipeline," although small, is a successful partnership between the District and area community colleges. The District's "Career in Teaching" program assigns mentor teachers to new hires and counsels out ineffective probationary teachers. Data show the program has resulted in higher than average teacher retention rates. Master schedules have been implemented in elementary and high schools, resulting in increased instructional time; "Early Dismissal Wednesday" was discontinued to further increase instructional time.</p> <p>Sections (b) and (c) are not addressed.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	1
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not successfully meet the criteria of (B)(2). Per the narrative, public forums were held to gain public input into the district budget; no evidence of the forums (public notice, advertising, agenda, presentation slides, sign-in sheets, etc.) was provided. The district does not provide for the public a school-by-school breakdown of K-12 education expenditures. It is stated that the district budget book is available on the public website and salaries are posted on the "SeeThroughNY" website; no links or evidence were included.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	2
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>New York is a Race to the Top state and has been granted an ESEA waiver to give the state and districts increased flexibility to implement the NYS Regents' Reform Agenda. No evidence was found to illustrate what flexibilities are available to the applicant because of these facts. NY DOE gives districts autonomy over selection of textbooks, class schedules and sizes, staffing, and length of day (no evidence provided). The applicant does not provide evidence that these autonomies would be sufficient to personalize learning environments as described in this proposal. It is unclear how the adoption of an Annual Professional Performance Appraisal and Traditional Course Pathway for High School Mathematics support section (B)(3).</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	1
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal cites input from key district management staff and claims to have processes in place to reach out to stakeholders; no evidence or explanation was provided. Giving the school-based planning team (only one was mentioned) an executive summary of the project does not constitute meaningful stakeholder engagement throughout the development of the project. Nor is it clear how the described relationships with local colleges and the city's ranking for high tech employment concentration translate to stakeholder engagement in the development of this proposal. Only two letters of support are included in the proposal, one from Rochester's mayor and one from New York's Commissioner of Education.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	2
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not present a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment. The narrative appears more as a brainstorming session or haphazard list of good intentions. Subsections (a), (b) and (c) are not discernibly addressed. Listed activities are not supported by detail, measurable goals, quantification, deliverables, or responsible parties. The "timeline" (a brief paragraph) is sparse and would not support implementation. Proposed staff to be supported by the grant and a brief description of their roles is included, but it is very difficult to determine how they fit into the mix. Roles and responsibilities of contractual consultants, descriptions of technology to be purchased, and the purpose/extent of proposed professional development are not to be found. Required supplies and travel are briefly mentioned and without context. ePortfolios appear to be an important component of the proposal yet the description and implementation scheme is hazy.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	0
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(C)(2) The applicant does not present a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment. The narrative consists of random intentions for which no detail or evidence is given. The response to (C)(2)(b) is "NEED TO WRITE," substantiating the readers suspicion that the proposal was hastily put together with little forethought or planning. Other omissions and missing narrative were found in other parts of the proposal.</p>		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	2
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant hardly touches the requirements of section (D)(2). No high-quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure was found. Instead, a list of very non-specific intentions and activities is included without order, quantification, supporting detail, or specific responsible parties. Project leaders are cited, but specifics are sparse. Central office organization was not discussed; governance is via an elected Board of Education with consummate authority over policy, expenditures, and activities. That collective bargaining exists was stated without any connotation. The move to standardized instructional periods across the district seems counter to the intent of RTT-D. No detail was found regarding the consultants to be hired or the "contracts to be secured." The existence, make-up, roles, and responsibilities of school leadership teams are uncertain. There is no mention of student opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery vs. time, of students being able to demonstrate mastery of standards in multiple ways at multiple times, or of adaptable learning and instructional resources fully accessible to all students.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	1
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>In response to requirement (D)(2) the applicant lists existing district data systems and assessments without connection to the RTT-D proposal. The four sub-requirements of (D)(2) are not addressed.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	1
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>No high-quality plan is included for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process that provides timely and</p>		

regular feedback on progress toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the grant period. The SPA Dashboard Module is proposed to track performance against undefined benchmarks; there is no information about how the module would inform an improvement process. The tool for monitoring project 2 (Competitive Preference Priority) has never been used by the district above level Pre-K. Publicly sharing of information about the quality of RTT-D investments was not addressed.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	0
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:
 No high-quality plan for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders is present.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:
 There are concerns about the performance measures included in requirement (E)(3). The application states that Annual Professional Performance Review legislation was not approved by teaching staff until February 2012. Thus, performance measures for students taught by highly effective and effective teachers and principals are incomplete. Data are provided only for "All" students. By 2016-17 only 8% of students are projected to have highly effective teachers and principals. Percent projections for effective staff seem more appropriate. The district's selected performance measure, supported by a viable rationale, is attendance. However, the baseline data and annual targets are presented in the aggregate for grades K-12 combined; subgroup measures are included. Percents of students by subgroup on track to college- and career-readiness by 2016-17 based on mathematics and reading assessment results are low, and large gaps persist among subgroups; for example, White - 53%, Black - 24%, economically disadvantaged - 26%, ELLs - 16%. Large gains are predicted in NYS reading and mathematics assessment results, but no explanation of how the growth was predicted was found. Obviously, no baseline data exists based on the Teacher-Child Rating Scale because it has never been used in the district except with Pre-K students. Percents of students completing and submitting the Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form increase by only 8% from 2011-12 (baseline year) to 2016-17 (post-grant). This seems low for a project intended to increase college- and career-readiness.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:
 The applicant's response to (E)(4) was not found in the proposal.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	2

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:
 It is difficult to evaluate the applicant's budget because the projects it is intended to support are so inadequately presented. It is not feasible to determine if all necessary funds are identified or whether the stated amounts are reasonable and sufficient. One-time expenditures vs. ongoing operational costs are not clearly indicated.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	1
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:
 The applicant's narrative does not contain a high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. Random promises, approaches, and resources are mentioned but not precisely enough to link them to sustainability. The connection between the proposed "sustainability" strategies and the RTT-D grant is not always obvious. For example, one cited strategy occurs only in five elementary schools, yet the proposal is for high school.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
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Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	1
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The narrative provided falls extremely short of meeting the requirements for the Competitive Preference Priority. In fact, it is prefaced with the phrase "NEEDS TO BE WRITTEN." The intent of the LyncX Academy seems to be to provide a personalize learning environment in which students who are placed on long-term suspension can continue their academic program. No subsections are addressed.</p>		

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Not Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant has identified a pressing need for improved teaching and learning for the targeted students and has identified strategies that have the potential to support that improvement. However, this proposal falls tragically short of addressing in a coherent and comprehensive way how it will build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements; accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student; increase the effectiveness of educators; expand student access to the most effective educators; decrease achievement gaps across student groups; and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.</p>		

Total	210	45
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0191NY-3 for Rochester City School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	6
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>a. Each of the four core educational assurance areas are identified in the Narrative. Area 1 is addressed by adoption of the Common Core State Standards in grades 7-12. The project specifically addresses College and Career Graduation Requirements and the College and Career Standards. Area 2 is addressed through the use of the district's e-learning platform. A pilot for credit recovery and AP courses is currently taking place. In addition, the district will use Naviance and Accuplacer on-line systems to meet project goals. Area 3 is addressed by the hiring of literacy coaches to focus on college ready reading and writing skill. The district being identified as a state Focus district addresses Area 4. Several initiatives have been implemented in efforts to turn around these low achieving schools including extended learning opportunities.</p> <p>b. The applicant delivers an approach that addresses the overall goals of personalizing student learning by providing individualized pathways that focus on college and career readiness. On-line assessments will be incorporated into</p>		

the plan. However, the goals of the project are vague and not clearly articulated and lack specific detail.

- c. The applicant provided some description of some of the activities students may experience, however, there is a significant lack of explanation concerning the exact content and curriculum components and how they will be delivered. Naviance is an outstanding organizing tool, however, while it does provide some test prep guidance, it is not an instructional tool. It is a planning and organizational tool. The use of reading coaches supports students that need assistance, but the project lacks description of exactly what content will be delivered and what opportunities for accessing the content will be available outside of traditional teacher-led instruction.

The lack of clear and concise descriptions of specific activities prevents this section from receiving full points. This section earns a score of 6 out of 10 possible points.

(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)	10	6
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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes to serve six secondary schools of the district.

- a. There is no explanation of the process used to identify the participating schools. The narrative indicates that the four of the schools were selected due to their “priority school” designation. Two other schools were selected as they are considered Career/technical schools. It is also mentioned that all of the schools are located in city’s three poorest quadrants.
- b. A list of each school involved in the project is included.
- c. The narrative indicates that a table should be present but it was not found in this section. The table appeared in another section of the narrative. Once the table was found, it did appear to include information that the project meets the criteria of over 40% of students are high-need.

Lack of explanation of the process used to identify participating schools and the missing demographic data warrant a mid-range score for this section.

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

While the applicant describes several quality reforms and strategies, they are not formulated into any type of systematic high-quality plan. There is no clear theory of change identified other than a “trans-disciplinary approach” to implementation.

There are no specific steps identified and no clear evidence of any plan to implement the strategies identified in the section. Strategies including “understanding by design, inquiry-based teaching, problem based learning and more are simply listed as things that will be utilized. There is no explanation of how these strategies will improve outcomes for students. The lack of a high-quality plan prevent this section from receiving higher than a low-range score.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	3
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has identified performance goals for student growth, however, provides conflicting targets between sub-sections a and b.

- a. Summative assessment goals are based on the state’s end-of-course test for grades 7 and 8 in both math and reading and are reported as percentages achieving proficiency. The percentages at the baseline in grade 7 reading range from 3.7 – 20.6. The post grant targets range from 32.6 – 51.2. Math baselines and targets are similar in range for grade 7. Grade 8 baselines and targets in ELA are similar to grade 7, however math baselines and targets for grade 8 range from as low as 1.7 – 18.9 with targets of 42 – 60.9. High school scores are listed in average scores on a scale of up to 200 with baselines ranging from 41 -136 in Reading and 46-106 in Math. Targets for reading range from 106-174 in reading and 93-168 in math.

There is no explanation of how the targets were identified. The targets of only 51% of students achieving proficiency in reading seem low for a final target, however may be realistic given the low percentage of proficiency

at the baseline.

- b. There is conflicting information in the application. The original targets on the tables for section a are different than the information provided in tables labeled as section B. In the section a tables, the targets for each content area target do not decrease in achievement gap each year. There are 16.9 percentage points difference in the baseline scores between the lowest and highest scores in 7th grade math and 18.6 points difference in the post grant target thus making the achievement gap wider, not smaller. The same is true of eighth grade math with a 17.2 point difference in baseline scores and a target score difference of 18.9. The gaps are identified per sub-group.

The section b tables provide the same baseline data a significantly lower achievement targets. While the gaps are significantly lower, the targets are considerably below sufficient to make this a high-quality proposal. Proficiency rates of below 30% are undesirable.

- c. Graduation rate targets increase each year with final rates ranging between 59 and 73%.
- d. The baseline data indicates a current college enrollment range of 31% - 68% targeting a range of 67% - 77% by the end of the grant.

The target performance measures and gap information is conflicting. Sub-sections a and b provide two different pictures of projected targets. This discrepancy again provides evidence that the applicant does not have a high-quality plan designed and therefore cannot be awarded a score higher than a low-range score for this section.

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	5

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does demonstrate some success in student learning and achievement through earlier pilot and grant projects, however, the projects are in grade levels other than the grades being addressed in this section and therefore do not support evidence that the applicant has demonstrated evidence of success for this age or group of students.

- a. The art pilot project mentioned in the application provided some gains in achievement for elementary students when capered to non-participating students, however, there is no evidence of closing of achievement gaps.

The Pump up the Math professional development project did show promising support for improving student achievement. Comparisons of students taught by Pump up the Math teachers sored higher on Regents exams than students of non-participating teachers. There was no evidence of closing achievement gaps between sub-groups.

Much space was dedicated to the explanation of programs related to teacher retention programs, however, there is no statistical evidence presented to support the correlation between teacher retention and student growth.

- b. Again, evidence presented in this section does not clearly signify that the projects targeted the lowest-performing schools in the district. The art program was a “randomized, experimental research study”. The Pump it Up Math project explanation did not indicate if teachers from the lowest performing schools were targeted or if it was a district-wide effort.
- c. Information concerning how student data and reporting of improvement efforts is made available to parents and students is not presented.

While the applicant has had some success with both an arts and math project, there is little evidence and proof that they

have systems in place to support significant growth in student outcomes. In addition, the lack of information concerning potential closing of achievement gaps is missing. The section also lacks an explanation of how data is shared with parents and students. The section is weak and does not meet the requirements and therefore is awarded a low-range score.

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

5

1

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Little evidence is presented to support transparency in LEA processes outside of standard open rules and public reporting state regulations.

- a. The narrative indicates that employees are represented by a collective bargaining unit and positions are posted publically but there is not indication if salaries are posted. There are no supporting documents in the appendix concerning salaries.
- b. No evidence is available to indicate salaries are made public. There are no supporting documents in the appendix to address this issue.
- c. No evidence is available to indicate salaries are made public. There are no supporting documents in the appendix to address this issue.
- d. It is reported that the NYS Education Department publishes a fiscal supplement for each district detailing expenditures but it does not state if the report is broken down into per-building information or remains at the district level. Assessment data is presented by building, but no mention of expenditures by building is presented.

The applicant follows state rules and regulations concerning open records, which include financial records. It was not mentioned if salaries and salary schedules are posted to the district web site. There are no records available in the appendix to support any of the claims made in the narrative. Lack of supporting evidence beyond the minimum state-reporting requirements prevents this section from receiving anything higher than a low-range score.

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

10

4

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The narrative explains that the state of New York is a Race to the Top phase 2 state. As such, certain waivers have ben granted by the US Department of Education. Explanation of those waivers is not given. In addition, it is mentioned that the state was granted waivers in the rules for Title 1 and ESEA but again, aside from mentioning that the waivers give districts a certain degree of flexibility in expenditures, the narrative does little to provide explicit examples of what that actually means.

The narrative does mention that teachers are allowed to flex their schedules which indicates that a non-traditional school day may be in place, but there is no further explanation explaining if that means students are receiving instruction during those non-traditional hours or if the differing times are related to other duties.

The applicant does not explain if state rules concerning seat time, units of instruction, or content delivery models are governed by the state or if the district can set those parameters on its own. It appears as though the current method of delivery is teacher-centered with normal attendance and credit requirements of traditional schools.

Information presented in this section does not seem to address the issue of autonomy for the district clearly enough to determine if there will be a significant change in the method of delivery of instruction or how students will be assigned credit. This section scores in the low-middle range.

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

15

4

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does a poor job of including stakeholders in the proposal development.

- a. Advisory committees were involved in the development of the RTTT-D application but there is no indication of

parent or student involvement in the process. There are no survey results indicated. In addition, there is no mention of meeting minutes or sign in sheets in the appendix for advisory meetings that included discussion and planning of the proposal. There is mention of e-mails being sent to school-based planning teams but the content of those e-mails is not available in the appendix, nor is an explanation of how or if any responses from the e-mails impacted or changed the project plans.

- i. The LEA has collective bargaining representation. The president of the teacher's union signed the application.
- b. Only two letters of support are included in the appendix of the application. Letters are from the NY department of Education and the City of Rochester.

The applicant did base much of the project development on an Occupations study concerning the types of jobs predicted in the near future. While this study may have some basis of support for the project, there is no evidence that representatives from the district were involved in the study. The lack of survey responses and supporting documentation (meeting notes, participant sign in sheets, etc.) as well as the exclusion of parents and students in the planning of the proposal keep this section from scoring above a low-range score.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	5

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Learning: An approach to learning that engages and empowers all learners, in particular high-need students (as defined in this notice), in an age-appropriate manner such that:

The applicant fails to deliver a high-quality plan for improving learning. While there are some notable efforts and quality resources identified in the proposal, there is no clear plan for implementation that addresses the key elements of a high-quality plan. There are no time lines, benchmarks, or clearly defined steps for implementation developed and ready for action. The narrative indicates that the first six months of the project will be spent in planning. A high-quality plan will have all aspects of the project identified with specific action items articulated. This plan does not have these elements in place.

(a) With the support of parents and educators, all students—

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

The plan indicates the focus will be on career technical education and career paths. There is no explanation of how students will develop and understanding of how learning is the key to their success. The project is planning to implement ePortfolios but this is the first time in the narrative that this is mentioned. How this relates to having understood learning is the key to their success is unclear.

(ii) Identify and pursue learning and development goals linked to college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice) or college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice), understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals, and measure progress toward those goals;

The implementation of Naviance is an excellent step in providing students and parents with a clear path to college planning. However, the narrative does little to explain the potential of the product to the average reader. Without prior knowledge of the product, it would be impossible to know what the product has to offer. In addition to Naviance, Accuplacer is mentioned. It is inferred that this program provides feed-back to students concerning their current level of performance but it does not explain if strategies for improvement are provided or if the program simply analyzes the data. Without feed-back about what the data means, students will be unable to understand what steps they need to take to adjust their instructional path to reach their goals.

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

There is mention in the narrative about technical opportunities and STEM pathways, however, there is no explanation about what these actually mean. While the plan indicates “new CTE programs will be explored” it does nothing to explain what that means. The plan does not clearly articulate if there will be job-shadowing experiences, business partnerships where mentors support instruction, school-to-work credits, or exactly what types of experiences will be available.

(iv) Have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning; and Again, the applicant fails to explain exactly how individual student learning will be addressed. Aside from the mention of additional coaching in literacy and math, there is no explanation of what formats will be developed. There is mention of two dual-credit courses being offered, but there is no mention of on-line instruction, video-conferencing with experts who may be local, regional, or global. There is no mention of advanced placement or accelerated learning. Credit recovery is mentioned but it was not clearly defined in how that will take place.

(v) Master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving; These elements were mentioned as things that will be addressed, however, the lack of a specific action steps or identifiable content used to develop these skills leave the evaluator to guess on how these things will be addressed.

(b) With the support of parents and educators (as defined in this notice), each student has access to—

(i) A 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; The applicant fails to deliver a personalized sequence of instruction other than the traditional teacher-led classroom. There is no plan to provide on-line opportunities. While the Naviance program provides guidance in which classes are needed to achieve college entrance, it is not a content delivery program and does little to support content development. It will allow students to track which courses to take but again, does not allow for variance from the traditional delivery methods.

(ii) A variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments; The application does an extremely poor job of providing high-quality instructional approaches other than teacher-led instruction. Some dual credit opportunities are mentioned, however, there is no mention of on-line resources or tools or how credit may be earned through non-traditional methods.

(iii) High-quality content, including digital learning content (as defined in this notice) as appropriate, aligned with college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice) or college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice); There is no evidence that any high-quality or digital learning content will be available to students.

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

(A) Frequently updated individual student data that can be used to determine progress toward mastery of college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice), or college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice); and The proposal does include the implementation of Accuplacer, however, it does not appear that this tool provides immediate feed-back on formative assessments that could guide instruction.

(B) Personalized learning recommendations based on the student's current knowledge and skills, college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice) or college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice), and available content, instructional approaches, and supports; and Again, the tools identified in this proposal are quality tools, however, do not constitute a comprehensive approach to informing instruction on a daily basis.

(v) Accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students (as defined in this notice) to help ensure that they are on track toward meeting college- and career-ready standards (as defined in this notice) or college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice); and Dual credit courses are mentioned as well as credit recovery. There is little explanation of how high-needs students will be supported other than the implementation of reading and math coaches.

(c) Mechanisms are in place to provide training and support to students that will ensure that they understand how to use the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning. There is no mention of how students will be supported in using the proposed tools other than to stay they will be "trained" in how to use them.

The applicant does not delivery a high-quality or comprehensive plan to support individualized student learning. The lack of specific action items with benchmarks and timelines suggest that while some of the resources and proposed strategies are worthy, they lack potential for significant impact due to missing elements that address all aspects of student learning outcomes including access to high-quality digital content tools and varied deliveries.

Due to the lack of a high-quality plan, this section scores in the low-range.

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

20

3

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not make a clear case to support teaching and leading. The information presented in this section is generic and vague and does little to support the minimum requirements of any accredited school.

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

- (i) There is no evidence that any training will be provided to support the implementation of personalized learning environments. There is some explanation of an on-line PD program but specific modules addressing individualized learning were not selected nor any plan for systemic PD processes was presented.
- (ii) Again, the narrative indicates that the district has adopted the Danielson Framework and utilizes Teachscape to measure teacher performance. It also mentions an on-line PD program but does nothing to indicate how the Frameworks are used to inform PD or exactly what Teachscape is able to provide. There is no mention of how instruction or content will be adapted to support individual student tasks.
- (iii) There is no plan or mention of how data will be used to inform instruction or how teachers will use data to inform PD needs.
- (iv) The narrative indicates that the Multidimensional Principal Performance Rubric was selected as the administrative rubric. It fails, however, to explain what that means. How is the rubric used to support administrative outcomes? While the rubric is able to indicate if an administrator is effective, there is no explanation of how improvement will be supported.

(b) All participating educators (as defined in this notice) have access to, and know how to use, tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice). Those resources must include—

The application is missing information that addresses this section. It simply states: "Need to Write".

- (i) No narrative provided.
- (ii) No narrative provided.
- (iii) No narrative provided.

(c) All participating school leaders and school leadership teams (as defined in this notice) 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 (as defined in this notice) or college- and career-ready graduation requirements (as defined in this notice). The training, policies, tools, data, and resources must include:

There seems to be a disconnect between the proposed project and this section. The narrative indicates that intense professional development will be implemented for teachers in grades K-5 and 6-8 when the proposal is for 7-12 buildings. Again, the proposal is for a career and technical education project and while two of the schools involved have STEM initiatives, the entire PD focus seems to be for elementary teachers and in the STEM area.

- (i) There is no evidence that the PD plan is directly tied to the district's teacher evaluation system.
- (ii) Again, this section seems completely random with little thought or connection to the proposed other outcomes and activities of the project. The plan indicates that it will "seek expertise" of a career resource center but there is no clear plan for implementation of training. There is also a random paragraph about participation in summer enrichment activities but as it is presented, it is not clear if these are student or teacher projects.

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

The applicant clearly does not provide a high-quality plan. This section is poorly constructed and is completely missing an entire section. There is no clear professional development plan other than to say teachers have access to on-line PD and that the Danielson Framework has been adopted for teacher evaluation. There are no supporting documents to even support what the teacher evaluation looks like or how improvement of teaching is supported through an analysis of teacher evaluations. There is no mention of coaching, professional learning communities, or data retreats to inform instruction. This section lacks any substance and therefore earns a low-range score.

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 does a poor job of developing a high-quality plan to support project implementation. The section is vague and general in nature and does not address the sub-sections individually making it difficult to identify each criteria outlined.

The applicant has practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning by—

(a) The projected will be governed by traditional methods including a publically elected board of education, superintendent, and building administrators. There will be a full-time project manager. However, there is no evidence of any advisory board to monitor the project implementation and provide feedback to monitor and adjust the project based on student performance.

(b) No evidence to address this sub-section was found in the narrative. The general indication is that the project will be governed by traditional school and state practices.

(c) The applicant fails to provide any explanation of how credit will be earned. It is then assumed that credits will be given in a traditional manner of completion of traditional teacher-led instruction and not based on evidence of mastery of content.

(d) There is no evidence that this element is addressed. There is no explanation of how students will demonstrate mastery aside from traditional classes and evaluation methods.

(e) The applicant briefly mentions “digital content” but fails to expand on the topic. There is no discussion concerning English learners or students with disabilities. The plan fails to even explain how instructional practices are adaptable to any student nor how they are available outside of the normal school day.

The applicant fails to address the criteria of this section. The narrative is extremely weak and did not address any of the sub-sections individually making it difficult to fully grasp each component. There does not appear to be any explanation of how the project will change traditional learning formats and experiences to address personalized learning. This section scores in the low-range due to lack of evidence of a high-quality plan.

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

The LEA and school infrastructure supports personalized learning by—

(a) The applicant indicates that a data warehouse called ParentConnect is available but provides no indication of how the tool may be utilized with parents nor how parents are made aware and trained on the system. There is also no mention of how resources will be accessed in and out of school.

(b) No supports for parents, students, or educators are addressed in terms of technology support or data result interpretation.

(c) Again, it is mentioned that ParentConnect is available but there is no further explanation of how the data is presented or how all the data systems are integrated.

(d) The plan provides a laundry list of resources and systems that are in place throughout the district including assessment components geared towards early elementary grades that are not being served in the project. There is no clearly defined plan or explanation of how each of the systems work together. The lack of explanation of how data teams or professional learning communities use the data prevents this section from being supportive of the

project.

Again, this section provides a list of some high-quality components but there is no evidence that the resources and tools are being utilized in a strategic and effective manner. This is the first section that even addresses the use of NWEA MAPs assessments and Compass Learning. These resources have the potential to inform individual student learning outcomes but nowhere else in the proposal are they even mentioned. In addition, assessments for primary grades are highlighted when the proposal is clearly a secondary project. The applicant has some quality resources available but fails to incorporate them into the development of a high-quality plan. Due to this lack of cohesiveness and the inability to address each sub-section individually, this section scores in the low-range.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	4
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant fails to articulate a high-quality plan for continuous improvement. The mention of SPA in the previous section is vague and does little to explain if this is a local or commercial product. The product is to provide data to track performance against benchmarks associated with career and postsecondary readiness. This may be an appropriate tool for tracking student performance but does little to support the entire project goals and objectives in terms of improving the plan.</p> <p>In addition to the SPA, the proposal mentions a social-emotional problem behavior and competency tool that is currently being used at the pre-K level. How this relates to the continuous improvement of the project plan remains unclear.</p> <p>There are no examples or explanations of how project performance will be disseminated to stakeholders other than to state that the action team will assess on a quarterly basis and adjust the plan. There is no indication that stakeholder input will be sought or that changes in the plan will be reported to even the district administrators or board.</p> <p>The lack of a clearly articulated and high-quality plan for continuous improvement prevents this section from receiving a score out of the low range.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	0
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant indicates that a plan will be developed during year one of the project. Therefore, there is no high-quality plan. The plan is to develop a plan in year one. No points can be awarded for this section because no plan was presented.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides information about the performance measure of highly effective teachers and principals. The data provided in the table seems incredibly low indicating that by the end of the project, only 8% of the population will have highly-effective teachers and principals. A second chart with the performance measure of students with access to an affective teacher indicates a post-grant level of 80% for teachers and 67% for principals.</p> <p>(a) Its rationale for selecting that measure; The applicant selected attendance as an additional performance measure quoting a strong correlation between attendance and student performance. The chart provided shows an already impressive attendance percentage for students in grades K-12. The targets are high (in the 93% range) however the data is for grades K-12. It would have been more helpful if the data were for the grades being served by the project and not the entire district. The other measures include using reading and math scores for</p>		

grades 7 and 8 to determine college and career readiness. The target percentages for the end of the grant seem low with percentages ranging from 16% - only 53% of students on track to career readiness.

(b) How the measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant’s implementation success or areas of concern; and The applicant proposes to use formative assessment data that is given three times per year.

(c) How it will review and improve the measure over time if it is insufficient to gauge implementation progress. The applicant indicates that the information will be reviewed after each assessment, which would be three times per year.

The applicant should have a total of approximately 12 to 14 performance measures.

The chart below outlines the required and applicant-proposed performance measures based on an applicant’s applicable population.

Grades 7 & 8

- a. **The number and percentage of participating students (as defined in this notice), by subgroup, who are on track to college- and career-readiness based on the applicant’s on-track indicator (as defined in this notice);** The measures proposed are using reading and math scores for grades 7 and 8 to determine college and career readiness. The target percentages for the end of the grant seem low with percentages ranging from 16% - only 53% of students on track to career readiness.
- b. **Applicant must propose at least one grade-appropriate academic leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan; and** The learning indicators provided are the use of reading and math scores.
- c. **Applicant must propose at least one grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan.** The project proposes to use the Teacher-Child Rating scale as the measure of social-emotional health for grades 7 and 8. No baseline data is available therefore targets cannot yet be established.

- a. **The number and percentage of participating students (as defined in this notice) who complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form;** The percentage of students completing the FAFSA seems extremely low. The baseline data indicate that only 9% over all are completing the form with a target of only 17%. This seems incredibly low considering the entire project is geared up to support college and career-ready programs.
- b. **The number and percentage of participating students (as defined in this notice), by subgroup, who are on track to college- and career-readiness based on the applicant’s on-track indicator (as defined in this notice);** No data available. The narrative indicated charts for grades 9-12 were in the appendix. No such charts were found.
- c. **Applicant must propose at least one measure of career-readiness in order to assess the number and percentage of participating students (as defined in this notice) who are or are on track to being career-ready;** No data available. The narrative indicated charts for grades 9-12 were in the appendix. No such charts were found.
- d. **Applicant must propose at least one grade-appropriate academic leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan; and** No data available. The narrative indicated charts for grades 9-12 were in the appendix. No such charts were found.
- e. **Applicant must propose at least one grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan.** No data available. The narrative indicated charts for grades 9-12 were in the appendix. No such charts were found.

The applicant failed to provide the adequate number of performance measures as outlined by the criteria. There were no performance measures for grades 9-12 outside of the FAFSA completion. The proposed targets for all performance measures were lacking in rigor. The applicant earns a low-range score for this section.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	1
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

There is no high-quality plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed project. There is a very short paragraph indicating the development of a series of surveys and that there will be continual feedback from the team, director, principals and others. There is essentially no articulated plan. The applicant earns a very low-range score for lack of defined activities related to an effective evaluation.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	2
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's budget, including the budget narrative and tables—</p> <p>(a) No other funding sources outside of RTT-D funds are identified.</p> <p>(b) The budget narrative is very general. It is difficult to determine exactly what is being purchased aside from staffing. There is no breakdown of salaries except stating 6 Literacy coaches for a total of \$401 in year two. There are year one instructional expenses when the plan indicates the entire first year will be used for planning.</p> <p>(c) Clearly provides a thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities, including--</p> <p>(i) No funds other than the RTT-D funds are addressed.</p> <p>(ii) There is no explanation of what constitutes one-time investments and versus ongoing operational costs.</p> <p>The budget is very vague and does not clearly explain what exactly is being purchased. There is not indication of what investments are one-time and which are on-going. Items like "College Stem/robotics camps" do not indicate if these are camps for students or camps that teachers will attend.</p> <p>The budget does not provide a clear picture of how these funds will be used with other funds to fully integrate the project into the district. Because the budget is vague and lacks sufficient explanation and detail, this section scores in the low range.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	2
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not deliver a high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals. The items addressed in this section seem disjointed and not entirely related to the over arching goals of the project. The plan did little to address any support from State and local leaders aside from current scholarship programs for students meeting eligibility requirements. There is no proof that project developers have even addressed long-term sustainability of project components with the district administration and board of education. There is no discussion of how the full-time positions supported by the project will be supported after grants funds expire. No potential for future funding is identified and strategic partnerships with businesses and/or organizations that could support the project are lacking.</p> <p>The lack of clearly defined steps to address the absorption of new staffing for the project after the grant as well as no discussion concerning strategic partnerships or potential revenue or funding sources prevent this section from receiving a score out of the low range.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	1
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not provide evidence of a strong partnership for services outlines in the priority. There is no narrative associated with any of the sub-sections. The first applicant information states: NEEDS TO BE WRITTEN. This clearly indicates that this section was not completed and therefore cannot be considered as an actual plan.</p>		

Demographic information in an attempt to establish need is present in a bulleted list. There is a brief paragraph about the introduction of an on-line tool for rating social-emotional performance. Another paragraph begins to introduce the LynX Academy and the budget section of the proposal includes funding for the academy but there is no clear explanation of the academy other than it is designed for students on long-term suspension.

And finally, there is a single paragraph about a student and family support center at east high school. There is no explanation of exactly what the support center provides.

The lack of a clearly articulated plan eliminates this section from receiving any more than one point.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

This application fails to meet absolute priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments.

While the application provides a glimpse into the potential of the district, it falls short of delivering a high-quality plan to implement truly personalized learning environments for students.

The application builds its program on the promise of delivering college and career ready learning environments but fails to identify exactly how that will happen. Quality resources are mentioned including Naviance and Compass Learning but the project fails to maximize the potential of these resources by developing clearly defined action steps to implementation.

There is a serious lack of evidence that key stakeholders were adequately involved in the planning process. There is no evidence of surveys, meeting notes, or attendance records of planning meetings. The district fails to explain how instruction and credits for students will be delivered outside of normal teacher-led instruction.

There appears to be an effort for school-work experience, but the plan fails to explain how the work partners are selected and how or if credit will be given to students and how they will be assessed on the effectiveness of their experience.

And finally, the lack of provisions for access to high –quality digital content, structured professional development, and how these things may or may not play a role in the acquisition of skills for students eliminates the ability of this project to be considered high-quality. There is no explanation of how students will be allowed to move along in the curriculum based on their needs and interests, nor is there any plan formulated in providing support to teachers as their roles may be re-defined.

Total	210	58
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