



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0136NM-1 for Santa Fe Public Schools

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>

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

The applicant outlines a comprehensive and coherent reform vision for its Empowering Communities – Personalized Learning (ECPL) program.

- a. The applicant will effectively build on its work in three of the four core educational assurance areas in the following ways:
  - Adopting standards, approaches, and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy by aligning district curriculum to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) to ensure continuity across the district. Continuing these efforts at the state level, New Mexico is developing a next-generation assessment system through the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). PARCC is a 24-state consortium that is developing a common online assessment to test multiple types of student performance. The New Mexico Public Education Department is currently constructing a Bridge Assessment to facilitate the transition to this more robust system of assessments, to be delivered in grades 3-8, 10 and 11 by 2014. The PARCC assessment will become the primary assessment for New Mexico’s students by SY the 2014-2015. The measures are aligned with current educational practices and are more than appropriate.
  - Building data systems that measure student growth and success and that can inform and improve instruction by using Pearson’s SchoolNet information management system District-wide. SchoolNet is a system that allows for data informed decision-making. The applicant states that it also allows school districts to engage in reporting and analysis, from the district level down to the individual student level, including the District’s Key Performance Indicator dashboards. The system also allows for the creation of formative assessments that allow the district to manage, and deploy classroom, school, and district-wide assessments. The assessments are accessible and creatable by teachers, principals, and administrators in order to allow for the real-time correction of issues. The curriculum management tool allows teachers to create common lesson plans and gives teachers access to student assessment data, standards-aligned curriculum, and student profiles. And finally, a Response to Intervention (RtI) module combines with SchoolNet to provide tools to define thresholds for at-risk students and refer them to counselors and interventions. The data systems are extensive and far reaching.
  - The district will attempt to turn around the lowest-achieving schools by using the Achievement Zone system - a new means of assessing schools by ranking them according to six main factors: student achievement, relative achievement, relative growth, relative growth of struggling students, parent engagement, and parent feedback. Schools are classified into three Achievement Zones: Innovation, Acceleration, and Transformation. Innovation Zone schools are high-performing and demonstrate a strong culture of success. Acceleration Zone schools are those that demonstrate a strong and improving culture, but maintain room for improvement in one or more of the six indicators, relative to comparison schools. Transformation Zone schools are those with the worst performance relative to peer schools, and which fail to demonstrate a culture conducive to success. The applicant states that this system works in tandem with the State Public Education Department’s A-F grading system, and provides an assessment of school culture where the grading system fails to.
  - The district was a recipient of a School Improvement Grant four years ago. Those grant funds were used to create a culture of learning and greatly improved one of the most persistently low-performing schools in the state. The story of Ramirez Thomas Elementary was offered--the school's status improved significantly, showing continuous improvement over the past four years. Ramirez Thomas' rating increased from an ‘F’ grade (earning 6.8 out of 40 points in 2010) to a ‘C’ grade (more than doubling its score by 2012) in less than three years under the Public Education Department’s grading system. This rate of improvement is impressive.

However, the efforts put forth on the remaining area do not sufficiently demonstrate how the applicant has been effective in these areas.

- In regards to recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most, the applicant states that the district has approved a pay raise (average 2%) for unionized teachers. Professional development is a cornerstone of the district’s activities, including early release Fridays where students are dismissed early so that teacher may take advantage of in-house professional development. Additionally, the District has made an active effort to meet with educators and listen to them, incorporating their ideas and suggestions which have led to a decrease in resignations. Later in the narrative, the applicant states that it will enlist the support of teacher-placement agencies such as Teach for America which places teachers in a district for two years. The district is also working to ensure that as many children as possible are taught by a highly-qualified teacher by adding to the Performance Compact for the Human Resources Department. Human Resources staff people are held accountable for having positions filled by qualified candidates in a timely manner, with a target of zero vacancies. These efforts combined to reduce vacancies on the first day of school from 54 in 2009-2010 to only 28 in the most recent school year. These measures, while needed, do not demonstrate how teachers will be rewarded.
  
- b. The applicant articulates a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support grounded in common and individual tasks that are based on student academic interests. The applicant states that students in the district will play an active role in developing their individual personalized learning plans (Next Step Plan) under ECPL. Students, along with counselors and teachers, will work with families to develop individual learning plans, which are linked to college and career ready standards and align with the district’s performance goals. It is a sound approach that allows for participation of all involved—teachers, students, and parents.
  
- c. The applicant effectively describes what the classroom experience will be like for students and teachers participating in personalized learning environments. Under ECPL, students will receive a combination of targeted direct instruction and instruction in leveled small groups (divided according to data and observations on their abilities and capacities). The instructional approach is differentiated, in that it addresses the three components of learning: content, process, and product. Students will be able to move through these leveled groups and individual lesson plans based on their unique needs as revealed by continuous evaluation of data on their test scores, exams, and qualitative feedback from weekly sessions with a counselor. The applicant continues the narrative with detailing the emphasis placed on each stage of learning. For example, at the primary level, the emphasis is ensuring that all students have a strong foundation in core subject areas. Students engage in leveled reading groups to ensure that they can read by the third grade, receive one-on-one training as needed, and are assessed by counselors weekly to gauge adjustment and progress in core academic areas. The teacher experience includes training in home language development in order to work with English Language Learners. Teachers will also be trained to analyze a variety of data in order to get a clear picture of each student’s needs. They will also work with counselors and families to develop a learning plan that is responsive to students changing needs (the Next Step Plan). Plans may include intervention, frequent use of formative assessments, and progress monitoring. The individual student Next Step plan is formed using data from the Rtl process, truancy and behavioral information, grades and scores on exams/assessments. Teachers will use benchmark and formative reading and math assessments, including beginning, middle, and end-of-year, using the Response to Intervention model. They also receive training on personalized instruction models, including on addressing the CCSS implementation. The proposed narrative seeks to address every student’s needs and exemplifies careful thought by the applicant.

Overall, the applicant scores in the high range for this criterion.

<b>(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
--	-----------	-----------

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

The applicant provides an extensive narrative about its approach to implementing its reform proposal that will support high-quality LEA-level and school-level implementation of that proposal.

(a) The applicant states that plans for implementation began back in 2012, when the District underwent a comprehensive review process of the curriculum and the quality of instruction and leadership within each school, as well as the structure and qualifications of key administration at the District level. A third-party evaluation found that school culture needed to be changed, instruction needed to be improved, and resource allocation needed to be revised. This external evaluation,

coupled with the state's assessment system led the district to determine that the Transformation Zone schools, those underachieving relative to comparable schools around the state, were the most important to target. While not limited to a specific grade band, these schools had the largest achievement gaps and the greatest risk factors to prepare its students for graduation, college, and careers.

(b) To identify the schools most in need of additional resources, the applicant used its Achievement Zone approach, which divides schools into Transformation (the lowest distinction), Acceleration, and Innovation Zones. The program will target seven Transformation Zone schools before scaling up to additional schools: Capital High, Nava Elementary, Ortiz Middle, Cesar Chavez Elementary, Aspen Community School (K-8), De Vargas Middle, and Academy at Larragoite High School. By focusing resources on a small number of schools that are known to be underperforming given their challenges, the applicant hopes to maximize the likelihood of high-quality implementation and ultimate success. This appears to be an appropriate approach for the district which has 25 schools and more than 13,000 students.

(c) The applicant states that the proposed program will target approximately 4,000 students at the seven schools, representing students from kindergarten through 12th grade and slightly more than 30% of the district's total student population. These students are predominately poor, with 84% qualifying for free or reduced lunch. District-wide, approximately 67% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch. The Transformation Zone schools also have greater numbers of English Language Learners than the overall population, with around one-third of students learning English, compared to one-quarter in the other schools. The applicant's narrative confirms that all of the targeted schools meet eligibility requirements.

Overall, the applicant provides exhaustive evidence of its approach to implementation. It is evident that careful thought and much planning went into crafting the parameters of the program from as far back as 2012. The input from an external evaluator as well as the state evaluation tool, lends even more credibility to the selection and implementation process. Because of this, the applicant scores in the high range.

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

**10**

**10**

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

The District offers a high-quality plan to reform its lowest-performing schools as well as additional information in Table 1 and Appendix C. The SFPS Executive Team will review annually the effectiveness of elements of ECPL for scale up based on the evaluation provided by an external evaluator. Elements of the plan that prove successful will then be operationalized in other schools in the Acceleration and Innovation Zone schools as they demonstrate need. In areas where there is evidence of success, SFPS will include scale up in the following year's budget so that all schools will have access to highly-effective programs. Funding for scale-up will come from multiple sources, including the State, additional grant funds, and community organizational and business partners. By focusing resources on a small number of schools that are known to be underperforming given their challenges, the district maximizes the likelihood of high-quality implementation and ultimate success.

Overall, the applicant's plan is clear and comprehensive. There is a sound plan to duplicate success only when methods have proven successful. Additionally, the plan to concentrate on the least successful schools first, gives the applicant the opportunity to implement, analyze, and refine, if necessary, program components before they become widespread programs and activities. This careful approach is achievable and appropriate. The applicant scores in the high range for this criterion.

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

**10**

**9**

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

The applicant's vision is more than likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goals that are equal to or exceed the State ESEA targets for the LEA(s), overall and by student subgroup, for each participating LEA. The goals are:

- Goal 1: Create an environment that raises expectations and promotes high academic performance of all students.
- Goal 2: Recruit and support highly qualified and effective personnel at every level and every function throughout the District.
- Goal 3: Develop a culture of shared responsibility for student success by engaging families and the community.
- Goal 4: Promote a safe, sustainable, healthy and respectful school community.
- Goal 5: Ensure efficient and effective systems, operations, state-of-the art technology and infrastructure to support instruction and student learning.

(a) Santa Fe Public Schools uses a number of exams to judge reading and math proficiency: DIBELS Next, Discovery Educational Assessment, STAR Reading and Math, and STAR Early Literacy at the elementary school level, Discovery

Educational Assessment and STAR Reading and Math at the middle school level, and Discovery and STAR Math at the high school level. The SchoolNet information management system tracks results on assessments, coursework, and tests. The applicant provides a set of tables that establish baseline measurements and student proficiency targets for the LEA. These targets are set by the state Public Education Department and are both ambitious and achievable. For example, the applicant states that of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students who took the New Mexico Standards Based Assessment, 54% scored proficient and above in SY 2011-2012. Using the methods outlined in the narrative such as data-driven instruction, the applicant expects to increase this number to 72% by the end of the grant period.

(b) The applicant provides ambitious and achievable goals for closing the achievement gap. For example, the disparity between Grade 3 Reading Caucasian and Hispanic students will decrease from its current 25% gap to 12% by the end of the grant period. Similarly, the applicant will work to decrease the disparity between Grade 5 Math students from its current 29% gap to 12% by the end of the grant period. The applicant will focus on individual student plans and provide support such as tutoring, mentoring, and counseling to students. This is a commendable undertaking.

(c) The district's graduation rates have made improvements, up to nearly 62% in 2012 from 57% in 2011 and 53% in 2010-lower than both the District goal and the statewide average. The applicant will focus on individual academic achievement, school climate, behavioral support, "performance management" of principals, and community engagement, ECPL expects to improve graduation rates to 80% and increase overall proficiency levels to 75% in reading and 65% in math by 2018. The applicant's approach is sound. The ECPL, more specifically its program for at-risk students, will more than likely result in improved graduation rates.

(d) The applicant provides ambitious and achievable goals for college enrollment overall and by subgroup. For example, the applicant hopes to increase the percentage of Hispanics entering college from its current rate of 53% to 69% by the end of the grant term. However, the applicant admits that its district has not seen significant gains in college enrollment over the past four years. And through its ECPL program, the district hopes to prepare students to meet college and career ready requirements and provide students with a bridge to higher education. The applicant will do this through dual credit and advanced placement courses. However, the applicant fails to detail how it will increase student participation in these programs nor does the applicant state how it will track high school graduates after they leave (in order to confirm college enrollment).

The applicant did not address the optional area of Postsecondary degree attainment.

Overall, this places the applicant in the high range.

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

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

### (B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant shows a strong record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching, including a description, charts or graphs, and raw student data.

(a) The applicant has done an impressive job improving student learning outcomes and closing achievement gaps, including raising student achievement, high school graduation rates, and college enrollment rates.

- Communities in Schools of New Mexico is used as a tool to assist the lowest performing students in the lowest performing schools, and to help provide the non-academic supports that are prerequisites for academic success. This partnership, active in Agua Fria and Salazar elementary schools, has helped to improve student performance and the learning environment to lift the schools into the Acceleration Zone.
- In regards to advancing student learning and achievement, the district has experienced overall gains for the past several years. For example, by the 11th grade, the District has nearly closed the gap with the state in reading proficiency since 2009. Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students made significant reading gains (32.1% to 46.3% for Hispanics and 30% to 44.9% for English Language Learning students) since 2009.
- Within the past four years, SFPS has increased the state-calculated graduation rates from 53% to where they currently stand at just under 62%. Also within the last four years, SFPS has implemented a system that requires a more hands-on approach to maintaining contact with students at risk of dropping out and requires schools to contact students prior to being dropped from enrollment rolls.
- The applicant does not address college enrollment.

Given some of the challenges that students in the region face, such as language barriers, the outcomes are notable. Many of the reforms have produced favorable results in such a short period of time. There is no doubt that this rate of change and improvement can continue with the proposed programs. However, the applicant does not address college enrollment rates at all in the narrative. This information would have been helpful to the reviewer to determine whether the applicant has a record of successfully moving students into higher education.

(b) The applicant clearly shows how it has achieved ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools or in its low-performing schools such as Agua Fria and Salazar elementary schools, but particularly in Ramirez Thomas Elementary School. The applicant outlines the steps that it undertook to turn this school around.

- Five years ago, Ramirez Thomas Elementary School was deemed one of the worst schools in New Mexico as measured by the New Mexico Public Education Department, earning 6.8 out of 40 points in 2010.
- The school included students who were 100% eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals, over 80% Hispanic population, and over half of students being English Language Learners.
- To spur improvement, the district negotiated with the teachers' union, solicited stakeholder feedback, and implemented a range of interventions, data-driven decision making, and Professional Learning Communities.
- Ramirez Thomas improved from an 'F' grade to a 'C' grade in less than three years under the Public Education Department's grading system.
- Ramirez Thomas Elementary School's student growth and growth trajectory are among the best in the state, with only one other school improving upon its performance even more rapidly.

This particular example speaks to the applicant's ability to achieve ambitious and significant reforms. To literally rise from the very bottom of the achievement ladder to the second rung is astounding.

(c) The applicant has taken a variety of methods to make student performance data available to students, educators, and parents in ways that inform and improve participation, instruction, and services.

- The district currently makes student-level and school-level data available in an easily-accessible online format so that students and parents, and educators and district staff, are fully aware of student performance and progress.
- Through the district website, students, parents, and educators can access the SchoolNet Instructional Improvement System and PowerSchool. SchoolNet integrates teaching, learning, data and achievement. It provides SFP educators with a range of tools, including: data management and reporting, Response to Intervention, and student and parent access.
- The combination of SchoolNet and PowerSchool provides a complete student performance database to inform and improve participation, instruction and services making student performance data available 24/7 to students, educators and parents.
- Families may use the PowerParent portal to review their student's data, including grades, assignments, test scores, and schedules. (With grant funds, the applicant will enlist parent liaisons, who will be placed at each school and in the Parent Academy. The Academy will offer a course on technology that will include lessons for parents on accessing, reading, and interpreting student performance data. Families who do not have easy access to a computer or the internet will have access to computer stations at participating schools. And those whose digital literacy makes computer use a hardship may request hard copies of student information and other data.)

Student data will help improve instruction in the following ways:

- The Discovery Education Assessment online tool provides a platform with interim assessments aligned with the Common Core State Standards, as well as an integrated RtI process with shorter probes. Historical data on each student allow educators to review the student performance data for each subject, grade level, language, and teacher, through the lens of the schools' instructional program and place the student where they best fit. The district team will then analyze whether the instructional program is working as intended and discusses whether and how to implement mid-course corrections.
- STAR Assessment and Renaissance Learning programs allow teachers to customize lessons based on standards and student performance.

Both of these measures are reliable and provide accurate information to students and educators.

In this section, the applicant clearly shows how it will use its past successes to build on future ones. PowerSchool, Discovery Education, and STAR assessments are known entities in the education community. The applicant is not trying

to reinvent the wheel only tweak it so that it runs faster and smoother. They've clearly shown that they do more than gather data, rather they analyze and use it to spur further success.

Overall, all of the measures outlined have proven effective and are sound techniques to be used in the future. However, the applicant should consider expanding their efforts to a higher level, more specifically encouraging students, in large numbers, to enroll in college. Because of this, the applicant places in the high range.

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

**5**

**5**

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

The applicant currently displays a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments, including by making public, by school, actual school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration.

- The state requires that information on district-level budgeting, expenses, revenues, and non-personnel expenditures be available through the New Mexico Sunshine Portal, which is the official transparency and accountability portal for New Mexico state government. Districts, including the applicant, are required to submit information for posting, including: Salary Schedules and Policies, a directory of the LEA employee positions by school name, title and salary, and monthly financial reports, as well as other information on spending, budgets, revenues, employees, contracts and other information.
- The applicant goes further by committing to a high level of transparency in activities and plans, as well as in salaries and budgets. SFPS currently collects and makes available a wide variety of data on district and school-level revenues and expenses, audit and budgets. The district has redesigned its website to make it more user-friendly and informative, and to function as a tool for internal and external stakeholders. The district website also makes central office and school-level information on expenditures related to instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration publicly available. The redesigned website includes pages that share school-level information on actual personnel salaries at the school level for school-level support staff; actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff; actual personnel salaries at the school level for teachers; and actual non-personnel expenditures.
- The applicant makes the above information available in paper format to anyone who requests it at the central office.
- The district fully supports the Inspection of Public Records Act (IPRA). In New Mexico, IPRA provides for any public record, with few exceptions, to be made available for inspection within 14 calendar days of the request. The district has added the time it takes to respond to these requests to the Performance Compact of the Chief of Staff in charge of communication, for even greater transparency and accountability to the public.

Overall, the applicant presents an impressive level of transparency that cannot be improved upon. The applicant scores high for this criterion.

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

**10**

**10**

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

The applicant supplies overwhelming evidence to support successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments described in the applicant's proposal.

- Santa Fe Public School District has informed the New Mexico Public Education Department of its plan and has sufficient autonomy under New Mexico legal, statutory and regulatory requirements to implement and maintain the personalized learning environments and other activities described in this proposal.
- The district has shown evidence of successful proactive collaboration with the state by being one of the 12 districts which received approval of a customized teacher evaluation system, as well as being given the ability last year to deviate from the old evaluation system for school leaders (met competency/did not meet competency) in order to implement the Performance Compact process for school leaders.
- The applicant also cites relevant state laws to underscore its autonomy.
- Figure 2 also identifies the level of autonomy for each school zone.

The proactive steps that the applicant has taken to seek state approval as well as highlight relevant state laws provides evidence of sufficient autonomy. Overall, the applicant scores in the high range.

**(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)****15****11****(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

Meaningful stakeholder engagement was undertaken during the development of the proposal and evidence of meaningful support for the proposal has been provided.

(a)

Students, families, teachers, and principals in participating schools were engaged in the development and revision of the proposal in the following ways:

- As part of the engagement process, the District has held regular public meetings since Fall 2012, which involved central office staff, principals, teachers, support staff, parents, students, local nonprofits and advocacy organizations, union representatives, and government officials.
- The District shaped the ECPL plan based on parent and community feedback gathered during regular Community Conversations (Spanish language translators are made available to improve accessibility) and surveys disseminated District-wide (also available in English and Spanish).
- To inform families and community members of the details of the project, a summary of the ECPL proposal was made available for public comment during the 10-day comment period on the District website, in hard copy at the central office, and was presented at a board meeting. Additional information on the project was made available upon request. A comment form was available on the District website, and the public was invited to submit hard copy comments at the central office.
- The central office staff, including the Director of Teaching and Learning, the Literacy and Rtl Coordinator, the Director of Technology, and the Chief Academic Officer, supported by the Chief Accountability and Strategy Officer wrote the grant.
- The district posted on its website, a copy of the draft proposal. The public was invited to read and weigh in on the proposed activities. The SurveyMonkey website was used to collect the information.
- Local collective bargaining leadership was also given an opportunity to read and respond to a draft during the 10-day public comment period. Feedback from the comment period was taken into consideration and incorporated throughout the proposal.
- The District issued press releases, available on the website and disseminated to local media outlets.
- The Superintendent has a dedicated webpage, with links to his regular communications, including memos, letters, reports and presentations.
- Key documents are also available in Spanish to increase accessibility; translators for Spanish-speaking community members are also available at all community meetings.
- Teacher feedback during the planning process revealed that classrooms in Transformation Zone schools require upgraded technology to improve teachers' abilities to personalize the learning environment, to engage students, increase technological access for families, and to foster a sense of ownership among students about the learning experience.

The applicant's evidence includes letters of support from some parents and teachers in the target schools; however, the letters are inconsistent in the type of support. For example, the letter provided by Francis X. Nava Elementary School contains signatures from parents and community members while the letter from Aspen Community Magnet School was signed by members of the School Leadership Team/School Advisory. There appears to be no consistency or uniformity in how signatures were obtained or whether teachers were asked to sign these documents. Why teacher signatures are missing from some letters is unclear and the reviewer is unable to determine the level of widespread teacher support because of this.

Additionally, it appears that the applicant has not secured overarching teacher support as they state in the narrative that details are still being solidified and that the union leadership generally supports the teacher evaluation system developed by the district within the framework of the Public Education Department, as well as the other elements of the proposed program. This is extremely important because teacher participation is crucial to the success of the program. If there is no teacher buy-in, then there can be no program and can seriously impact the effective implementation of grant funds.

(b)

Approximately twelve letters of support from such key stakeholders are included. The letters from entities, such as the mayor of Santa Fe, the Parent Involvement Committee and the Santa Fe Community Foundation, not only pledge their support for the program, but detail their commitments as well. For example, the School Advisory Councils at Transformation Zone Schools writes that it will provide support in the execution of key activities and encourage family and community engagement. These letters exemplify the level of effort that the applicant undertook to gain stakeholder support.

Overall, the applicant scores in the middle range.

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

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

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

The applicant offers a high-quality plan for improving the existing learning environment and includes an approach to implementing instructional strategies for all participating students that enable participating students to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to college- and career-ready standards and college- and career-ready graduation requirements and accelerate his or her learning through support of his or her needs, which are outlined below.

(a-b)

The applicant states that under ECPL, students will benefit from consistent, direct instruction delivered by highly-qualified teachers. As a majority of the students in the seven schools are deemed high need, they will receive a combination of targeted direct instruction and instruction in leveled small groups (divided according to data and observations on their abilities and capacities). The instructional approach is differentiated, in that it addresses the three components of learning: content, process, and product. Students will be able to move through these leveled groups and individual lesson plans based on their unique needs as revealed by continuous evaluation of data on their test scores, exams, and qualitative feedback from weekly sessions with a counselor. For example, at the secondary school level, student schedules will be based on their Next Step plans and on their interest and ability in various Career Pathways.

All students will have access to self-paced digital content which gives them access to programs and coursework that improve student comprehension of core subject areas and allows them to pursue mastery at their own pace. ECPL will scale-up the use and application of End-of-Course exams in secondary school, which the applicant believes will further augment the personalized learning environment for students by allowing them to demonstrate mastery when they are ready. As they progress through school, students are given increased autonomy in determining their academic pathway. High school students are invited to choose options in the District’s Secondary School Reform Plan; providing Career Academies, Evening School, an alternative self-paced school, or an International Baccalaureate Magnet School, which will provide training and skills.

The applicant states that it employs highly-qualified teachers and staff at the schools who are trained in specialty areas such as home language instruction and are trained to address diverse cultural and academic needs.

Teachers, counselors, and parents will work together with community service providers to create opportunities for students to master critical academic content and skills such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving. At the high school level, SFPS offers an elective college preparation and leadership class, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), in participating high schools. AVID is a research-backed approach used in 47 states and Washington, D.C. This college readiness elective class targets those students who are not yet reaching their full potential, but who could do well in college with additional preparation and support. Students learn about college readiness best practices, such as Cornell note-taking, organizational techniques, career exploration, and test preparation techniques.

And parents are crucial to the process as they have to review and approve all learning goals and activities.

(c)

The applicant’s means are impressive and far-reaching. Each group of students and their respective learning experiences have been chronicled. The applicant also outlines the mechanisms that it will use 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. For example, students will receive primary training and support from their teachers; however, a help center will be established in order to address student needs that cannot be addressed by the teacher or problems that may arise outside of school hours.

Overall, the applicant offers a high-quality plan of action for implementing an individual learning environment for students. Students will have an equal voice in the development of the process, and along with their parents, decide on an appropriate course of action. The applicant also outlines a thorough plan to address student learning needs outside of the classroom. Because of this, the applicant scores in the high range for this criterion.

**(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)****20****15****(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

Overall, the applicant does not offer a high-quality plan for teaching and leading under its program.

(a)

All teachers will engage in training that supports their individual and collective capacity to create personalized learning environments for students. This will be accomplished through establishing Professional Learning Communities and the Teacher Institutes.

In other sections of the proposal, the applicant states that it will take a data-driven approach to frequently measure student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards and use data to inform both the acceleration of student progress and the improvement of the individual and collective practice of educators. The primary source of this information will come from the PowerSchool and SchoolNet data, which will be shared with all stakeholders.

Finally, the applicant states that it will use its newly created evaluation tools, walk-through observations, and common planning time to improve teachers' practice and effectiveness. The applicant will also provide recommendations, supports, and interventions as needed for improvement through sustained workshops, instructional coaches, and principal feedback. Principals will receive feedback through state-required evaluations. This plan is adequate for real-time feedback.

Overall, the applicant's support and development of teachers is clear; however, the plan to adapt content and instruction is unclear. Although instructors will receive copious amounts of data, it is not fully understood how the data will be systematically used to adapt instruction.

(b) According to the applicant, all teachers will be trained, have access to, and know how to use tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready graduation requirements. For example:

- At the primary level, teachers are trained to employ differentiated learning strategies at the content, process, and product levels.
- At the secondary school level, teachers are trained to deliver a range of educational options, which will be expanded to be offered uniformly across participating high schools under ECPL.

All of the training systems are outlined in Table 11 and have feedback mechanisms in place for students and families to gauge progress and for teachers to track effectiveness and success. Teachers will conduct ongoing progress evaluations to ensure that students are on track with their individual learning plans. SchoolNet and PowerSchool will be utilized to monitor student progress and also allow teachers to assign students to remedial or enrichment activities. This effort will be coupled with educational plans such as Individual Education Programs for students with disabilities and the plans used for at-risk students. These practices will effectively allow educators the opportunity to monitor student progress toward their goals.

The applicant also lists high-quality learning resources such as STAR Reading and STAR Math that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements, and the tools to create and share new resources it plans to implement such as its website. STAR assessments are widely used in schools and have proven to be reliable and valid sources of data.

This plan is sound. The applicant has gone to great lengths to detail its training plan. It appears the most, if not all, school and district staff will receive training,

(c) According to the applicant, all participating principals will have training, policies, tools, data, and resources that will 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 proposal requirements. The training, policies, tools, data, and resources include:

- Feedback from the new district's teacher evaluation system, will help principals assess, and take steps to improve, individual and collective educator effectiveness.
- Monthly classroom visits and surveys will also be administered for the purpose of continuous school improvement; and
- Training of aspiring principles and those who want to remain in assistant principal roles.

The applicant hopes that by creating a model for instruction that begins with the principal, student performance and achievement gap gains will be continuous. This is a good plan. The plan to also develop those who do not seek higher

positions is particularly noteworthy,

(d)

Though the applicant offers many incentives such as pay raises and housing opportunities, to increase the overall number of teachers in the district, the plan is not high quality. In particular, the plan lacks information about increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals, including in hard-to-staff schools, subjects (mathematics and science), and in specialty areas such as special education. For example, the applicant highlights its potential partnership with agencies such as The New Teacher Project and Teach For America; however, few details have been given about the plan. It is unclear whether the applicant will use these agencies to fill specific vacancies such as special education or math and science positions or whether they will be used to fill any vacancy the district has. Moreover, a vast majority of these program participants are first-year teachers who, though they may be highly qualified, have yet to be classified as effective or highly effective teachers.

Overall, the applicant places in the middle range for this criterion.

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

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

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

The applicant has offered a high-quality plan to support project implementation through a complete set of practices and infrastructure that provide every student, educator, and level of the education system with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed.

(a)

- The district has organized the LEA central office to provide support and services to all participating schools.
- During the district’s central office reorganization, Santa Fe Public School hired someone to handle academic decisions at the District level. This person frequently meets with teachers and principals at all schools in the district and conducts walkthroughs and professional development at school sites.
- The Chief Accountability and Strategy Officer is in charge of data, evaluation, and reporting requirements at the district level and works directly with the Superintendent.
- In addition to the above positions, schools and their leadership are supported by regular visits conducted by the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Director of Teaching and Learning, Director of Multicultural Education, Coordinator of Instructional Programs, and the Mentoring Coordinator. These visits are focused on classroom practices and instruction and help the central office to better understand the frontline needs of each school and to provide an opportunity for school staff to communicate directly with central office staff. If found to be deficient, schools receive a written recommendation for improvement, which is based on collaborative conversation with the entire walkthrough team and includes the school principal. Other leaders may be brought in as necessary if there is a problem of practice at a school or if additional expertise is required.
- Regular site visits will enable school principals to maintain close communication with key central office staff and provide opportunities to communicate concerns over needed supports and services.
- Annual Performance Compact meetings at the beginning of the school year provide a chance for the Superintendent’s office to sit down with principals and other key staff members one-on-one to discuss school progress and analyze the supports that will lead to a better school environment and greater success for students.

The overall organization is more than adequate to address the needs of teachers and their students. The applicant has created appropriate positions in anticipation of grant monies. The distribution of responsibilities is appropriate and far reaching as no one person is responsible for too much.

(b)

Differentiated autonomy will be the overarching concept for providing school leadership teams in participating schools with sufficient flexibility and autonomy to control such factors as school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators, and school-level budgets. This approach is more than appropriate to meet the program's goals.

- Principals will be treated as CEOs of their schools and will allow them freedom and flexibility while holding them to rigorous performance standards.
- Principals will be given the data gathering, evaluation, and sharing infrastructure to achieve continuous improvement.

The applicant clearly states that autonomy will be supported so that the proposed program will flourish.

(c)

- Currently, giving students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic is not a common practice in the district. However, the applicant states that the proposed program will lay the groundwork for a system wherein students may earn credit based on their mastery of a topic using an online course system. Online programs, such as Edgenuity blended learning and Achieve 3000, will allow students to participate in self-paced learning that is adapted to focus on their academic weaknesses.
- The District is also in the process of adopting the New Mexico Public Education Department's End-of-Course (EOC) exams, which are required by the State, to be used as a tool to demonstrate mastery. This new application of the EOCs will be an extension beyond their current use by offering them when a student progresses through the material, rather than at the end of the semester. The goal is to expand this practice of credit for mastery to more courses and more schools.

Although the program has not been implemented, the plan is clearly outlined and the applicant has undertaken a lot of research about the expected outcomes.

(d)

- The district currently gives students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways.
- Several software packages are used within the District that allow students to demonstrate mastery of standards, including the following: Edgenuity, Compass Learning, and Renaissance Learning; Achieve 3000, currently in use in a few District schools, will be expanded under the ECPL plan in participating schools. These programs will allow students to access and use material at the time and place of their choosing and to progress at their own pace.
- Online content will be supplemented and reinforced by in-class teaching, including in small groups and group discussions. Student progress will be tracked through individual student plans, and adapted as students' needs change.

Many of these software programs and online practices are standard within the education community. The applicant is choosing proven methods.

(e)

- The applicant's Response to Intervention (Rtl) program offers effective learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners, and specifically outlines these resources and practice for teachers. The District's Rtl Student Assistance Team leader is available to provide direct support and professional development to schools requiring adaptable materials.
- Teachers and administrations are and will continue to be trained in various support strategies and methodologies (GLAD, TESOL, and Bilingual instruction) for working with English Language Learner students.
- Related professional development is offered throughout the school year to support skills in differentiated instruction, improved instructional practices and varied instruction to support English Language Learners and Spanish speakers, students with disabilities, and students facing other challenges or risk factors.

The applicant has gone to great lengths to provide insight into its high-quality plan. All of the outlined measures are appropriate for the proposed program and will ensure that the applicant meets its goals. Overall, the applicant places in the high range.

<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
---	-----------	-----------

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

The applicant outlines a high-quality plan. The LEA and school infrastructure supports personalized learning by:

(a)

Ensuring that all participating students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders, regardless of income, have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources through the following means:

- PowerSchool will be used to track student progress and growth, and all educators, stakeholders, students and their families have access to Pearson PowerSchool and the SchoolNet information management system.
- The Edgenuity program will be used for content instruction and assessment. Students are able to work at their own pace on lessons, and in an environment best suited for their individual needs (such as at school, at home, or in the library). Edgenuity also allows the school to assess individual students and prescribe personalized lessons based on performance on other lessons in the system, reducing the time required for a student to earn credit for a class.

The software described above are more than adequate to provide information to all intended audience. The information in PowerSchool, coupled with the ability to work on goals and assignments at home through Edgenuity, allows for a 360<sup>o</sup> experience.

(b)

Ensuring that students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders have appropriate levels of technical support, which may be provided through a range of strategies through the following means:

- Educators and staff members receive regular and ongoing training on technical systems through My Learning Plan, an online professional development tracking system. Additionally, each system used in the District offers training sessions and ongoing online support for school-level staff. The District offers regular trainings for its staff on the following commonly-employed systems: PowerSchool for administrators, PowerTeacher, Grade Book, keeping attendance, SchoolNet, and PowerSchool reporting.
- Students receive in-class training in online systems and devices required for the classroom. These trainings are delivered by teachers using age-appropriate language.
- The principle mechanism for providing parents with training and technical support is through the Parent Academy, which holds lessons and classes throughout the year on topics relevant to individual schools sites. Parent Academy is designed to provide parents with information and education to support their student's success and offers courses, in both English and Spanish.
- The District recently implemented a Help Desk, available on the phone and online, for PowerSchool and SchoolNet. The Help Desk enables parents, students and staff to fully utilize the systems. The Help Desk will also provide parents with details on attaining hard copy resources, in the cases where computers are not available or digital literacy is low.
- Translators will also assist with basic communications as well as with technical support.
- Additionally, printed communications, press releases, and surveys are available in English and Spanish. Individual schools with additional home languages will train teachers in home language instruction for languages other than English or Spanish. These teachers provide communication assistance to families who do not speak either English or Spanish well.

Overall, the expected level of training will attend to all stakeholders' needs. The plan is comprehensive and sound.

(c)

Using information technology systems that allow parents and students to export their information in an open data format and to use the data in other electronic learning systems through the following means:

- Parents and students will be able to export all of the information available to them through the various online systems employed in the District in an open data format.
- Files will be compatible with programs such as Microsoft Word or Excel, and Adobe Acrobat. PowerSchool has a Direct Data Export and a Quick Export tool that allow data to be exported to Excel or text format, for use with various software packages. PowerSchool also has a Direct Send feature that allows the system administrator to set up automatic exports to other software packages.
- Parents who are interested in setting up this feature can contact their child's school, where the secretaries are trained in giving instruction.
- Secretaries can also produce hard copy reports for those parents who do not have access to computers or other digital devices, or whose digital literacy rate does not support instruction the secretaries or parent liaisons can provide.

The plan includes providing information to those who have access to technology and those who do not. The plan to include both audiences underscores the applicant's commitment to the process.

(d)

Ensuring that LEAs and schools use interoperable data systems through the following means:

- The district outlines its two interoperable data systems.
- The District employs interoperable data systems for all of its reporting needs. SFPS uses iVisions for Human Resources, Budgeting, and state reporting; and AppliTrack for application tracking and hiring procedures. Both of these software packages fully integrate to manage human resources and reporting data.
- SFPS uses PowerSchool as the parent account for several software packages. Information from PowerSchool is imported into all other software to ensure that records are complete district-wide and includes information such as assessment, curriculum management; assessment and content delivery; nursing; transportation; student nutrition; state reporting; payroll / HR; and federal reporting.

Both systems more than cover the required information. PowerSchool's capabilities go above and beyond any system that is routinely used by students, parents, and teachers.

Overall, the applicant scores in the high range.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant outlines a high-quality plan for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the term of the grant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The district will gather information using: (1) principal interviews, (2) teacher surveys and focus groups, (3) classroom observations, (4) counselor interviews, (5) student assistant team interviews, (6) parent focus groups, (7) community organization interviews, and (8) district interviews. For example,                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ The district will train its principals, teachers, and central office data team to collect information via qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods on each of the performance measures. Data will be collected and reviewed on an ongoing basis, and compiled into reports every two weeks.</li> <li>◦ Student Assistance Teams located at each school collect and maintain information on students who have been identified as needing interventions.</li> <li>◦ Instructional coaches and interventionists will provide weekly data to principals, who in turn convey this data to the Chief Academic Officer.</li> <li>◦ Information will also be made publicly available via request on the district's website to share its progress toward meeting key project goals.</li> <li>◦ The external evaluator, RAND, will lead the implementation analysis with involvement from the district in securing data, designing instruments, collecting survey data, and identifying key evaluation questions to guide the analysis. The applicant believes that involving the schools and district in this process will build their capacity so that they are able continue to monitor and improve their intervention systematically on their own after the grant ends by using the instruments and analytic approaches developed jointly with RAND during the study.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Every initiative that the applicant has outlined is clearly the result of much planning and thought. Each measure is appropriate and the results obtained from the improvement process will make for a better school district. The applicant places in the high range for this criterion.</p>		
<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>

**(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant outlines a high-quality plan for ongoing communication with internal and external stakeholders.

- A third-party evaluator will work closely with internal stakeholders.
- The superintendent has a dedicated webpage, with links to his regular communications, including memos, letters, reports and presentations.

- Key documents are also available in Spanish to increase accessibility; translators for Spanish-speaking community members are also available at all community meetings.
- Information about the proposed activities will be located on the district website and on individual school websites.
- The District also regularly publishes articles and op-ed pieces in New Mexico newspapers, including the *Santa Fe New Mexican* and the *Albuquerque Journal*, holds regular public forums, and disseminates news releases to local television and radio news outlets on District- and school-level activities.
- Other means of disseminating information at the school level include backpack mail, AM/PM announcements, personal invitations, PTA e-mail blasts, daily bulletins, school weekly newsletter, and robo-calls.

Through these means, effective and ongoing communication will be realized; however, the applicant does not detail how it will engage internal and external stakeholders. The applicant could improve this section by stating how the relationship will be symbiotic and beneficial for all sides. Overall, the applicant scores in the middle range.

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

**5**

**3**

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

The applicant outlines nine performance measures, overall and by subgroup, with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures. Many of these goals are ambitious and achievable.

(a-b)

The applicant provides adequate rationale for several of its performance measures and instruments. For example,

- For early grades (Pre K-3), the applicant expects to increase student learning to manifest in student basic literacy skills. DIBELS assessments will be used to measure literacy at the early grade levels. DIBELS were developed to measure recognized and empirically validated skills related to reading outcomes. All of the measures have been thoroughly researched and demonstrated to be reliable and valid indicators of early literacy development and predictive of later reading. Students in Transformation Zone schools will be assessed three times a year and categorized based on the annual assessment into three groups (at risk for poor language, some risk for poor language, low risk for poor language). Using DIBELS, the applicant will monitor whether schools have met their targets, as well as examine changes in percentages of students in each of these categories over the four-year duration. For K-3, DIBELS assessments will be used to measure recognized and empirically validated skills related to reading outcomes.
- For grades 4 through 8 and 11, the applicant expects an increase in student learning to manifest in increased proficiency levels on state based accountability assessments (SBA) in math and reading over the four-year period. SBA is a strong academic measure as it is aligned with the common core curriculum adopted by SFPS schools (including the Transformation schools) and is designed to measure higher order cognitive skills. Using SBA proficiency levels, we will monitor whether schools have met their targets, as well as examine changes in percentages of proficient students over the four-year duration SBA and DIBELS data will provide an indication on whether teachers and counselors are identifying at-risk students and providing them with the appropriate instruction and academic services.
- College Readiness (grades 9-12): To measure college and career readiness, the applicant will use Explore for 9th and 10th graders. Explore is a standardized assessment developed by ACT and measures student knowledge in English, Math, Science, and History. Explore has benchmarks that shows whether a student is becoming ready for college. Based on the benchmarks, we will be able to estimate the proportion of 9th and 10th students who are becoming ready for college. This exam will be given annually and the data will provide an indication on whether the academic support programs provided at the high school level are preparing students for college.
- For students in grades 6-12, ACT Engage will be used to gauge students' psychosocial attributes (motivation, self-regulation, and social engagement), which are predictors of academic success. The assessment will be conducted annually, with results available immediately, this research-based assessment will be used by counselors and teachers to assess the type of non-academic interventions a student may find helpful.
- And for all students, school attendance rates Research has shown that student attendance in the middle grades is an important indicator of high school graduation and college enrollment. Attendance rates will be monitored twice a semester. Improvement or regression in rates will be used to help guide attendance interventions.

The applicant states that student success will be monitored using multiple instruments such as PowerSchool, surveys, and interviews and the district's work with the external evaluator. The applicant also states that the proposed program is designed so that teachers, counselors, and School Advisory Team members continually assess and re-evaluate student learning, and customize their strategies to individual student needs, as well as link them to additional academic support and

programs if needed. The applicant provides a summary of the classes of assessments used in the performance measures. Each of these measures link to student subject matter proficiency and setting them on a path to college and career readiness.

In addition to the overall rationale for the measures, the applicant outlines its ending goals. For example, the DIEBLS baseline for K-1 ELL students is 65. The applicant proposes to reach 79 by the final year of the grant. Similarly, low-income students currently have a 94% attendance rate and the applicant hopes to realize an increase of 4% by the end of the grant period.

Overall, the measures are realistic and achievable. When the applicant provides baseline information and a clear end goal, the measures are both ambitious and achievable. However, when some items are missing or are unclear such as baseline information for critical assessments like ACT Engage, it is difficult to determine whether the applicant thoroughly assessed the current data and/or whether the applicant was able to determine meaningful goals for these measures. Including this information would allow for a more thorough review.

(c)

According to the applicant, the data will be aggregated at the school level to see whether schools have met their targets. Changes in school-level data across the four years will also be monitored. This information will signify whether the intervention is improving students' attributes on these dimensions, and whether the intervention is providing adequate non-academic support to at-risk students in order to promote their motivation and self-confidence. Each of these measures link to student subject matter proficiency and setting them on a path to college and career readiness. Part of the district's partnership with RAND will include review and analysis of whether the performance measures chosen are sufficient to gauge implementation progress. If insufficient, advice will be provided on how to improve the performance measures, and necessary improvements will be made. This plan is appropriate as it allows for the data to be analyzed on at least two levels; and the frequency with which the analysis will occur is sufficient to promote ongoing change.

Overall, the applicant scores in the middle range.

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

**5**

**2**

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

An adequate, but not high quality plan, to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of Race to the Top – District funded activities, such as professional development and activities that employ technology has been offered by the applicant.

The applicant states that its the evaluator, RAND, and the district's Chief Accountability and Strategy Officer will develop a system of evaluation to determine the effectiveness of investments associated with project activities. It will seek to answer two central research questions: 1. What is the impact of the intervention on student academic and non-academic outcomes? 2. Are there any particular implementation practices that are associated with outcomes?

- The answer to question 1, will be obtained using information gleaned from the Transformation Zone schools, which will be tracked on selected academic (state assessments in reading and math for grades 3 through 8 and 11th grade) and non-academic outcomes (attendance) over a four-year period.
- The answer to question 2, will be obtained using the implementation data collected through teacher surveys and logs. The analysis will be complemented with interview and focus group results to better understand and interpret the associations.
- The Chief Accountability and Strategy Officer will evaluate all sources of data and take steps to ensure that District expenditures related to Empowering Communities – Personalized Learning are reasonable, targeted, and are leveraged in an efficient manner. The third party evaluator will report on project activities as part of is continuous improvement process, to ensure that investments are effective and appropriately targeted to ensure that students receive personalized learning environments such that achievement increases and teachers are supported.

The two questions that the applicant offers are concentrated on their intervention program and much of the verbiage used to explain the methods are not very clear. And because the evaluation tool does not exist, it is difficult to evaluate the quality of the applicant's plan.

Overall, the applicant scores in the middle range.

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

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

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

The applicant outlines a comprehensive budget that is reasonable and sufficient to support the project for the duration of the grant.

(a-b)

The applicant states that the total costs of the project exceed \$20,000,000, and it appears that most of the funds to support the project will come from outside sources. For example,

- \$100,000.00: Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title II Funding: \$25,000 per year x 4 years for professional development on Common Core for English Language Arts and mathematics with a focus on providing evidence from text and higher order thinking skills, analyzing and evaluating, and the mathematical practice of modeling.
- \$200,000: Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title II Funding: \$50,000 per year x 4 years for contracting with professional development providers on close reading and citing evidence and transitioning to the PARCC assessment.
- \$132,000.00: Operational funding: Cash match of \$33,000 per year x 4 years for contract with TNTP or TFA.
- \$720,000.00: Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title II Funding: \$180,000 per year x 4 years for professional development for principals and instructional coaches on instructional rounds, interventions, the Common Core, and the Collaborative coaching and Learning Model.

The applicant accurately justifies each expected expense and each line item is aligned to a measure that will support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposed program and its goals.

(c)

Clearly provides a thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities, such as

- The applicant will purchase a four-year site license for Achieve 3000 at six of its schools. Achieve 3000 is a software solution for differentiated instruction in literacy and science that is aligned with the Common Core State Standards and includes the following software packages: KidBiz 3000 (elementary); TeenBiz 3000 (middle school); Empower 3000 (high school); eScience 3000 (K-12); and tailored software for summer and afterschool programs. The site license will be good for four years and is considered a one-time investment during Year 1 of the grant period.
- SFPS will purchase one iMac Desktop computer and one printer for each of the seven Transformation Zone schools in order to provide students and families with access to online information and course content. This is also designated as a one-time investment made during Year 1 of the grant period. The applicant states that future technology needs will be included in the annual operating budget.
- SFPS will contract with Communities in Schools New Mexico to provide coordinators for wrap-around support services at each Transformation Zone school. Ongoing costs beyond the grant period, will become part of the District's operating budget or the District will seek additional grant funding from another source

Overall, the Applicant outlines an effective means of measure and monitoring performance as the external evaluator and district office personnel will craft and monitor performance through surveys, interviews, and other data. The plan is comprehensive and well thought out. The criterion is rated in the high range.

<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
---	-----------	-----------

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

The applicant has a high-quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant.

- The applicant will explore ways to improve the leveraging of existing resources in the community. The superintendent has already set a precedent for greater efficiency through realizing a savings of \$500,000 in operational costs, redirecting these funds into schools while preserving teacher and principal jobs and maintaining pay.
- Pearson PowerSchool and SchoolNet data systems are already in place at all District schools and costs to maintain them will come out of the District's budget.

- The grant period will be used to build comprehensive systems and train educators so that the long-term costs of the systems are low. The District is also currently in the process of securing additional funding from the State to support better infrastructure.
- The salary for grant personnel positions will either be absorbed by the district or the applicant will seek additional funding on an as-needed basis.
- After the grant period, in-house staff will conduct ongoing trainings at minimal expense during times already embedded into the contract day.
- Over time, professional development expenses related to ECPL will become more job-embedded. For supplemental training sessions, SFPS will solicit in-kind donations of training time from partners and additional sources of grant funding to compensate educators for their time.
- ECPL has support from the New Mexico Public Education Department, the Santa Fe mayor's office, and the local branch of the National Education Association-Santa Fe (NEA-SF; the local collective bargaining agency), which have approved of associated goals and activities. The Public Education Department reviewed the proposal and supports it.
- In September 2013, SFPS was the recipient of a \$150,000 grant award from the Daniels Fund (\$300,000 total). This grant will bolster the proposed ECPL project by providing funds for the scale-up and maintenance of the partnership between SFPS and CISNM. A Race to the Top grant will leverage not only this \$150,000 but also other private funds.
- State funds make up 97.4% of the district's operating budget. Most of the funds are allocated to salaries and benefits, about 85%, with the balance going to other fixed costs and a small percentage used for things not currently funded from other revenue streams.
- SFPS will hire a third party evaluator to assess the effectiveness of ECPL and its associated activities. The Chief Accountability and Strategy Officer will work with the hired evaluator to develop a system of evaluation to determine the effectiveness of investments associated with project activities. SFPS's financial statements and internal controls are reviewed annually by independent auditors, including compliance with OMB Circular A-133.
- Costs associated with the evaluation will end by the close of the grant period. This evaluation will identify improvements in productivity and outcomes to inform a post-grant budget. Project elements that the District deems successful through rigorous evaluations will be operationalized. Operationalized activities are supported through the State Public School Fund, which is in turn paid for through the General Fund, the Current School Fund, and the Federal Mineral Leasing Revenue.

To evaluate the effectiveness of past investments and use this data to inform future investments, the applicant states that the Chief Accountability and Strategy Officer, Chief Academic Officer, Superintendent, and Assistant Superintendent will use the various resources collected through ECPL to evaluate the effectiveness of investments and share information at regular Board, PLC, SAC, and Superintendent leadership team meetings. These regular budget assessments will generate a high degree of awareness related to budget-related costs and will help to underscore the linkage between program elements and their costs. Those elements deemed cost ineffective will undergo a review to determine how to reach a greater degree of efficiency, or whether to discontinue the activity due to an imbalance between deliverables and cost; this is part of the continuous improvement model that will be employed. The third party evaluator will conduct a rigorous assessment of project success and impact, including costs and their unique circumstances.

Though no table of an estimated budget for the three years after the term of the grant was included, the applicant, throughout the narrative, offers information about how costs will be covered and the program sustained through measures such as seeking additional grants and absorbing costs.

Overall, the applicant convincingly demonstrates its ability to sustain the project after the grant period ends. It is apparent to the reviewer that the applicant has looked at every aspect of the program and analyzed how, or if, they can sustain all aspects of the program at the same or higher level as they will with the RttT-D grant. These measures will be effective and are appropriate for the proposed program. The applicant scores in the high range.

## Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant completely demonstrates the extent to which it proposes to integrate public or private resources in a partnership designed to augment the schools' resources by providing additional student and family supports to schools that address the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of the participating students. The proposed program is achievable and extensive.

(1) The applicant will leverage a strong network of local and state partners to support and integrate services associated with the Empowering Communities – Personalized Learning (ECPL) plan. SFPS partners include the Santa Fe Community Foundation, the United Way, and Communities in Schools of New Mexico (CISNM). But the primary partner will be the local affiliate of the Communities in Schools (CIS) network of independent nonprofit organizations, which works to address the factors that lead to high dropout rates in the United States. CIS will support the efforts of the applicant in the following ways:

- It will help SFPS reduce dropout rates while providing wraparound services in a cost-effective manner.
- It will identify and mobilize existing resources in the community.
- It will also foster cooperative partnerships that benefit students and their families by improving retention and performance.
- It will continue the work it started with its integrated student service programming at Agua Fria and Salazar Elementary schools which has already helped to improve the culture and performance at both schools. (Both schools are in the Acceleration Zone under the District's Achievement Zone system, meaning they have strong school cultures but have remaining room for improvement.)
- It will provide high-risk children and youth, ages 4 to 21, access to the services, tools and resources needed to ensure they will stay in school and achieve in life.

The applicant will incrementally expand the already successful partnership to six additional low-performing schools, covering all Transformation Zone schools. Targeted student populations include high-minority schools, students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are homeless or affected by poverty, family instability, or other child welfare issues (e.g., foster care) that create risk factors. The partnership will look to other local nonprofits and businesses to provide a wide range of services, including: La Familia Medical Center (medical, dental, mental health care); La Familia REACH Program; Adelante program for Homeless Families (a SFPS program that will be expanded under this partnership); Cooking with Kids; Big Brothers/Big Sisters; Interfaith Coalition for Public Education (volunteer tutoring program); Girls on the Run (health and fitness); Girls, Inc.; Food Depot (food security); Coats for Kids; SOLACE Crisis Treatment Center; and other housing/shelter and food security agencies and mental health agencies.

Through this one partnership, the applicant has shown that it can build an effective relationship—especially one that seeks to deal with the whole child. The partnership is impressive and can serve as a model for others.

(2) The applicant has identifies five population-level desired results for students in the narrative. The listed results include both educational results and other education outcomes and family and community supports:

- Improved promotion/graduation rates;
- Reduced dropout rates;
- Reduced incidents of truancy;
- Decreased behavioral issues; and
- Improved student health, as measured by annual health screenings.

Evaluation tools to monitor student progress and to measure the five key results will include student attendance and behavioral records, quarterly grades, case notes, survey tools, and participation logs.

If undertaken, all of the measures will be effective in supporting the applicant's more specific goals and outcomes. All of these measured are aligned with the performance measures outlined in section E. However, the applicant does not provide sufficient baseline and desired goal information for Attitude/Behavior Leading Indicator (ACT Engage) and the Parental Engagement Leading Indicator. As providing additional support, including behavioral interventions and parental support are important factors in this criterion, the applicant fails to provide evidence as to the current status and what the applicant hopes the end result to be.

(3) CISNM will generate reports quarterly from the population-level desired results data and will examine the extent to which services are successfully delivered, including the number of students receiving appropriate services, the types of services, and student progress. These reports, combined with real-time student data generated by trained full-time site coordinators, will be used to refine, improve, and strengthen the interventions and programs on behalf of students.

CISNM's Program Manager and Executive Director are responsible for managing Site Coordinator's progress at each school site. A preliminary CISNM Needs Assessment process led by each school's CISNM Site Coordinator and in partnership with each school's principal and leadership team will determine key issue areas school wide and also determines those high risk students in need of CISNM Case Managed Intervention support. Data will be used to help identify areas/students that under perform expectations.

Because of the CISNM has a strong track record of producing results (it is the only drop-out prevention program to show results) and building lasting partnerships that rely on its ability to monitor and refine the process, the applicant is sure to meet its goals.

(4) The applicant adequately describes how the partnership will, within participating schools, integrate education and other services (e.g., services that address social-emotional, and behavioral needs, acculturation for immigrants and refugees) for participating students.

As previously stated, CISM will use real-time student data to determine student interventions. Such interventions focus programmatic energy, resources and time on shared school and student goals. CISNM will seek to identify and address the underlying reasons why students drop out of school. For example, a solution may be as simple as providing eyeglasses to a student who has difficulty reading. For some students, interventions may be more complicated and may necessitate providing ongoing counseling and out-of school time interventions, such as to reduce the risk of joining a gang or abusing drugs.

The applicant appears to have a solution for even the simplest type of intervention. This speaks to thorough and thoughtful planning on the part of the applicant.

(5) At each school site, the full-time Site Coordinator, a trained full-time social/health worker will work with the school's leadership to assess school/student needs, develop and implement a school Site/Campus Plan, and oversee the delivery of services and supports to the school and to individual students through Communities In Schools' nationally recognized framework for student success. Each school site will be staffed through CISNM's Site Coordination program. Additionally, the Site Coordinator will:

- augment current counseling capacity,
- ensure that each student is assessed for individual needs and that every child receives necessary resources and services
- work with local school staff to design and implement school-site specific Site/Campus Plans designed to help change the culture of schools, delivering individualized wraparound services, and graduating students who are better prepared for college and careers.
- liaise with SFPS and CISNM to match the needs of students and families with the resources in the community.
- be active participants in the work of teachers and administrators in making schools places where students feel supported and secure in an environment conducive to learning and achievement.
- be trained in data collection and analysis using the CIS Data Management System, already in use across the CIS National Network, and will share information with the SchoolNet system used by SFPS. Working with school staff, including counselors and principals
- gather and record student baseline information, progress, and annual outcomes. This will enable close tracking of student progress, ensuring that students remain on track and allowing for quick identification of potential risk factors. When needed, these data will allow for the development of appropriate Case Management Intervention Plans for the high-risk students.
- establish a Parent Resource Center at their school site as a place for parents to attend trainings and classes in support of sound parenting, language and computer skills development, financial literacy, health and nutrition education.

The applicant does not fail to detail every aspect of this plan. It is extremely impressive.

(6) The applicant identifies annual ambitious and achievable performance measures for the proposed population-level and

describe desired results for students

The applicant lists four general performance measures that will be used to gauge program success across schools:

1. *Absenteeism/Truancy*: 75% of students with absenteeism/truancy reduction needs will meet or exceed their absenteeism/truancy goals.
2. *Academic Improvement*: 75% of students will demonstrate improvement in Literacy and Math as demonstrated by test scores.
3. *Attitude/Behavior*: 75% will demonstrate marked shifts in attitudes/behaviors with and toward their classmates leading to the elimination of bullying of peers/classmates.
4. *Parental Engagement*: 75% of parents will increase their parental engagement in their child's academic, attendance and behavior performance and success.

Site Coordinators will provide a number of supports to parents and families such as basic needs to relevant skill-building classes. As a result of both the Parent Resource Center offerings and Case Managed Intervention processes, parents come to trust the school and more actively engage in their child's education. Because a large portion of the applicant's program hinges on parental engagement and participation, something that can be rare within the intended population, the goals are certainly ambitious and can be achieved given the partner's past record of success.

Overall, the applicant place in the high range for this criterion.

### Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

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

#### Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Time and time again throughout the narrative, the applicant presents evidence of extensive research and planning. Each of the four core educational assurance areas is addressed. For example, the applicant's ability to create a massive data system which will allow all stakeholders the ability to gather data in real time is incredibly impressive. Through digital means, parental engagement, and the partnership with Communities In Schools, students will be given the opportunities to accelerate achievement and deepen their learning. Professional Learning Communities will allow educators to improve their effectiveness.

The applicant has also effectively developed a proposal that personalizes strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators. Under ECPL, students will receive a combination of targeted direct instruction and instruction in leveled small groups. The instructional approach is differentiated and students will be able to move through these leveled groups and individual lesson plans based on their unique needs as revealed by continuous evaluation of data on their test scores, exams, and qualitative feedback from weekly sessions with a counselor. The teacher experience includes training in home language development in order to work with English Language Learners. Teachers will also be trained to analyze a variety of data in order to get a clear picture of each student's needs and use benchmark and formative reading and math assessments to guide students. They will also receive training on personalized instruction models, including CCSS implementation. Administrators will receive appropriate training and an external evaluator will take the lead in many areas such as communication and data analysis.

Overall, the applicant addresses every criterion and leaves the reviewer with no doubts about the program's ability to reach its goals. The applicant offers a high-quality plan for improving the existing learning environment and providing personalized experiences.

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

## Race to the Top - District



## Technical Review Form

### Application #0136NM-2 for Santa Fe Public Schools

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

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>

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

The applicant has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that appropriately addresses the four core educational assurance areas and articulates a clear and credible approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity.

a. The applicant addresses the four core educational assurance areas through a plan with five goals.

- Create an environment that raises expectations and promotes high academic performance of all students
- Recruit and support highly qualified and effective personnel at every level and every function throughout the District
- Develop a culture of shared responsibility for student success by engaging families and the community
- Promote a safe, sustainable, healthy and respectful school community
- Ensure efficient and effective systems, operations, state-of-the art technology and infrastructure to support instruction and student learning

The core educational assurances areas are articulated and include the following.

College and career standards & assessments

Prior to the 2012-2013 school years, curricula between schools within the District were not aligned. This created challenges for district with 22% mobility - where families are often forced to change living arrangements because of factors such as high rent or job instability. Now at the state level, all districts are in the midst of implementing Common Core (CCSS). CCSS will assist the state in upholding common expectations for educational achievement.

Robust K-12 data systems

New Mexico is developing a next-generation assessment system through the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). PARCC is a 24-state consortium that is developing a common online assessment to test multiple types of student performance. The New Mexico Public Education Department is currently constructing a Bridge Assessment to facilitate the transition to this more robust system of assessments, to be delivered in grades 3-8, 10 and 11 by 2014.

Staff members are provided with time to receive professional development focusing on aligning math and English/Language Arts to the CCSS and the transition to the new PARCC assessment.

SFPS uses Pearson's SchoolNet information management system District-wide. This system allows for school districts to engage in reporting and analysis, from the district level down to the individual student level, including the District's Key Performance Indicator dashboards.

Hiring, retaining, and evaluating effective teachers and principals

State level funding restrictions do not allow Santa Fe to pay a cost of living adjustment. The district has made efforts to retain teachers/principals by providing supports and autonomy in decision making that is aligned to the district's vision.

Turning around lowest performing schools

The applicant describes a successful turn-around of a school through a school improvement grant. There is also a description of how all schools will develop and implement a plan that requires the participation and sign-off by the School Advisory Council (SAC). The SAC includes a school's principal, parents, a union representative from the National Educators Association (NEA)-Santa Fe, teachers and community members. More on this process is provided in other sections.

The applicant addresses a concern that a number of schools are still in need of improvement. Within the district and within

some schools, there is a “juxtaposition of poverty and affluence its population.” There is a need to improve the 15 of 21 schools that currently have D or F grades as determined by the New Mexico Public Education Department A–F School Grading System.

b. Articulation of a clear and credible approach to goals

The district has identified a comprehensive framework with three key focus areas that support District reform, particularly among the seven schools targeted by Empowering Communities-Personalized Learning (ECPL)

These three areas include: 1) High Quality Teaching; 2) Leadership; and 3) Parent/Family and Community Support. These supports are clearly articulated. An *Empowering Communities-Personalized Learning Summary Document* is also provided.

c. The applicant has a clear and comprehensive description what the classroom experience will be like.

- Students will be able to move through leveled groups and individual lesson plans based on their unique needs as revealed by continuous evaluation of data on test scores, exams, and qualitative feedback from weekly sessions with a counselor.
- Students have access to self-paced digital content.
- Teachers will be trained to analyze a variety of data to be able to get a grasp on student needs.
- Teachers will receive training on personalized instructional models, including RTI.
- The Response to Intervention module combines with SchoolNet to provide powerful tools to define thresholds for at-risk students and refer them to counselors and interventions.

A comprehensive and coherent reform vision is provided with ample detail to support its implementation. This section includes a description of the need in the community, the disparity in opportunities, a plan to meet the needs of students, educators, and parents. With these support systems in place, Santa Fe Public Schools will be poised to successfully carryout the personalized learning initiatives proposed to ensure all students graduate college- and career ready. The four core components have been addressed; however, the description of the hiring, retaining, and evaluating highly effective teachers and principals is not fully defined. Educators will receive training in personalized instructional models. There is a description of supports that will be in place to make the district a more desirable place to work.

The applicant’s vision is rated in the high range.

<b>(A)(2) Applicant’s approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
--	-----------	-----------

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

The applicant clearly describes the process used to select participating schools and the data is provided

a. The district began with comprehensive review of the curriculum and the quality of instruction and leadership within each school and of the structure and qualifications of key district administration. Through this process the following goals were determined:

- Create a culture of urgency with teaching and learning at the core;
- Create and support leadership for instructional improvement, especially for underserved student populations;
- Establish metrics and clear expectations for performance and transparent accountability for employees; and
- Revise resource allocation, structures, and cost savings in support of the new vision for the District.

b. SFPS uses the Achievement Zone approach identified above to identify schools into Transformation, Acceleration, and Innovation Zones. The seven schools in the Transformation Zone will be served. The District determined that the Transformation Zone schools, those “underachieving relative to comparable schools around the state, are the most important to target”. While not limited to a specific grade band, these schools have the largest achievement gaps and the greatest risk factors to prepare its students for graduation, college, and careers.

c. Participation data for the participating schools is provided. This includes the number of educators, all students, and students from low income families, and students who are high-need. The RttT-D grant plans to target around 4,000

students attending the seven schools Transition Schools, representing students from kindergarten through 12th grade and slightly more than 30% of the District's total student population. These students are predominately poor, with 84% qualifying for FRP which is greater than the District-wide approximately average of 67%. The Transformation Zone schools also have greater numbers of English Language Learners than the overall population, with around one-third of students learning English. All of the targeted schools meet eligibility requirements. These are the lowest achieving schools in the District, and are also among the poorest. Transformation Zone schools under perform relative to comparison schools around the state, which are similar in terms of income, racial composition, English Language Learning, student mobility, and special education.

The applicant has included an excellent description for the selection of the schools to be served through the Achievement Zone Approach. The data provided confirms that the process ensures that the participating schools collectively meet the competition's eligibility requirements. The applicant's approach to reform will build upon its high-quality district level improvement with specific intervention to implement enhanced school-level improvement. The applicant has demonstrated how the proposal will support high level reform. This section is rated in the high scoring range.

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

**10**

**10**

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

The applicant has provided a clearly defined, credible plan that includes scale up of its vision through the Achievement Zone approach. The key goals defined in A1 have been expanded to include activities, rationales, timelines, deliverables, and parties responsible. While the intent is to scale up to include other schools in the district, a specific timeline for this has not been developed.

The high-quality plan for ECPL rests on five Transformation Pillars, which are: (1) Teacher development, (2) Strategic interventions, (3) Extended learning, (4) Enhanced family and community engagement, and (5) Nonacademic support. These pillars are clearly defined and have specific programs and supports to demonstrate how they will enhance the implementation of the plan at the schools identified as transformation schools.

The applicant states that it will be able to focus resources on those schools that lag behind (Transitional Schools), while empowering those schools that are excelling (Innovation Zones and Acceleration Zones) to continue to expand their winning strategies to help the entire district improve. ECPL will facilitate the District's ability to adopt uniform, objective assessments and teaching standards that are aligned to college and career ready standards, update its data collection systems (both centrally and at individual schools) and train its principals and teachers in correct data collection and interpretation methods to drive instruction and professional development.

The SFPS Executive Team will review the efficacy of elements of ECPL for scale up based on the evaluation provided an external evaluator This is reflected in the evaluation plans (Section E) and budget detail.(Section F). There is also an extensive improvement model and logic plan included to detail how support will be allocated throughout the district.

The application includes a high-quality plan to implement reform and to support district-wide change beyond participating schools.

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

**10**

**9**

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

LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes

(a) Performance on summative assessments

- Santa Fe Public Schools evaluates reading and math proficiency with DIBELS Next, Discovery Educational Assessment, STAR Reading and Math, and STAR Early Literacy at the elementary school level, Discovery Educational Assessment and STAR Reading and Math at the middle school level, and Discovery and STAT Math at the high school level.
- SFPS uses the SchoolNet information management system to track results on assessments, coursework, and tests. The system is accessible by teachers and administrators and has a login for students and parents. The New Mexico Department of Education has determined baseline measurements and student proficiency targets for the LEA.

(b) Decreasing achievement gaps

ECPL is expected to close achievement gaps among those students where the gaps are highest, targeting Hispanic, English Language Learning, and low-income students— groups that tend to fall behind early and stay behind in the race for college and career readiness and success.

(c) Graduation rates

Using the goals and activities of ECPL, the applicant proposes to improved graduation rates to 80% and increase overall proficiency levels to 75% in reading and 65% in math by 2018.

(d) College enrollment rates

ECPL initiatives will result in 75% of graduates enrolling in college by the end of the grant period. Projected college enrollment rates for low income students are indicated as N/A.

(e) Postsecondary degree attainment is not addressed.

The applicant provided performance for improved student achievement based on summative assessments using proficiency status and growth rates. Summative assessments were based on The New Mexico Standards Based Assessment. The metric for determining growth was the change in achievement levels. The projected achievement rates are equal to the ESEA targets. Growth levels for all subgroups are substantial. However, they are determined based on the students' baseline data. Proficiency achievement levels for these subgroups are still below the traditionally higher scoring subgroups. For example, the projected proficiency for third grade reading in 2017-18 for Caucasian students is 82%. The projected proficiency rate for Hispanic students is 67%, for low income students is 65%,for English Language Learners is 63%, and for student with disabilities is 51%. Charts to demonstrate increases in proficiency by subgroup show a similar trend.

The applicant's vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity as demonstrated by ambitious yet achievable annual goals that are equal to or exceed State ESEA targets. The increase by subgroups is significant but is not equal to the overall projected improvement rates set for traditionally higher achieving groups. The applicant has provided substantial detail on innovative approaches to increase student learning as projected. Goals are ambitious. There are interventions detailed throughout the application to provide evidence that the goals are achievable.

This section is rated in the high scoring range.

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

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

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

Demonstrating a clear track record of success

In the past four years, SFPS has demonstrated a clear record of success in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching, high school graduation rates, implementation of systems to increase equity in learning and teaching. Results from pilot programs and case studies demonstrate that the activities in this proposal have worked in other similar schools. Evidence is provided in charts, raw student data, and other evidence that demonstrates the applicant's ability to improve student learning outcomes and close achievement gaps including raising student achievement, high school graduation rates, and college experienced overall gains for the past several years.

(a) Improve Student Learning Outcomes

Since 2009, the district has nearly closed the gap between the district and the state in reading proficiency for 11th grade students.

Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students have made significant reading gains (32.1% to 46.3% for Hispanics and 30% to 44.9% for English Language Learning students).

Math proficiencies by subgroup, as measured by the Standards Based Assessment, at the Transformation Zone schools show some growth for all students, female, male, Hispanic, and economically disadvantaged. These are modest improvements. Reading scores show similar gains. There is a decrease in achievement levels in reading and math for

Caucasian students.

Over the past four years, SFPS has increased the state-calculated graduation rates from 53% to just under 62%. The district has developed a system to maintain contact with students who are at risk of dropping out. Students are encouraged to stay in school and are offered support through initiatives that may better suit their needs. There was no evidence concerning college enrollment included in this section.

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

The Communities in Schools of New Mexico (CISNM) Partnership implemented at the Agua Fria and Salazar elementary schools sufficiently improved student performance and the learning environment to move these schools from the Transformation Zone to the Acceleration Zone. These schools have 100% of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch, 89% are Hispanic and 49% are ELL.

Five years ago, the Ramirez Thomas Elementary School was identified by the New Mexico Public Education Department as "one of the worst schools in New Mexico." Though work supported by a School Improvement Grant (SIG), Ramirez Thomas improved from an 'F' grade (earning a mere 6.8 out of 40 points in 2010) to a 'C' grade (more than doubling its score by 2012) in less than three years. The demographics of this school are similar to the ones selected to be served by this grant.

SFPS is implementing a number of measures aimed at improving secondary school retention and graduation rates through offering more flexibility and a greater range of student choices. These include instruction after school for high school students. Students who are not currently enrolled in school will have the option to return to school full- or part-time during regular school hours. Evidence of success stories is provided in newspaper articles included in the application's appendix.

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

The applicant makes student-level and school-level data available in an easily-accessible online format so that students and parents, educators and District staff, can be aware of student performance and progress.

The website provides access to the SchoolNet Instructional Improvement System and PowerSchool (via the Power Parent online portal). Parents can access this information either by going to the school website and clicking on a prominently visible link or by contacting their child's counselor.

SchoolNet is an all-in-one solution to integrate teaching, learning, data and achievement by providing educators with a range of tools, including: data management and reporting, Response to Intervention, and student and parent access.

SFPS uses SchoolNet to allow educators to make informed decisions based on timely access to data, provide students with information they need to set goals and participate in their education, and involve parents in the everyday process of educating their children.

SchoolNet combined with PowerSchool, Pearson's web-based student information system, provides a complete student performance database to inform and improve participation, instruction and services making student performance data available 24/7 to students,

Student Data Available to Educators to Improve Instruction is provided through The Discovery Education Assessment online tool. This provides a platform with interim assessments aligned with the Common Core Standards, RTI and other statistics to allow all stakeholders to review progress of the students and to collaboratively assess progress and to determine needed instructional mid-course corrections.

STAR Assessment component of Renaissance Learning is used to implement timely semi-automatic instructional course corrections.

Additional data to support success is included in Appendix Section F.

The applicant provides a record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching. Narrative, graphs and data presented in the proposal demonstrate an ability to meet each of the three criteria in this section. The applicant has successfully "turned around" two high poverty, high-need schools. While the achievement has increased, the district recognizes that much more is required. The section is rated in the high scoring range.

<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
---	----------	----------

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

A high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments, including by making public, by school, actual

school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration has been demonstrated.

The state requires that information on district-level budgeting, expenses, revenues, and non-personnel expenditures be available through the New Mexico Sunshine Portal.

As part of the District's desire to increase transparency, the SFPS district website makes central office and school-level information on expenditures related to instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration publicly available. The redesigned website includes pages that share school-level information on:

- Actual personnel salaries at the school level for school-level support staff;
- Actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff;
- Actual personnel salaries at the school level for teachers; and
- Actual non-personnel expenditures.

The district makes the above information available in paper format to anyone who requests it at the central office.

SFPS fully supports the Inspection of Public Records Act (IPRA).

The applicant has provided evidence of a high level of transparency. All of the required expenditures are readily available on-line and in paper form. This section is rated in the high scoring range.

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

**10**

**10**

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

State context for implementation

A letter from the New Mexico Public Education Department documents sufficient autonomy under New Mexico legal, statutory and regulatory requirements to implement and maintain personalized learning.

- Alignment to state-level reform initiatives
- Evidence that the strategies outlined in the application are based on proven practices

The activities proposed fall completely within the preexisting budgetary authorization authority granted to school boards.

SFPS has shown evidence of successful proactive collaboration.

"The New Mexico Constitution empowers the Board to determine public school policy and to have control, management and direction, including financial direction, distribution of school funds and financial accounting for all public schools."

The methods chosen to implement the personalized learning environments in ECPL are supported by state law.

The applicant lists numerous grants that it has successfully won and managed.

The New Mexico Department of Education provided comments on the SFPS application. No concerns regarding the conditions and autonomy were noted. Comments were favorable on this section on the inclusion of the Next Step Plan to "enhance symmetry across state and local systems".

The applicant has described and provided evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements to implement the personalized learning environments. This section is rated in the high scoring range.

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

**15**

**13**

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

Stakeholder engagement and support

(a) A description of how students, families, teachers, and principals in participating schools (Transformation Zone Schools) were engaged in the development of the proposal and, as appropriate, how the proposal was revised based on their engagement and feedback, including—

Regular public meetings were held starting in the fall of 2012. These meetings included central office staff, principals, teachers, support staff, parents, students, local nonprofits and advocacy organizations, union representatives, and government officials.

A summary of the ECPL proposal (included) was made available for public comment during the 10 day comment period on

the District website, in hard copy at the central office, and was presented at a board meeting. Communications were available in English and in Spanish.

(i) Collective bargaining buy-in and support were solicited through many meetings with representatives from the district and representatives from the National Education Association (NEA)-Santa Fe, the local collective bargaining body. These meetings included discussions on how the plan related to teacher evaluations, compensation, working hours and conditions, and professional development opportunities. Although details are still being solidified, the union leadership generally supports the teacher evaluation system developed by SFPS within the framework of the Public Education Department, as well as the other elements of ECPL. Letters from the Transformation Zone principals and School Advisory Councils are included stating that they “are please to express support: for the proposal.” This is evidence of direct engagement and support from teachers in participating schools. However, numbers have not been provided to determine the the amount of support..

(b) Letters of support from multiple key stakeholders are provided. These include the New Mexico Congressional Delegation, The Santa Fe Community College, Committee on Schools, Parent Involvement Committee, Santa Fe Community Foundation, Community response emails are also included.

A chart listing specific stakeholders who have pledged support of the plan, as well as details about their commitments is included.

Significant and meaningful stakeholder engagement has been provided throughout the development of the proposal. Meaningful stakeholder support for the proposal is well documented. There is evidence of stakeholder buy-in; however, the amount of support could not be determined. Evidence includes input from the required representation. There was, however, no description to show how revisions based on this input were taken into consideration. Letters of support include signatures of principals, teachers, and parents. This section is rated in the high scoring range.

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

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

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

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

The applicant provided a description of the community and how it relates to the development of this plan. The area is known for affluence and scientific institutions. Many of the wealthy citizens have moved to Santa Fe are older citizens. However, there are many “inequities in education and income.” Young people in Santa Fe, particularly those who are in the public school system, are “more likely to be native Santa Feans who are low-income and minorities with limited English language skills”. The Empowering Communities – Personalized Learning (ECPL) is an approach to learning that engages and empowers all learners, particularly high-need students

Activities for improving learning are listed for each of the following areas. They are linked to district goals and include rationales, deliverables, timelines, and person responsible.

- Comprehensive student plans (incorporating Response to Intervention and Next Step Plans)
- Parent meetings to discuss individual student learning plans (RTI information and Next Step Plans)
- Computer stations in classrooms
- Wrap Around Non-academic supports
- Regular learning plan reviews
- Adequate technology for integration into instruction

To support this work, a number of initiatives have been identified.

Response to Intervention (RTI) system will identify risk factors and determine methods to address them. This is currently available to grades k-3 and will be expanded to all grade spans.

Student Advisory Team (SAT), will monitor student interventions for a specified time period. Interventions will be chosen based on the student’s needs.

Each student's interventions are personalized and recorded so that all stakeholders can use them to plan accordingly. Students receive support on how to use the resources provided to assist them in managing their own learning.

Families meet with counselors or teachers to review and indicate approval of student plans prior to implementation. Meetings with parents are scheduled regularly to ensure that all parties are clear on goals and progress benchmarks.

Additional supports or interventions are available through Communities and Schools of New Mexico (CISNM) to link participating schools with a variety of service organizations to address needs, including health screenings, out-of-school-time programming, and mentoring or tutoring.

Career Academies offer a successful model in helping students to understand that what they are learning in school is the key to their long-term success in accomplishing goals.

Core and elective courses are available to students through the Edgenuity™ curriculum. This provides flexibility for self-paced learning in non-traditional formats including online and hybrid learning approaches.

Students will have exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives to motivate them and deepen individual student learning. Dual credit agreements have been established between the high schools and the Santa Fe Community College (SFCC). Students can participate in internships and mentoring programs at SFCC related to their specific career track. This is important since the students with the highest needs have had less access to jobs requiring educational levels sufficient to attain promising jobs in science, math, engineering and technology.

Students have access to personalized learning designed for them to master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving through differentiated instructional supports.

ECPL will make wraparound supports available at all grade levels through a partnership with Communities in Schools (CIS).

Each participating school will have two designated parent liaisons, one who is fluent in Spanish, whose primary responsibility will be to increase parent engagement. The parent liaisons will hold workshops, coordinate events, help with contacting parents, and assist with technology use in the parent computer lab at the school site.

Parent Academies will be held to support individual student progress by empowering parents to help their children. Examples of course offerings are technology (using e-mail, reading student's online progress reports), English language attainment (a year-long course for non-native speakers), and information sessions on local health, financial, and out-of-school-time resources. Sessions on how to utilize online information to support their students will include the use of computer stations for families who do not have access to computers or the internet at home.

Counselors will inform parents of needed interventions, to which they must agree before students can receive services. Parents will receive regular status updates on student progress. Counselors will link parents and families to additional resources available through the SFPS Parent Academy to provide classes on areas of interest including: digital literacy, supporting student progress, English attainment, and information sessions on health, financial, and out-of-school-time resources.

The applicant has provided a long-term, individualized student plan that will monitor success and successfully intervene if necessary, that will inform and engage parents, and that will provide students with access to classroom computer stations to assist with differentiated instruction. Multiple programs have been included for students to participate in career academies, to experience alternative educational deliveries, and to expand their horizons have been included. Mechanisms are in place to provide training and support to parents that will ensure their understanding of tools and resources that are available to them in order to track and manage their learning have been provided. The RTI and NextStep Programs appear to provide understanding of tools and resources for students.

This section is rated in the high scoring range.

<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>
--	-----------	-----------

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

The applicant has provided a high-quality plan for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. This plan is aligned with New Mexico's Common Core State Assessments. The applicant provides goals, activities, deliverables, timelines and responsibilities for this work.

Teaching and Leading: An approach to teaching and leading that helps to improve instruction and increase their capacity to support student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation

requirements by enabling the full implementation of personalized learning and teaching for all students, in particular high-need students is described.

The applicant begins with a narrative that describes the programs and approaches that were not in place to address elements of the criteria and sub criteria and how they intend to address them. This included a need for comprehensive planning and programs across the district and a comprehensive and effective teacher evaluation plan. The core of the ECPL plan is taking steps to enact "a cultural shift among educators that involves schools becoming a unified learning body with robust data and tracking systems and reliable systems of evaluation and continuous improvement".

(a)(i) Support for the effective implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies that meet each student's academic needs and help ensure all students can graduate on time and college- and career-ready will include:

- <!--[endif]-->Lesson study professional development to give all teachers uniform resources
- <!--[endif]-->Professional development on relevant topics
- <!--[endif]-->Classroom monitoring to provide support for teachers
- <!--[endif]-->Comprehensive student plans (RTI and NextSteps)
- <!--[endif]-->Professional Learning Communities at every school by grades or by subjects
- <!--[endif]-->Instructional rounds for principals
- <!--[endif]-->Teacher Institutes before the start of school and throughout the year
- <!--[endif]-->Ensure fair compensation through performance based incentives
- <!--[endif]-->Regular Learning plan review
- <!--[endif]-->Adequate technology for integrating instruction

Under ECPL, training, support, and accountability infrastructure will be leveraged to provide training sessions and tools to educators on how to: fully utilize the data collection and information systems in place, engage in better decision-making, utilize student learning plans to provide a personalized learning environment, and how to provide differentiated instruction to serve all students.

(ii) The applicant plans to adapt content and instruction, providing opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks, in response to their academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches through their RTI and SAT. Intervention programs and other required tools or materials are part of these initiatives.

(iii) The recently-approved teacher evaluation system, in combination with the Performance Compacts for educational leaders (Superintendent, Principals, and District office staff), will help school leaders and school leadership teams conduct frequent and ongoing assessments of performance from the individual student level up to the District level. A third party evaluator of the ECPL plan will provide the central office with reports and analysis of project successes.

(iv) Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) consist of teachers and principals at school sites who will meet weekly to discuss progress, problems, and best practices. They will function as a regular forum for educators to discuss ECPL-related issues and activities and to provide recommendations, supports, and interventions as needed for improvement.

(b) Learning plans will be developed for students in all grade levels using information from Response to Intervention (RtI) and ACE Engage assessment tools, which identify students' personal intervention requirements and academic needs, to lay out a student's individual educational goals.

(i) Planning to assist educators to identify needs and to implement optimal learning approaches that respond to individual student academic needs and interests will be determined through a review of the Performance Compacts. These are reviewed at the teacher, school, and district level.

(ii) Tools to create and share resources include the Schoolnet data system that is augmented with Gradebook. PowerParent will be used to track data progress to inform stakeholders.

(iii) Learning Communities (PLCs) will be available to all participating schools. PLCs consist of teachers and principals at school sites who meet weekly to discuss progress, problems, and best practices. They function as a regular forum for educators to discuss ECPL-related issues and activities and to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the resources in meeting student needs.

(c) Training policies and tools include a CCSS Curriculum Guides (for K-12) that was created by district educators to provide English Language Arts and math teachers with a weekly framework designed to ensure full coverage of the

standards uniformly around the District. This included learning targets and assessment guidance aligned to the Common Core.

MidSchoolMath will be implemented in the middle school to build the capacity of teachers to develop math content that functions on shared technological infrastructure and aligns with CCSS.

Performance Compacts for education leaders, teacher evaluations, district-wide common course requirements, and individualized learning plans and supports for students lay out clear expectations and attainable goals for primary all stakeholders.

(d) Educators who do not meet goals and are struggling will be provided with central office support and additional professional development through a professional support team to help them improve in weak areas.

The New Mexico Public Education Department mandated that each school district have a teacher evaluation system in place in the Fall of 2013. The Santa Fe School Department has proposed the following factors for analysis by the principal and an outside evaluator:

- <!--[endif]-->35% from improvements on either the standards-based assessment for tested subjects, or teacher-developed achievement
- <!--[endif]-->10% is attributed to teacher group achievement growth
- <!--[endif]-->25% from classroom observation, which demonstrates the value placed on the formative feedback teachers receive to improve their teaching practice (it takes into account the process of teaching and not solely achievement outcomes)
- <!--[endif]-->20% from professional responsibilities (including self-reflection on lesson planning and delivery, recording accurate records on assignments, grades and attendance, and parental outreach and communication)
- <!--[endif]-->10% from student perception surveys (carefully worded questions on surveys will provide students with a voice on topics such as course rigor and student engagement)

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

The District is implementing three key approaches to improving teaching and assessment systems:

- <!--[endif]-->Common Core State Standards and associated PARCC test;
- <!--[endif]-->Improved and evidence-based teacher evaluation instrument; and
- <!--[endif]-->Individual learning plans for students based on RTI, ACE Engage non-academic assessment, academic assessments, and ongoing student performance.

(d) The plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers includes devoting resources to educators, including offering competitive wages and a high level of comprehensive supports, in order to attract highly qualified teachers to these lower-performing schools when vacancies open, particularly in harder-to-staff subjects and specialties (such as English Language Learners and special education). The New Mexico Department of Education has mandated a teacher evaluation system to be implemented in the Fall of 2013. The district has begun a process; however, data regarding the numbers numbers of effective and highly effective teachers can not be determined until the teacher evaluation has been implemented.

The applicant has provided a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals through the professional development plans and through incentives for teachers. The District states that teachers and leaders will stay and remain committed to their jobs if they feel supported in other, non-pecuniary ways. As such, the expansion of Professional Learning Communities and shared planning time helps to build a sense of community and commitment between teachers, within schools, and within the District. The Superintendent and central office staff are committed to maintaining open lines of communication, with regular visits (Instructional Rounds) at schools, and formative walkthrough observations for teachers.

Obstacles include a high-cost-of- living in Santa Fe.

The applicant has provided an approach to implementing instructional strategies for all participating students that enable participating students to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to college- and career-ready standards and college- and career-ready graduation requirements and accelerate his or her learning through support of his or her needs. The plan relies on the RTI and Next Step initiatives. Activities, rationale deliverables, timelines, and responsibility roles are included. The plan for increasing highly effective teachers and principals is not well defined; however, a criterion for defining these

roles is included and is supported by the New Mexico Department of Education. An Educator Effectiveness Evaluation Framework was provided in the appendix.

The applicant has provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate an approach to teaching and learning that will support educators in increasing their capacity to improve instruction for students to graduate college-and-career ready. This section is rated in the high scoring section.

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

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

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

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

(a) The Empowering Communities – Personalized Learning (ECPL) plan will build on recent reorganizational efforts that improve support and services to District schools.

Transformation Zone schools and their leadership are supported by regular walkthroughs where central office staff focus on classroom practices and instruction. Written plans are developed for any areas of need identified through this process.

The Chief Academic Officer facilitates Instructional Rounds with school Principals. These professional development sessions are modeled on “medical rounds” and provide participants with a forum where issues are discussed to gain a deeper understanding of the schools’ needs.

The District has developed Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) that group principals and assistant principals for discussion, practice, and improvement. ECPL uses this infrastructure to support educators and instructional leaders as they develop personalized learning environments for students, utilize data to improve teaching and decision-making, increase student options, and engage families.

School Advisory Councils (SACs) are a present in every school and are similar to PLCs, but involve a wider range of stakeholders including families and the community.

The Chief Academic Officer also provides bi-weekly professional development, aligned across all schools, to instructional coaches and interventionists to provide ongoing support. Current professional development focuses on implementing Common Core State Standards (CCSS) across all grades and include instructional practices and strategies for continuous improvement.

(b) A differentiated autonomy approach provides principals with freedom and flexibility on decisions regarding school schedules and calendars, school personnel and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators, and school-level budgets as long as they continue to make progress toward improving their schools.

(c) Giving students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic is currently being piloted.

The District is in the process of adopting the state required New Mexico Public Education Department’s End-of-Course (EOC) exams to use as a tool to demonstrate mastery.

ECPL will convene a Task Force to explore developing the Career Academies into a competency based educational approach.

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

Edgenuity™, Compass Learning, and Renaissance Learning; Achieve 3000, are software programs currently in use in some of the District’s schools to demonstrate mastery of standards. These programs allow students to access and use material at the time and place of their choosing and to progress at their own pace. Online content is supplemented and reinforced by in-class teaching. Student progress is tracked through individual student plans, which are adapted as student needs change and follow them from Kindergarten through graduation. This is available at some but not all schools.

The applicant is developing a credit for mastery system linked to the high school Career Academies. The Credit for Mastery Task Force is planning to release its findings on this system during the third year of the grant period. Evaluation

and reporting are scheduled for release in year four.

The applicant plans to expand use of these programs to include all of the ECPL participating schools.

(e) Learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners, are provided through wide range of instructional materials related to core instruction and intervention that improve accessibility for students of varying needs. The Response to Intervention (RTI) includes materials and practices. The District's RI Student Assistance Team leader provides support and professional development to schools requiring adaptable materials.

The applicant has a high-quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator and level of the education system with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed. Infrastructure was developed in recent reorganizational efforts that will improve support and services. They are consistent with the goals, activities, rationale, timeline, deliverables are provided throughout the application. The structure is clearly presented. Many supports are referenced in the RTI and SAT and are presented here in general terms. Opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery are available in some but not all schools. A pilot is in development to provide students in the career academy with opportunities to demonstrate mastery. These opportunities are not currently available to all students.

This section is rated in the high scoring range.

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

**10**

**10**

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

The applicant has a high-quality plan for district and school infrastructure to provide every student, educator, and level of the education system with the support and resources needed.

Pearson PowerSchool and the SchoolNet information management system will provide access to data and to track student progress and growth.

(a) All participating students, parents, educators and others, regardless of income, have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of the applicant's proposal.

Students with low levels of digital literacy will receive in-class training from teachers in accessing management tools through access to computers in the classroom and in computer labs.

The Parent Academy will offer classes for families with low digital literacy or limited English language skill to assist them in accessing online information.

Families can visit their child's school and talk to the parent liaison or any other school staff member to request hard copy reports or to meet with counselors and teachers to discuss information related to curriculum, student progress, or any school-related concerns.

ECPL will provide for computer stations in participating classrooms, available for use by students and families outside of school hours for those who do not have access to computers or the internet at home.

Counselors and teachers meet with families when developing students' individual learning plans.

Translators are made available to assist those families who require them.

(b) Students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders will have appropriate levels of technical support.

Educators and staff members receive regular and ongoing training on technical systems through My Learning Plan, an online professional development tracking system.

Students receive in-class training in using online systems and devices required for the classroom. Increased accessibility is available in school sites, libraries, and other locations.

The district provides a Help Desk that is available by phone and online.

(c) Parents and students are able to export all of the information available to them through the various online systems employed in the District in an open data format. Software programs are well defined and are compatible with commonly used operating systems. School secretaries will also provide a hard copy for those who request it.

(d) The District employs interoperable data systems for all of its reporting needs. iVisions is used for Human Resources, Budgeting, and state reporting. AppliTrack is used for application tracking and hiring procedures. Both of these software packages fully integrate to manage human resources and reporting data.

The applicant has a comprehensive high-quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator, and level of the education system with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed. All individuals and groups can obtain quality data and have the needed technology tools and training required to access this data. The plan includes details on activities, rationales, deliverables, timelines, and parties responsible for implementing the goals of this plan.

This section is rated in the high scoring level.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant's high quality plan for Empowering Communities – Personalized Learning (ECPL) for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback on progress toward project-goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvements during and after the term of the grant is comprehensive and complete.</p> <p>Continuous improvement will be evaluated throughout the infrastructure developed for district, school, teacher, and stakeholder support. In addition to student academic measures, evaluation will include (1) principal interviews, (2) teacher surveys and focus groups, (3) classroom observations, (4) counselor interviews, (5) student assistant team interviews, (6) parent focus groups, (7) community organization interviews, and (8) District interviews. Documents on individual student plans and staff professional development, reports generated by SchoolNet, and counselor and School Advisory Team logs will be collected.</p> <p>Areas to be evaluated include RTI, extended learning, academic supports, community supports, parental engagement, and teacher and staff development and supports.</p> <p>RAND will conduct an external, ongoing formative evaluation of program implementation to evaluate whether the targeted goals of the plan have been reached. This external component is designed to support district staff in building capacity to continue to monitor and improve their intervention systematically on their own after the grant end. A copy of the RAND evaluation is provided in the appendix.</p> <p>The survey results will be compiled and analyzed by the District's data analyst. Themes in the results will be identified and shared with District leadership. Areas of possible concern will be shared with RAND for further investigation, and areas of immediate concern would trigger a review of the activities involved, and potentially result in conversations with the USED regarding the potential cessation or modification of those activities. Other methods to share the quality of investments funded by Race to the Top – District are not provided.</p> <p>The applicant has provided a high-quality plan for internal and external evaluation using a number of measurements. Evaluation is consistent with plans and goals described throughout the application. The methods that will be used to share the quality of investments are not included beyond the district leadership, Rand, and USED. The Santa Fe School Department has provided sufficient evidence to document their ability to monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of its investments funded by RttT-D.</p>		
<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>The applicant's will work with its external evaluator to provide ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders</p> <p>The external evaluator, RAND, will work closely with the seven schools served by the RttT-D grant to provide timely feedback on the quality of implementation and progress toward intended outcomes. In Years 1 through 4 of the study, RAND will participate in face-to-face and web meetings at the school and district levels to share findings with district officials, principals, teachers, and counselors and other stakeholders to discuss potential implications for the program. In addition, RAND will provide each school in years 1, 2 and 3 with short summaries discussing findings related to its implementation of the intervention and identifying areas of strengths and areas in need of improvement. These summaries</p>		

will include information on whether the school met its targets for that year.

In Year 4, RAND researchers will provide an in-person briefing on the full study findings to the district and will publish a technical report, with a clear description of the program, full implementation findings, and results from the outcomes analysis. This report will be freely available to the public on RAND's website and will be accompanied by a Research Brief that will summarize the key findings in a brief, reader-friendly format. The district will issue a press release for each report.

The district will ensure school-level and district-level engagement with RAND feedback so that all stakeholders are aware of opportunities to interact with and learn from evaluation. The results of district-implemented "just-in-time" analysis will be available on the website and presented to the Board of Education. Paper copies will be made available for interested community members and sent to all principals for distribution to their School Advisory Councils and their staff.

District leadership will also write one editorial on the progress made to date during each grant year.

Training on how to use any of the systems needed to understand the data and information to be communicated will be provided for district staff and for parents.

The applicant has provided a description of what will be communicated and how it will engage with all stakeholders. However, it has not provided a clear description how it will act on adjustments and revisions based on information received after engaging stakeholders. There are deliverables and timelines provided. The section is scored in the mid- range.

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

**5**

**3**

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

The applicant has provided 9 performance measures that address all students in grades K-12, the target population for this project. The proposed measures assess college and career readiness in multiple areas and include the required measures.

(a) For early grades (Pre K-3), increases in student basic literacy skills will be measured using the DIBELS assessments. Students in Transformation Zone schools will be assessed three times a year and categorized based on the annual assessment into three groups (at risk for poor language, some risk for poor language, low risk for poor language).

For grades 4 through 8 and 11, increase in student learning will be measured by an increased proficiency levels on state based accountability assessments (SBA) in math and reading over the four-year period. SBA is a strong academic measure as it is aligned with the common core curriculum adopted by SFPS.

College Readiness for grades 4 through 8 will be assessed through student attendance which is a strong indicator of success in school. The average student attendance rate over the four-year period will be monitored to determine if schools are meeting their targets.

College Readiness for grades 9-12 will be measured using Explore for 9th and 10th graders. Explore is a standardized assessment developed by ACT and measures student knowledge in English, Math, Science, and History.

Socio-Emotional Outcomes for grades 6-12 will be measured on students' psychosocial attributes including motivation, self-regulation, and social engagement. The ACT Engage, a survey developed by ACT, will be used for this evaluation.

For each performance measure, the applicant has included a rationale, timeline, and person responsible.

(b) The District's agreement with RAND includes an analysis of whether the performance measures chosen are sufficient to evaluate implementation progress. If they are determined to be insufficient, advice will be provided on how to improve the performance measures, and necessary improvements will be made.

(c) ECPL is designed so that teachers, counselors, and School Advisory Team members continually assess and re-evaluate student learning, and customize their strategies to individual student needs, as well as link them to additional academic support and programs if needed.

Several required outcomes for proposed performance measures are not available. This includes the number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup whose teacher of record and principal are meet the requirements to be highly effective and one age-appropriate non-cognitive indicator of growth. Performance expectations for these components are baseline plus 5% for each year of the grant. It cannot be determined that these goals are achievable or ambitious because no baseline indicator was provided. Targets for the number of students on track to college- and career-readiness based on the applicant's on-track indicator range from 60% for all students to 43% for English Language Learners and students with disabilities. The results do not indicate that the applicant is on the right track to accelerate student achievement and narrow the achievement gap.

This section is rated in the mid scoring range.

<b>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
--	----------	----------

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

Transformation Zone schools will be tracked on selected academic (state assessments in reading and math for grades 3 through 8 and 11th grade) and non-academic outcomes (attendance) over a four-year period. A critical element of this design is the identification of an appropriate comparison group that will be tracked on the same outcomes over the study period. The outcome is to provide an answer to the question, "What would have happened to student outcomes had the school not implemented the intervention?" This evaluation will look at schools with a comparable structure and demographics with an achievement level that is just higher than the Transition Schools in the SFPC but were not exposed to the intervention. A Rand analysis of this data will be used to determine the effectiveness of the intervention.

Using the implementation data collected through teacher surveys and logs, the implementation of the intervention on student academic and non-academic outcomes will be determined.

The Chief Accountability and Strategy Officer will evaluate all sources of data and take steps to ensure that District expenditures related to Empowering Communities – Personalized Learning were reasonable, targeted, and leveraged in an efficient manner.

The applicant has provided a high-quality plan to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of the RttT-D funded activities. The approach using a "control" group is an unusual one. The applicant has a rare opportunity to judge the effectiveness of the district intervention provided to all schools against the schools that received the district support and the RttT-D support. This section is rated in the high range.

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

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

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

The Santa Fe Public School District has a detailed budget that reflects a high-quality plan and approach to accelerating student achievement, beginning with its lowest performing schools, termed "Transformation Zone Schools."

The budget has been separated into six projects: 1) Teacher Development; 2) Strategic Interventions; 3) Extended Learning; 4) Enhanced Family and Community Involvement; 5) Non-Academic Supports; and 6) Foundational Activities.

For each budget activity, the applicant has provided a narrative to document how it aligns with the five Transformational Pillars detailed in section A3.

- (a) The budget identifies all funds that will support the project and links these activities directly to the goals articulated throughout the application.
- (b) The budget is clearly presented and allocations appear to be reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal. A commitment to the initiative is supported through the use of local, state, private, and federal funds.
- (c) The rationale for investments is linked to the application goals and to the district initiative and clearly provides a thoughtful rationale for investments.
  - (i) The applicant has included an overall budget summary that includes the project name, a link to the application section associated with that expenditure, total grant funds, and total budget amount. Grant funds total to \$9,685,829.75 and the total budget to implement the reform initiative is \$20,038,280.71. Additional supports listed are local, state, and private funds. Federal support will be provided by Titles I and II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and 21<sup>st</sup> Century programs.
  - (ii) There are few expenditures budgeted as one-time investments. They are \$546,480 for Achieve 3000, a software solution for differentiated instruction in literacy and science that is aligned with the Common Core State Standards. In addition, \$12,768 to purchase one iMac Desktop computer and one printer for each of the 7 Transformation Zone schools is included. Other expenditures are budgeted throughout the grant period.

The applicant has provided an excellent and detail budget that identifies all funds that will support the project, is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal, and clearly provides a thoughtful rationale for investments and priorities. This section is rated in the high range.

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

**10**

**10**

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

The applicant has already taken steps to increase efficiency and reduce redundancy. This will allow the District to sustain the successful components of the ECPL plan with a low level of ongoing investment. Costs in the first year will be highest, largely due to initial teacher development training costs, equipment purchases, and an expanded multi-year site license for the online differentiated instruction tool, Achieve 3000. After the implementation period, costs will be nearly \$800,000 lower per year than in year one.

The applicant will maintain a high level of awareness of costs linked to deliverables and inputs through district and school level meetings and through the external evaluation planned and elements will be evaluated throughout the grant. Elements will be modified or eliminated as needed.

The applicant will evaluate the effectiveness of past investments and use this data to inform future investments. The Chief Accountability and Strategy Officer, Chief Academic Officer, Superintendent, and Assistant Superintendent will be responsible for analyzing costs and their link to program elements. Costs found to be ineffective will be reviewed and a determination will be made whether to modify the activity or to discontinue it. The third party evaluator will conduct a rigorous assessment of project success and impact, including costs and effectiveness. Together, these reviews will allow the District to maintain a high level of awareness of costs that is linked to deliverables and outputs.

Santa Fe Public Schools has a credible and achievable plan to sustain the project's goals after the grant funding period by using a combination of careful investments during the grant term and State funding after the grant ends combined with other fundraising efforts as needed. The letters of support in the Appendix indicate that Santa Fe has strong support from a number of government and private organizations to assist them in securing continued support after the grant ends. The grant's investments in professional development and technology (detailed in (F) (1) provide the groundwork for a sustainable program.

The applicant has provided a high quality plan to sustain the project's goals after the term of the grant and is rated in the high range.

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

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

Competitive Preference Priority

(1) The applicant is planning to expand on its partnership with the Communities in Schools of New Mexico (CISNM), an independent 501(c)3 affiliate of the national Communities In Schools. A partnership is already in place in two of the Transforming Schools and the plan is to expand services to all RtT-D participating schools. Targeted student populations for this service include students in high-minority schools, students with disabilities, English language learners (ELL), and students who are homeless or affected by poverty, family instability, or other child welfare issues (e.g..., foster care) that create risk factors. CISNM will link these students to local nonprofits and businesses providing a wide range of services, including: La Familia Medical Center (medical, dental, mental health care); La Familia REACH Program; Adelante program for Homeless Families (a SFPS program that will be expanded under this partnership); Cooking with Kids; Big Brothers/Big Sisters; Interfaith Coalition for Public Education (volunteer tutoring program); Girls on the Run (health and fitness); Girls, Inc.; Food Depot (food security); Coats for Kids; SOLACE Crisis Treatment Center; and other housing/shelter and food security agencies and mental health agencies.

(2) (2) Key Results for this initiative include; improved promotion/graduation rates, reduced dropout rates, reduced incidents

of truancy, decreased behavioral issues, and improved student health. Evaluation tools to monitor student progress and to measure the five key results will include student attendance and behavioral records, quarterly grades, case notes, survey tools, and participation logs.

(3) CISNM tracks the number of students receiving appropriate services, the types of services and student progress to determine the success of the program. The evaluation tools will provide data to identify areas/students that under perform expectations, allowing for continuous improvement, accurate targeting of student needs, and allowing CISNM and SFPS to identify service areas where additional partnerships may be needed to fill service gaps. CISNM utilizes the CIS National Data Management System to gather and track student data, assess results and in turn refine strategies for student improvement

(b) CIS seeks to identify and address the underlying reasons why students drop out of school. These vary greatly. A solution may be as simple as providing eyeglasses to a student who has difficulty reading. For some students, interventions may be more complicated and may necessitate providing ongoing counseling and out-of-school time interventions, such as to reduce the risk of joining a gang or abusing drugs.

(c) The applicant will expand services to all of the RttT-D participating schools under this initiative and then to other high needs students in the district.

(d) Data will help to identify areas/students that under perform expectations, allowing for continuous improvement, accurate targeting of student needs, and allowing CISNM and SFPS to identify service areas where additional partnerships may be needed to fill service gaps. CISNM utilizes the CIS National Data Management System to gather and track student data, assess results and in turn refine strategies for student improvement.

(4) The partnership will integrate education and other services through the Communities In Schools' framework for student success through the Site Coordinator, a trained full-time social/health worker. who works with a school's leadership to assess school/student needs, develop and implement a school Site/Campus Plan, and oversee the delivery of services and supports.

The Site Coordinator's role is to augment current counseling capacity, ensuring that each student is assessed for individual needs and that every child receives necessary resources and services. Site Coordinators work with local school staff to design and implement school-site specific Site/Campus schools. The Site Coordinator's role is to augment current counseling capacity, ensuring that each student is assessed for individual needs and that every child receives necessary resources and services. Site Coordinators will work with local school staff to design and implement school-site specific Site/Campus Plans designed to help change the culture of schools, delivering individualized wraparound services, and graduating students who are better prepared for college and careers.

(5) Trained Site Coordinators will build the capacity of staff in participating schools by assisting in the training of additional Site Coordinators. Data and evidence collected from work at the Transformation Zone schools will allow for more efficient implementation of best practices as the partnership is scaled up district-wide

(a) Evaluation of the CISNM has been promising as is the national evaluation of CIS. It has been shown to be effective in meeting the needs of students so that they stay in school. "The majority of case managed students stayed in school (87%), moved on to the next grade level (84%) or graduated (88%) (CIS, 2012)."

(b) A preliminary CISNM Needs Assessment process led by each school's CISNM Site Coordinator and in partnership with each school's principal and leadership team determines key issue areas school wide and also determines those high risk students in need of CISNM Case Managed Intervention support. Data will help to identify areas/students that under perform expectations, allowing for continuous improvement consistent with the goals of ECPL.

(c) A decision-making process and infrastructure to select, implement, and evaluate supports is provided through the CISNM Site Coordinator in partnership with each school's principal and leadership team.

(d) The Site Coordinator engages with parents and families of participating students in decision making solutions and to match the needs of students and families with the resources in the community.

(e) The applicant's progress in implementing its plan to maximize impact and resolve challenge is routinely assessed CISNM is required by CIS National to utilize a rigorous CIS Data Management System designed to capture and track student data and outcomes. All Site Coordinators receive CIS Data Management System training from CIS National staff as well as ongoing CIS training in implementing the CIS framework. Site Coordinators will gather and record student baseline information, progress, and annual outcomes. This will enable close tracking of student progress, ensuring that students remain on track and allowing for quick identification of potential risk factors.

(6) Four general performance measures will be used to measure program success across schools.

- Absenteeism/Truancy: 75% of students with absenteeism/truancy reduction needs will meet or exceed their absenteeism/truancy goals.
- Academic Improvement: 75% of students will demonstrate improvement in Literacy and Math as demonstrated by test scores;
- 75% of students will meet or exceed their academic achievement goals.
- Attitude/Behavior: 75% will demonstrate marked shifts in attitudes/behaviors with and toward their classmates leading to the elimination of bullying of peers/classmates; 75% of students will meet their behavior improvement goals; 75% will meet or exceed their attitude and commitment to school improvement goals.
- Parental Engagement: 75% of parents will increase their parental engagement in their child's academic, attendance and behavior performance and success.

Baseline and yearly targets on assessments and attendance were provided for all students and by subgroups. Target measures are ambitious. Plans throughout the application indicate that the measures are achievable. Data is not provided to determine parental engagement or ACT Engage measures of motivation, social engagement and self regulation. These are presented as baseline plus a 5% increase for each year. With no baseline data available, it is not possible to determine that these measures are ambitious or achievable.

The partnership with CISNM will allow the applicant to leverage existing community resources and partnerships to serve its students better through wraparound support services aimed to help them excel in school and graduate. CISNM will link those schools in the District that receive the least amount of funding and have the largest proportions of at-risk young people to organizations that can augment school capacity to serve at-risk students. The plan included population groups, types of results, and desired results. A timeline was not provided. Responsibility roles were embedded in the narrative. This section is rated in the high range.

### Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

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

#### Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

This is an ambitious and comprehensive proposal from a district in New Mexico that is committed to raising the achievement for all its schools. Santa Fe is an area known for affluence and scientific institutions. Many of the wealthy citizens who have moved to Santa Fe are older citizens. However, there are many "inequities in education and income." Young people in Santa Fe, particularly those who are in the public school system, are "more likely to be native Santa Feans who are low-income and minorities with limited English language skills". The Empowering Communities – Personalized Learning (ECPL) as an approach to learning that engages and empowers all learners, particularly high-need students.

An Achievement Zone approach has been developed to identify schools into Transformation, Acceleration, and Innovation Zones. The RttT-D grant will focus on the seven schools in the Transformation Zone that are “underachieving relative to comparable schools around the state, are the most important to target”. While not limited to a specific grade band, these schools have the largest achievement gaps and the greatest risk factors to prepare its students for graduation, college, and careers. The RttT-D grant will provide focused support to these school.

The Empowering Communities – Personalized Learning developed through this grant has coherently and comprehensively addressed how it will build on the core educational assurances to create learning environments designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through personalized learning plans. The plan includes high-quality plans with well articulated goals. These goals are clearly defined and have activities, deliverables, timelines, and staff identified as responsible for implementation.

The applicant has provided a comprehensive plan with supports for students and educators that will result in a personalized learning environment to accelerated student achievement allowing them to graduate college-and-career ready.

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>189</b>
--------------	------------	------------



## Race to the Top - District Technical Review Form

**Application #0136NM-3 for Santa Fe Public Schools**

### A. Vision (40 total points)

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

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

In reviewing the proposal, it is evident that the applicant has given a lot of thought to establishing a comprehensive and coherent reform. In addition, the applicant has provided a very clear logic model in how it wishes to implement the reform starting with five basic goals: raising expectations, building a cohort of qualified personnel, creating a culture of shared responsibility, promoting safe and healthy schools, & ensuring efficient and effective systems. The blueprint that the applicant has presented has a strong foundation for effective reform.

However, there's a single area of weakness: raising expectations as one of the five goals can be risky. Expectations come from establishing a clear implementation plan and comes only naturally. To say we will raise expectations is insufficient if there's no plan to make changes, which is why it may be unrealistic to make "raising expectations" as one of the goals.

The applicant has outlined how it intends to address all four core educational assurances including aligning curricula, implementing common core state standards, strengthening assessment systems, involving students in "developing individual personalized learning plans", building data systems, and building teachers and administrators will result in turning around low-performing schools without question.

The applicant has articulated in the proposal that it has developed strong outcomes and strategies for recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers and placing them in the right schools. Also, the applicant identifies closing achievement gaps as one of critical areas of focus in the proposal. To close the gaps, the applicant explains that it will place greater emphasis on professional development to train the teachers to address the needs of their students, including "how to use data as a means of tracking progress and creating environments where students receive the personalized learning."

The applicant explains that stronger professional development plan will help teachers become more skilled in providing personalized instruction including use of data to inform instruction and planning. This will result in more direct instruction, small group, differentiated instruction as well, and self-paced digital instruction & content. Finally, the students will be able to demonstrate mastery through end of course exams as opposed to end of semester or end of year exams, meaning

mastery will be demonstrated through knowledge or mastery of content as opposed to seat time.

The fact that the proposal is well-written has helped the applicant articulate a clear and credible plan and that goes a long way in establishing a comprehensive and, especially, coherent vision of how the applicant wishes to effectuate change to the school districts. Even with identifying raising expectations as one of the goals, it is evident that the applicant has a high-quality plan that can result in closing the achievement gaps among low-performing students and for that clear and coherent vision, the applicant will receive 9 out of 10 points.

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

**10**

**10**

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

The applicant's approach to implement starts with internal review and evaluation and their evaluation led to the conclusion that their main focus will be on, what they term, "Transformation Zone Schools," meaning those schools that are underachieving in comparison to schools in the state. The underperforming schools had the largest achievement gaps & greatest risk factors as identified in the proposal.

The basic principle behind the applicant's approach is centered around a cause-and-effect concept: If the applicant improves the quality of teaching and learning, heightens expectations and increases family and community involvement, the result shall be, according to the applicant, more rigorous and relevant classroom experience for the students and graduation & college and career success. The applicant has summed up the approach in a simple format but success won't come easily.

The applicant identified seven schools in the "Transformation Zone" as the starting point in the proposal and the applicant has included a statement on how it intends to scale up to additional schools.

The number of students that will benefit from the project is around 4,000 representing grades from kindergarten to 12th grade. Additionally, 84% of these students are identified as poor and qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, which meets one of the guidelines for the grant application and about 1/3 of the 4,000 students are identified as English learners.

The applicant has presented a high quality plan that will result in successful implementation of the project goals. For that, the applicant receives full 10 points.

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

**10**

**8**

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

In the area of LEA-wide reform and change, the applicant has presented a high quality plan describing how it will scale up the reform proposal to support non-participating schools and how the proposal will improve student learning outcomes for all students.

In the previous sections, the applicant has hinted at how it would scale up starting with schools within the "Transformation Zone" then moving up to schools in "Acceleration" and "Innovation" zones. Primarily, the applicant will focus its scale-up plan on five district goals as outlined in the proposal. The district goals will help the applicant determine how to strategically use the resources to support schools that need support the most.

The applicant explains that they will work with an external reviewer (RAND) in identifying "the efficacy of elements," and use the model to scale up to non-participating schools. The third party reviewer will collect data and analyze the data and report the findings to the applicant's executive team for review. The report will also be used to help the applicant scale up the model to other non-participating schools. The use of a third party reviewer gives some credibility to the applicant as it can evaluate the progress neutrally and without bias.

However, there is a minor concern in the entire section, "Elements of the plan that prove successful will then be operationalized in other schools." Should the initial steps prove to be unfruitful, one would have to assume that there will be no scale-up. This is a risky proposition especially considering that some reform models may be more effective with different population. For instance, the reform plan may work with one school but not work very well with other school due to unique characteristics of each school population.

The applicant explains that it will focus resources on underperforming schools while expecting all schools within the district to adopt "five Transformation Pillars," so that ultimately, this will enable the district to adopt uniform assessments, standards, update its data collection, and train its teachers and principals to collect and interpret data. Finally, this will allow the applicant to scale up the model successfully.

In spite of some missing information, the applicant has submitted a high quality plan and does map out in some details how the district plans to scale up to other schools. For the depth in the high quality plan, the applicant receives 8 out of

10 points.

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

**10**

**8**

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

In the previous sections, the applicant has outlined "the extent to which the vision is likely to result in improved student learning and performance." The applicant has provided some explanations on logic models and pillars that the applicant have implemented, which will guide the district-wide reform and change. The models and the pillars focus on teacher development, strategic interventions, extended learning, enhanced family and community engagement, and non-academic supports.

In effectuating the changes, the applicant has provided data on four areas: performance on summative assessments, decreasing achievement gaps, graduation rates & college enrollment including data on subgroups within each area.

Overall, the performance measures and annual target goals are strong and the applicant has set the bar high but there are some areas where the annual target goals could be higher. From reviewing the entire section on LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes, the reader can infer two things: annual target goals for subgroups are strong and ensure that the students are pushed to achieve more but annual target goals for the overall appear a little weak. Below are examples.

In terms of ambitious yet achievable goals, here's a few examples: currently, 46% of male 3rd graders (a subgroup) are proficient at reading and have declined from 49% in SY2011-12, the applicant has set 68% as the annual target goal to be achieved by 2017-18. This would represent 22% of growth, which may appear modest but historically, the trend is downward (from SY2011-12 to SY2012-13) and 20% of growth would be ambitious yet achievable. Another example would be decreasing the achievement gap for the subgroup, English Language Learners, which averaged 34% in SY2012-13 and the applicant set 17% as the annual target goal, which would mean the applicant has halved the number of students experiencing achievement gaps. It is a challenge and can be ambitious but the goal is achievable if the district puts in effort and focus to reducing the achievement gap between the subgroups. Here's another example: currently, 51.9% of students with disabilities (a subgroup) graduate from high school (SY2012-13) and the applicant has set the bar high in setting 72% of students with disabilities will graduate in SY2017-18. This is an outstanding example for two reasons: first, it is critical that the applicant sets high expectations for traditionally underserved subgroup such as students with disabilities and inclusion of the subgroup (students with disabilities) shows serious commitment on the applicant's part to include every segment of the student population.

In spite of strong annual target goals, there are a couple of performance measures where annual target goals may be modest for overall student population such as: the current achievement gap between white caucasian students and the rest of the school population stands at 20% and the applicant hopes to reduce it to 10%, which would represent an average of 2% reduction annually from now until 2017-18. This would be an example of modest progress and not necessarily ambitious in any way. Another example would be overall high school graduation for overall student population, which stands at 61.8% and the applicant hopes that 79% of the overall student population will graduate, which would mean that 17.2% more students graduated in SY2017-18 comparing to now. This is a strong target goal but not necessarily ambitious. Additionally, the selection criteria asks that the applicant present data on college enrollment but the table shows that the applicant hasn't collected the data, which in essence, is an incompleteness on the applicant's end. The baselines are unavailable therefore it is somewhat impossible to determine if the target goals are ambitious yet achievable but college enrollment is one of the requirements.

Overall, the applicant has presented ambitious yet achievable" annual goals and for that reason, the applicant receives 8 out of 10 points and the applicant loses points due to two areas: some of the target goals are modest and missing baseline data for some of the requirements as outlined in the selection criteria.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>

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

The applicant has demonstrated a clear overall record of success from student achievement to turning around schools.

First, Table 2 provides an example of an established track record of success. Table 2 explains that the schools that received wrap-around support through collaboration with CISNM had higher growth comparing to those schools that didn't.

This is critical because the schools that are receiving CISNM wrap-around support will be scaled up as a part of the

project. The table shows that the schools that received the support were consistently in the upper quartile, which is an impressive feat considering the population that the schools work with. Additionally, figure 3 shows growth for some traditionally underperforming subgroups such as Hispanics and Economically Disadvantaged students. In addition, the applicant has demonstrated evidence of success in the area of graduation rate where four years ago, the state-calculated graduation rate was 53% and currently, the graduation rate is 62%. Despite some clear record of success on a limited basis, the applicant, nevertheless, has demonstrated some level of success in improving student achievement the past four years.

As a single case study, Ramirez Thomas Elementary School reflects what "ambitious and complex reform," with support, funding, and resources from a district can do for persistently underachieving schools even though it reflects only a single school (which is rather a limited sample). What the applicant implemented was negotiating with teacher union, soliciting feedback and support from the community, implementing a range of intervention, data-driven decision making, stronger Professional Development Communities and other activities. What the applicant implemented at the elementary school is not so different from what the applicant intends to implement as a part of the project.

As for the data component of the proposal, the applicant describes what it has implemented as a part of the reform such as using SchoolNet Instructional Improvement System and PowerSchool to help simplify data for students, parents and educators. Both tools will allow educators to make timely decisions, set goals, and involve parents in the process. To make data simpler and accessible, the district has implemented a plan to manage amount of data that will be available and the district will increase amount of available data based on whether the parents or the educators have received training to understand the data. After receiving the training, the teachers will be better prepared to utilize data in their instruction and support personalized learning/teaching for the students. However, in reviewing the application, it does not appear that the applicant has make data-based changes or reforms historically (or the past four years).

Additionally, the applicant hasn't provided any details in response to one of the indicators for Selection Criteria (B)(1)(a): College Enrollment. There is no evidence of prior record of success in regard to the area of college enrollment.

The applicant has successfully demonstrated evidence of previous success even though within a limited scope. For that, the applicant receives 12 out of 15 points.

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

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

The applicant explains that it has posted salary information and budgets on New Mexico Sunshine Portal as a part of compliance with state law that was passed in 2010. However, the applicant adds that it has redesigned their website to make it more friendly, informative, robust, and to function better for both external and internal stakeholders. The redesigned website *will* include school-level information such as personnel salaries and non-personnel expenditures. In short, it hasn't been established as a part of the district's track record of high level of transparency. This is something that the district has started when the website was redesigned. Additionally, the applicant does make available these kinds of information in paper format upon request. There's no mention of the applicant's efforts to publish the information in newspaper, which would certainly increase the level of transparency.

With a mixed history of making LEA processes, practices and investments transparent to both the external and internal stakeholders, the applicant receives 3 out of 5 points.

<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
--	-----------	-----------

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

The current legal, statutory, regulatory, and budgetary requirements provide the applicant with the necessary authority and autonomy to implement personalized learning environments. In regard to this, the state has provided the district the authority to implement Performance Compact, a new teacher evaluation system designed to align with district's vision of reform. The Compact allows school leadership to set performance goals for individual schools as opposed to school district setting the goals for all schools. This aligns with the district plans to ensure that the local schools have the flexibility and autonomy to set school-level goals.

In addition, the state constitution empowers the local boards to make decision relating to school policy, control, management, and direction including distribution of funds.

Due to the fact that the applicant has already the autonomy to implement the reform, the applicant will receive 10 out of 10 points.

<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>
--	-----------	-----------

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

From previous sections, the applicant has sought feedback from parents and teachers. In addition, the applicant has received support from state, teacher unions, and local universities.

In the section, the applicant has stated that the beginning of the groundwork for stakeholder engagement was the original RTT-D application and the applicant developed the new proposal with the support that it received in the initial application.

Since the initial application was rejected, the applicant maintained relationships with all critical stakeholders starting with evaluating the applicant's current state of affairs (in Fall 2012) to developing the Empowering Communities - Personalized Learning proposal. During the process, the applicant gathered input from different stakeholders such as parents, community members, and advocacy organizations and used the input to drive the development of the new application.

The applicant does not provide sufficient details in whether the majority of the teachers supported this initiative. Per the selection criteria, there needs to be an evidence that the collective bargaining representation supports this initiative but there is no proof of this in the proposal.

In addition, the applicant met with collective bargaining representatives over the past year to discuss teacher evaluations, compensation, and other issues that concern teachers. Included in the appendix is the letter from the president of the National Educators Association - Santa Fe, the leading teacher union organization in the area, supporting the application.

However, the letter submitted on the behalf of the applicant, indicates that the collective bargaining representative supports parts of this proposal. There are sections in the letter indicating that the representative doesn't support parts of the application such as the organization that the applicant has worked with to recruit teachers. This is a concern especially when one of the selection criteria explains that the application must receive support from the collective bargaining representative.

Variety of stakeholders and stakeholder organizations were invited to read the proposal draft and provide comments within the 10-day public comment period and the applicant received a lot of feedback which they incorporated into the proposal. However, the feedback was mainly collected online, which is a concern because there are subsections of the stakeholder such as parents, who do not have access to computers or internet at homes meaning they are not likely to have provided any input. In short, the district did not provide stakeholders opportunities other than district website.

The applicant has provided plenty of opportunities to share information about the application and its process and gather input as well from a variety of stakeholders even though the majority of the input gathered were through the internet (district website) and the applicant did not provide much evidence on what other mechanisms the applicant undertook to gather additional input about the application. Due to this, the applicant receives 12 out of 15 points.

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

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

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

The narrative begins with a brief discussion on disparity between "the haves and the have nots." The applicant lays the groundwork for reform by citing the need for change in educational system to improve the quality of education and lives for those who are born or grew up in Santa Fe. The author then delves into some historical information about the school system and why schools in the Transformation Zones are in need of this grant.

The applicant has explained how it will create "personalized learning experience" through two-pronged strategy: utilizing Response to Intervention & Next Steps planning system to design a more personalized learning approach for each individual student. Currently, the schools use Rtl for children in lower elementary grades & Next Steps for high school students to help the children assess their interests & aptitudes, and establish best courses of study and set progress benchmarks. The applicant explains that it will adapt and extend both tools to support "all grade bands," but the applicant doesn't describe how it will do this. Additionally, as the students embark on personalized learning experience, the counselors will work with the parents in helping them understand what their children's goals are and what courses they will be taking as a part of their individualized learning plan. Analytically, Rtl has been proven to be very effective in supporting children who are lagging behind their peers and this can be a wonderful tool to utilize as a part of the reform.

Also, to better offer academic options for the students needing more personalized learning experience, the applicant is prepared to offer a variety of options that will optimize their personalized learning experiences, such as Career Academics, flexible learning, dual credit, Honors and Advanced Placement, and magnet schools. Also, the applicant has stated that they will incorporate technology-based digital assessments such as Accelerated Reader and Accelerated Math. Also, some

digital content will be made available to the students through Achieve 3000, an on-line, self-paced literacy program to help students in grades from 2nd to 12th.

One of the selection criteria asks if the students will master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical-thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving. The applicant has stated that the students will master "college-readiness" and "career-readiness" skills, which typically include those kinds of skills that will prepare the students for the future. The applicant adds that it is working with Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), a research-based approach that will help students, who are not reaching their potential, to develop different college-readiness skills as well.

In addition, the applicant will incorporate wrap-around support through partnerships with a local organization, CISNM, to help reduce dropout and provide more personalized learning opportunities for the students. CISNM offers a variety of support such as tutoring, mentoring, health care, and counseling. Also, if the students are still unprepared, the applicant is working with Achievement Via Individual Determination, a program, that provides more individual type of support and train the students to become better at note-taking, preparing for tests, and other skills that are critical to developing college- and career-ready skills.

However, there is a concern as the proposal doesn't discuss what it will implement for middle school students. The applicant has stated that it will incorporate RtI for elementary students and Next Steps for high school students but it does not provide any details about what it intends to implement as a part of LEA-wide efforts to work with middle school students.

Throughout the proposal, the applicant has emphasized the value of including parents in their children's education. The applicant has outlined different activities they will undertake to increase the parental engagement such as meeting with the parents to discuss student plans and have the parents sign off the plans as a part of becoming engaged with their children's education.

In summary, the applicant has presented a high quality plan that will result in a transformation in the system. The only deficient would be the fact that the plan does not incorporate anything for the middle school students. For that reason, the applicant receives 17 out of 20 points.

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

**20**

**15**

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

The applicant has provided a high-quality plan for building teacher and principal capacity including designing professional development that will enable them to implement personalized learning in their classrooms. The applicant lists some areas of concern that they intend to address in the project: challenges of evaluating teachers effectively, training and retaining good teachers, limited ability to gather data and lack of high teaching standards. To address the areas of concern, the applicant has set up a comprehensive and clear plan including providing professional learning communities, training principals as leaders, building effective and reliable teacher evaluation system.

In response to ensuring that all participating educators engage in training: Specifically, Table 10 lists professional development, classroom monitoring, comprehensive student plans (including Response to Intervention & Next Step Plans), Teacher Institute, fair compensation through performance-based incentives, and technology integration into instruction. The activities are aligned with district's five goals as outlined in earlier part of the proposal. Among the professional development listed in the proposal is training to help teachers implement personalized instruction and use of data to inform instruction. Also, the applicant explains that it had to reorganize the central office to set up a Chief Accountability and Strategy Officer, to oversee data collection and communications, which will allow the central office to support teachers more effectively as they utilize data to inform their instruction. However, there is a concern with the table as it lists 7 activities that are designed to support teachers but only one activity designed to support principals and assistant principals.

For the principals and assistant principals to successfully support the teachers, there needs to be a stronger plan to train the administrators. However, Table 11 indicates that the applicant is prepared to provide support for principals and assistant principals through three-day summer Leadersip Institute for Principals and Assistant Principals, which will cover some general topics such as common core state standards, PARCC assessment, and using proficiency data.

In regard to having access to, and know how to use, tools, data, and resources: The applicant has two-pronged approach to this. First, the teachers and the principals will receive training and professional developmen to obtain the necessary knowledge and skills to utilize data to support classroom instruction and implement personalized learning environment and second, the schools have set up data systems that will allow teachers to track student progress on individual basis and help teachers utilize data for instruction.

The applicant explains that it will make salaries competitive to help recruit and retain teachers especially those hard-to-staff schools, subjects, and specialty areas and increase the number of students receiving instruction from effective and highly

effective teachers and principals.

Finally, there are some concerns with the high quality plan. The proposal explains that the collective bargaining representative and the applicant are still hammering out details for the teacher evaluation and this is a cause for concern. The representative could ultimately decide to back out from supporting the project and that can be a deal breaker. Without the support from the representative, which is essentially the teachers, this proposal has a little hope for success.

In addition, there isn't much discussion about training and retaining highly qualified principals and assistant principals other than retaining a third party organization to assist with recruiting of teachers.

In summary, the applicant has submitted a high quality plan even though the plan is heavily geared towards training and retaining teachers and does not offer much on how it intends to train and retain principals and assistant principals. The plan is nevertheless high quality and for that reason, the applicant receives 15 out of 20 points.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>

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

The applicant has enacted a high quality plan in response to the proposal. The word choice of 'enacted' is purposeful and this is because the applicant has reorganized the LEA central office in 2012 in response to become more efficient, accessible, and transparent, which happen to be two of the key words in the Selection Criteria (D)(1). The criteria asks if the application has "practices, policies, and rules" that facilitate personalized learning. Included in the reorganization is creating positions designed to focus on critical parts of the project such as Chief Academic Officer and Chief Accountability and Strategy Officer. Both positions were created to increase support for principals and place greater focus and emphasis on utilizing data to inform instruction respectively. These are two examples of how the applicant has created positions in anticipation of this project.

The applicant explains that school leaderships will continue to have the flexibility and autonomy to make school-level decisions such as school schedules, calendars, staffing and budget decisions providing "they continue to make progress toward improving the schools."

In the area of credit mastery, the applicant has established the framework for demonstrated mastery of topic as opposed to seat time and providing the framework for alternative pathways for credit mastery such as online learning (Edgenuity, Compass Learning, Renaissance Learning, and Achieve 3000). Another model that they have adopted as a part of their efforts to broaden pathways that the students may go through to earn credit mastery is Career Academies, which focuses on career development and developing career-based skills. However, the only true alternative pathways the applicant has set up focus on online learning. There are certainly other pathways that the applicant could set up such as after school classes or Saturday school, which may work better for some of the students needing more 1-on-1 instruction. Online learning is extremely accessible providing the students are able to access English successfully. And if they don't, then the applicant needs to come up with other pathways that may work better for those kinds of students until they have sufficient language skills to access English.

The applicant has set up Response to Intervention as an approach that the applicant will utilize to support English language learners and Spanish-speaking families. The applicant does state that RtI will work for students with other risk factors or students with disabilities, however many of students with disabilities have unique needs and RtI should not be considered one-size-fits-all solution for all of the ELL, students with other risk factors, and students with disabilities.

Due to some areas of limitations especially for traditionally underserved students like English language learners or students with disabilities, the applicant has, nevertheless, submitted a strong working plan, that can result in greater academic achievement for all of the students. The applicant earns 11 out of 15 points.

<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
---	-----------	-----------

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

The applicant has identified PowerSchool and School Net as two information management systems that will allow parents

and students to have access to basic information such as attendance, reporting, assessment reporting, and scheduling. Teachers and principals are also able to use PowerSchool to access demographics, course enrollment and faculty management as well. Parents are also given training through Parent Academy to learn how to use relevant school sites to learn more about their children's academic progress at the schools.

There are also assessments that the district will utilize as a part of LEA-wide efforts to allow for greater access to parents and students such as Achieve 3000, Edgenuity, Compass Learning (content-based as well), Read 180, Renaissance Learning, and STAR Assessment. This is a comprehensive suite of assessment, learning tools, and they will provide personalized learning for the students.

The applicant has committed to ensuring that they use data format that can be utilized through open data formats.

The applicant has stated that the data systems that they use for human resources and budgeting are interoperable and can work with other systems. In addition, the PowerSchool program that the applicant uses is interoperable with several other district-level programs such as School Net, Edgenuity, Renaissance Learning, and OCR Reporting.

For high quality in the plan, the applicant receives 10 out of 10 points.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>

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

The applicant did not present a high quality plan for implementing continuous improvement process that will enable the applicant to make adjustments or corrections, even, to the plan. The applicant has stated that the district will implement two-level process: continuous improvement via data analysis & third party evaluation. Later in the section, the applicant explains that this will be done on a school-to-school basis and that the analysis will rely on data as gathered by the school officials.

The application does not really address the issue as there are two ways to approach this: micro- and macro-level. First, the micro-level can be managed by principals and assistant principals meaning the school officials can do quick day to day adjustments to the process to ensure that there is a continuous process of improving, adjusting and correcting. Next, there needs to be a discussion on how improvements can be made on macro-level meaning if the proposal does not make any effect on student performance or if there are some issues on project-level and that would require macro-level adjustments.

The selection criteria explains, "the applicant's plans represent the best thinking at a point in time, and may require adjustments and revisions during implementation," (Selection Criteria (E) Continuous Improvement).

The applicant, however, does provide plenty of details on how it plans to monitor, measure and publicly share information on the progress of each individual school. Surveys, third party evaluations and data analyses will lead the process in determining whether the implementation is effective or not but, again, the application does not address macro-level possibilities. The process for continuously improving during the grant cycle would be qualitative and quantitative evaluations performed biweekly, but the applicant does not provide any specifics on what data the applicant will be collecting as a part of the process.

With some depth in how the district intends to monitor the progress and make adjustments, where necessary, the applicant receives 10 out of 15 points mainly because it does not provide much details on macro-level process.

<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
---	----------	----------

**(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant has stated that it will contract RAND, a third party evaluator, to monitor progress and provide timely feedback on the quality of the implementation and progress. The evaluator will perform face to face meetings and web meetings to share findings with internal stakeholders such as teachers and counselors between years 1 and 4. For the Year 4, the applicant will provide an in-person briefing on the full study findings and outcomes from the results analysis.

The applicant explains that the district will provide district- and school-level engagements for the external stakeholders through web meetings, annual memorandums, and final technical report. The applicant will also provide reports through board meetings and district websites. There are insufficient details about how the applicant will gather input and how they will engage the stakeholders other than say that they will communicate with them through web meetings, memorandums, and reports.

For that, the applicant receives 3 out of 5 points.

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

**5**

**3**

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

In the area of performance measures, the applicant has identified nine performance measures (such as DIBELS, school attendance, college-going rate, staff climate surveys, and youth risk and resiliency survey) and provided rationale for each measure. The assessment tools that the applicant has identified are widely used in the classrooms and the breadth of the assessment tools reveal a broad range of indicators that will enable the applicant to gauge its progress. Furthermore, resiliency has been identified as one of the most critical predictors of student achievement so it is laudable that the applicant has selected resiliency as one of the indicators.

The applicant has not proven that the measures would inform how successful they have been in implementing their personalized learning environments. For instance, school attendance, college-going rate, and course completion do not provide an in-depth analysis of whether the plan is successful or not. In short, the performance measures that the applicant has identified, do not provide direct results on the progress or the implementation.

In regard to "ambitious yet achievable" performance measures, the applicant has presented data and some of the baselines are not available (Highly Effective Teachers and Principals, Effective Teachers and Principals, Socio-Emotional Indicator, and mainly the indicator for "on track to college- and career-readiness,") therefore it is not possible to determine whether the target goals are ambitious yet achievable. For other indicators, the target goals are fairly ambitious and they are achievable.

The applicant explains that it will consult RAND to evaluate whether the performance measures selected are insufficient to gauge progress and that they will provide advice on how the applicant may improve the performance measures to better gauge the progress. The use of a third party evaluation will allow the applicant to independently and reliably gauge the progress and receive necessary support as it improves the process.

The applicant receives 3 out of 5 points.

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

**5**

**2**

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

The applicant presented two central research questions but they do not cover entirely what the proposal is attempting to do and that is to create personalized learning environments for the children in the Santa Fe area. Perhaps, the questions should ask whether the implementation is successfully creating personalized learning environments and what may interfere in making this happen rather than the questions posited in the proposal. The research questions developed by the applicant may be too broad and there may be too many factors that may affect the results. The applicant has described in statistical details how it intends to evaluate rigorously whether the implementation is successful or not. Statistically, this makes a lot of sense but the applicant did not address a critical area: effectiveness of RTT-D-funded activities.

Additionally, the applicant has identified five goals: create an environment that raises expectations, recruit and support highly qualified and effective personnel, develop a culture of shared responsibility for student success, promote a safe, healthy, and respectful school community, and ensuring efficient and effective systems, operations and infrastructure to support instruction and student learning. The applicant has repeated the goals throughout the proposal and it is disappointing not to see how the applicant intends to evaluate the progress based on the five goals, or at least incorporate the goals as a part of the evaluation process.

One of the selection criteria asks the district to evaluate whether the Race to the Top-District funded activities are effective or not. There's not much discussion on how investments are used financially and how this can be evaluated to determine whether the investments have resulted in effective implementation of personalized learning environment.

For this, the applicant receives 2 out of 5 points.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>

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

The applicant has submitted a very detailed budget proposal and it cross-references project descriptions with funding requests, e.g., Table 2-1 provides a very detailed description project names, primary criterion they are associated with, total grant funds requested, and total budget. The details in the table provide for a very clear accounting of how the funds will be funded and where the funds will go to support the project.

Specifically, the applicant lists every sub-budget activities for each project (Teacher Development, Strategic Intervention, Extended Learning, Enhanced Family and Community Involvement, Non-Academic Support, and Foundational Activities), including personnel, equipment, travel, fringe benefits, et al.

The applicant also lists what will be one-time investments (equipment, laptops) versus on-going budget needs such as personnel and others.

The only glaring weakness is the applicant does not list other funding sources that will support this project even though there are amounts in the budget request that indicate that they will come from other funding sources but the applicant does not list who specifically will provide the funding. For instance, Table 3-1 shows 3.2 million dollars will support the project but there's no mention of who will provide that funding. Generally speaking, the project has potential for long-term sustainability but there's not clear discussion on how the applicant will continue to fund the project especially when the applicant hasn't identified external funding streams.

For the depth and justification in the budget report, the applicant receives 8 out of 10 points.

<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
---	-----------	----------

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

The applicant has explained that the district has undertaken steps to save money from various internal sources such as restructuring and reinvesting. In addition to that, the applicant has explained that some of the project funding will cover equipment purchases, site licenses, data warehouses, and others, which mean by the time the district is weaned off from the RTT-D funding, the cost will be lower and will require less funding from the district thus making the sustainability of the project much more manageable.

The applicant does list a few potential funding streams post-grant but their total will not provide the district with sufficient funding to continue the project, which is a concern. For instance, the initial budget request totals 20 million dollars over four years. The applicant has stated that it will be able to reduce annual spending by \$500,000 due to cost-cutting practices and the district will not need another \$800,000 due to one-time investments, which means the district still need to cover \$3.7 million dollars and the applicant doesn't provide any specifics on how it plans to do that except to state that the State will cover 97% of the district operating budget. It is not clear if the district is able to sustain and cover \$3.7 million annually. This is critical because without sufficient funding support, the project cannot continue beyond the life of grant.

The applicant explains that Chief Accountability and Strategy Officer will work with a third party evaluator to evaluate for effectiveness of the investments and that financial statements and internal controls will be monitored by auditors to ensure quality and effectiveness of the investments.

The applicant also added that they will monitor the investments and review data collected through various resources to better understand the connection between program elements and their costs. This will allow the applicant to review and determine which activities to continue and discontinue and inform future fiscal decisions.

The applicant receives 7 out of 10 points.

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

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

In order to sustain the project, the applicant needs to list different business and non-profit organizations that it will work together to promote personalized learning environments for the students. The applicant lists a few of them but mainly, they will work through the Communities in Schools in New Mexico (CISNM), a non-profit networking organization that works with other agencies and organizations to support schools. The CISNM will work with a variety of agencies, businesses and organizations such as La Familia REACH, Food Depot, and many others in support of this project.

The applicant lists the following results that it hopes to achieve through partnership with CISNM: 1) improved promotion/graduation rates, 2) reduced dropout rates, 3) reduced truancy, 4) decreased behavioral issues & 5) improved student health through regular screenings. The applicant also provided target goals for each of the five categories specified within the Competitive Preference Priority. The applicant lists 75% as the target for each category, but does not provide any baseline, therefore it is impossible to determine if the goals are ambitious and/or achievable.

CISNM will utilize its current data systems to support tracking and monitoring and will work with the district in identifying gaps in services and work with additional organizations to fill the gaps. The current data system that the CISNM uses is already designed to track data such as types of services that each student is receiving and student progress.

Additionally, CISNM will utilize its data to allocate resources according to student needs and strengthen interventions where needed as a part of efforts to "use the data to target its resources." The same set of data will allow CISNM and the applicant to work together and identify partners that may be need to assist with scale-up of the project to other families and students.

The applicant has provided a very detailed description of how CISNM will work with the schools within the district including identifying how it will set up site coordinators within each school to better coordinate services for the students. The site coordinators will be trained to analyze data and provide support based on the data. The coordinators will also work with families with focus on financial literacy, health and nutrition education.

The applicant earns 8 out of 10 points.

### Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>		<b>Met</b>
<b>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>Overall, the applicant has presented a high quality plan that builds on what the applicant has done in 2012 as a part of larger effort to restructure the LEA to implement personalized learning environment for the students in the district.</p> <p>The four core educational assurance areas focus on adopting standards and assessment that help the students develop college- and career-ready skills, building data systems that will help teachers, parents, and school leaders measure student progress, recruiting and retaining high quality teachers, and turning around lowest performing schools.</p> <p>In response to each core assurance area, the applicant has presented a clear and comprehensive plan for reform that will result in improved student performance through five district goals: creating an environment that raises expectations and promotes high academic performance, recruit and retain highly qualified educators, develop a culture of shared responsibility for student success by engaging families and the community, provide a safe, sustainable, healthy, and respectful school community, and ensure efficient and effective systems, operations, and state of the art technology and infrastructure. Throughout the proposal, the applicant has successfully respond to each of the district goal and how it intends to implement the goals throughout the entire district to make the implementation successful.</p> <p>Through the district goals, the applicant will be able to implement personalized learning environment, which will allow for more alignment between student needs and instruction. Through this, the applicant has successfully met the criteria.</p>		

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>166</b>
--------------	------------	------------