



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0138MI-2 for School District of the City of Detroit

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The School District of the City of Detroit has a strong comprehensive and coherent reform vision. The vision is to transform its schools into centers of excellence by "providing a safe, intellectually challenging, and academically personalized learning experience for all of its schools." The applicant articulates this vision clearly in its proposal for the Race to the Top District-Level grant is called the "Detroit Advantage."

The applicant clearly builds on the four core educational assurance areas which is a strength of this proposal:

- The district is already implementing the college- and career-ready standards. (In this proposal they are referred to as Common Core State Standards.) The proposal describes how the plans for personalized learning become the vehicle for implementing the common core state standards (CCSS) because the applicant recognizes that "simply rolling out new standards will not help students achieve them." The district has aligned its pre-kindergarten through 12th grade curriculum with the English and math CCSS.
- With this proposal, the use of student data will increase. For example, students discussions with their teachers will be driven by the academic data and leading indicators data in their Individualized Learning Plans.
- The district has a new teacher evaluation system in place that includes student growth, classroom observations, professional contributions and relevant special training to determine a teacher's effectiveness. The information learned from the classroom observations aligns with the concept of personalized learning environments. The teacher evaluation system is linked to the professional development system. The applicant recognizes that the Detroit Advantage cannot succeed without teachers and administrators who are well-prepared in their academic content area and equipped with the skills to deliver personalized learning.
- The proposal targets the persistently lowest- achieving schools and builds on the efforts underway that began with School Improvement Grants. The applicant identifies its low-achieving schools as the Priority Schools, Focus Schools and Detroit Rising Schools. These are the schools that will be participating in the proposal activities.

The applicant did not specifically describe how this proposal builds on recruiting, rewarding and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most. They did, however, discuss developing teachers as referenced in the third bullet from above.

The applicant provided a clear picture as to what the classroom experience will be for both teachers and students as a result of this proposal. The emphasis is on personalize learning. There will be increased access to technology as the vehicle for building individual learning plans which map each student's journey. Teachers will have flexibility in selecting appropriate strategies such as one-on-one instruction, flipped classrooms, project-based learning and blended instruction. The applicant gave an example of what that classroom experience would like for a specific student and teacher.

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

The School District of the City of Detroit has 97 schools. Thirty-eight of these will be participating in the grant activities. Within these schools, all 21,970 students will participate. The district included many stakeholders in the process of determining which schools to include. The applicant convened a Design Team to plan the Race to the Top District-Level proposal. That team determined which schools were to participate. They selected the schools considered to be the most in need of improvement under the state's accountability rules. The schools selected by the district to participate in the grant

are identified as Priority Schools, Focus Schools and Detroit Rising Schools

By selecting these schools, the district's approach to reform has a significant chance of bringing high-quality district and school-level implementation of the proposal. The Priority Schools are required by federal requirements to implement intervention models that transform or turn schools around. These schools are ripe for implementing the activities in the proposal and building on the changes already started through the School Improvement Grants.

The applicant provided the list of the 38 schools and each schools demographics as requested in Table (A)(2). All schools meet the competition's eligibility criteria. The poverty in these schools ranges from 71%-95%. Each school has significant numbers of high-need students. The column with the participating grades is somewhat confusing in that each school is listed as a K-12 school rather than having the specific grades of each school.

The applicant did not discuss the number of participating educators in it's narrative. In Table (A)(2), the number of participating educators for each school is provided. It is not clear if these numbers represent all of the teachers in each building or not.

NOTE: In Table (A)(2) the Grades/Subjects column has the same grade level for each school which is K-12. It would be helpful to have the grades specific to each building listed in this column.

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

The applicant has a high-quality plan for scaling up and translating the reform proposal into meaningful reform to support district-wide change. The district already has 27 schools implementing Individual Learning Plans which focus on student goals, strengths and weaknesses. With the RTTD proposal, these plans will spread to the 38 identified high-need schools. The applicant identified changes that need to happen in order to scale up for the 38 schools. This includes building capacity centrally and in the schools. The Assistant Superintendent for School Turnaround will be responsible for overall implementation of the proposal. This is good in that this position is already involved with the Priority and Focus schools and the changes begun in those schools.

Throughout the implementation of the proposal activities, the district will share any rapid improvements identified with other schools in the district. During Year 4, other schools may begin implementing the reforms that offer the promise of substantial gains in learner outcomes. The intent is to have most if not all 97 schools replicating key components of the proposal.

The applicant is being realistic in recognizing that they must work through any logistical challenges or any difficulties in order to scale up the components of the proposal.

The applicant provided the Detroit Advantage's Theory of Action which if followed should lead to improving student learning outcomes for all participating students. Essentially, the theory is if "teachers are empowered with certain resources and supports, and students are engaged in their learning. . .then with right tools and structures to promote discovery, student engagement will increase and student achievement will improve"

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

a) The applicant provided ambitious yet achievable annual goals using the state assessments to measure growth and decrease achievement gaps. It is somewhat confusing as to whether the goals in the initial table on state assessments are measuring status or growth. In analyzing the data in the table, this reviewer is assuming that the goals represent growth. The State's goal is to reach 85% proficiency by 2021-2022. It appears that the applicant's goals are based on the trajectory toward 85% and calculated using the State's formula.

When considering the baseline data and the goals for 2016-2017 and 2017-2018, one realizes there is significant need to improve student performance in this district. Implementing the applicant's proposal will be a tremendous success for students when the personalized learning environments are in place and the goals are achieved.

b) The table providing decreasing achievement gaps indicates that the subgroups used to determine gaps was the Asian-American group which had the highest proficiency levels. It's not clear how the applicant determined how much each subgroup was to decrease its gap each year. As a result, it is difficult to know if these goals are ambitious.

c) It's sad that the graduation rates are so low for some of the student groups. Having a goal of 59.80% by 2017-2018 is low; however, considering the baseline data, the goals could be considered reasonable. One would hope that the district would have higher expectations regarding graduation. There was no accompanying narrative regarding graduation so one is

not able to tell if the graduation rate goals meet or exceed the State's graduation rate goal.

Since only some of the district's high schools are participating in the proposed activities, it is not clear if the graduation rate goals are for each participating school or for the district as a whole.

d) The applicant only provided college enrollment baseline data and goals for the "All Students." The applicant expects to receive the data for subgroups from the National Student Clearinghouse. No information was provided regarding how the goals were established and whether they are ambitious and meet or exceed the State's goals.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	14
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provided information showing there has been some success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement. The district acknowledges that state assessment scores remain low and trail statewide averages. There have been, however, gains and the achievement gaps are closing. The graduation rate is increasing and the dropout rate is decreasing. The applicant also mentioned that NAEP scores are moving upward and a few elementary schools were identified by the Mackinac Center for Public Policy as "Beating the Odds" schools. This incremental record of success is encouraging.</p> <p>The applicant states that the district created an "intentional strategy" to turn around the lowest-achieving schools. As a result of the various reforms launched in the past two years, 13 of the Focus schools are no longer in the bottom 5% of the State. This is a significant improvement in the right direction.</p> <p>This applicant currently has several resources for making information including student data available to parents. One of these resources includes a web-based portal through which parents access their students' grades and assessment scores as well as class assignments. Giving parents access to this data is important.</p> <p>This record of success shows that the district is advancing student learning and achievement with the potential to expand this success with the implementation of the proposal.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	4
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has a high level of transparency regarding investments. The district posts budgetary information and expenditures. The expenditures includes school-level instructional and support staff.</p> <p>In 2011 this district was recognized for its transparency.</p> <p>The applicant did not say much about transparency regarding its processes and practices. Most of the information provided related to financial transparency.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant explained how the district has an unusual governance structure. Detroit is under the control of an Emergency Manager who has the authority to modify all contracts and decide fiscal and academic matters. This authority allows the district to implement its reforms quicker. The district believes it has sufficient autonomy to implement the personalized learning environments. Having a history of implementing personalized learning plans in many schools illustrates how there is sufficient autonomy to implement the RTTD proposal</p> <p>The applicant believes its strong working relationship with its teachers union will help with autonomy in ways that work for teachers. The teacher and leader evaluation system is an important factor in implementing successful personalized learning environments.</p>		

The applicant demonstrated that it has sufficient autonomy and successful conditions to implement the personalized learning environments.

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

15

13

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

There was meaningful stakeholder engagement throughout the development of the proposal. The Design Team included administrations, leaders, teachers and parent representatives who planned the proposal. The process included two public forums regarding the plan. The first forum included principals, teachers and principals from the 38 participating schools. The teachers' union and the school administrators supervisors gave input and support to the proposal. The use of a Design Team and public forums are positive methods for stakeholder engagement.

Students are an important stakeholder group; however, they seemed to be missing during the design of the proposals. There was no mention of obtaining any input from students.

The applicant included numerous letters of support with its proposal. An important aspect of many of the letters is that individuals, organizations and institutions also stated what they would pledge or do to further academic achievement and individualized learning. The applicant provided the State Department an opportunity to review its proposal. The State Department provided many suggestions and shared how items aligned with State Board priorities. It is evident that the applicant used this information in revising its proposal.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	18

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a high-quality plan for improving student learning by personalizing the learning environment so they graduate college- and career-ready. Throughout this proposal, there is significant emphasis on Individualized Learning Plans (ILP) which are to guide student's learning. These ILPs are to help students understand why what they are learning is key to their success and become the guide to help them reach their goals. The applicant included a document with the ILP in Appendices 10 and 11. The ILP form itself only provides an individual student's data and their objectives. It is how the form is used by teachers and students and what it is linked to (i.e. digital resources) that a personalized learning environment emerges. The applicant recognizes this and ensures that the ILP becomes a dynamic working document as teachers converse with students in their Advisory Program. The development and uses of the ILPs are strengths of this proposal.

The applicant alludes to exposing students to diverse cultures, contexts and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning. Students and teachers have access via a district portal to a digital library of materials and resources. If that is the only way in which diverse cultures, contexts and perspectives are made available to students, it is a limitation on creating personalized learning environments in this reviewer's professional judgment.

The proposal included information on how there will be dedicated blocks of time for reading and math instruction in grades K-8. In addition, technology devices will be used to engage students in reading practice tailored to their reading level. This helps support personalized learning environments.

The applicant acknowledged that the area of math achievement is a struggle due to teachers not having the "skill-sets and know-how to ensure students have the opportunity to learn math concepts." Recognizing this challenge and taking steps to address this by identifying Math Instructional Specialists who will deliver model math lessons through the video-conferencing system and help teachers expand their skills and knowledge through job embedded professional development is a strength of this proposal.

The applicant mentioned that students will have access to a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable him or her to achieve individual learning goals. The applicant then listed several models that students have such as project-based learning and dual credit opportunities. It's not evident to what extent each individual student has access to all the models listed and how they specifically connect to a student's personalized sequence so they graduate on time and are college- and career-ready.

A strength of this proposal is having the Instructional Management System connected with the Individualized Learning Plans so that students will have access to their own updated data to follow their progress. Having the Advisory Program as

a vehicle for purposeful conversations regarding a student's progress between teachers and students is an asset.

The applicant believes that accommodations for high-need students will increase as a result of this proposal. Teachers will have more creativity and tools available to help students reach their goals. The applicant recognizes that teachers trained in differentiated instruction and having the Response to Intervention model contributes to accommodating a student's approach to learning. In this reviewer's professional judgment, this supports the shift to a more personalized learning experience.

The applicant mentions having two trainings regarding the ILP for students and their parents that will be offered through the Advisory Program. It's good to have this training; however, it seems very limited. This area of the proposal is vague in that the training doesn't seem to include purposeful training on the various tools and supports that are mentioned throughout the proposal.

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

20

17

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Section (C)(2) in the proposal is strong and should result in educators improving their instruction and increasing their capacity to support student progress through a personalized learning environment which results in students being college- and career-ready. The applicant provided a high-quality plan which builds on changes already underway in the district. The applicant believes it is a "new day, a new approach and the learning renaissance if fully underway."

The district is smart to use a Readiness Assessment to determine which schools are most ready to implement personalized learning. The district has one half of the schools participating as Cohort 1 with full implementation in Year 1 of the grant; these will be the Cohort 1 schools. The remaining participating schools will become Cohort 2 and implement in 2015. The district recognizes to have full implementation, extensive training and supports must be available to teachers and leaders.

Each cohort will have multiple days of intense professional development focused on the components of the proposal including Individual Learning Plans, digital content and technology, and project-based learning. Considering the number of participating schools and students, it is good that the district is phasing in the implementation based on readiness.

The applicant described how the district believes *there are two main elements necessary to support educators in successfully implementing personalized learning that leads to college- and career-readiness: a user-friendly technology platform to unify rich instructional resources, data and information to guide educators' work and development and, deep ongoing professional learning and support for instruction that is intentionally designed to build individual educator, leader and building-level team capacity.*

The applicant provided thorough information in its proposal which supports this belief in two main elements. First the applicant detailed how the Instructional Improvement System will be designed and then how it will be used by educators and leaders. Data will be readily available. Access to digital learning and other resources, supports and tools will increase which benefit teachers as they differentiate learning and adapt content and instruction.

The proposal created a picture of the training and job embedded professional development that will occur. This proposal builds on the professional development already underway including differentiated instruction. There will be 12 Instructional Specialists with expertise who will model lessons for teachers, Professional Learning Communities will be a vehicle for teachers to learn and share together as will the Lesson Study groups within the PLCs. The teacher evaluation system will guide educator growth by targeting areas a teacher may need additional training and/or support. Training on the use of the Individual Learning Plans and the new Instructional Improvement System will also occur to ensure that teachers are checking students' progress and adjusting learning approaches as appropriate. All the professional development in the proposal will help teachers in creating personalized learning environments.

The applicant articulated most of Section (C)(2) well. It provided a high-quality plan and has a strong belief in what it will take to ensure that the students have the optimal learning experiences so they can meet college- and career-ready graduation requirements.

It seems to this reviewer that the applicant misunderstood what (C)(2)(d) was requesting. There was nothing in the applicant's response about increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals. In addition, no information was included regarding hard-to-staff schools, subjects and specialty areas.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score

(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	11
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant states that it has the practices, policies and rules in place to support personalized learning.</p> <p>a) The applicant mentioned that the central office is shifting from a focus on compliance to one focused on outcomes and customer service. Student success is part of the central office staff evaluation process. The Assistant Superintendent with the Office of School Turnaround will have the responsibility for overall implementation of the proposal. This is good in that the School Turnaround Office has experiences working with the Priority Schools and guiding them through significant changes. In addition, multiple offices including Curriculum and Instruction; Professional Development; Technology; and Research, Evaluation and Assessment will be part of the Implementation Team. The district will assign Instructional Specialists and Personalization Coaches to each participating school. This will ensure that the personalized learning is implemented.</p> <p>b) Principals have flexibility and autonomy over staff responsibilities, school calendars, budgets and services to be provided to students. They work collaboratively with their School Improvement Team to reach build consensus and make decisions. The applicant provided the example of the Detroit Rising Schools to illustrate their experiences with autonomy and having significant flexibility. In addition, the district has the ability to move swiftly and adapt its support to schools as seen when 4 additional weeks were added to the Priority Schools calendar last year.</p> <p>c) and d) The applicant mentioned that students may test out of certain subjects as a way to show mastery. In addition, there is a credit recovery procedure for those who failed a course or need additional credits. The applicant stated that the district is <i>built upon a mastery perspective</i> but this reviewer did not see much evidence of it. There was a lack of clarity on what opportunities and how individual students demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple ways.</p> <p>e) The district provides digital learning resources to all students in grades 6-12. It mentions that digital resources are more adaptable to special needs students. The applicant believes that the components of the proposal will become additional tools for teachers to use with students; this included the Individualized Learning Plans and the Instructional Management System. Overall, the response to this question did not really address adaptability and full access for students with disabilities and English Learners.</p>		

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	7
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant described a variety of learning resources that are already accessible through the district's infrastructure. The district has a strong technology-rich environment with numerous supports and training opportunities. With this proposal, the district will move to an open system with interoperability; there will be a unified technology platform. It is not clear how the new system will bring in all the data and information from the "current" disparate and separate systems into a single system.</p> <p>The applicant discusses what will happen within the district for teachers and leaders; however, there is no mention about ensuring that students and parents have access to content, tools and other learning resources out of school. There seems to be little technical support for parents; the only supports are within the schools. This could be an issue when implementing the various changes and tools.</p> <p>The applicant mentioned that parents have access to information and data provided through the state portals. This appears to be aggregate data rather than individual data. It's not clear how parents and students will have access at anytime to their own individual student information including the Individualized Learning Plan through district systems.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	12

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant provided its plan for a continuous improvement process. It will build on the continuous improvement process already implemented around the school improvement plans. Rather than creating something entirely new, the district is building on a model that is working for them. The applicant described the various types of data available, the goal setting</p>		

process and the opportunity to evaluate implementation. The process is thoughtful and appears to work for the schools.

The applicant intends to use this model with the implementation of personalized learning strategies. The participating schools will adjust their current continuous improvement process to have the goals and targets as specified in the proposal. Teams of teachers will develop implementation monitoring guides to build a frame of reference for academic content mastery and to see the impact of different instructional strategies. There will also be a reflection process. Creating the guides and reflection piece will strengthen the continuous improvement process.

It's not clear if the continuous improvement process considers the quality of all investments of the proposal, i.e. new staff positions, technology. Nothing was mentioned in this section regarding how information on the quality of the investments will be publicly shared.

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

5

5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a clear and high-quality plan for ongoing communication and engagement with both internal and external stakeholders. The applicant recognizes the need for both general and specific engagement opportunities. The district is creating a Detroit Advantage Stakeholder Advisory Committee as a vehicle for regular engagement of key stakeholder representatives. The need and creation for this committee is in response to stakeholders involved in the Design Team.

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

5

5

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

This proposal includes ambitious but achievable performance measures with targets. The district provided baseline data and targets for all students and various student groups. Both required and applicant selected performance measures are provided. The performance measures mesh with the proposal. The applicant provided a rationale for the selected measures which is to provide "rigorous, timely and formative leading information relative to implementation success or identifying areas of concern. The district expects to monitor these measures closely to allow for greater understanding of the success of implementation."

This reviewer finds it interesting that the percent of students having highly effective teachers is 91% and the percent with effective teachers is 25%. This is more than 100%. With that high of a percentage of highly effective teachers, one would expect student performance results to be higher than it is in the 2012-2013 baseline data.

An example of one of the ambitious performance measures at grades 4-8 considers college-and career-readiness as scoring "advanced" on the state assessments. The baseline data shows all groups except Asian-Americans between 4-6%. The target in 2017-2018 for those groups range from 14-16%. These targets are ambitious when one considers the baseline data and the proficiency level which students are to reach. The Asian-American's baseline is 21% and their 2017-2018 target is 31%. There is definitely a gap between this group and all the other groups on numerous measures. Reducing achievement gap is not an emphasis in this proposal as the goal is to increase achievement for every single student.

The applicant will review the measures over time to determine if any are insufficient to determine implementation progress. This will be done with the evaluation and continuous improvement process.

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

5

5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

This proposal includes a high-quality plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the Race to the Top funded activities. As part of the continuous improvement process, the evaluation will have short-cycle formative and longer-cycle summative components. The applicant identified the two areas of impact for the evaluation to consider: teacher and principal effectiveness and student engagement and achievement. In addition, key research questions are identified for each of these areas.

An Evaluation Working Group will be created. This group oversees the evaluation work. An external evaluator will be hired to evaluate both the short-cycle (what is working and what is not?) and the summative evaluation (Is the implementation of

the proposal resulting in changes that are transforming schools and teaching practices resulting in improved student outcomes?).

Designing the actual evaluation plan including the methodology will begin during the first year of the grant. The applicant's plan for evaluating the effectiveness of its investments is thoughtful and a strength of this proposal.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provided budget narratives and tables to identify and detail the funds that will support the three projects described in the proposal: Technology to Support Personalized Learning and Teaching, Detroit Advantage Project Management and Individualized Learning Plan Implementation Support. The budget seems reasonable and sufficient to support the proposal. The applicant is requesting an amount of grant funds (\$29,846,198) that is appropriate for the number of participating students (21,970). The applicant mentions that \$94.06 million in state, local and federal funds will be used to support the grant funds. No further explanation is provided regarding these non-grant funds.</p> <p>The largest aspect of the budget relates to technology including infrastructure and implementing 1:1 technology. The costs of training and supports to ensure the personalized learning environments are implemented are included in the budget. The costs of technology, personnel, travel and software seem reasonable and appropriate.</p> <p>It was confusing to this reviewer to have the exact same wording in both the overall budget summary narrative and the Project-level budget narrative. Within these narratives, there is an error in the "Summary by Object of Expense Training Stipends." The word "million" should not be included.</p> <p>In Tables 4-1 and 4-2, the personnel amount in year 1 does not agree with the cost description. The description says "(1 FTE) Video System Engineer \$100,000 per year..." but the Year 1 Cost has \$150,000. Likewise, on Table 4-2, the project director is listed @ \$100,000 but the Year 1 Cost has \$150,000. The grant includes 3 FTE Program Supervisors at \$80,000 but the Year 1 Costs are for \$360,000.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	8
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant says it <i>has been deliberate in identifying investments that help build capacity and create the conditions for success that do not need on-going investment.</i> It believes that investments in technology and professional development can be sustained at reduced funding levels after the grant funds cease.</p> <p>Throughout implementation of the proposal, there will be a project evaluation approach that will contribute to sustainability by examining improvements in productivity and determining which proposed activities allow resources to be extended.</p> <p>The applicant mentions that the amount of funds needed for on-going costs represent 0.01% of the district's annual budget. It will be able to identify funds to support those ongoing expenses. The district will also look at re-aligning existing resources. No mention was made as to support of state and local government leaders regarding sustainability.</p> <p>The applicant provided a plan for developing and deploying a sustainability approach which included deliverables, activities, timelines and persons responsible. This district has the potential to sustain the activities implemented through the RTTD grant.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	7

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

For the competitive preference priority, the applicant described how it intends to expand the "Pathways to Potential" program by leveraging public and private resources to provide additional student and family support to schools to address social, emotional or behavioral needs. It is guided by the National Center for Community Schools which has a lot of experiences in addressing these type of needs. The applicant provided a list of primary partners who will provide oversight and guidance. These partners will strategize with school-based teams to determine how best to deploy community resources to address the identified needs and desired results. It's not clear if these "partners" have already committed to this work.

That the applicant is building on an initiative already underway provides strength to the partnership and the possibility of reaching desired results. Those results include both educational and family and community supports. They are compatible with the desired goals, outcomes and measures of the broader proposal. For example, one of the age-appropriate non-cognitive indicators of growth performance measures in (E)(3) is increasing attendance. It is also a performance measure for the Competitive Preference Priority. In addition, the schools participating in the broader proposal activities are the ones included in the expansion of the Pathways to Potential. This is a strength of this proposal.

(4) The information on Plan for Integration of Education and Other Services is rather vague. It says the support strategies will be customized to the particular school building. It doesn't, however, provide sufficient information on what it will be like for participating students. This is why the points for this section are reduced.

(5) The applicant will provide professional development to build the capacity of staff to implement the competitive preference priority. The applicant provided a list of professional development topics that relate to the Pathways to Potential implementation. This list is somewhat confusing in that the explanations with each topic aren't about professional development but rather the activities that will be conducted. For example, one topic is "Identifying/inventorying needs and assets of school and community." The explanation talks about protocols being established rather than professional development and building capacity.

(6) The applicant selected performance measures that include both educational and family and community supports. It's difficult to determine if the desired results and targets are ambitious but achievable for some of the measures. For example, having only 30% of students in grades 6, 7, and 8 be on track to high school readiness is low. This is the target for 2017-2018. A few of the measures, i.e. participation in extended learning, are missing both baseline data and targets.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

This applicant definitely meets Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments. There is a strong vision. This proposal provides a comprehensive and coherent plan for building on the core educational assurance areas. Through investments in technology, professional development, staffing and leadership, this district will create personalized learning environments in which learning increases and achievement improves as students and educators have the tools and supports aligned with college-and career-ready graduation requirements that they need.

The effectiveness of educators will increase as a result of the extensive professional development and supports provided. Professional Learning Communities will continue as the vehicle for teachers to learn, to share, to analyze and to grow. The professional development in this proposal is geared to helping teachers create personalized learning environments designed to improve learning and accelerate student achievement and decrease achievement gaps. By increasing the effectiveness of the educators in the participating schools, students will expand their access to effective educators.

Total	210	179
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Race to the Top - District



Technical Review Form

Application #0138MI-3 for School District of the City of Detroit

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant fully meets the criteria of this section by describing ongoing work to meet the four core areas and explaining how this grant will build on that work. Specifically, the state and district have already aligned K-12 curriculum to the Common Core State Standards; the district has a continuous improvement process that relies heavily on a variety of data sources; the district has adopted an evaluation system for teachers and principals that incorporates student achievement and student growth measures; and the district has demonstrated growth in schools identified for intervention by the state.</p> <p>The applicant maintains a partnership with an outside entity to recruit people with STEM degrees into the teaching profession. This shows a willingness to provide students with a connection to careers through their coursework.</p> <p>Additionally, the applicant has developed Individualized Learning Plans for students that incorporate technology and student goal-setting. While these ILPs are piloted in the 38 schools designated for inclusion in the proposed project, RTTT funds would be used to improve them. This shows a commitment to working with the lowest performing schools in the district.</p> <p>Finally, the applicant includes vignettes that show what the ideal outcome if this proposed project would look like for students and teachers. This includes a hypothetical student expressing curiosity about his academic options as well as his future beyond high school. It also includes a hypothetical teacher navigating the menu of professional development options that would be available to help with the nature of reforms included in this project.</p> <p>Having fully met the criteria for the section, the applicant receives full points.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's described process for selecting schools to participate in the proposed project aligns with the scoring criteria for this section. Schools include 35 sites that were given the Priority School label as designated by the state, one on the Focus School list, one school no longer on the Focus School list, and one school that has closed. In the case of the school that closed, the activities included in the grant will support the students who have been disbursed elsewhere. Emphasizing schools in need of improvement is consistent with the priorities of the program. The proposed project will serve approximately 21,970 students from the neediest schools. As such, the applicant receives full points for this section.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has selected 38 schools to participate in the proposed project, and they will introduce the activities from the grant in two phases. The first group of schools will begin receiving professional development during the summer of 2014, and the second group will begin the following winter. While this is an appropriate way to scale-up implementation of program activities, the applicant states that criteria have not been set for selecting schools for the two cohorts. Lacking this information diminishes the quality of the implementation plan, as written.</p> <p>The applicant also states that schools from outside the 38 included in the grant will be encouraged to adopt the reforms included in the proposed project. The implementation plan includes pairing of expansion schools with the original 38.</p> <p>The implementation plan includes a methodical description of target dates for major milestones. Project activities are scheduled continuously and at reasonable intervals. Overall, the applicant receives a high score because of the detailed plan.</p>		

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has framed performance goals around the state goal of 85% proficiency in all grades and subjects by the end of the 2021-22 school year, as measured by state tests. Accordingly, each grade and subject goal for each year shows equal incremental growth from the baseline, creating a trajectory towards reaching that goal. Because many of the baseline values are extremely low, the post-grant 2017-18 goals are often just above 50%. For example, the baseline for all students in 3rd grade math is 15.70 percent proficient. The post-grant goal is 54.20 percent. That means after four years and nearly \$20 million of federal funds, nearly half of all students would still be below proficient on this test, and many others. Ideally, the infusion of RTTT funding and reforms would allow the applicant to exceed the state-anticipated trajectory and reach higher levels of student achievement sooner.</p> <p>Goals for decreasing achievement gaps in this section include all identified subgroups and their scores relative to the state of Michigan's Asian-American population. While this is an ambitious target, it is unclear if the applicant's goals actually decrease gaps within their own target population.</p> <p>Similarly, all of the graduation rate goals show improvement from the baseline as recorded from 2012-13. However, with a goal to increase each subgroup's graduation rate by four percent annually, the gaps among subgroups would remain.</p> <p>College enrollment rates also grow incrementally in the applicant's goals. However, the goal for college enrollment exceeds the student proficiency rate in many subjects by as many as 20 percentage points. With this is a concern that students would be attending college without the background necessary to be successful.</p> <p>Because the goals included sometimes lack ambition or explanation, the applicant receives a score in the middle range of points.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	12
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant shows improvement over the past four years in several key measurements. Incremental gains led to 13 schools moving off of the state Focus School list. Other gains include reading and math as assessed on the NAEP exam, in which the district saw gains greater than those of the state of Michigan as a whole. Additionally, graduation rates have increased and dropout rates have decreased during this time. Results over time in the lowest-achieving schools were more mixed. While the applicant has written to the scoring criteria by including this trend information, it is unclear to what the applicant attributes the results. It is also unclear how the district plans to leverage the data system they have purchased to increase parental participation consistent with the scoring criteria. As such, the applicant receives a score in the middle range of points.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant includes a description of basic expenditures as reported on the district's website. This information includes actual personnel salaries as required by the scoring criteria. These can be broken down at the school level for a number of criteria, such as salaries for instructional staff, all teachers, and non-personnel expenditures. The applicant includes a screen shot of a dashboard from which the public can navigate among school sites for the information meeting this criteria. As such, the applicant receives full points for this section.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	2
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not describe conditions that provide sufficient autonomy to implement the reforms described in the proposed project. Rather, the proposal discusses the district being placed under the control of an Emergency Manager appointed by the state. While the state-appointed emergency manager may have complete powers to support reforms, the applicant does not include this individual in the management plan for the grant. While legislation increasing the rigor of teacher evaluation is included in the discussion of this section, and that is a key component to meeting the four core</p>		

assurances of RTTT, this action is not reflective of the district's ability to implement personalized learning environments. Letters of support do not include evidence that parent groups understand and favor proposed project activities. As such, this section receives a score in the low range of points.

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

15

13

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states that the district's chief negotiator met with teacher union representatives to discuss the roles and responsibilities of various parties before moving forward with the RTTT application. The proposal also includes plans to meet with stakeholders "three or four times per year." The letters of support provided by the applicant show significant contact has been made with those interested in the grant activities. However, it is unclear from the documentation how many teachers and members of the public came to the planning meetings. With this minor deduction, the applicant nonetheless receives a score in the high range of points.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	15

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant intends to use the proposed program and the funds that come with it to deploy a user-friendly platform that would allow students, parents, and teachers to easily access achievement data. The platform would also improve progress monitoring and communication. Students' individual learning plans would be enhanced by the elements of the platform in ways that would increase their understanding of what they are learning and why they are learning it. The implementation of Advisory programs also will enhance student ownership of their own educational plans and progress. The availability of netbooks will increase student access to research and enhance the extent to which the adoption of the Common Core State Standards raise the level of learning. The district also plans to use extended calendars in schools included in this proposal to maximize student learning.

Part of the plan is to identify math instructional specialists from the district's teachers and deploy them throughout the district. It is unclear in the narrative, however, what criteria will be used to identify them.

The applicant states that 92 percent of eighth graders currently take Algebra I, with the goal being 100 percent. It is unclear why this is a desired outcome. If only 11 percent of eighth grade district students are passing the state math test, accelerating their coursework is counterintuitive.

The applicant discusses the challenge of maintaining several computer systems that "do not communicate with each other," but proposes no solution for this problem. As such, the extent to which the intent of allowing parents, students, and teachers to monitor data will be effective is questionable.

The applicant includes several activities that promote students receiving a personalized sequence of instruction. These include dual credit opportunities, Advanced Placement courses, project-based learning, blended learning, flipped classes, credit recovery programs, and structured work study experiences. Collectively, these strategies allow students a menu of options. The narrative also includes descriptions of assessments that are in place to provide individualized supports and interventions to high-need students.

The applicant states that 27 of the schools included in the proposal are currently using advisories to support students in taking control of their education. It is not clear from the proposal how the other schools will implement this aspect of the project.

In all, the applicant has addressed all aspects of the criteria for this section. While including many strengths, the narrative also leaves questions about the effectiveness of ultimate implementation. As such, the section receives a score in the middle range of points.

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

20

17

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states that the district will develop a self-assessment to determine schools' readiness for participation in the first cohort in the project. This means that they have neither selected the schools nor determined how they will select the

schools that are participating in the initial roll out of the grant. This speaks to the timeframe for developing the readiness of teachers to implement the reforms described in the proposal.

District teachers already create common formative assessments through a question bank owned by the district. Teachers also have had training in using data to make decisions. However, it is unclear from the narrative that the applicant has provided teachers in taking the information they have collected and personalizing learning for students.

Details on the instructional management system and educator development system, both in the planning stages, include several features that will directly improve teaching and learning. These include components to house the student individualized learning plans, instructional tools and content, educator learning plans, and teacher evaluation supports. The confluence of these systems will provide students, parents, and educators with information about student learning, and educators with tools for interventions with students and professional development for themselves.

The teacher evaluation model that has elements that measure teacher effectiveness, both qualitatively and quantitatively. Including these measures in personnel decisions will increase the extent to which students have access to high quality teachers and principals.

Overall, the applicant meets the scoring criteria with a few exceptions and receives a score in the medium range of points for this section.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	10
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has an existing District Improvement team that leads planning and implementing school improvement initiatives. Each site has a School Improvement Team that mirrors the district team. Overall, the district has multiple assistant superintendents assigned to oversee management of project activities, but it is not clear how that will impact other duties assigned to them. The teams at all levels include teachers, administrators, and parents. The applicant states that school teams have flexibility provided by the district and state in policy. Priority schools served in this proposal already have four extra weeks of school in the summer for students. The high schools have programs in place to allow students to progress based on mastery, but only in terms of credit recovery.</p> <p>The project narrative does not address adaptability and accessibility for students with disabilities and English language learners.</p> <p>Overall, because of the structures in place to support teachers and students, the applicant receives a score in the middle range of points for this section.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	9
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides evidence of multiple learning resources that are already available to students in the targeted schools. These include sites with academic content as well as sites designed to provide assessment and academic support. With the proposed project, the applicant will be able to add a reporting component that will allow monitoring of teacher, student, and other participant use of available content. This information will inform the ongoing improvement process designed in the project proposal. The applicant will also provide parent resource centers housed within schools, allowing parents an access point and technical support for using the digital resources that will be available. It is not clear from the narrative, however, that the applicant will be able to ensure parents have the tools to access these supports from home. This could create different levels of involvement for families with low incomes.</p> <p>Grant funds will also be used to make data that is currently available to stakeholders more accessible and transportable. This will allow data from assessments and learning activities to move quickly into a student's individual learning plan.</p> <p>Overall, the applicant has met the requirements of the criteria, with one minor deduction for questions about equitable access to information. As such, a score in the middle range of points is awarded.</p>		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	10
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Continuous improvement for this project primarily includes use of site teams. These consist of the principal, assistant principal, teachers, parents, and community partners. Analysis by these teams includes review of student achievement, demographic, and perception data. Work by the teams results in goal-setting for the following school year. However, it is unclear whether these teams meet frequently enough to identify adjustments that need to be made during the school year. As such, this section receives a score in the middle range of points.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant differentiates between communication that is necessary at the district level and that which is necessary at the site level. The communication plan includes key questions that need to be answered frequently at each level. These include discussions of expectations and any variance in the results of implementation. The applicant will communicate to various stakeholder groups at three key times (beginning, middle, and end of the school year). It is unclear, though how much opportunity each group will have to provide input and influence the course of project implementation at those times. As such, this section receives a minor deduction, still scoring in the high range of points.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a total of 12 performance measures, one for each of the sub-criteria under the grade spans in this section. While several speak to ambitious goals, such as having 50 percent of students meet growth targets in grades 4-8 during the first year of the grant, others are less ambitious. For example, the applicant aims for a three percent annual growth in the number of students who are taught by "highly effective" teachers. With the size of investment in professional development and the number of teachers included in the schools that will be impacted by the proposed project, this goal is minimal. As such the applicant receives a score in the middle range of points for this section.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's design for evaluating the effectiveness of investment includes three well-developed research questions for teacher and principal effectiveness, three for student engagement and achievement, and one for productivity. What makes them good questions is that they are directly related to changes and desired outcomes relevant to the activities in the proposed project. The evaluation plan includes methods for collecting and analyzing relevant data, short-term and long-term goals, and processes for communicating results and making changes. Overall, this section receives full points.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant proposes a budget that includes more than \$16 million in federal funds during the first year and a decreasing amount each year afterward. This demonstrates a priority on purchasing the digital devices that are essential to the personalized learning environments the applicant seeks to create, as well as the professional development that teachers will need. The inclusion of external funds in the project budget contributes to the likelihood that implementation will be successful. In all, the proposed budget is sufficient to the activities proposed by the applicant. As such, full points are awarded.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	7

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant prioritizes spending in the first year, with over \$16 million in federal funds supporting the project activities. By the fourth year, only \$2.2 million in federal funds are attached to the project. By phasing down the district's reliance upon federal funding, this project will be easier to sustain. However, the applicant's plan to leverage other federal funds does not show complete evidence of sustainability. Title I, Title II, and IDEA funds are used district-wide and may not be available at a level necessary to sustain the purchase of replacement technology and provide ongoing professional development. As such, the applicant receives a score in the medium range of points for this section.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant includes a list of entities which have partnered with the district on student initiatives in the past. It is unclear from the narrative, however, how each of these partnerships will be extended in the proposed project to support overall project goals and those specifically listed within the competitive preference priority section. The applicant states that the partnerships in place will be used to target resources to improve the project activities. Although the performance measures included in this section are ambitious and include measures that are critical to student achievement (such as increasing the student attendance rate from 78 percent to 88 percent over four years), it is unclear how the listed project partners will complement this project and contribute to those goals. As such, the applicant receives a score in the low range of points for this section.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The proposed project would allow improvements to instruction and allow for personalized learning environments by increasing access to high-level instructional content. Prior work to improve student achievement shows that the applicant has an investment in the improvement of both the students and the professionals who teach them. With low starting points in student achievement, some of the goals of the proposed project do not seem very ambitious, especially considering the level of federal investment requested. That aside, the applicant has met the absolute priority.

Total	210	161
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0138MI-4 for School District of the City of Detroit

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Detroit Advantage (DA) is the Detroit Public Schools (DPS) Race to the Top-District (RttT-D) plan to implement comprehensive personalized learning for 38 of its 97 schools designated as high-need. Post-grant plans include scaling up DA to the district's other schools. During the course of the RttT-D grant period, the applicant intends to develop new and expand existing tools to implement the strategy. DA also proposes to equip students, teachers, administrators and parents with the skills to effectively use those tools.

DPS proposes to address and build on the four core assurances as called for in the RttT-D criteria. Other sections of this application provide the full range of proposed core assurance initiatives in some detail, however this vision section gives the following examples of how the core assurances will be addressed.

1. Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy: Kindergarten-5th grade will incorporate cross-curricular lessons that enhance the Common Core's instructional shifts by teaching literacy and math through other content areas instead of in isolation. Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) will be developed and informed by information from summative and CCSS-aligned benchmark assessments. ILPs are a major DA strategy for 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. Development of ILPs will be informed by teacher observations and conversations with students and their families, and an Instructional Management System that collects data from several sources.
2. Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals with data about how they can improve instruction: Through a cycle of continuous improvement, schools and the district will examine quantitative and qualitative data to gauge the district's progress against goals and targets. This data ranging from state-level assessments, benchmark assessments administered at various points through the year, data from instructional software assessments, student and teacher perception data, and self-assessment data on school processes. Among other uses, the data will drive the development of personalized learning strategies.
3. Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most: Professional development of teachers (and eventually, principals) will be planned around the DPS new teacher evaluation system that employs, among other things, Charlotte Danielson's framework for classroom observations, which will give teachers and administrators relevant, observable feedback on differentiating learning for each student, and PD 360, which offers professional development opportunities based on the observation's recommendations for improvement. Teachers will meet for at least a week each summer to plan the year ahead, receive refresher courses on technology, and reflect on their incoming students. During the year, teachers will work in Professional Learning Communities on topics central to the DA model – advisories, personalized learning, use of technology, or cross-curricular content. In addition, an educator in each of the 38 participating schools will receive release time to serve as the Detroit Advantage teacher leader, gathering once a month with the 12 instructional specialists who will provide support for the personalized learning approaches within and across subjects.
4. Turning around lowest-achieving schools: Lowest-achieving schools that will participate in Detroit Advantage will include three of the nine "Detroit Rising" high schools which are schools that operate with greater degrees of autonomy over staffing, curriculum, finances, and major school-level decisions. Instructional strategies proposed for these schools to more effectively engage students include blended learning and the use of personalized learning techniques such as ILPs and virtual learning. Other factors which are features in the proposal for improving Detroit's persistently low-achieving schools are additional coaching and increased use of common planning time and professional learning communities.

An Instructional Improvement system is proposed for DA. It will personalize and monitor learning in conjunction with ILPs. Based on students' needs identified in the ILP, the system will include instructional strategies such as one-on-one instruction, small-group learning, "flipped" classrooms, project-based learning, extended learning time, blended instruction, college-level learning experiences, and Advanced Placement courses.

Starting in grades 6-12 and eventually expanding to elementary school, classes called advisories will be implemented where teachers work with students on their ILPs, discuss challenges they are facing, and focus on individual goals.

Other initiatives envisioned for DA are

- videotaping highly-effective teachers' classroom lessons so that first-year high school teachers can observe exemplary lessons without leaving their buildings, and
- selection of highly effective teachers in literacy, math, science and social studies to serve as specialists to teach

students in these subjects and to work with teachers in participating schools on issues of personalized learning.

Although individually, the elements of the DA are not particularly unique or innovative, collectively, they present a clear and credible approach to accelerating student achievement and deepening student learning. This conclusion is drawn through evidence of personalized student involvement in the curriculum. It is noted, however, that there is no evidence of personalization in terms of addressing individual student interests, pacing, and abilities.

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

The DPS DA Design Team consisting of the district’s Academic Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, curriculum leaders, communications officials, information technology officials, school leaders, content specialists, teachers and parent representatives determined that 38 district schools with the greatest needs, based on the State’s designation, would be served first with additional DPS schools joining Year 4 of the grant. The proposal lists all 38 participating schools (by name, not grade) and projected enrollment. All students and educators in these schools are participants in this program. 24 (63.2%) of these are *schools among the lowest achieving bottom 5% of schools statewide, one (0.3%) is the school with the largest achievement gap between top 30% and bottom 30% of students, and 13 (34.2%) are schools that are no longer in priority status, but were previously identified as such in 2012-13.* is a significant number, 88% of the approximately 22,000, of the students in its participating schools are from low-income families.

Detroit has a total of 97 schools enrolling 50,000 students. The district chose the participating schools because they are arguably among the district’s most in need of improvement under Michigan’s accountability rules. Priority Schools, for example, are required to implement an intervention model, improve student achievement substantially, or face state takeover. Participating schools include three of the nine “Detroit Rising” high schools which are schools that operate with greater degrees of autonomy over staffing, curriculum, finances, and major school-level decisions. They are implementing a turnaround model that involves shifting some authority and accountability for vital schooling decisions to the building level, and will be held accountable for results, for increasing substantially, and the numbers of students who graduate career and college ready.

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

Currently, 27 of the 97 DPS schools (including 10 that will be part of the Detroit Advantage) are implementing a form of the Individual Learning Plan. The applicant proposes that the enhancement and spread of these tools, starting with 38 participation schools and eventually expanding districtwide, will require additional central office support and 19 FTE teacher leaders who will be given one year of release time to provide training and support in implementing ILPs, advisories, VECS, and other key personalized learning strategies. The applicant contends that by year 4, enough schools will have implemented these tools to form a critical mass of skilled teachers and leaders to help scale up this aspect of DA to support district-wide change beyond the participating schools.

To prime the pump for scaling up, each year the district will share the best of what it has learned with principals, school improvement teams, and other stakeholders. During Year 4, any district school interested in replicating Detroit Advantage reforms will have the opportunity to apply for post-grant implementation through a district application and review process.

Although Detroit Advantage staff will be responsible for administrative and substantive details of project management, it is favorably noted that the Central Office role in these personalized learning efforts will focus on support rather than on compliance, a decision that has the potential to enhance decision-makers knowledge and understanding of details, thereby enhancing their effectiveness to address post-grant scale-up initiatives.

The applicant’s Goal to Launch and scale up the Detroit Advantage to other DPS schools is driven by a Logic Model that simply, but directly, connects input to desired outcome.

1. Adopt a teaching and learning model focusing on personalized learning in which students take responsibility for their own learning and teachers are supported in helping students plan their learning;
2. Support Individual Learning plans with technology, instructional strategies, continuous improvement cycles, and professional development;
3. Result: increased achievement on state and national assessments, higher graduation rates and lower dropout rates, higher postsecondary enrollment, and increased student satisfaction.

The proposal presents elements of a high quality plan (Deliverables, Activities, Timelines, and Responsible Parties) that reflect the the change model and address the scale-up goal. The activities are outlined in a table that references implementation details in other sections of the proposal.

In addition to post-grant scale-up plans, the applicant proposes scaling-up during the grant period. All 38 participation schools will implement some aspects of the program immediately in Year 1, such as the Instructional Improvement System, the building-based teacher leaders, and the professional learning communities focused on personalized learning. Other aspects of the program will be rolled out in stages. For example, half, or 19 schools, that are deemed to be the most ready because of previous experience with the ILP, staff buy-in, and capacity, will launch their use of the ILP in Year 1. The second half will begin using the ILP in Year 2. In Year 4, the district will let other DPS schools apply for the model to begin implementation in year 2018-19. This is a laudable aspect of the plan since it allows targeted concentration of supporting staff and resources without stressing their availability and effectiveness.

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

10

10

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The DA proposes instructional strategies such as blended learning, personalized learning techniques such as ILPs, instructional coaching, and professional learning communities to result in improved student learning and performance and increased equity. Given that in 2012, through the use of some of these same personalized learning techniques in its lowest-achieving schools, 13 of the 35 schools that were Priority Schools were no longer in the bottom 5 percent of the State in terms of performance, it is reasonable to expect that the applicant's vision is likely to result the achievement of ambitious annual goals that are equal to or exceed State ESEA targets..

Summative assessments being used regarding these goals are those from the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) and are based on the Michigan Statewide goal of reaching 85% proficiency across all subgroups by 2021-22, which constitutes the ESEA target. All goals reflect this trajectory toward 85% and use the formula provided by the State.

For the State's Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), the highest-achieving subgroup for all grades and subjects is Asian-Americans. Thus, all gaps reflect the difference between percent of students in each subgroup achieving proficiency on the MEAP compared with the percent of Asian-American students achieving proficiency. Since 'Asians' is listed as a subgroup and in some grade levels have a gap rating higher than zero, it can be assumed that in those instances, Asians are included in the subgroups of those grades. Because the applicant's vision includes a focus on personalization of instruction, school-level parent involvement, and collaboration with groups that provide emotional and behavioral support to students, the goals to decrease achievement gaps are reasonable.

Although DPS shows college enrollment goals for all students, Detroit Public Schools currently does not have college enrollment data broken out by subgroup.

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

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

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Based on the Michigan Assessment of Educational Progress (MEAP) for elementary and middle schools) and the Michigan Merit Exam (MME) for high schools, an analysis of change from 2009 to 2013 in the gap between the LEA and state in percent of student proficiency, the percentage of Detroit students scoring proficient increased in 16 of the 23 grades and subjects covered.

In 2012, the graduation rate for DPS was 64.7, up more than five percentage points since 2009. The dropout rate also inched down over four years, from 21.1 percent in 2009 to 19.3 percent in 2012.

In the past two years, Detroit Public Schools was able to remove 13 of its Persistently Low-Achieving schools from the number of schools in the bottom 5 percent of the State in terms of performance. The applicant attributes some of the resources that are included in the DA proposal (e.g. blended learning and the expansion of professional learning communities) to helping achieve these results.

These data provide evidence that the applicant has demonstrated the ability to improve student learning outcomes, close achievement gaps, and raise high school graduation and college enrollment rates.

As proposed in the application, access to student achievement data will be available to families and educators through a variety of ways, including:

- Parent Connect: A web-based portal that allows parents to access their students' grades and assessment scores at any time, and
- Data Director: A portal housing all student assessment data in the district, including summative and benchmark assessments. Data Director is accessed through DPS's Learning Village web site, which houses curriculum and content-area.

Due to a potential lack of training or interest, there is a disconnect between the availability of data sites to parents and actual access. Also, even if accessed, many parents will not be able to use the data appropriately. The district is commended for reducing the number of parents in this situation by establishing a Parent Advisory Council on Student Achievement (PACSA) in each school. The PACSA parents/guardians receive 20 hours of training to be certified as PACSA members, including formal instruction on understanding school data.

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

The proposal provides a link to a website that contains budgets for every school by category. One of the categories, Teaching, provides the total salary figure, but not by actual instructional and other personnel salaries at the school level as required by the criterion. Salaries of central office personal positions are provided. Salaries for individual principals are given, but not identified by name or school.

The web site is the only source of public access of the budget provided in the proposal. Its availability, however, does not indicate the extent of its access and use by parents, educators, and community members.

It is noted that an award for transparency was presented to DPS by the Editors of *Sunshine Review* to honor the website with an "A" for its 2009-2011 budget and salary compensation transparency report, 2003-2011 financial data, and audit reports.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	4
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The only specific regulatory requirement to implement the personalized learning environments described in the applicant's proposal is a local one stemming from state action. The Emergency Manager law itself – Michigan Public Act 436 gives the Detroit Public Schools Emergency Manager authority over fiscal and academic matters. The Emergency Manager's letter of support for the RttT-D application, by inference, grants the district sufficient autonomy to implement personalized learning environments. There is no reference to any other specific local, state or national legal, statutory, or regulatory requirements.

In terms of non-regulatory supportive conditions, the applicant's statement that the district has a strong working relationship with the Detroit Federation of Teachers implying support is confirmed by the signature of the union president to that effect on the proposal's Application Assurances -page, but there is no other evidence of union support.

Another supporting condition cited is that teacher and leader evaluations are a key factor in ensuring that personalized learning reforms succeed since annual evaluations of educators considers student growth as a significant factor.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	13
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

A Design Team was formed to put together a RttT-D initiative. The proposal does not provide the membership of this group. However, given that each Design Team member shared initial plans and sought input and recommendations from staff working in his or her respective office, it is implied that the team was comprised of DPS administrators and/or managers.

The district's chief negotiator met with the teacher's collective bargaining units to discuss Race to the Top and come to consensus about roles and responsibilities for union members. The proposal contains a letter of support from the Detroit Federation of Teachers and a relevant letter from one school's principal attesting to support from the school's teachers.

The Design Team held two public forums to share plans for the Detroit Advantage with the larger community during which it gathered feedback from written comments as well as remarks from the floor at each of the forums. The Design Team incorporated some ideas and suggestions in the final grant document. For example, the creation of a stakeholder advisory committee composed of parents, students, teachers, and leaders from participating schools; leaders of central office staffs involved in the grant, university representatives, community members, and business leaders.

The narrative section of this criterion refers to the Appendix for a compilation of letters of support for the Detroit Advantage from participating schools, local and state officials, state universities, and parents. These letters are minimal, given the degree of community support and involvement expected for a program of this size and scope. For example, there are no supportive letters from parent organizations, student organizations, early learning programs, tribes, the business community, civil rights organizations, or advocacy groups.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	16

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

With a few exceptions included during and at the end of these comments, DPS has proposed a High Quality Plan with the goal to develop individualized student learning supports and practices, and implement individualized learning for students with support of their parents and families. An outline of the plan organizes the plan's elements into deliverables, activities, timelines, and responsible parties. The text for this section provides details about these elements.

Overall, the plan's focus is to scale up existing tools and supports that have shown some degree of effectiveness in addressing the district's goals. These tools and supports include:

- a. the curricula for PK-12 aligned to state, national, and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) standards that focus on student understanding and differentiated models of instruction,
- b. concepts and topics are linked to and build on one another within and across the grades so that students' understanding and knowledge deepens as does their ability to apply that knowledge,
- c. availability online of the curricula for CCSS Math and ELA, along with social studies and science, where DPS teachers and students can access online supports on use one-to-one computing devices,
- d. the use of highly effective teachers certified to teach higher level content to teach lessons in-person and remotely through the VECS, a recorded video web process, DPS is commended for deciding to implementing this unique process because it allows for interactive presentations by a range remote classrooms,
- e. an advisory programs whereby students will have opportunities to gain and document key academic and social competencies needed for success in school and in life. Advisory programs will be important vehicles to build student capacity for using the ILP to pursue learning and develop goals linked to college- and career-ready standards and graduation requirements, and
- f. Individualized Learning programs (IPLs) that are intended to allow students to understand why what they are learning is key for their future, and how they can set their own learning goals. IPLs also help educators track individual student's progress toward accomplishing their goals and identify learning supports, tools, and instructional methods that can help individual students succeed.

Of the above elements, the DPS is especially commended for its decision to upscale the use of the ILP as a core tool in its plan to personalize instruction. The ILP has been shown to assist students in taking ownership of their own learning and achieving the goals linked to that learning. Through the Advisory Program, the ILP will be a vehicle for conversation between teacher and student as well as a tool for discussing student progress with parents, creating and planning differentiated learning experiences, and assisting both teachers and students in understanding the best personalized approaches to employ.

In addition to the elements already designated to be scaled up, the following are proposed to use in concert with the ILPs and Advisory Programs:

- *One to One Computing Devices* – students in grades 6-12 currently have the use of netbooks as the core 1:1 learning support in their schools.
- *Parent and family communication and engagement activities* – communication strategies that help staff develop relationships with parents and families, and to engage them in supporting their students' education.
- *More time on task* – Priority Schools run for four additional weeks, with the use of that time designed at the building level to address the specific needs of that school's students.
- *Dual Credit Opportunities* –university dual enrollment partnerships opportunities for students to earn college credit.
- *Advanced Placement* – access to AP classes by using interactive video broadcast of qualified teachers through VECS.
- *Blended Learning and Flipped Teaching* – combining face to face time classroom methods with computer mediated activities to form an integrated instructional approach.

- *Structured Experiences in College and Work* – college planning support and activities such as job shadowing, internships, work experiences, real and virtual college campus tours, career fairs attendance; and field trips.

The DPS also proposes to use RttT-D funding to acquire new tools and supports that would enhance the program, such as:

- a user-friendly technology platform and supports that connect data and materials for easy student and teacher use,
- an intentional, consistent approach to managing and guiding student learning that uses data and technology to identify and deploy personalized approaches and engages students in goal setting for and ownership of their own learning,

DPS proposes to purchase an Instructional Management System (IMS) through which to implement an Instructional Improvement System (IIS) to provide a comprehensive, connected, and user-friendly system of supports for both students and teachers to use on a daily basis. The IIS is an important component of the plan because it will provide learners and teachers with the ability to focus on analyzing and using data to improve the student experience and personalize learning, create and connect learning goals to college- and career-readiness, and track progress toward success at the student, teacher, classroom, and building levels.

Among concerns that account for the lowered score for this criterion are those having to do with the sparse information regarding training for students and their parents, i.e., that it will be accomplished at the school level through the advisory program during the first year of the grant..

- What will the training consist of?
- when will it take place?
- what happens after year one?
- will every participating student have an advisory period scheduled?
- who will facilitate advisory periods, a regular teacher or a counselor? If a regular teacher, will they receiving appropriate training?

Another concern is the little evidence that students will have exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning or addresses accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	16
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

DPS proposes to implement Detroit Advantage in phases in at least two cohorts, and translating what is learned from one cohort to the next in a cycle of continuous improvement. This is a wise decision given the scope of the program and the opportunity it provides for modifications as it scales up. Over the course of the grant all participating educators will be supported in implementing personalized learning in their schools, and additional schools throughout the district will be invited to apply to fully implement after the grant period.

Much of the structure and support for the proposed DA is an expansion and replication of the work currently being done within the district's Office of School Turnaround. An assessment will be developed and administered to determine the readiness of participating schools for Cohort 1.

The Readiness Assessment will consider the level of ability to manage change, current use of and proficiency technology in the classroom, use of ILPs in the building, consistent use of online district resources, fidelity of implementation of specified programs, proficiency in using data to make decisions.. Schools that the district judges most ready to be successful will be assigned to Cohort 1, begin their work almost immediately, and implement personalized learning in their building in the fall of 2014. Remaining schools will identify their key staff right away, gain access to critical tools and training in the fall of 2014, implement core elements of the program immediately, and launch full implementation in 2015.

The district has determined there are two main elements necessary to support educators in successfully implementing personalized learning that leads to college- and career-readiness: 1) a user-friendly technology platform to unify instructional resources, data and information to guide educators' work and development, and 2) ongoing professional learning and support for instruction that is designed to build individual educator, leader and building-level team capacity.

DPS proposes to implement an Instructional Improvement System (IIS) that will be the focus of how schools and the district measure and stay on track to succeed in its goals to improve student performance and teacher effectiveness. The system will facilitate schools communicating and collaborating internally and with each other. In addition, the Instructional Management System Will be capable of housing such Educator Development Systems as Educator Learning Plans, Teacher evaluation multiple measure reporting, professional development catalogs, and interactive PD experiences in synchronous and asynchronous delivery. Once fully functioning, it is anticipated that the system would consolidate and

provide a wide variety of curriculum, instructional and management information to educators throughout the district. DPS is commended for recognizing and planning for such consolidation of its IMS to replace the disparate systems it currently has, because doing so will not only make the information more accessible and usable in terms of teaching and learning, but also serve as a platform for managing and providing professional development.

With the implementation of the Advisory Program in participating schools, DPS proposes to provide time for teachers to work with students on their ILPs and have frank discussions that can shed even more light on how best to structure learning for individual students, as well as how students with strengths may provide support to their peers. The proposal specifies teachers, not councilors, as facilitating these advisory classes. However, there is no evidence provided that those teachers will receive any training or support in this area, or how this additional responsibility will impact on the time available for their regular teaching assignments.

District and building leadership personnel (Instructional Specialists, the Building Principal, and a Personalized Learning Coach) in each participating school will undergo training to prepare to support building level teams throughout the preparation and implementation process. Focus on personalized learning and instructional practices will be work of the building-based PLCs, allowing teachers to depend upon and learn from each other. Educators will have a refresher PLC training, and their building Personalized Learning Coach will be responsible for directing the PLC work. The building-level teams will participate in PLCs on at least a monthly basis. PLC support from Instructional Specialists will continue throughout the life of the grant. As teachers build their own capacity in the work, they will also become resource for colleagues at their own schools and other schools to support professional learning and problem solving. Organized within the PLCs will be Lesson Study groups. Lesson study is a form of long-term professional development in which teams of teachers will collaboratively plan, research, and study their lessons. Although the DPS is commended for instituting building-based reform and focusing grant dollars on managing change at the classroom level, it is noted that while the proposal states that the work of PLCs at the school level will be bolstered by the frequent availability of timely student assessment data, it does not specify how that data will be aligned with professional development as required by this criterion.

Cohort 1 building-based teams will engage in five days of professional development and planning in the summer, followed by a three day DA specific track at the annual Detroit Public Schools Symposium in early August, and five days of preparation at their building immediately prior to the start of the school year. Other than such generalities as proposing to familiarize teachers and principals on options for personalization at the school level, and supporting teachers in technology use and problem solving for instruction, the application provides little information regarding other details of these symposia and building level sessions, especially content aimed at providing opportunities for students to engage in common and individual tasks, in response to their academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches.

The DPS Teacher Evaluation process targets where teachers may need to seek additional support, and highlights where their good practice might provide insight for a peer. The DPS Educator Development System portion of the Instructional Improvement System applies that information to inform Observation 360, which houses the classroom observation results and PD 360, which offers professional development opportunities based on the observation's recommendations for improvement. The Office of Professional Development will use these systems to provide targeted support for teachers wanting to improve their skills as well as to refer them to other professional development supports. Administrators may also request that a teacher who is struggling, engage in specific professional development. The Office of Professional Development is commended for providing a more personalized PD based on assessed needs rather than a one-size-fits-all-approach.

The proposal states that the district makes time within the work day for professional development (such as PLCs) on a regular basis, as well as making some elements available when it is convenient for teachers outside of the work day. Not provided, however, is a description of how time within the work day for professional development will be provided, and how and where "convenient" outside time will be found and compensated.

It is clear from the evidence in the proposal that Detroit Advantage teachers will have access to the critical tools, information and resources needed to support students in graduating from high school college- and career-ready. In addition, through the ongoing data available on student learning and the embedded assessments in digital curricular products, teachers should be able to quickly establish which tools and processes best match and effectively support student learning.

The applicant proposes to provide professional development and training for the application of these tools, information and resources. For example, Teachers will be provided training on VECS, as well as receive ongoing support from Instructional Specialists who know both the recorded content and use of the technical system. Training will also involve the use of ILPs and the new IMS system.

School leaders will receive training on implementation of key tools and supports so they may manage work knowledgably with their teams. This will include topics such as the new IMS, ILPs, VECS, PLCs and Lesson Study, and any additional

supports needed for specific personalization tools or approaches chosen for their building. It is noted that the evaluation process for principals has not yet been established for DPS, therefore it is not known if or how it might contribute to identifying professional development needs. No description is provided in the proposal, however, regarding how or when such training will occur.

The proposal presents creditable elements of a high quality plan for Implementing supports for effective teaching and leading in personalized learning environments, but not for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals (as defined in this notice), including in hard-to-staff schools, subjects (such as mathematics and science), and specialty areas.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	11

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The Detroit Advantage initiative will be an additional activity, managed out of the district's Office of School Turnaround. The Assistant Superintendent for **School Leadership and Educational Accountability/Office of School Turnaround (for Priority Schools) who reports directly to the Superintendent for Academics, will continue to have** overall responsibility for Detroit's low-priority schools which will, if funded, also be the participating schools of the DA. In addition, a Project Manager and three Student Achievement & Assessment Teams from across the district will work on the DA. Key staff from the Offices of Curriculum and Instruction, Professional Development, Technology, School Turnaround and Research, Evaluation and Assessment will extend their support to the DA's effort and serve as members of the central office team. All this constitutes a comprehensive and well positioned management system.

The district has a corps of Instructional Specialists in core content areas charged with supporting teachers in growing their classroom teaching practice. Twelve of them will be trained to provide embedded content, pedagogical and technology support for personalization at the school level and redirected to support the Detroit Advantage schools.

At the school building level, School Improvement Teams (SIT) are guided by the school principal. They comprise teachers, administrators, parents and members of the community. The focus of the teams is to improve the school learning environment. Each Detroit Advantage school principal and designated Personalization Coach receive training to lead the work within their building. Personalization Coaches will be chosen from among the building's teachers and provided one year's release time to assist with the systemic transformation and support necessary to launch full implementation at the building level. In each school, the principal has autonomy to make decisions related to roles and responsibility of staff, the school calendar, school budgets, and services. Participating schools have control over budget, hiring, curriculum, and operations. This degree of support at the building level is commendable.

The DPS Testing Out and Credit Recovery Procedures provide a framework for high school students to be able to demonstrate mastery in multiple ways and at their own pace. Students may apply and then test out of courses by successfully completing designated assessments and scoring a 77% or C+. In addition, every high school in the district provides Credit Recovery programming to assist students who have failed Michigan Merit Curriculum course or have not achieved the number of credits required for graduation, or to obtain those credits needed to graduate within four years. Students may take equivalent, aligned courses online, retake the same course at a DPS school or test out.. Credit Recovery is a computer based, student driven model where students work at their own pace with support from staff.

DPS provides digital learning resources to all students across the district and dedicated one-to-one digital devices to students in grades 6-12. For students with special needs, the proposal indicates that these digital learning items are easily adaptable for differently abled students, as well as for students who need more time on task or different ways of engaging with the content.

With the funding of Detroit Advantage, there will be an upscaling of existing tools as well as additional tools for teachers to use with their students. These include

- Use of Individualized Learning Plans;
- Use of the Instructional Management System for accessing learning supports and materials, administering assessments and intervention planning;
- Implementation of an Advisory Program to support use of the ILP and college- and career-ready behaviors and activities;

Increased use of data for decision making purposes as all levels of the organization from the classroom to the Central Office; and

- Use of the Teacher Evaluation, and eventually, the Principal Evaluation as tools for identifying and supporting educator growth and effectiveness.

It is noted that many of these elements are extensions of those already in place, the major exception being the Instructional Management System. This brings into question the number of dedicated new and/or repositioned central office personnel needed to support Detroit Advantage and the need for the extent of requested support from RttT-D funds.

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

Throughout the DA grant period and beyond, the applicant will continue to make available and upgrade learning resources that are already accessible as a part of the district's infrastructure. These involve the use of technology and allow for peer support, online support and parental support. Additionally, technology staff, teachers and volunteers, working in district facilities are available to provide technical support for the technology that aids in personalizing learning. DPS has a high bandwidth capacity at the building level, functional and dependable networking infrastructure, up to date technology devices and an in-house Help Desk and support functions.

DPS proposes to implement a new Instructional Improvement System that will function both as an Instructional Management System and Educator Development System. Existing DPS systems – such as PD 360, Observation 360 and VECS – will be imported to the system, along with critical documents, data and programs teachers use with their students. Most critical to the

personalized learning approach described in this proposal is the Individualized Learning Plan that will be housed within the IMS and which depends upon the ability to import data in an open systems interoperable environment in order to be timely and relevant.

DPS will seek a product that provides both functionality as an IMS system, but also provides features for communicating with various audiences and so users may access resources on their own. While teachers receive instantaneous results from these assessments now, the results are not ported to individual student ILPs, so tracking down information on how a student is doing on a variety of assessments and work challenging and time consuming.

The proposal's High-Quality Plan to organize district policies, practices and resources to support Detroit Advantage schools in achieving success provides a summary of its deliverables, activities, timelines, and responsible parties. The table outlining the elements of the plan sketches out a process to:

1. Implement technology device procurement
2. Hire key staff members to lead and manage Detroit Advantage Implementation
3. Identify, assign and train Instructional Specialists, Building Principals and Personalization Coaches
4. Procure personalization experts to support training and launch of Detroit Advantage

Missing from the information required in this criterion are provisions ensuring that all participating students, parents, and other stakeholders, regardless of income, have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources and support both in and out of school to support the implementation of the applicant's proposal.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	11

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district regularly goes through a continuous improvement plan. The Detroit Public Schools' proposal to invigorate and configure its current continuous improvement process to support the personalized learning approach is laudable. The applicant proposes to expand on its existing structure in ways that it claims will specifically monitor, assess and improve

the implementation of the Detroit Advantage plan.

The proposal presents in detail elements of the district's existing DPS continuous improvement plan. Its discussion of what would be done differently to provide continuous improvement if its proposal were funded focuses first on the Invigoration of the building- then the district-level processes in support of the Detroit Advantage personalized learning approach. Participating schools will focus on the personalized learning approach strategies specified in their improvement plans.

Last year, the district piloted the Instructional Learning Cycle process in a small number of schools. This process is an implementation and monitoring mechanism that is executed every two to four weeks allowing for more rapid exploration of effectiveness of strategies and impact on student learning. The Instructional Learning Cycle process will be implemented more broadly in Detroit Advantage schools in order to invigorate the current continuous improvement cycle and align it to the personalized learning approach.

The following reflect ways in which the continuous improvement process will be further strengthened to support the implementation of the Detroit Advantage initiative.

- 1) Goal Setting and Process Alignment: The continuous improvement process will be adjusted for each Detroit Advantage school so that the goals established are consistent with the targets and goals specified in this grant application.
- 2) Implementation Monitoring Guide: The process will gauge student progress on an individualized basis and assess the impact of different instructional strategies and the effectiveness of professional development.
- 3) Engaged Reflections of Teacher Practices and Student Experiences: The district will employ two engaged reflection processes; a Reflections Protocol and a discussion guide to be used during the course of each professional learning community (PLC) meeting.
- 4) Building Level Processing: Using the information collected in the short-cycle monitoring and reflection processes, the school improvement teams will be able to identify patterns and trends, and structure broader schoolwide sharing of information about implementation successes and challenges

Invigoration of current District-Level Process in Support of the Detroit Advantage Personalized Learning Approach. Enhancement will take the shape of a separate Detroit Advantage Participating Schools Improvement Plan and district continuous improvement process.

These strategies are basically extensions of existing continuous improvement cycle process to personalized learning in participating schools, and are not substantiated as being primarily DA related by enough evidence to indicate that they would not be implemented even if the grant proposal were not funded.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

This is a strong component of the DPS's proposal. The high quality plan details the deliverables, activities, timelines and responsible parties for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders.

At the building level, the emphasis will not be on regular, consistent and timely ways to keep key building-level people and parents informed. Communication will be built around the following key purposes and messages: What's the vision? What are we doing? What can people expect? What's working and what's not working – and how do we know? What results are being achieved? What are we learning? What can you do to help?

The district's web site will be the hub of all communications around Detroit Advantage. A special space will be created on the web site exclusively featuring the Detroit Advantage initiative enabled for access via smartphone technology through a mobile app currently under design.

Communications will be tailored to meet the needs of various audiences and will leverage modes of dissemination already being used by the district and school buildings. Students will hear about the work as part of their participation in it. Teachers, principals and staff will be kept apprised by way of the whole range of staff communication methods – regular staff meetings, content faculty and grade-level faculty meetings, staff bulletin boards, building web sites, staff newsletters, the Detroit Public Schools Symposium etc. Parents will receive information through regular take-home newsletters, through the Parent Resource Centers and in the course of parent-teacher conferences and PACSA meetings and activities. Community newsletters, school radio programs (operated by students) will serve to inform multiple audiences. The community and the general public will hear about the work through district-level communications to the media, and through the use of social media strategies. Special briefings will be provided to media representatives as well as public officials and other opinion leaders to showcase the work.

DPS will also designate a standing Detroit Advantage Stakeholder Advisory Committee. This will allow for regular engagement of representative of key stakeholder groups to receive updates, gauge progress, and provide advice.

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

5

3

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not provide performance measure targets for all students because the baseline number of highly effective principals is not available since the DPS principal evaluation is not yet determined. However, the applicant provides related information such as

- concerning the number and percentage of students for whom the teacher of record and principal achieve *high rates of student growth*, for purposes of this measure, DPS defines a high rate of student growth as greater than one and a half grade levels of progress in an academic year.
- The percent of students meeting their MAP growth target will increase by 4-6 percentage points annually to reach their targets.
- The district’s overall goal is to increase the number of students who complete and submit the
- FAFSA by 10 percent annually

Tables are provided for projected growth target percentages for ambitious yet achievable performance measures by subgroup for

- preK-3: a) reading MAP benchmark assessment results, b) attendance rates measured as average daily attendance rate across students, and c) *all students will engage in physical activity/education for 60 minutes per day*;
- Grades 4-8: a) college- and career-readiness measured by the number of students scoring “advanced” on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), and b) percent of students achieving their projected growth target in reading and math MAP benchmark assessment results (note that no grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan was provided as required); and
- Grades 9-12: a) the number and percentage of participating students who complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form (note: DPS does not currently collect subgroup data for this performance measure), b) the percentage of students meeting the “college readiness” cutoff score on either the PSAT or the ACT, c) the number and percentage of students score at the career ready level on the WorkKeys assessment, d) percent of students achieving their projected growth target in reading, mathematics and language usage, and e) attendance rates as measured by the average daily attendance of participating students (note that no grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan was provided as required).

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

5

5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The DA evaluation will have both formative and summative components. The evaluation will examine desired Impacts on teacher and principal effectiveness, and impacts on student engagement and achievement.

Such factors will include,

- What changes have occurred to teacher practices and effectiveness?
- What strategies and activities have contributed to these changes?
- Are teachers and principals implementing new practices and strategies with fidelity?
- Is student achievement improving as a result of the activities supported by the Detroit Advantage plan and the implementation of personalized learning strategies?
- Are students more engaged in their learning?
- Are impacts on student achievement consistent across student subgroups? Are achievement gaps being closed?
- Do any of the strategies that show successful impact on student achievement reflect improved resource productivity?

Longer Term Evaluation (: The purpose of the longer-term summative evaluation will be to answer the question “Is the implementation of the Detroit Advantage plan resulting in changes that are transforming schools and teaching practices resulting in improved student outcomes?”

The applicant provides a high quality plan that details activities starting from ‘convene Evaluation Working Group, prepare and issue RFP for evaluator’ to the final ‘Publish periodic “issue briefs” based on formative evaluation findings’, and

'Publish annual reports with comprehensive evaluation perspective, Revise evaluation methodology and plan as appropriate'.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A significant portion of the budget is dedicated to the purchase and implementation of Technology to Support Personalized Teaching and Learning: This includes the procurement of the Video Education and Collaboration System (VECS), the one-to-one student technology devices (tablets), and Instructional Management System (IMS) software. The VECS and IMS technologies will be implemented in all participating schools in year one. The applicant describes this initial investments in designing new professional development as a one time cost, but the budgetary tables include PD costs throughout all four years. The budget narrative also states that the total proposed budget of \$29,846,197.55 includes \$28,530,197.55 of one-time costs (96%). \$1,316,000.00 represents ongoing costs. The narrative oes on to state that this level of on-going costs represents .01% of the district's total annual operating expenses of approximately \$800 million in 2012-13. Identifying funding to support these ongoing expenses will not present a significant challenge to the district.</p> <p>Although this is a powerful argument for sustainability, its implication is that RttT-D funding is being sought mainly for the purchase and implementation of Technology, and that the balance of the proposed costs supplant what would normally be the responsibility of the district's operation. Indeed, this is also implied by the fact that RttT-D funds would be supplemented with \$94.06 million in state, local and federal funds that will also be in support of the initiative. These non-grant funds represent the resources available to the DPS Office of School Turnaround that are being deployed in the 38 schools that are the subject of this proposal.</p> <p>Overall, however, the budget does reflect the anticipated costs of the Detroit Advantage program as presented.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has a solid basis for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. This plan is based on the budget narrative w hich states that the total proposed budget of \$29,846,197.55 includes \$28,530,197.55 of one-time costs (96%). \$1,316,000.00 represents ongoing costs. The narrative goes on to state that this level of on-going costs represents .01% of the district's total annual operating expenses of approximately \$800 million in 2012-13. Identifying funding to support these ongoing expenses will not present a significant challenge to the district. In addition, support from the state-appointed emergency manager signifies approval of the project and its ongoing support.</p> <p>The district has proposed a project evaluation approach that allows it to monitor and measure the impact of investments made pursuant to this proposal. The results of this analysis and evaluation will help fine-tune the deployment of strategies in the future.</p> <p>A High Quality Plan is presented with the goal to design and implement a sustainability analysis and planning process for the Detroit Advantage project. A significant activity of the plan is to Develop a plan for migrating on-going expenditures to other non-grant funding sources.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	10
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The proposal emphasizes the applicant's integration of the "Pathways to Potential" program that takes a holistic approach to leveraging public and private resources to enhance school resources by providing additional student and family supports to schools in order to address their social,emotional, or behavioral needs. The "Pathways to Potential" program consists of twenty-one schools designated as 12/7 Community Schools using a model developed by the National Center for Community Schools. These schools serve as hubs by housing community-based programs and partnerships to provide a</p>		

system of services and supports to students, parents and community members during extended hours. Services are provided based on what local schools and parents want and may include homework assistance, language programs, child care and elder care, literacy development, prenatal training, technology skills, financial literacy and other professional services.

This collaboration appears to go a long way to meeting the requirement to describe the coherent and sustainable partnership to support the plan. For example, each school building identified for implementation of the Pathways to Potential strategy will utilize its School Improvement Team as the point of integration. Additional members will be added to the team to represent the key partners participating in the Pathways to Potential partnership. In addition to Pathways to Potential, DPS has a long history of collaboration with other public and private partners in support of its students. These include Michigan Department of Human Services, School-Based Health Centers, Mobile Dental Care, See to Achieve, Detroit Public Library, Young People Excel Teen Center, and Detroit Employment Solutions (DES).

DPS has identified ten population-level desired results to form the initial points of focus for the Pathways to Potential initiative. A table of goals for performance measures aligned to the desired results of Pathway to Potential is presented. The table includes Population Groups, Type of Result: (a) educational outcomes or (b) family and community supports), and Desired Results. For example, the table includes the percentage of students identified as “Developmentally Vulnerable” on two or more domains of the Early Development Instrument. These goals are comprehensive in that they encompass both educational and family/community support areas

The proposal states that district’s “Pathways to Potential” initiative “can be” (not will be) expanded and enhanced to align with and support the district’s Race to the Top-District proposal. The proposal does state, however, that DPS will create a formal partnership in order to oversee the continued expansion of the “Pathways to Potential” initiative and alignment of the initiative to meet the social, emotional and behavioral needs of students in a manner that supports the Detroit Advantage.

The applicant proposes to develop a professional development curriculum to be deployed through the Office of Professional Development, and enhanced via PD 360, that supports the Pathways to Potential implementation.

Overall, the applicant presents a commendable plan for meeting this criterion.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant meets Absolute Priority 1 because the DPS application describes a program that is achievable and ambitious due to its focus on updating the data gathering and processing technology that will enhance the district's plans to personalize instruction. Especially noteworthy is the proposal's attention to personalizing instruction and learning and the provision of both central and building-level support. In addition, the applicant's plans to scale up and sustain the program is laudable, as is its attention to non-academic goals as well as Common Core standards in its implementation of technology.

It is noted, however, that except for underwriting the purchase and implementation of technology, the project appears to be otherwise achievable within the usual responsibilities and budget of the district.

Total	210	178
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