



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0069NV-1 for Washoe County School District (WCSD)

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The vision outlined for this plan is comprehensive and provides extensive documentation about how the plan is designed to meet the individual learning needs of all students, increase academic success, and increase graduation rates and college enrollment. This is supported through the District strategic plan which is already in place and designed to identify strengths and weaknesses and target resources toward each. A Data Warehouse has been developed and implemented allowing all stakeholder access to student achievement data in a timely manner. The District has received and is implementing grants targeted to increasing the professional growth of the teachers and provide training on the Common Core Standards and using them to design learning.</p> <p>Students develop personalized learning pathways profiles utilizing the Standards, designed with core academic learning and participation in their choice of Signature Academies/CTE. 21st Century learning competencies are focused upon: collaboration, knowledge construction, real world problem solving. There are flexible learning options for students , such as; face to face, blended, and on-line learning opportunities. Classroom teachers will be trained to facilitate personalized student learning by District staff designated with responsibilities in the area of use of data, technology as an instructional tool, how to assist students in development of their personalized learning plans, implementation of on-line learning opportunities for students, as well as other needs that may be identified in PLC meetings or through the teacher evaluation process.</p> <p>A Systems approach to development and implementation of clear career pathways leading to graduation is present. The District has strong relationships with both the University of Nevada/Reno and Truckee Meadows Community College. Personalized Learning for each student is emphasized as they develop a Student Learning Plan. Table 1 provides a listing of major reforms identified within the District Strategic Plan. The teaching and learning framework is described as: plan, do, study, act.</p> <p>Teacher and leader (principal) Professional Growth System (PGS) is in place and follows requirements set by the State of Nevada. The PGS includes pay for performance for both teachers and principals; career lattice incentives; hiring for both teachers and leaders(principals) aligned to the PGS rubric to strengthen recruitment efforts and retention of highly effective teachers and leaders.</p> <p>The classroom environment supports personalized learning for all students. Students participate in one of 17 Signature Academies. The Academies blend traditional academics with CTE pathways. Each student will have a customized learning experience detailed in their Academic Personalized Plan (APP). Students will use traditional classroom activities blended with project based learning, portfolio assessments, and technology to achieve success. Student support in learning is provided through the implementation of RTI and the use of a risk assessment tool to identify students who are not succeeding and may be in danger of dropping out.</p> <p>This section is scored in the high range because of the details provided in support of the plan vision, meets the criteria of Core Educational Assurance Areas to support student achievement in meeting college and career ready standards in personalized learning environments, the use of data by all stakeholders to plan and monitor student learning, the hiring of effective and highly effective teachers, and impacting the success of lower performing schools.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p>		

This section scores in the high range because there is description of how participating schools were selected based upon the need to inspire middle school students to increase their high school graduation rates. Documentation provided in Table 2 - WSCD Meets all RTTD Eligibility Requirements lists required information in support of meeting eligibility requirements. The plan will include 13 middle schools and 11 high schools for a total of 15,000 students, 1,180 teachers, principals, and school counselors. The schools were selected through the Offices of Academics, School Performance, and Information Technology. The WSCD leadership collectively agreed to focus on Signature Academy/CTE sites. Table 2 provides a checklist indicating the WSCD meets all RTTD eligibility requirements. Table 3 further lists the names of each school with planned rollout timelines included. Appendix E, Table A-2-b and c provide actual student counts by required sub group reporting elements, with both actual counts of students in each group and percentages.

<b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
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**(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

This section is scored in the high range because it clearly describes expectations for learning and provides job descriptions of key staff personnel. The total number of points were not awarded because the application describes how it will scale up and share the program with other LEA's and educational entities, but does not describe plans for scaling up the program into all schools within the District (such as, timelines, personnel responsible, and deliverables).

WSCD plans to provide information and assistance to other school entities about the Signature Academies and learning strategies as a guide to how they can implement the same type of success by setting targets, providing best practices for roll out and plans, guiding professional learning, and demonstrating the practicality of personalized learning environments.

The Logic Model for designing student learning is an appropriate and comprehensive model demonstrating high expectations for all students in personalized learning environments. This model is based on policy recommendations for improving America's high schools from the National Conference of State Legislators: elevating academic standards and course requirements to college and career ready levels; helping every student to plan through high graduation and beyond; developing effective career and technical education programs; expanding college-level learning opportunities; using a variety of online learning options; identifying and supporting struggling students; developing dropout recovery programs to re-engage out-of-school youth; and providing structures and incentives for high schools and colleges to work together to improve college readiness. Table 4: Logic Model provides supporting data in support of the Logic Model implementation by listing core education assurances with inputs, process, outputs, immediate and long-term outcomes described.

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

This section is scored in the high range because of the clear and concise presentation of learning goals and continuous achievement expectations provided in Appendix E. The tables provide information for each school site with subject areas, summative assessment information and results, and annual benchmarks attached. WSCD will use the Student Growth Profile developed by Betebenner (2008) to measure and link student growth to teacher and principal evaluations. This same model will be used to calculate how much growth each student needs each year to maintain proficiency and move up to college readiness. The table describing expectations in decreasing the achievement gaps is listed by grade and subject levels with benchmark data and annual benchmarks attached. Graduation rate expectations are listed for the District overall and also by sub-groups with benchmark data and annual growth attached. College Enrollment rate is listed as District overall expectation with benchmark data and annual growth expectation. The information gathered from this data provides evidence in support of high expectations for all students, along with the data to support personalized learning for all students based upon what their expected growth levels are.

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

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

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

This section is scored in the high range because the supporting data provided presents a clear picture of the increases in student achievement that have occurred over the past four years. This data includes Table 5. Closing the Achievement Gap, Figure 3 Cohort Graduation Rate Trends (2010-13); Ninth grade credit attainment; Figure 5 Percentage of WSCD graduates who completed an AP, IB, or dual course with a C or better. Each table shows growth in the area it presents. Each of these outcomes demonstrates steps already taken by WSCD to ensure student success and to increase graduation

rates. The total points available were not awarded because even though the narrative states that increases in Advanced Placement courses and credit attainment at the 9th grade level will carry over into increased college enrollment number there was no data provided that demonstrates this is happening.

Growth was also evident in the 7 middle schools identified as low -performing. Each demonstrates growth in math and reading as shown on Table 7. This growth is attributed to increased teacher collaboration time from an early release schedule used for planning instruction; increased learning time either through a longer school day or additional school days.

Student performance data is available to students as they develop and monitor their APP. This data is also used and discussed with the student by their teachers and during Advisory Consults with the counselor. The data is used both to demonstrate growth in meeting the CCSS and also to identify areas that may need to be modified or where additional tutoring may be needed.

The Data Warehouse provides timely access to student learning data for all stakeholders. Parents have access to student data through the use of the Infinite Campus Parent Portal, an online information system the provides information on students' credit attainment, grades, and assessment data. The Parent University provides training for use of the Portal. Table 8 lists number of uses of the data site by parents during SY12-13.

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

**5**

**4**

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

This section is scored in the high range because each element (a-d) is included on the District website and is also found in Appendix G of this document. In addition, salary information is provided by the Human Resources as various entitles request it in conformance to local, state, and federal regulations. All available points were not awarded because it did not appear that the staff salary listings were listed by school site as required.

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

**10**

**10**

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

This section is scored in the high range because the plan includes all elements required for implementation. The State of Nevada has approved CCSS for implementation and the Nevada Department of Education has recommended a roll-out of these standards and to align the assessment to them. The State of Nevada has also passed a bill creating the Teachers and Leaders Council to work with the State Board of Education on a new teacher and principal evaluation system. The process put in place by WSCD to implement the RTTD plan correlates to the State requirements with alignment to CCSS, teacher and principal evaluation system is in place, data is available to all stakeholders, and personalized learning plans (APP) are in place to ensure the success of all students. The description provides information in support of implementation of personalized learning plans to support student learning.

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

**15**

**13**

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

This section is scored in the high range because stakeholder involvement was sought at all levels. The process began with Central Office personnel identifying key areas of need. A survey was developed and sent out to all school staff and parents who had provided the District with an email address. The survey was also available on the District website. A total of 3,362 responses from stakeholders was received. Key elements of responses from teachers, parents, and students were included in the plan document. Student participation was focused upon their access to technology and the Signature Academy classes. The District also provided the proposal to various community groups for their input and support.

There are multiple letters of support for the proposal from local business and education partners included. The President of the Local Bargaining Unit provided a signed letter of support (Appendix 4) and also signed the application along with the Superintendent.

The total points in the high range were not awarded because there was no inclusion in the plan providing information about how the District communicated the survey to parents who did not have an email address. There was a statement about parents having the ability to come to the school site and use a computer kiosk to complete the survey if they wished.

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

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

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

This section is scored in the high range because it describes a comprehensive, achievable plan that demonstrates a strong focus on providing programs designed to prepare college and career ready students for graduation through the implementation of personalized learning environments and plans. This is accomplished through appropriate curriculum and learning at the middle school levels and Signature Academies/CTE programs at the high school level. All students develop an Academic Personalized Plan (App) that is based upon their individual skills, learning, and interests. The plan is stored in the Data Warehouse in order to be readily available to all stakeholders as needed. This also allows it to be revised quickly as needed. The plan is prepared with the assistance of the School Counselor who has been trained and communicates with the teacher and student as it is prepared.

Signature Academies/CTE programs provide all students access to personalized instruction based upon their skills and interests. There are flexible learning options available for all students (online, job shadowing, internships, etc) as part of demonstrating their learning. Digital sources are also present through Schoolwires program and other online sources. These digital sources will motivate students and also give access to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that will deepen their learning and provide exposure and experience with diverse cultures the student may be unfamiliar with. The available technology enhances blended learning opportunities for students. The Signature Academies link 5 postsecondary options: local career options, apprenticeships/trade school, military careers, technical and community college degree and/or certification, or four-year university degree.

The Signature Academy/CTE Outreach Coordinator will oversee transition of students from middle school programs into appropriate Signature Academy choices based upon interests and skills. Parents will be included in the transition process as it occurs.

All targeted students will have an Academic Personalized Plan (APP). The APP will increase the link between interests, aptitude, and coursework. Students who may be at risk are identified through the use of assessment data and climate surveys. It is a priority of WSCD that these students will be assisted through the implementation of the APP and its use in guiding a personalized learning environment based upon their needs.

The personalized learning environment will allow students the option of online and blended learning providing flexibility for students to learn in different ways. Project based learning and portfolio assessments provide opportunities for formative learning and different ways for students to demonstrate their mastery of subjects and competencies.

The Data Warehouse provides frequent updates about individual student achievement tied to their APP, and also groups data in ways that assists the principal and teachers in planning for instruction and interventions in a timely manner. The Early Warning Risk Indicator is taken quarterly and indicates when students may be in need of assistance. Student data from the ACT EXPLORE taken in 7th grade and the ACT PLAN will also be utilized in developing a student's APP.

There are provisions in place for students to demonstrate learning through personalized sequence of instructions. This is accomplished by the sequencing of courses in the Signature Academies to reflect CTE competencies. The sequence allows courses to provide increasingly rigorous technical curriculum. This learning is tracked through assessments, Infinite Campus, student review of their data, and feedback from their teacher.

SPED support leaders are present at the schools and assist with accommodations and implementation of student learning plans that are appropriate for the student. In addition to working with students, these SPED support leaders will also work with teachers to ensure that student programs and needs are appropriately addressed and in compliance with all regulations. ELL students will receive support at each school from an ELL teachers. This teacher will assist the students in developing skills required for success in meeting the CCSS standards.

There is a training mechanism in place to teach the students how to be better accountable for their own learning through the use of the APP. This process allows students to become more responsible for their own learning and also more accountable for their own success. A teacher will be assigned to work with each student to provide support as they implement and/or revise their APP. The teacher who is working with students in this area will have specialized training in personalized learning environments and APP development so the assistance provided to the students is timely and meets their needs.

Professional learning experiences for all staff is a strongly integrated strand throughout the plan implementation. This provides the skill needed by the teacher to guide the student in the APP. WSCD has a process in place to recruit and train industry professionals to act as teachers in various CTE courses. This allows for higher level skills and better

implementation of workplace requirements related to a particular area. These teachers are identified as non-traditional teacher/practitioners, and their training will be supported by WSCD supervisors.

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

**20**

**18**

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

This section scored in the high range because it describes a comprehensive program of professional learning for teachers and leaders(principals) in support of the goals of the RTTD plan. The program provides training on implementation of personalized learning environments in support of non-traditional teachers, development of the Academic Personalized Plan, 21st century learning environments, the formative assessment process, and information technology--all key areas of the RTTD plan implementation and success. This training will be supported with funding from the RTTD budget and will cover both hourly pay and/or sub days.

Professional learning will focus on moving the teacher to understand how, when, why to use the tools and supports to meet the needs of all students. All training will include PLC's and the train the trainer model to provide additional site resources to staff. Key staff will be identified and their responsibilities identified to assist in the success for all students. Formative assessment training is a key component of the professional learning component. IT will provide the option for flexible learning environments for students. Appropriate equipment will be purchased from plan funds to support program needs in CTE and Signature Academies. The Common Core and 21st century learning learning skills are key to student learning. Service Learning component has been integrated into the APP to enhance student involvement and responsibility for their own learning. Frequent formative assessments are in place to assist the student in learning to be responsible for their own success.

Specific staff will be identified as Signature Academy Teacher Manager, Signature Academy/CTE Curriculum Coordinator, Academic Personalized Plan Implementation Specialists, 21st Century Learning Implementation Specialists, Blended Learning Instructional Designer, Formative Assessment Implementation Specialists, Network Analyst and IT Specialists. Each will receive training specific to the job title and will work with school staff in the RTTD implementation. These staff members will assist in ensuring that personalized learning environments are in place at each site and students have assistance in preparing their APP.

The personalized student learning environments will provide opportunities for students to participate in Service Learning projects within their work in a Signature Academy. Work Experience and Capstone Projects will also be in place as nontraditional ways for students to explore their area of interest and demonstrate competencies. Frequent monitoring of student progress is a key component of the Formative Assessment process.

District, principal, and teacher evaluations are in place and follow the requirements of the State of Nevada the the guidelines listed in this project. There will be on-going training and guided practice to continue to increase teacher and principal effectiveness with a focus on State requirements and the skills needed to implement the personalized learning environments and APP. Table 10 shows examples of strength based teacher led APP questioning. Table 12 shows a rubric designed to assist teachers in the development of formative assessment questions. The PGS developed by each teacher and leader will be aligned to the needs of the RTTD plan implementation and focus on the skills required in the classroom, by those responsible for providing training, and those responsible for evaluating the teaching process. This process is designed to foster continuous improvement of all involved.

The District has put in place an innovative process to recruit and hire non-traditional teachers for the skills based courses in specialized areas, such as CTE. The Implementation Specialist will be assigned to supervise and support the non-traditional teacher in the classroom and assist them in learning required processes. The District has put a plan in place to recruit and hire highly qualified staff to meet the learning needs of the students. This process focuses on "Hiring for Attitude" with the result being hiring staff not just with experience and education but also those who have a passion for teaching, persistence, being an advocate for students, and believing all students can learn and be successful. WSCD has also put into place a method of equitable distribution of teachers to help close the gap between high poverty/high minority schools and low poverty/low minority schools related to the percent of core subjects taught by experienced teachers.

The total number of points were not awarded because there was no discussion of any recruitment plan for the non-traditional teachers. There is discussion about how these teachers will be utilized, but no information about how they will be found and hired.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>
<p><b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>This section is scored in the high range because its comprehensive design is set up to support the success of all students. The District central office is organized into offices each designed to address specific learning areas for students and to work together in support of student learning. District offices work closely with school principals/leaders to plan and organize programs as they are selected and implemented. The support systems are detailed in Section A(Table 1). The total points were not awarded because the timeline provides a list of reforms with no timeline or persons responsible for implementation included in the table (Section A, Table 1).</p> <p>Site and District personnel were involved in the planning meetings as the RTTD plan was developed. Principal leaders were involved in developing the plan for implementation of the Signature Academies which began in SY 2008-09. Early release Wednesdays allow time for appropriate staff learning opportunities and PLC meetings to take place under the guidance of the site principal. School calendars have moved from the traditional model to a balanced calendar by the Board to allow timely interventions to meet student learning needs and credit recovery within the school year. Curriculum has been aligned to CCSS and is assessed using the Nevada Comprehensive Curriculum Audit Tool. This provides a focus on individual school needs, however there is no clear statement describing the autonomy of the school sites over their calendar, schedules, or school personnel decisions.</p> <p>Students are offered a variety of options to meet individual learning needs. CTE skills are based upon performance mastery of the goals within each program and foster 21st century learning skills. Students can progress at their own pace within the on-line learning programs provided with the A+ program. This is a mastery based program that is not time embedded and allows students to move at their own pace to both accelerate or utilized as a credit recovery tool in grades K-12. There is an alternative high school (Inspire High) that students may be referred to when learning is impacted by behavior, attendance, or lack of credits. The adult high school is designed to meet the needs of non-traditional learners. The offices of ELL and Disability provide appropriate programs to support the learning needs of students in the District whose learning may be impacted as they work to acquire language and meet goals of their IEP's. Staff learning opportunities provide teachers with the tools to assist students in achieving success.</p>		
<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<p><b>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>This section is scored in the high range because it provides extensive support for personalized learning for all students. The total points were not awarded because the plan discusses student access to technology in the classroom, with no discussion about how access can be obtained outside of schools hours by either parents or students in the home. The blended learning environment uses Schoolwire, an integrated online system available 24/7/365 where students and staff can collect and access resources for their learning. Students develop Academic Learning Plans designed to meet their goals. The District website will be overhauled during SY2013-14 to increase parental access to information on the District and individual student information.</p> <p>Support is available 24/7/365 through Schoolwire. The maintenance agreement provides online support as needed.</p> <p>The District Data Warehouse enables school staff to see student results in real time, principals can view school progress to design what and where support may be needed for the site and also individual teachers. The Infinite Campus Student Information System allows online access to students, parents, and families information about student achievement, attendance, and discipline. There is a kiosk located at each school site that is open for use by parents and families who need to access this information.</p> <p>The systems utilized by the District meet the requirements as defined for interoperability.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>
<p><b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p>		

This section scores in the high range because of the structured/organized implementation plan that is in place along with identified staff to monitor the plan implementation and success. This is to be accomplished with the hiring of an Internal Evaluator(IE) who will meet to analyze data and align with implementation on a regular basis with project staff. School Improvement Teams (SIT) and principals will meet with the IE to review implementation and adjust plan as necessary. Quarterly meetings for all stakeholders will be held for the purpose of communicating plan information and acquiring feedback. Adjustments to the plan will be made as needed. The plan states that a comprehensive annual report will also be prepared and distributed to disseminated publicly. The first two years the report will contain formative evaluation descriptions, summaries, and progress on evaluation benchmarks. Outcome information will be included in the annual report beginning in the third year.

User friendly data tools are in place and planned for all stakeholders to provide timely data, as well as tracking risk factors to identify areas for appropriate interventions to be applied.

The Data Analyst will collect, analyze, and provide results to schools of information provided from the Data Warehouse.

The full amount of points in the section were not awarded because this structure is designed to place most responsibility for monitoring implementation at the District level, with information flowing down to sites and other stakeholders. There should be additional provisions in place for a two-way discussion about what is working and what may need to be adjusted allowing for increased input from the school sites who are part of the programs and other stakeholders, such as parents. A more formal structure may need to be in place for discussions to take place such as regularly scheduled meetings with stakeholders present at the site. The plan states that monthly meetings will take place at the District level with program staff, with information shared on a quarterly basis with school site personnel. This timeline will not work if there is a need for revision based upon available data that is only received quarterly.

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

5

5

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

This section is scored in the high range because of comprehensive use of communication tools that are designed to both provide information and gather feedback to use as the plan is implemented. The provision for sharing the information with the public is clearly stated and inclusive with plans to meet with all stakeholders. Regular meetings and presentations are embedded into the structure and responsibilities of the Internal Evaluator, District and site leadership. Project leadership will utilize information gathered at these meetings and presentations to make appropriate adjustments to the plan. Information is distributed via weekly newsletters distributed to school staff, monthly magazine mailed to all parents, social media (Facebook and Twitter), monthly communication with the community through Chamber meetings. Students are involved through the use of the Student Voice Toolkit. User friendly data tools provide school sites with information needed to plan for teaching and learning to support the academic success of their students.

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

5

4

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

This section is scored in the high range because it presents comprehensive information on expected performance measures and how they apply to all sub groups and grade levels. This data is clearly presented within the plan document and further explained in Appendix E. High academic expectations are presented for students as part of the proficiency expectations. Measurable goals for graduation rates, closing achievement gaps, increasing college enrollment are listed and explained. This data will be thoroughly evaluated for measures of reliability, validity, and utility annually in collaboration with District research partners. Appropriate adjustments will be made to ensure timely implementation of the plan.

The total points available were not awarded because the expected growth in graduation rates do not reflect ambitious goals for all students. The expected total graduation rate for all students at the end of the plan is 87%, or a growth of only 15% over 5 years from the benchmark data for all students of 72%. The expected final graduation goal of 50% for the LEP population from baseline data of 21% graduation and expected final graduation goal of 53% for the students with IEPs from baseline data of 26% demonstrate a seeming lack of high expectations for all students.

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

5

5

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

This section is scored in the high range because the process of evaluating the effectiveness of the plan is clearly stated and inclusive of all stakeholders. The Internal Evaluator will be responsible for conducting a mixed-method evaluation to measure progress on stated objectives. The evaluation will involve gathering data from all stakeholders. Both formative and summative evaluations will be developed by the IE. Ongoing formative evaluations will be conducted to check for

fidelity of implementation and barriers to success which will then be presented to make appropriate adjustments. The IE will work collaboratively with project staff, District leadership, and school sites to both gather information and disseminate results of the evaluations. The results can then be used to make any needed adjustments in the plan.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>This section scores in the high range because of the comprehensive description of the funding streams and how they will be spent in the implementation of the plan. There is specific information about annual expenditures that will come from RTTD funds and also additional funding that will come from District, State, and Federal programs to support RTTD implementations. WSCD has demonstrated a budget planned to meet the needs of all stakeholders. It has done an excellent job of blending funds from many sources in support of the RTTD plan and has demonstrated commitment to the plan success and sustainability as a result.</p> <p>Funding sources that will be used in support of the RTTD plan include: Title I, Title IIA, Title III, McKinney-Vento, Striving Readers, Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Grant, Educational Technology Competitive and Formula Funds, IES grant, Teacher Incentive Grants 3 and 4, Washoe K-12 Education Foundation, and General Fund. These funding sources provide for professional learning programs for teachers and leaders, student academic support and learning (ELL, Early warning for at-risk students), curriculum implementation for 21st Century and CSSS standards, improved technology and training. The use of the funds in support of the RTTD demonstrates a planned cohesive program designed to utilize all sources in support of increased student learning.</p> <p>Personalized Learning Environments will have one-time investment costs of 35% and ongoing cost of 65% and will be supported through RTTD one-time budgeted costs. The costs will create PLE technology-tools that are accessible in all classrooms, provide devices for teachers to create and monitor APPs, and create content for blended learning environments. Another one time cost is for transportation of students to Signature Academy/CTE classrooms. It is the intent of WSCD that this is a one time investment from RTTD funds that will be picked up by local Regional Transportation Commission plans in the future.</p> <p>There are five project budgets presented in Appendix D, providing the breakdown for staffing, program, one time purchases, etc. The plan includes the leveraging of multiple funding sources available throughout the District, such as Title I, Title IIA, Title III, McKinney-Vento, CTE. The total amount of funding requested from RTTD is \$24,932,291.00. The total amount of funding from other sources to be used in support of the plan is \$7,913,160.00. The sustainability of the project is supported with a clearly defined plan for the future that details both purchases and plans for ongoing staff training to support personalized student learning environments.</p>		
<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<p><b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>This section scores in the high range because of the detailed description of how the project's goals will be sustained after the grant has ended. The description includes discussion of the support of high academic achievement and support on the part of the Nevada legislature, strategic use of existing program and funding sources in support of plan goals, partnerships with local institutions of higher learning to provide highly qualified teachers and staff learning opportunities, planning with the Regional Transportation System to provide low-cost transportation to the Signature Academies. The External Relations Coordinator is responsible for implementing a program for developing non-traditional pathways for non-traditions teachers in support of plan goals. Efforts are also in place to increase support from local businesses in support of the CTE programs.</p> <p>The total points available were not awarded in this section because, even though WSCD provides a description of what will be done to sustain the RTTD plan after the grant ends, it does not provide any specific budget detail other than a statement; ie, such as Title I and Title IIA funds will continue to be used to fund training. There is no projected budget for three years going forward after the term of the grant provided.</p>		

## Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
<p><b>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>This section states it has ongoing partnerships with 50 local educational oriented community based non-profits, more than 20 industries/employers and institutions of higher learning. The focus of all combined is to ensure academic success for all students and to graduate students with CCSS knowledge and 21st century learning skills. There are provisions included for working with parents, at risk middle school and high school students, drop out prevention, and family resource center for struggling families.</p> <p>Table 13 identifies the population desired results and indicators for success.</p> <p>Data will be used to engage in transparent communication with schools, families, District leaders, business and community to help guide school improvement. The data utilized is listed on Table 13.</p> <p>The train the trainer model is the strategy the District will use to scale the plan model beyond participating students. It plans to communicate with other districts, state agencies to share plan information and success. It is unclear how this will assist District population who may not currently be included in the plan.</p> <p>There is little discussion of intervention provisions for ELL or disabled populations in the goals and what will be in place to assist their success.</p> <p>The District plans to integrate SEL strategies into the core curriculum. CASEL consultants will collaborate with superintendent and District leaders to this end. It is unclearly stated how this will then transfer to the school sites.</p> <p>The District also plans to expand homeless services through the use of McKinney Vento and Title I funds in partnership with Volunteers of America and Washo County Social Services. These entities will work to identify families in need of assistance.</p> <p>The Washoe K-12 Educational Foundation also provides program support.</p> <p>Table 14 lists partnerships and capacity building. The table does not have a timeline or list persons responsible for implementation.</p> <p>Table 15 lists measurable goals by population group with baseline data and expected outcomes.</p> <p>This section is scored in the high range. The total points available were not awarded because it does not clearly tie the involvement of the outside partnerships and what their contributions might be to the goals of the plan. In addition, when addressing the method to scale the success beyond the student population participating in the plan the focus was on working with other educational entities outside of the District and not on transferring the success of the plan to the remaining students.</p>		

**Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments**

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>		<b>Met</b>
<p><b>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The WCSD application is complete and comprehensive. The amount of supporting data demonstrates commitment to the success and high expectations for all students to graduate college and career ready is extensive. The provisions in the plan to individualize learning for all students, close achievement gaps, increase graduation rates, and increase the number of college going graduates are based upon data examined by district and school administrators, teachers, parents, students, and community members. The APP provides an avenue for students to pursue both traditional and non-traditional modes of learning and demonstrating academic success. The Professional Learning plan supports the training of all teachers in an organized and continuous manner with the end in mind of increased student learning and achievement as the overriding goal. The planning process systematically involved all stakeholders in the plan development, giving all the opportunity to participate and provide suggestions and ideas. An evaluation system approved by the State of Nevada has been adopted and is in place. The Data Warehouse put in place by the District allows access to real time student learning information and is available to students, teachers, principals, and parents. The data contained in the Data Warehouse is to be utilized as student plan and implement their individualized learning plans. An appropriate intervention process has been put in place to monitor and assist students with learning needs. Special education learning needs are</p>		

addressed with staff members trained in providing appropriate accommodations and implementing the student learning plans. There is an organized structure in place for providing information to all stakeholders. The Internal Evaluator will be charged with implementing the program with fidelity and evaluation of its success. The plan is focused on implementing college and career ready standards preparing students for success in the workplace and global economies through the use of individualized learning opportunities for all students. The data systems that will be utilized will provide timely information to students, parents, teachers, principals, and the public. The District has an organized and achievable process in place to recruit and retain effective teachers that will support their professional growth based upon needs shown from the evaluation system as well as needs identified to provide full implementation of the proposal. The plan will meet the needs of the lowest performing schools with support for curriculum implementation, the building of personalized learning environments for all students, data systems to monitor success at the school site and for individual students. Absolute Priority 1 has been met.

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>191</b>
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## Race to the Top - District

### Technical Review Form

Application #0069NV-2 for Washoe County School District (WCSD)

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

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

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

The vision of Washoe County School District (WCSD) to reform instructional experiences for secondary students is understood. The district's Education for the Future initiative builds on the work of the four educational assurances and defined in the RTTT-D notice. The school district has created a Data Warehouse to share student achievement information with teachers, parents, and students. The LEA also offers a full day kindergarten program in almost all of its 62 elementary schools. In the grant application it is noted that Washoe offers personalized learning for its P-3 population. The grant applicant also has developed a Teacher Professional Growth System.

The five goals for the LEA's project are:

- Provide continued academic success for every student
- Recruit and support highly effective personnel
- Engage families and community partners
- Value and strengthen a positive, self-renewing culture
- Align performance management systems

The grant applicant's quality logic model includes provisions to adopt standards to create rigorous assessments. Also, the project's vision clearly outlines how professional development will be implemented and how students will have access to quality principals and teachers. The district desire to expand infrastructure to support personalized learning through wireless technologies is sound. The plan personalizes learning for all students in participating school and the plan is aligned with RTTT-D goals to turn around low achieving schools. By providing individual support the district is demonstrating the ability to meet the needs of all learners.

The LEA desires to enhance programs that have been created within the last five years. The rationales of the enhancements are sound.

The approaches used to increase student achievement are clear and credible. From the description provided, it is equipped to close the achievement gaps for K-12 students and assuring that the district will decrease the number of students that are ill prepared for college upon graduation.

The WCSD Performance Framework is a concrete model of the district's expectations for student achievement. Included in the model is a sound plan to increase reading, writing, and math skills at all grade levels. The Plan Do Study Act Model within the Teaching and Learning Framework supports the applicant's achievement initiative.

The applicant describes learning rigorous learning environments. The description of each academy and how 21<sup>st</sup> century learning will take place in these schools is reflective of outcomes desired in quality high achieving schools. It is ambitious to provide students with choices on what to take each year they are enrolled in the academy, WCSD vision is clear and its detailed plan represents a credible approach that can reform student achievement within the district. Full points have been assigned.

<b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
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**(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The district provides a description of its desires to select 11 high school and 13 middle school campuses to participate in the Education for the Future Initiative. A list of schools is sufficient. It is understood why the district is targeting middle school because these years are vital transition years in development in the learning process.

A total of 15,000 students and 1,180 teachers will be served under the Education for the Future Initiative. While the LEA's Roll out Plan is included in the grant application, there does not appear to be a clear rationale on selection criteria for schools within each cohort.

Strong evidence for strategies for implementation within the selected schools is not provided. Also, Table A(2) clearly outlines the total number of participating students and educators, in addition the total number of low income students. All schools selected for the project are identified as low income. Also, it is noted in the grant application that at least 40% of all students qualify for free and reduced lunch. The applicant has scored high. The one weakness with this application is that there is no clear rationale on the criterion used to decide which schools will implement initiatives yearly. Nine points have been assigned.

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

This applicant has included a logic model that contains all elements of a high quality plan. The aspiration to scale up to all secondary schools within the district is realistic. The desired outcomes after project implementation are achievable. Within the logic model the applicant has included a process of how each personalized learning environment activity will be implemented and the LEA has also included measurable evidence of immediate and long-term outcomes.

Within the logic model is a plan to train teachers, communicate student achievement to parents, provide collaboration opportunities amongst teachers, and provide learning opportunities for students beyond the traditional classroom setting. It is noteworthy that the district has strongly considered student input as a measure of project success. The applicant has scored high for selection criteria A(3).

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

Washoe addresses this component within tables that describe student performance on Nevada Criterion Referenced Test and The Nevada High School Proficiency Exam. The growth goals set by the district are attainable. The LEA efforts to close the achievement gaps by increasing the use of Adequate Growth to a Higher Level Percentile (AGHL) are clear. By completion of the 2017 – 2018 school year the AGHL elementary and middle school reading and math, for all student ethnicity populations, matches or exceeds goals for overall AGHL performance. Also, efforts to close external district gaps are decreased each year of the grant cycle. The district documents that for the 2017 – 2018 school year there will be no external gaps between disadvantaged and advantaged students.

Goals set to increase graduation rates for all students are sound. Notably, less than 30% of LEP and students with IEP currently graduate. Upon completion of the 2017 – 2018 school year, the district plans increase this number by 30 percentage points.

The vision to increase college enrollment is sufficient. WCSD desires to have 85% of student enrolled in college upon completion of the grant cycle.

The district has appropriately responded to selection criteria A(4). Full points have been assigned.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>
<p><b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>WCSD provides ninth grade credit attainment, graduation rates, and advanced placement course completion data for four school years. All students showed growth trends from 2010 to 2013. Also, the achievement gaps for all groups have diminished.</p> <p>Although the district does exhibit growth, there is no explanation provided why graduation rates and student ninth grade credit attainment dropped 2011 to 2012.</p> <p>Documentation of reform efforts in persistently low achieving schools has been included. Efforts to increase student achievement are commendable. For example, in low achieving schools, the LEA has made effort to add instructional days to student calendars, significantly increased the number of hour for academic instruction in low performing schools, allowed time for collaboration during the school day, and it has provided quality technology in all classrooms.</p> <p>WCSD has provided ample information on the open communication within the school district. Currently twenty-five school in the district have access to Academic Personalized Plans (APP). The description of it purpose is clear and the information within the plan is aligned with the goal of improving academic instruction. Data is appropriately shared with all stakeholders in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have access to data during personalized advisory periods.</li> <li>• APPs are utilized during parent teacher conferences and Door to Door Achievement Campaigns.</li> <li>• Campus Parent Portals provide parents access to student attendance, credits, grades, and assessment data.</li> <li>• Parent University classes teach parents how to read and access data.</li> <li>• Educators have access to APPs, Dashboards, Student Monitoring Tools (SMT), Graduation Cohort Roster and Status Tool, and Honors and AP Identification Tool.</li> </ul> <p>It is unclear why there are gaps in student academic success. The applicant does not specifically address gains for all student groups. The applicant has however provided strong evidence to ensure that parents are communicated with on a continuous basis. Also, the school district has not fully described a clear track record of success with increasing college enrollment. The applicant has scored in the mid high range. A score of 12 points has been assigned.</p>		
<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant does a sufficient job of describing their process for ensuring transparency. The information provided by the applicant indicates that job titles and salaries for all employees are posted on the district's website. In addition the district provides all information to the community as requested. The applicant reports certified personnel salary to NDE annually. The applicant does not clearly describe how information is provided at the school level. Four points have been assigned.</p>		
<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The applicant description of sufficient state autonomy is adequate. Implementation of instructional and leadership activities under TIF funding has also been provided by the school district. Awarding of TIF funds has allowed the district to create a personalized Performance based Growth System (PGS) that provides performance-based compensation to highly qualified school staff based on regular observations of instruction and leadership activities, archival data, and quantitative student achievement performance. The description of implementation of CCSS and College and Career Readiness Standards is clear. WCSD 's has also written in detail of its collaborative efforts to measure longitudinal academic growth with the Nevada Department of Education. Full points have been assigned.</p>		
<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>

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

The applicant has provided information on how district personnel were engaged in developing the grant proposal. The applicant notes that series of meetings were held but it is unclear what input parents, teachers and students had in identifying key areas of change or improvement.

The utilization of a survey to gauge thinking was acceptable. The survey was sent via email, posted on the district's website, and posted in the online newsletter. The district has failed to provide information on how parents who did not have access to technology were engaged.

The district is in a collective bargaining state and provides satisfactory evidence of support for the grant. 37 letters of support are included in the grant application. There is no indication that there were any letters submitted from parents, parent organizations, and student organizations.

It is unclear what efforts the district had with gauging the proposal's support beyond the requested survey with all stakeholders. The applicant has scored in the mid range. Eleven points have been assigned.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>

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

The applicant has written a justification on the goals of Education for the Future project. There are sound goals to increase the number of WCSD graduates that are highly-skilled and college and career ready is clear. The personalized learning environment process provides unique learning pathways within its academies, access to learning profiles that are created based on the interest of students, strong descriptions of options to demonstrate learning mastery, and an adequate description of how students can have access to online, blended learning, and project-based learning classes.

The applicant has written that the internet will be utilized to provide students access to diverse cultures and perspectives. How the internet will specifically be used beyond search engine exposure is unclear.

A brief description of a rationale of the sequence of classes students will take in Signature Academies has been included in the grant application. The application is lacking a course sequence of desired classes for the academies.

Written evidence of how the district will recruit industry professionals to work in the academies is sound. Also, options to provide learning opportunities outside the classroom through job shadowing are evident in the grant application.

WCSD has noted that the Data Warehouse was launched to all school staff in August 2013. Convincing evidence is described that the data is frequently updated and reflect relevant information that can be utilized to assist with improving student achievement.

The district has done a good job at describing how learning will be personalized for each student. Academic Personalized Plans are created based with the input of the student based on the student's academic achievement. The plan to provide students access to online classes and the plan to provide opportunities for students to job shadow is appropriate.

The addition of a special education/ELL support teacher to mentor students will support the district's effort to increase student achievement. Also, the efforts to track students' progress towards credit and pathway completion are appropriate.

The weaknesses in this section are that there is a limited rationale on the instruction strategies that will be incorporated to expose students to diverse cultures and also, there is limited information on the courses that students can select from while attending the academy. Providing course selection demonstrates the ability of the school district to design a program that is centered on the academic interest of students. The applicant score is on the mid high end. Section C(1) has been given a rating of eighteen points.

<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>
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**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

This application includes evidence that Washoe County School District is committed to training and empowering educators that lead student instruction. The applicant effectively describes the process that will be used to train staff members on incorporating Academic Personalized Plans (APP) into student learning. Included in this plan is a timeline for anticipated launching of trainings. The plan to provide teachers with access to formative assessment training and 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning

environment trainings for content based instruction is adequate. However, in this plan it is not clear if there is support or encouragement for outside professional development that will assist providing best practices to increase student achievement.

Evidence of appropriate guiding questioning lead by teachers with students as they complete APPs has been included in the project request. Also, the description of resources used to support best practices for teachers is sound.

It is unique that staff members will be equipped to meet with all students to ensure that APPs are specific to the needs of each student. APPs will assist educators to guide instruction and create formative assessments that match student needs and learning activities.

The district goal to effectively use funds by implementing a train the trainer model is sound. Specialists will support teachers and will assist in locating outside resources and speakers specific to the needs of the academies.

The LEA does address a goal for increasing the number of students that have access to highly effective teachers by hiring an external relations coordinator for non-traditional teachers. But the plan does not specify the process that will be utilized to recruit the non-traditional teachers. It is clear that once the non-traditional teachers are hired that they will go through extensive on the job 16 week training program.

It is unclear what efforts the district will use to retain highly effective teachers in the district and support their professional development needs beyond course offerings provided by specialists. Also, a plan for recruiting non-traditional teachers is not fully described. The applicant has scored in the mid-range. Fifteen points have been assigned.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>Documentation of central staff responsibilities that will work with selected schools is extensive. The grant applicant's high quality plan does not include a launching timeline for staff members, their project goals and avenues to assess outcomes.</p> <p>The applicant states that numerous meetings were held to discuss program design. The idea to allow schools to select what academies to offer on campus is unique. Schools also have flexibility with designing collaborative sessions, school calendars, and curriculum.</p> <p>The ability to provide a virtual school environment for all school aged children in commendable. With the existence of career pathways, it is evident that the district is committed to allow students to be active participants in selecting classes that they would like to take. The district does a good job in describing the multiple opportunities that students can earn credits in their desired learning environment beyond the traditional seat time.</p> <p>A description of accommodations provided to ELL and special education students is acceptable. For example, ELL teachers will receive Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) professional development. Also, students identified as ELL in high school will have access to summer school classes at no cost. According to the school district, Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) is supported through Title I and II for low performing schools to develop strategies that assist students to reach standards. It is clear that the district is committed to providing learning resources to all students to ensure success.</p> <p>The weakness with this application is that the timeline provided does not clearly provide an explanation of goal, deliverables, and responsible parties to support project implementation. The applicant has scored in the mid-range. Ten points are assigned.</p>		
<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>Students have access to blended learning environment at any time throughout the school year. However, it is noted that mobile devices can only be utilized in classroom settings.</p> <p>The Data Warehouse description provided by the LEA appropriately describes how each technologic system is interoperable for all educational stakeholders. It is commendable that the LEA will provide technical support 24/7 in multiple formats. It is stated that parents will have assistance by phone and video.</p>		

The district has not provided information on how at-risk students and parents can access technology content beyond the school day. The district does state that parents can access student achievement data via campus kiosks.

The applicant has scored in the mid-range for this section criterion. There is not adequate information on how the applicant will provide additional software and learning supports to students and parents on how to utilize the district's learning systems. Seven points have been assigned.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>A plan to assure project goals are on target is included in the grant application. The intent to hire an internal evaluator is clearly justified. Included in the application is a goal to have quarterly meetings lead by the evaluator to share formative evaluation with School Improvement Teams and Area leaders. Obtaining key district stakeholders and principals input only quarterly does not address RTTT-D expectations to provide timely and regular feedback to key staff to address corrections and improvements.</p> <p>WCSD states that the data analyst internal evaluator and project director will travel frequently to schools to plan, organize, communicate, implement, and manage the vision of the project. The district's commitment to monitor project implementation is vague. Also, there is limited information in the application of the process that will be used to gain feedback from stakeholders of the project's progress and shortfalls. The applicant has scored in the mid-range. Ten points have been assigned.</p>		
<b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Efforts described to communicate will all stakeholders are appropriate. If awarded funding, the district is committed to communicate in the following ways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newsletters and emails to staff</li> <li>• Updates at administrative and supervisory meetings</li> <li>• Broadcast at board meetings</li> <li>• Parent magazine sent home monthly</li> <li>• Social Media blast on Facebook and Twitter</li> <li>• Superintendent brown bag lunches for parents and community</li> <li>• Website updates</li> <li>• Focus groups with students</li> </ul> <p>The applicant has full addressed the criteria. Full points have been assigned.</p>		
<b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<p><b>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The LEA has included performance targets within the grant application. The description provided for each performance measure is clear and concise. For example, the district notes ninth grade credit attainment has become a critical performance indicator of high school student achievement. The plan to monitor credit completion is sound.</p> <p>The application is lacking evidence of ambitious goals to provide students with highly effective teachers by the 2017 – 2018 school year. According to the district data, only 50% of all teachers and 35% of all principals will be highly effective upon completion of the grant cycle. Also, the district desires to have 36% of all Limited English Proficient (LEP) students graduate with at least a standard diploma by the 2016-2017 school year. The goal is not ambitious and is inconsistent with the vision of the high level of support the district plans to provide LEP and special education students with the reform of the English Language Learners Services it plans to provide to students if awarded RTTT-D funding. If the project's vision</p>		

is to provide students with access to additional staff members to increase student achievement, it is reasonable to plan for increased achievement and graduation rates since there will be an increased opportunities for personalized learning. The applicant has scored in the mid-range for section criteria E(3). Three points have been assigned.

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

**5**

**5**

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

As stated previously, the intent to hire an internal evaluator is sound. The external evaluator will utilize mix methods to collect and gather data. This person is responsible for collecting data from all parents, teachers, students, and district staff members. Formative and summative evaluation tools will be developed by the internal evaluator. The expectations to have the evaluator assist with providing information to the district are clear. The yearly steps the district has provided on measuring successes are feasible. The first two years of the grant will focus on evaluating program level implementation and during years three and four, the district will focus on overall impact of the project on the performance measures. Full points have been assigned.

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

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

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

The district is successful in identifying funds that will support the vision of its project Education for the Future. The district has submitted five budget narratives. Funding requests for the administrative team, Signature Academies, personalized academic plans, 21<sup>st</sup> century learning and formative assessment process, and flexible learning options are all reasonable and justified. Titled funds, technology funding, IES grants, teacher incentive grants, Washoe private foundation funding, and general operating funds will assist with supporting project goals beyond the scope of RTTT-D funding. The rationale for one time investments to enhance technology, transportation, and professional development for staff members is well documented in the grant application. The applicant has fully addressed selection F(1). Full points have been assigned.

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

**10**

**7**

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

Letters of support from state and local government officials are included in the grant application. The district has appropriately documented its capacity to manage federal grant funding. Within the past three years the district has been awarded over 60 million dollars from the following federal initiatives:

- Teacher Incentive
- High School Graduation Initiative
- School Improvement Grant
- Striving Reading
- ARRA EduJobs

The effort to seek additional funding to sustain the project beyond the scope of the grant is clear. Collaborative partnerships with local universities will assist with identifying curriculum, textbook, and assessment needs. According to the grant application, WCSD is one of six national IES grants. This grant award will help support RTTT-D funding upon the completion of the grant cycle. With implementation of student academic plans. Inputted data from the academic plans will be used to monitor future potential student dropouts. By monitoring dropouts, the school district is monitoring future student academic achievement and addressing one of the project goals of increasing the number of graduates that are highly-skilled and college and career ready.

The district has provided a description of itemized funding by grant cycle year. The description provided is clear and concise. A budget table that describes funding beyond the scope of the grant is not included. The applicant is scored mid-range. A score of seven has been noted.

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

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	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The district has done a good job of describing outside partnerships within the community to assist the Signature Academics. The LEA has a working relationship with neighboring colleges. It is commendable that they will to incorporate STEAM learning into the curriculum.</p> <p>The district efforts to communicate and support parents are impressive. The Parent University provides over two hundred classes to parents with the assistance of funding from community based organizations.</p> <p>Seven population desired results for students are included in the grant applicant and are aligned with the vision of Education for the Future. The desired results can be achieved with RTTT-D funding.</p> <p>The goal to increase student achievement for targeted students is realistic. Dashboard and Early Tracking Systems will assist with ensuring that students are successful.</p> <p>The plan to partner with Washoe County Social Services and Juvenile Services is clear. Services will be streamlined to participating schools to provide support to targeted students. The applicant has fully addressed this criteria. Full points have been assigned.</p>		

**Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments**

	Available	Score
<b>Absolute Priority 1</b>		<b>Met</b>
<p><b>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The vision of Washoe County School District (WCSD) to reform instructional experiences for secondary students is understood. The district’s Education for the Future initiative builds on the</p> <p>A total of 15,000 students and 1,180 teachers will be served under the Education for the Future Initiative. The district provides a description of its desires to select 11 high school and 13 middle school campuses to participant in the Education for the Future Initiative. It is understood why the district is targeting middle school because these years are vital transition years in development in the learning process.</p> <p>Documentation of reform efforts in persistently low achieving schools has been included. Efforts to increase student achievement are commendable. For example, in low achieving schools, the LEA has made effort to add instructional days to student calendars, significantly increased the number of hour for academic instruction in low performing schools, allowed time for collaboration during the school day, and it has provided quality technology in all classrooms.</p> <p>The district has support from community members and the collective bargaining representatives within the school district. The applicant has an extensive list of supporters that have written compelling evidence why this grant application should be funded.</p> <p>Allowing student choices on where they attend middle school and high school is impressive. It is also notable that each school is uniquely designed to meet the career aspirations of the students served. Students will have choices in what they earning, they will have access to diverse learning formats, and will have access to outside professionals that can serve as resources and mentors.</p> <p>Central staff commitment and resources the district plans to provide staff members and schools to support learning are provided within the grant application.</p> <p>The applicant has provided compelling evidence that its grant application will assist with meeting the academic needs of children within the school district. The applicant has met goals of Absolute Priority 1.</p>		

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>176</b>
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0069NV-3 for Washoe County School District (WCSD)

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
<p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(A)(1) The proposal articulates a clear, comprehensive reform vision. The proposed project, Education for the Future: College Ready and Career Inspired (Education for the Future), would "personalize the formal and informal learning experience for middle and high school students to significantly increase the number of high school graduates who are highly-skilled and college and career ready." To build on work in the four assurance areas, the proposal notes that the LEA has: adopted the Common Core State Standards; invested \$220K in the development of a data warehouse, including the development of an Early Warning Risk Index; and implemented a Principal and Teacher Professional Growth System (PGS) which incorporates personalized professional learning, career paths, and evaluation systems. The proposal notes that the LEA created "an accelerated learning zone for its lowest performing schools." In this regard, the National School Boards Association awarded the LEA the Council of Urban Boards of Education (CUBE) Annual Award for Urban School Board Excellence partly because of: (1) increases in achievement of low-income and minority students; and (2) placement of highly-qualified teachers in schools with the greatest needs. To accelerate achievement, deepen student learning, and increase equity, the proposal features a plausible, personalized approach that features highly personalized learning pathways, personalized plans for each student, and flexible learning options (face-to-face, blended, and online). The proposal provides rich detail on reforms taking place in the LEA as well as the state context. However, the section does not describe or illustrate what goes on inside classrooms between teachers and students pursuant to the implementation of the initiative.</p>		
<b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(A)(2) The applicant's approach supports high-quality implementation. The approach entails intensifying existing implementation of Signature Academy/CTE in the 11 high schools in the district that currently have these programs. In addition, the district would add 13 middle schools (whose students feed into these high schools) to the initiative in order to "build a pipeline" for students moving into Academy/CTE. Training will be provided using a train-the-trainers model, which (the proposal notes) has worked for the district on past federal grants. The proposal presents a table that states that participating schools collectively meet RTT-D's eligibility requirements. A complete list of participating schools is presented in an appendix. This list shows the number of participating educators and the number of participating students (total, high-need, and low-income). Table 3 in narrative shows how training will be rolled out to participating schools.</p>		
<b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
<p><b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(A)(3) The proposal does an excellent job of detailing the project's strategy, including logic models associated with each of the RTTT core assurance areas. As presented, the logic models contain some key elements of a high-quality plan, including: (a) inputs: investments from LEA; (b) process: Personalized Learning Environment Activities; (c) expected outputs from implementing activities; and (d) intermediate and long-term outcomes (e.g., impact on student performance). However, information regarding the implementation timeline is limited. Moreover, while the narrative describes the broad roles of staff who would implement the grant, the presentation does not consistently specify roles and responsibilities for various activities delineated in the logic model tables and/or org charts. The narrative in this section mentions scale-up but does not expressly discuss how the project would be scaled up to the district level. However, it is notable that the proposal itself represents part of a strategy to extend and scale-up the LEA's current reforms. If funded and implemented, the project would cover 11 of the district's 15 high schools and 13 of the district's 14 middle schools.</p>		

<b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
<p><b>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(A)(4) In general, the proposal (Appendix E) lists reasonably ambitious LEA-wide goals for performance on summative assessments, closing the achievement gap, graduation rates, and college-going rates. Notably, the LEA's annual performance assessment goals for elementary and middle schools are of two types: status (static) measure and growth measure (Adequate Growth to a Higher Level Percentile). Goals are set by school level, subject, and subgroup. In setting goals for decreasing the achievement gap, the district compares the performance of its three lowest-achieving subgroups (African American, Hispanic, and low-income) with the state of Nevada's most advantaged populations (i.e., white and/or non-low income). It is notable that while the district aims to close the state-wide achievement gap entirely by the first year following the end of the project (2017-18), within the LEA some groups would continue to endure major achievement gaps. For example, in at least one case, the academic achievement goals set for an initially high-performing group (multiracial students -- high school reading) are expected to grow by the same number of percentage points as the goals set for a low-performing group (African American students -- high school reading). Reasonably ambitious goals for increasing graduation rates are set for all participants and each subgroup. If the district achieves these graduation rate targets, the gap in graduation rates would close significantly. Finally, the district set the reasonably ambitious goal of moving its overall college enrollment rate for participating students from 75% to 85% during the life of the project. However, college enrollment baseline data or goals are not provided for subgroups.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>
<p><b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(B)(1) In general, the LEA has a clear record of success in the recent past. The LEA has experienced significant growth in student achievement over the past few years and has reduced the achievement gap overall and for selected groups (primarily Hispanic/Latino and FRL). Between 2010 and 2013, reading proficiency rates in the LEA increased by 12 percentage points (57% to 69%). Graduation rates have consistently risen for the following subgroups: Asian, Hispanic, White, and FRL. The LEA has implemented several policies and practices it believes fostered these results (e.g., small school implementations, seven period days, freshmen class houses, increased credit recovery options, graduation specialists, pilot programs for Project-Based Learning using immersive technologies, and better data monitoring). Although the proposal does not provide historical data regarding college enrollment patterns, as a proxy it does show that over the past four years there have been significant increases in the percentage of the LEA's students overall and by subgroup who completed an AP, IB, or Dual Course with a C or better. The seven persistently lowest achieving schools received funding from School Improvement Grants (SIG). All seven SIG sites have implemented research-based systems and strategies shown to increase student achievement. Many of these schools showed notable growth in achievement between 2010 and 2013. Strategies used to foster turn-around include extended learning time (e.g., adding five days to the school year), increased collaboration among teachers (e.g., joint development of lesson plans), improved discipline practices and outcomes, increased use of project-based learning, and improved use of technology (use of wireless connections in classrooms).</p> <p>The LEA uses multiple tools or avenues to provide student performance data to students, parents, and educators. A primary vehicle for providing data to students is the Academic Personalized Plan (APP), in which students maintain extensive data pertaining to their development and outcomes. APP is now implemented in 25 of the district's schools. Parents access student attendance, performance, and academic progress data through the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. At least 75% of parents log onto this system at least once. Educators have access to student performance data through a variety of channels including, for example, APP, online dashboards, student monitoring tool, and school profile data. Dynamic monitoring of student progress using these tools, along with data from the district's Early Warning Risk Index, enable educators to adjust and improve the personalized instruction provided students.</p>		
<b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>
<p><b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>B)(2) To address this criterion, the proposal refers to Appendix G, which contains personnel salary tables for the district's various employee groups. However, personnel salary tables do not provide school-level personnel expenditure data. There is no evidence in the proposal that data for actual school-level salary expenditures (or school-level non-personnel expenditures) are readily available to the public in a transparent format.</p>		

<b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(B)(3) The proposal does not mention any conditions or lack of autonomy that would hamper the district's ability to implement its approach to personalized learning environments (i. e., highly personalized learning pathways, rich learning profiles, options for student mastery, and flexible learning options). In addition, the proposal notes that several key state-level developments would facilitate implementation of the project: adoption of the Common Core State Standards; state mandate that district evaluation of teachers and principals incorporate student performance (at least 50%), and mandate that LEAs measure longitudinal student growth. The state has also set up a variety of educational policy/practice networks in which the LEA is involved.</p>		
<b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
<p><b>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(B)(4) A key vehicle for directly engaging stakeholders in the development of the proposal was an LEA-wide RTT-D survey -- responses were received from 2,119 parents, 380 LEA staff, and 863 students. Input provided by stakeholders is clearly aligned with the proposal. While 256 teachers completed the RTT-D survey, the proposal does not indicate how many of these teachers work at participating schools or how many support the proposal. However, the fact that the president of the teachers' union supports the proposal (signed proposal and submitted letter of support) suggests broad support of the proposal by teachers in participating schools. The proposal also notes that the LEA's Office of Human Resources "has worked with all employee associations to make policy changes supporting highly qualified, highly effective teachers, administrators and other staff at high needs schools." Appendix F of the proposal contains 39 letters of support from a wide array of key stakeholder groups, including the Governor of Nevada, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the heads of the teacher and principals' associations, presidents of two local colleges, and representatives of 11 community/business organizations.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>
<p><b>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(C)(1) The proposal provides a detailed discussion of the content of its strategy for personalizing instruction. The proposal includes a high quality plan that includes activities, deliverables, time lines, and responsibilities.</p> <p>With the involvement of parents, educators, counselors, and others, the proposed project would prepare students for college and careers around four interdependent components of Personalized Learning Environments (PLE): highly personalized learning pathways; rich learner profiles; options for demonstrating mastery; and flexible learning options. The primary vehicle for personalizing learning pathways is the Signature Academy, a school-within-a-school concept focused on career-and-industry-based programs that allow students to pursue special interests, talents, or career goals. Signature Academies currently operate in 11 of the LEA's comprehensive high schools. Signature Academies employ instructional techniques such as blended learning, Project-Based Learning, and portfolio assessments that facilitate personalization. Through engaging students in the development and maintenance of Academic Personalized Plans, students become aware of their interests and strengths and develop a sense of what they may want to do after high school graduation. This understanding fuels students' understanding of why learning is important. Learning options would be expanded (e.g., blended learning, Project-Based Learning). In addition to standardized tests (e. g., Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium tests), students will be able to demonstrate mastery through student portfolios and completer tests.</p> <p>Personalized instruction, the use of non-traditional teacher/practitioners, and digital learning content are key features of the Education for the Future Signature Academy/CTE. While each course in a Signature Academy features a set of objectives and outcomes that must be met, courses accommodate varying learning styles using inquiry-based activities and skills application that enable students to meet their individual learning goals. Flexible learning options will allow students to personalize their learning. For example, students will be able to use online learning, job shadowing, and internships or be part of a Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO), or enroll in CTE, AP, IB, or college courses as ways to accomplish their Academic Personalized Plan goals. Students will have access to high-quality content, especially digital content that is aligned to college and career ready standards. Using blended learning, teachers can customize learning activities to be collaborative or individual—and teachers can allow student self-regulation or regulate learning activities more</p>		

carefully. All data in the Warehouse is considered “live” and reflects the most up-to-date versions of formative and summative assessment, attendance, and behavioral data. The Academic Personalized Plan provides the foundation to create personalized learning recommendations and goals directly linked to college and career standards. The Academic Personalized Plan is also the most powerful tool for accommodating high need students. To ensure effective accommodation, the project would assign a Special Education Support Teacher Mentor to assist students and parents. In addition, the project would task a Registrar/Counselor Support Specialist with providing ongoing training to school registrars and counselors on how to meet the needs of high-need students.

To facilitate use of the main tool, the Academic Personalized Plan, students will receive training through structured classes, assemblies, and student/parent communications. In addition, students’ assigned teachers will provide personalized support for understanding their APPs.

Using the personalized plan as the foundation, each student would receive ongoing and regular feedback. Through teachers, students would have access to data from the continually updated (“live”) data warehouse. Moreover, all teachers will frequently review each student’s personalized plan and, as applicable, offer recommendations for improvement.

<b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>
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**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

(C)(2) This section does an excellent job of detailing the training and support teachers and school leaders would receive to advance the implementation of project goals. While a structured “high quality plan” is not articulated in this section, some planning details (e.g., timetable for rolling out project implementation to schools) are found in an earlier section. However, a key weakness of this section is that references made to teacher and principal evaluation information do not seem consistent with the RTTT definition (as explained below).

In addition to training provided by parties outside of schools, all teachers would engage in training by way of school-level Professional Learning Communities. Among other areas, training would cover Academic Personalized Plans, options for mastery, formative assessment in the personalized learning context, and using technology to facilitate flexible learning strategies. Teachers will receive training on how to monitor and self-assess their own professional growth. Randomly selected principals are being asked to pilot the state’s principal evaluation rubric in SY 2013-14. All principals and assistant principals participate in training on the LEA’s Observation and Analysis of Teaching (OAT) tool. This will enable them to provide critical feedback to teachers in the following areas: 1) the knowledge base of teacher instruction and pedagogy, 2) use of data-based decisionmaking for instruction, and 3) other areas of high standards and expectations for teaching and learning.

To accelerate student progress toward graduation and college-readiness, educators will have access to and skill in using tools such as: (1) students’ Academic Personalized Plans; (2) the 21st Century Learning Environments Rubric aligned with the Common Core State Standards; (3) a Formative Assessment Rubric that provides a tool for advancing instructional practice; (4) business or other non-school contexts (i.e., use of non-traditional teacher/practitioners to deliver content in highly skilled career fields); and (5) online classroom-ready resources and strategies and video examples of promising practices.

Teachers and school leaders will play a key role in implementing the Academic Personalized Plans for students. Teachers will bear responsibility for ensuring the development of the APPs. Teachers will have ready access to data contained in the various systems. School leaders will monitor the process and provide support and training to teachers on assisting students with the development and monitoring of APPS. School leaders will have access to the data from the teacher and principal Professional Growth Systems which, according to the narrative, focus on student-led learning. It’s not clear what access principals, for example, will have to teacher evaluation data, as defined by RTTT.

Key strategies that will be employed by the project to increase the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals include: (1) recruit and train highly skilled non-traditional teacher/practitioners from business and industry for Signature Academy/CTE pathways; (2) refocus hiring criteria to place greater emphasis on prospective teachers’ attitudes toward teaching and children; and (3) place more experienced teachers in classrooms in low-achieving schools. Planning timelines and responsibilities are not provided in this section. Moreover, the implicit definition of effective and highly effective teachers is not consistent with that of RTTT in that the use of non-traditional teachers, teacher attitudes, and teachers’ years of experience as hiring criteria do not necessarily lead to improvements in student achievement -- a key factor in the RTTT definition.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>
<p><b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(D)(1) Overall, while the proposal responds to each of the covered areas, the responses lack key details. Moreover, the proposal does not provide a timeline regarding when or how the various LEA offices will work together or with schools to implement the proposed project.</p> <p>The proposal describes the roles and functions of each central office department that will support the development, implementation, and review of the project. However, the proposal does not delineate specific activities and timelines for these offices.</p> <p>School leaders and leadership teams apparently have their greatest flexibility to determine how best to use available professional development time. Other critical elements of the project are in accord with state and district policy. For example the curriculum is aligned with the state-adopted Common Core State Standards. To help ensure project alignment with LEA policies and practices, the development of the project actively involved all key stakeholders and members of the LEA's leadership team.</p> <p>Students are able to earn credit based on demonstrated mastery as they progress through a series of knowledge-, competency- and skill-based lessons. Other systems in place for students to progress and earn credit at their own pace towards mastery include online learning and extended learning time.</p> <p>Regular teachers would work closely with ELL and special education teachers to ensure English Learners and students with disabilities accrue the full benefits of the initiative.</p>		
<b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(D)(2)</p> <p>The LEA would essentially use technological tools to ensure all project participants have access to content, tools, and other learning resources in and out of school. Examples include: blended learning environment, personal learning devices, LEA website, and a parent portal. The narrative acknowledges the challenge of providing access 24 hours a day to all participants. In addition, it is notable that the budget pages (Appendix D) indicate that only 1 mobile device will be purchased for every seven students in participating high and middle schools. Without a clearer specification of how mobile devices would be distributed or shared among students, the limited number of such devices could potentially diminish the effectiveness and equity of the personalization initiative.</p> <p>Technical support for personalized learning would be rendered to students, parents, and educators through Schoolwires, including self-support through tutorials, white papers, online videos, and phone support. Additional support would be provided through the LEA Office of Information Technology.</p> <p>Parents and students will have access to data/information through the LEA's Data Warehouse. However, the extent to which the data format is open is unclear.</p> <p>The proposal states that the project's Data Warehouse "will incorporate ALL 'live' and interoperable data systems currently used by District." However, the extent to which the various systems are open and easy to integrate is unclear.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
<p><b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(E)(1) The proposal presents a high quality plan for implementing a rigorous continuous improvement process. The Logic Model presented in the proposal describes the key objectives, activities, intended outputs, intermediate- and long-term outcomes, and performance measures used to monitor progress on implementation and impact. To facilitate the effective and timely collection, analysis, and reporting of improvement data, the project would hire: (1) an Internal Evaluator who would provide monthly reports regarding emerging trends and areas of the initiatives that may need adjustments; and (2) a Data Analyst who would compile all performance data and work with the Information Technology Department to ensure that</p>		

the Data Warehouse includes up-to-date performance measures. Moreover, the LEA's Department of Accountability, Research & Evaluation would provide user-friendly data tools to schools to ensure school personnel are effectively monitoring the academic progress of students at an individual-, classroom-, and school-level throughout the year.

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

**5**

**5**

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

(E)(2) To facilitate ongoing communication of project developments with internal and external stakeholders, the project would avail itself of the LEA's extant communications apparatus, including the Communication and Community Engagement Department (CCED). With the help of CCED, the project would employ the following means to communicate project news: Superintendent's weekly email to WCSD employees (Friday Minute), web-based employee newsletter, administrative and supervisory meetings, parent magazine, and social media (Facebook and Twitter).

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

**5**

**5**

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

(E)(3) Overall, the 10 performance measures for participating schools (middle and high school only) seem ambitious yet achievable. The proposal uses well thought-out performance measures of proficiency (on grade-level standards), student academic growth (percentile and adequate growth to a higher level), an early warning risk index, 9th grade credit attainment, a measure of the number of students on track to college- and career-readiness, percentage of students completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, and social and emotional competency (using data from a Student Climate Survey). The measures are provided by grade level and subgroups (FRL, LEP, and IEP). The proposal explains the rationale for each measure. The proposal also indicates that it would solicit support from its research partners (including WestEd and CASEL) to help the project review and improve these measures over time.

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

**5**

**5**

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

(E)(4) The proposal presents a high quality plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the project. The first two years of the evaluation would focus on program level implementation issues such as professional development participation, integrity of implementation, challenges, and promising strategies. During years 3 - 4 of the grant, the evaluation would assess the overall impact of the project guided by the performance indicators listed in section (E)(3). The plan for conducting the evaluation (including evaluation goals, questions, hypotheses, and broad implementation and reporting timeline) is well articulated. The project will hire an Internal Evaluator to coordinate the evaluation. The Internal Evaluator would provide bimonthly evaluation reports to project staff. Information gained from the formative evaluation would be shared quarterly with School Improvement Teams and Area leaders and through the stakeholder communication plan. Larger stakeholder meetings will be held semi-annually to review the evaluator's reports, assess ongoing goal attainment, examine performance and make modifications to improve the project.

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

	Available	Score
<b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>		
<p>(F)(1) The proposal presents a coherent, detailed budget (Appendix D). It identifies all funds that would support the overall project and five sub-projects, and it distinguishes between one-time and ongoing outlays. With a few exceptions, the budget seems reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the proposal and provides clear, thoughtful rationales for the various budgeted expenditures. There were two notable exceptions to this summary evaluation. First, participating schools would receive one mobile device for every seven students. This limited availability could diminish the effectiveness and equity of the proposal's personalization strategy. Second, a sizeable investment is made in securing and training nontraditional teachers. By the third year of the project a total of 12 nontraditional teachers are expected to be in participating schools. After project funding ends, the proposal does not indicate that these teachers will be retained by the LEA. If they are not retained, this major investment seems questionable.</p>		
<b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>

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

(F)(2) The proposal lays out a clear plan for sustaining critical project components after the RTT-D grant ends. Key project components would be sustained primarily through anticipated future increases in state funding for education as well as leveraging other District funds (e.g., Title 1 and Title 2). A key weakness in this sustainability plan is that while the project would invest considerable time and resources in securing and training non-traditional teachers/practitioners, the proposal does not indicate that (the 12) non-traditional teachers hired using RTT-D funds would be retained by the district.

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

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

**Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:**

CPP

The project would embrace key partnerships maintained by the LEA that are designed to support the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of students. These include: Parent University, CASEL, student re-engagement centers and drop-out prevention, and Family Resource Centers. The proposal tabulates desired student results and indicators, which cover both educational outcomes and support/behavioral outcomes associated with the project's engagement with these partnerships. Data associated with these indicators, much of which would be included in the Data Warehouse, would be used to assess student well-being (or risk). The NoVo Foundation and CASEL partnership provides two CASEL senior consultants (in-kind), who among other things, integrate social and emotional learning (SEL) with existing District initiatives. The proposal presents a table that describes how the partnerships would work to build capacity in participating schools to support students and families in addressing their non-educational needs. Finally, the proposal presents an extensive list of ambitious yet seemingly achievable goals that relate both to student academic achievement as well as students' emotional/behavioral outcomes.

**Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments**

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

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

Absolute Priority 1

Overall, the proposal presents a coherent comprehensive model for building on the core educational assurance areas to create efficacious personalized learning environments that promote and accelerate student achievement. The proposal would personalize learning by embedding four components in its reform initiative: highly personalized learning pathways for students; rich learner profiles (Academic Personalized Plans); options for individual students to master core academic and Signature Academy/CTE content; and flexible learning options for students (e.g., blended learning and Project-Based Learning). Full implementation of the proposal's strategies would enable the LEA to aggressively pursue the project's reasonably ambitious performance goals.

<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>179</b>
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