



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0189OH-1 for Xenia Community City Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Southwest Ohio Educational Alliance (SOEA) is comprised of 2 school districts with a common, credible vision of learning anytime and anywhere. By re-imagining the student experience, the applicant presents a comprehensive approach to meeting their goals through individualized learning plans, diversity of learning environments and opportunities and adult guidance in the form of individualized mentors. This vision will build on their existing commitment to 3 of the 4 core educational assurances, lacking emphasis on turning around the lowest performing schools. Through Ohio State RTT initiatives such as, Transformation Team responsible for the Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan, framework of implementation of personalized learning through the Ohio improvement process, curriculum aligned to Common Core State Standards for 100% schools by 2014, SOEA will be able to build on infrastructure to support the core educational assurance areas.</p> <p>SOEA demonstrates their plan and desire to increase capacity to accelerate and deepen learning through on and off campus experiences in different settings. Online courses, credit flexibility (supported by district policy), dual enrollment/college credit, extended or online learning. In order to increase equity and individualized student support, the following strategies justify the applicant's approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional Improvement System (IIS) used by educators to tailor assessments to individual learning objectives with a goal of standards-based reporting by 2015. • Teacher professional growth plans focused on student achievement and based in rigorous performance evaluation • Partnership with the Reinventing Schools Coalition (RISC) to create a personal student mastery system • Shift the paradigm from a time-driven system of students earning seat credits to a fundamentally different, proven performance-based system. • EDHEE tool (Equitable Distribution of Highly Effective Educators). <p>Through two day in the life depictions, the applicant successfully portrays how their plans to personalize the learning environment for students will impact their experience, but the ideas that a teacher would be able to grade a pre-assessment while teaching is questionable. Other weaknesses include attention to student interests, as the district grapples with student survey data that questions the joy of learning in the district.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant presents a broad approach to implementation, and lacks a targeted vision that leaves discrepancies about how key aspects of the learning anytime, anywhere will impact students at the elementary level. SOEA asserts that the eligibility requirement is met, and an equivocal description of how the participating schools were chosen by a leadership committee was offered. A list of the 11 total schools across 2 school districts was provided satisfying that requirement. The total number of participating students will be 6386, with 3608 or 56% of students considered low-income.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	3
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>SOEA did not explicitly provide a high quality plan of how this proposal will be scaled to transform their districts and meet their goals. The applicant provided no evidence of a logic model or theory of change to support the meaningful implementation across the consortium. One of the two school districts involved in the proposal (Xenia) provided their</p>		

district strategic plan. While aligned to the core assurances generally, this plan that was included in the appendix does not reference the proposal activities directly. While this Xenia district strategic plan has elements of a high quality plan: key goals, timelines, deliverables, and parties responsible, it is not a plan created to support the request for RTT funds. This plan cannot be deemed high quality, as it does not actually address the proposed activities of the consortium of 2 school districts, and instead focuses on the work underway at the lead school district, Xenia Community Schools.

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

The applicant provides summative data performance measures (grades 3-10), overall and by student subgroup, but does not explain why targets are not set for Hispanic and African-American students in Washington Court House City Schools. SOEA presents data about the achievement gap measured by proficiency level on the state assessment, but the targets are set at 3% growth each year for all racial subgroups with no rationale. Graduation rates and related justifications for missing subgroups are presented with ambitious targets, suggesting an almost 25% increase in the number of economically disadvantaged students that graduate by 2018. These targets may not be achievable based on the SOEA current report cards of D an F in closing achievement gaps. College enrollment and post-secondary degree attainment data are not available, but SOEA documented their intent to institute tracking these measures.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	4

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Generalized information is provided about student achievement over the last 4 years, showing mixed results, with some decreases for certain grades in math and reading. The applicant admits that there is room for improvement, in particular with subgroups where no specific data was provided. Graduation rates are declining or inconsistent. – Xenia’s rate decreased by almost 5% in 3 years.

During this time period, three elementary buildings in Xenia Community Schools were awarded a Tier 3 School Improvement Grant in which they undertook mostly traditional reform strategies rather than an ambitious turnaround effort: PD in guided reading, Literacy Collaborative program in grades K-5, math coaching from Ohio State University, RtII, Leveled Literacy Instruction, added RtI and Reading Recovery specialists, technology, parental involvement initiatives. Inconsistent gains were made based on these efforts, as this SIG grant coincides with the time period required to show a track record of success.

SOEA does specify a web-based software tool ProgressBook as a way of providing data to all stakeholders. Information and participation are enhanced by mentors and other traditional forms of engagement.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	4
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(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

SOEA is subject to the Ohio open records law, and annually publishes their budgets. Public forums are hosted to increase transparency, and evidence was provided through agendas. Financial reports are broken down by categories required by the application, and charts were provided to illustrate this publication.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	6
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Successful conditions are evident based on the Ohio Race to the Top award which has supported implementation of college and career ready standards, new teacher and principal evaluation systems, and a Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan. While the State context appears strong, it is less clear whether the level of autonomy is sufficient for SOEA to implement personalized learning environments. In order to realize a vision of learning anytime, anywhere it would be crucial to have the policy flexibility to do so. One of the districts passed a Credit Flexibility Plan, so it can be inferred that there is some autonomy, but the applicant does not make that obvious.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (15 points)	15	6
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>There is sparse evidence that meaningful stakeholder engagement occurred during the development of the proposal, but SOEA contends that school leaders, community members, local government officials, boards of education, and parent groups provided input. The bargaining unit leaders shared the proposal for feedback from members, none of which is documented in the application. Unit leaders provided letters of support and appropriate signatures, alongside 11 other letters of support, from a diverse group of stakeholders with the exception of parents.</p>		

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The essential emphasis of this proposal speaks to a fundamental shift in approach to offering students an opportunity to demonstrate mastery rather than being time-bound, but does not have an accompanying high quality plan. As it relates to how SOEA will improve teaching and learning by personalizing the learning environment, there is no detailed plan offering key goals, activities to be undertaken and the rationale for the activities, the timeline, the deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities.

There is however a set of solid ideas that address the criterion that are not necessarily ambitious or coherent, but certainly achievable such as:

- A twice yearly review of data related to a learning plan aligned to standards, overseen by a leadership team and a mentor alongside a learning team comprised of educators, students, and families.
- Access to diverse learning contexts: Online, credit recovery and flexibility, apprenticeships, post-secondary enrollment
- Project-based approach to learning aligned with standards to support teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving
- Teachers use and design of student learning objectives (SLO) to determine baseline data and tiered growth targets as specified by the Ohio Department of Education
- Use of SLO to personalized learning sequence and leadership team and mentor use to set goals
- Data-driven decision-making will support adjustments to learning plans including additional supports and interventions if necessary

This proposal heavily emphasizes progress monitoring and diversity of learning environments, and much less on pedagogy. There is also no explicit evidence that this set of ideas is geared towards supporting high needs students. There is no mention of exposure to diverse cultures, or perspectives, or digital content beyond online courses.

No mechanisms for training students to understand these tools are offered, and individual data will be updated rather infrequently with a twice yearly review. Overall this is a weak and incoherent approach to learning that lacks credibility in the absence of a high quality plan.

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

The central strategy to teaching and leading in SOEA is not credible based on the complete absence of detail of how the partnership with the Re-inventing Schools Coalition (RISC) will be implemented with educators in the system. The appendix reference is a limited snapshot of the front page of the website, and the discussion in this application is philosophical in nature, rather than focused on a high quality plan for implementation. In addition, the rest of this plan appears to be written from the perspective of the partner, rather than through the lens of the district tasked with implementing the partnership.

SOEA fails to substantiate any of the RISC philosophy with plans to engage educators in training to build capacity, to implement personalized learning environments, adapt content and instruction in response to student needs, frequently measuring progress on standards and using data to drive instruction, and using evaluation data to support educator effectiveness.

Again, while the RISC partnership is aligned to the absolutely priority, the narrative is vague in the approach to implementation. As defined by the RISC viewpoint, participating educators would measure progress on standards through multiple assessments and use of electronic tools. There is no confirmation that educators would be well prepared to use resources to accelerate progress toward meeting standards and graduation requirements. There is also no evidence of how educators would successfully identify optimal learning approaches based on individual student learning plans and through the learning and leadership team processes described in other areas of the proposal. While the philosophy of RISC speaks to effective instructional content and assessments, the applicant does not document how educators and students will access these resources and what would be made available beyond the actual diversity of learning environments (online, dual-enrollment, etc.).

In the area of school leadership, a team approach has been presented by the applicant, but not in direct connection with the teacher evaluation system, or an integrated and intentional method to training educators in the demands of implementing personalized learning to promote college and career readiness. The plan to ensure that every student has access to highly effective educators cannot be deemed high quality, as no such plan exists. The notion of continuous improvement is presented by SOEA in the conclusion of the section, but is vague and does not illustrate how this would be executed.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	8
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The consortium governance structure will leverage one key central office point person to coordinate grant activities across the 2 districts, and a larger District Leadership Team (DLT) will meet monthly to review progress on grant activities which satisfies this requirement. The DLT as defined by the State of Ohio Improvement Process, will mirror the Building Level Team (BLT) of which a leader will be released to participate in governance of the grant. The third level of implementation oversight would be provided by educators from the area educational service center, and will observe both BLTs and DLTs to add more accountability to the initiatives.</p> <p>Both districts have ensured that the policies and structures are in place to guarantee that students are able to progress and earn credit based on mastery, not seat time. While there appears to be a commitment to flexibility around school schedules and calendars, like year-round schools, it is evident based on the EDHEE from the State, that there is autonomy and flexibility around personnel. One policy that will be under review, supports personalized learning by ensuring that grading practices match the philosophy of anytime, anywhere personalized learning for each student.</p> <p>While all students, including students identified as English language learners, Special Education, and gifted and talented students will benefit from individualized learning plans, it is not understood how students with diverse learning needs will be accommodated. Team based decision-making overseen by mentors drives the individual process, but is not necessarily integrated with the proposed BLT/DLT structure, which lessens the credibility. The lack of a clear timeline that connects the activities, rationales, and parties responsible, makes their plan of average rather than high quality,</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	3
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>While the applicant proposes a high school strategy that will incorporate technology devices whether personal or school-provided, it is unclear what these devices are and how they will be used beyond accessing the Internet and a vague indication of online learning. This strategy does not ensure that all participating students will have the access needed to benefit from personalized learning.</p> <p>SOEA states that parents will have access to the Internet through the school building day or night, and that technical support will be provided without clear understanding of who or how they will be supported in using ProgressBook to monitor relevant student data. All stakeholders are not addressed by this support, which lessens the credibility of the infrastructure to support personalized learning.</p> <p>It is not specifically clear if interoperable data systems or open data formats will be available, but the state level Instructional Improvement System (IIS) implementation will be complete by the end of 2013-2014. In addition, an electronic KIOSK tracks and records employee data, and the fiscal services department uses secure, online system to adhere to the general accounting principles, but with no evidence of integration.</p>		

The applicant does not address all of the elements of a high quality plan, as described activities do not have clear rationales, detailed timelines, or an understanding of which parties are responsible.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	5
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The plan provided in the Appendix was created in May 2012 and is the strategic plan for Xenia Community Schools, the proposed lead LEA. This plan cannot be deemed high quality, as it does not address both school districts (Xenia and Washington) in the Southwest Ohio Education Alliance as defined in this proposal. In addition, the State of Ohio has a Continuous Improvement Process, but this is not defined as the process for reviewing the proposed grant activities. This is important to differentiate from the continuous improvement process associated with oversight of the grant activities and will be executed by the building and district level teams. External evaluators will use 7 guiding questions to analyze success, and school leaders will be open to making course corrections based on feedback which satisfies the criteria. There are not enough specifics related to how meaningful feedback will be provided, and other details about tools and process to deem their plan high quality.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Xenia Community Schools has a high quality plan for communicating with external stakeholders through multiple mechanisms of outreach through annual reports, websites, newsletters, ProgressBook, websites, awards, blogs, special events and a unique idea of "Good News Cards" to recognize student achievement. This plan has an objective, rationales, deliverables and timelines which justifies the quality. The other school district, Washington Court House City will plan to replicate these efforts with the addition of communication/marketing specialists, which lends more coherence to the potential for ongoing communication and engagement. The central deficit to this plan is the missing information about how internal stakeholders will be directly engaged.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Of the 12 performance measures offered 5 do not have any data, but the applicant asserts that by the end of the 2013-2014 school year they will set targets and begin collecting data on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup whose teacher of record and principal are a highly effective teacher (and a highly effective principal). • The number and percentage of participating students who complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form. • he number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup, who are on track to college- and career-readiness based on the Grades 9-12 where state level end of course exams are available; this is not grade level specific, but course specific • he number and percentage of second year high schools students who are or are on track to being career-ready as measured by PLAN or PSAE <p>In the analysis of the performance measures where data is provided, SOEA offers leading indicators of graduation rates, student growth, and college and career readiness to ensure success of personalized learning, but there is no mention of how it will review and improve measures over time to gage progress. Somewhat ambitious targets around discipline will be used to measure student behavior in relationship to academic focus, expecting decreases in 20-25% of students over the life of the grant. Most ambitious is the final performance target for graduation to be 100% for all participating schools, which would necessitate a nearly 20% increase in Xenia Community Schools and almost 10% in Washington Court House City Schools, which may not be achievable based on their current trajectory downward. In other areas, the applicant proposes 2-3% gains across subgroups, focusing on student growth rather than absolute performance. Subgroup information is unclear and inconsistent, and accompanying rationales are not present.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

There is no connection in this section to the proposed grant activities and a high quality plan to rigorously evaluate the initiatives. The applicant describes the investments as one-time and self-sustaining and that the intended impact will lie in the school culture shift towards personalized learning. While this is meaningful as a vision, it does not speak to the requirement of evaluating the effectiveness of the investments. Demonstration classrooms were mentioned here as a strategy, but there is a lack of information about how this relates to the financial investments of the proposal.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

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

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

This budget does not align to the SOEA vision of learning anytime, anywhere due to the lack of funds proposed to support diverse learning environments for students to demonstrate mastery. There are multiple discrepancies between the projected budget and the proposed plans and there is no rationale to provide additional insight into how these investments will develop and support the proposal. The following areas provide examples of these discrepancies:

- Afterschool support to families in the form of personnel is confusing based on the stipends being provided to mentors as well as the technological support services being employed
- A large investment in small group instructors does not have an accompanying rationale and was not mentioned anywhere else in the proposal
- Contractual services budget is incompatible between \$3,360,000 based on the line items vs. total \$4,320,000.00, a difference of \$960,000
- Other areas without explanation or specifications are: Travel and lodging associated with professional development, technology devices, curriculum materials and software

Re-inventing Schools Coalition expenses are not defined and represent a more than \$1.4 million investment or more than 7% of the total funding requested. Given that this is a key aspect to the proposal it warrants greater detail.

Another significant discrepancy relates to teacher stipends for professional development outside their contracted time. In the description it states \$500,000 per year but the chart reads a \$150,000 per year for a total of \$600,000.

The only reference to other funding relates to more than \$100,000 in district funds for custodial costs, and existing State level funds to support RTT initiatives rooted in the core educational assurances, where no related fiscal information was provided. The entire budget is considered to be a one-time investment, and there is no assurance that personalized learning environments will be sustained after the grant expires.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	1
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The continuous improvement planning process helps illuminate ways to sustain project activities, but this cannot be considered appropriate in the context of the significant investments proposed. While the applicant contends that professional development, communications, and continuous improvement are sustainable, there is not a plan available to assess the potential for sustainability. Without clear activities, rationales, timelines, or parties responsible, this plan cannot be considered high quality. There is no post-grant budget provided to bolster evidence in this area.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

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

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes an existing partnership with Greene County Educational Service Center Mental Health Services which provides outpatient mental health therapy services to school age children, but it is unclear how many students are impacted by these services, how long this partnership has been in progress, whether it is sustainable, and how it aligns to

improving student growth through personalized learning.

The applicant is targeting youth who are severely emotionally disturbed, and based on the minimal performance measures offered, these students are in the middle grades, which lacks coherency and is technically incomplete. Grade 6-8 Middle behavior indicators provided:

- Reduction in disciplinary occurrences
- Improvement in satisfaction surveys

GCESC-MHS provides diagnostic individualized assessments and treatment interventions that are empirically based and anchored to sound and established clinical practice, but it is unclear how outcomes are tracked for each child. Areas that have inadequate information to address criteria are:

- Strategy to scale the model
- Emphasis on results and improving outcomes over time
- Integrate services
- Details about capacity building beyond general training to assess the needs and align to goals
- Identify and inventory needs aligned with goals
- Assess the progress in implementing the plan

Screening for entry is based on information gained from the referral source and/or initial contact with the parent/ guardian, and is based on client preferences and subject to additional referral which is sufficient for the established criteria.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

This applicant has strength in its vision and philosophical approach that learning can take place anytime, anywhere. Unfortunately, this vision unraveled in the context of the lack of clear, credible, high quality plans for implementation. While the promising practices of providing diverse learning environments to create opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery in multiple ways can be considered aligned with the absolute priority, the application was incoherent overall, as evidenced by the budget investments and numerous discrepancies cited against criteria. There are several areas where the applicant failed to provide enough detail to be able to make a determination about whether the goals are ambitious and achievable, particularly in section C where a partnership with RISC was put forth without any understanding of how that partnership would influence teaching and learning and ultimately result in personalized learning environments driven by college and career ready standards and a commitment to improving outcomes.

Some of the strengths of the application relate to progress on 3 of 4 of the core educational assurances, and a teaming structure that allows for feedback and monitoring at all levels. The clear weaknesses relate to a real understanding of how central strategies of using individualized mentors and individual learning plans will be executed without a depth of understanding of how this will be done with fidelity. The absolute priority was met based on the vision, but had an unacceptable lack of detail and thorough, organized plans for implementation. This application has a serious disconnect between the vision and project activities, and the in-depth information necessary to understand whether this proposal is ambitious or achievable.

Total	210	73
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Race to the Top - District Technical Review Form



Application #0189OH-2 for Xenia Community City Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant submitted a plan with a targeted focus on school reform through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. development of a focused strategic plan including personalized learning through student choice, individual student learning plans through the Ohio Improvement Process 2. District, buiding, and teacher-based leadership team focused on the specific needs of students with the Ohio Improvement Process as the structure for analyzing student data, evaluating school improvement goals, and monitoring teacher/leader performance 3. clear outcomes for student performance through a rigorous college and career ready curriculum 4. professional deveopment curriculum resources to build teacher capacity through the transition to new state standards and common core 5. partnership with professional organizations (Re-inventing School Coalition) to help teachers develop student learning plans with learning targets matched to state standards 6. blending innovative learning opportunities with leadership practice 7. dual enrollment courses and post-secondary enrollment options to enrich and accelerate college/career pathways 8. common formative assessments to measure students' current understanding; performance-based assessments to demonstrate mastery of curricula indicators/outcomes 9. instructional improvement system (IIS), an online learning system that: allows teachers to plan/deliver instruction matched to students' needs; contains assessments, standards, curriculum, and reporting; contains cross-reference mechanism to create linkages to standards 10. ambitious evaluation system, Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession, which clearly articulates and define an effective teachers and leaders including the superintendent. <p>In addition to comprehensive steps toward school reform, the plan includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • addressing the socio-emotional needs of students through surveys to ascertain students' perceptions/feelings • flexible options for student learning in additional to the traditional learning environment • clear description of a typical school day in the classroom seting based on personalized learning components and strategies matched to students' needs 		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Plan clearly lists and defines the participants and the rationale for selection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participating schools were selected through collaborative decision-making by district leaders • all schools collectively meet the eligibility requirements (low income, high needs) • district leaders considered the current conditions of the school, previous and current successes, available resources, and levels of commitment by all stakeholders • participating schools listed from both districts. 		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Building on the state's RTTT initiatives, the plan does reflect tenets of a high quality plan:</p>		

- key goals were outlined to address the needs of low income, high needs students in both districts
- activities related to increase teacher capacity instructionally and technologically were mentioned.

However, the plan lacked:

- clear expectations for the execution of the plan
- no timeline
- no deliverables
- parties responsible for implementation were inferred, but not directly stated.

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

10

7

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Plan clearly identifies adequate annual goals within each participating school and targeted populations:

- proficiency status and growth rates on summative assessments varies between 2 and 4 percentage points - some schools have already experienced growth based on existing initiatives
- gap reduction - varied between 2 and 3 percentage points, Washington Court House City Schools and Xenia Community schools, respectively
- graduation rates - expected 2 percent increase, but acknowledge that some students will take longer to complete state requirement.

Plan did not include college enrollment projections citing that a system for data collection will be instituted, but had not been developed or tracked in previous years, but did include data tables as required.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	11

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Plan reflects moderate growth over the past four years in the area of reading - some grade levels and school groups outperforming others throughout the four years.

Evidence of declining or stagnant graduation rates was included in the plan with the acknowledgement that this is a high priority area. Based on My Voice survey, students indicated school did not meet their needs. The district believes moving towards personalized learning will contribute positively to an upward trajectory.

Plan expands on existing relevant practices to increase teacher capacity in Title I schools with a focus on guided reading and math:

- instituted the Literacy Collaborative program k-5
- math coaching
- changed schedules, methods of instructional delivery
- response to intervention programs
- leveled literacy instruction, reading recovery implemented.

The plan believes building on these successes throughout the will accelerate student achievement.

Student performance data is available to parents, students, and educators in a variety of ways:

- written notices of local and state assessment results
- electronic tool, ProgressBook
- online access to teacher gradebooks, student information, special needs/gifted educational plans, report cards, lesson plans, etc.
- open house/information nights for parents and students
- mentoring.

Overall, the plan appropriately addressed the criteria indicated. An explanation about the "general improvement" of student data would have added more context for the reviewer.

Additional information about why the graduation rates were not improving would have been helpful.

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

5

2

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

This plan only included a five-year forecast budget for each of the districts, but failed to fully address actual personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff, teachers, or non-personnel expenditures except to mention the availability of such information on an annual basis. The report, however, does not explicit contain a line-item reflecting the specific categories required in the criteria.

The plan does include the collaborative processes (transparency) used to engage stakeholders in making fiscal decisions.

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

10

8

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Plan references the existing structures and successful conditions created at the state through a state RTTT award.

- partnering with state RTTT specialists to share relevant practices, guidance for implementation, and implementation of core educational assurance areas
- collaborated with the Ohio Department of Education, Center for Teaching and Learning
- leaders successfully completed three-day OTES training to conduct consistent observations and evaluations
- student learning objectives training completed
- alignment with state's Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan to develop goals, strategies, action steps, and fiscal resources.

It appears based on the plan presented that successful conditions based on the existing work of the state's RTTT efforts and the expectations already set forth regarding personalized learning and community partnerships to better teaching and learning.

The plan presented will enhance the initiatives afforded by the state RTTT, but with a specific focus on expanding the states' Instructional Improvement System; however, additional information about other initiatives that specifically address the high needs within the participating schools was not included. This information would have strengthened the plan.

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

15

13

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Plan very clearly demonstrates extensive stakeholder collaboration to develop, engage, and construct specific actions to meet the diverse needs of students, particularly low income, high needs students.

- defined we to include key stakeholders (school personnel, community members/leaders, families, and students)
- gathered and garnered support through meetings, phone conferences, and emails
- input solicited throughout the planning, drafting, and final revisions of the plan
- union leaders provided support by sharing updates with respective employees and getting feedback
- letters of support from city manager, mayor, area educational service center, colleges, council members, public library, businesses, churches, and students.

It is evident that the school district has the necessary support to fully implement the plan:

- "Today, the signs of transformational change are both visible and abundant. The school district will enhance its capacity to meet the educational needs of our community's students and their families with the 21st century tools and strategies for individual students."

Information about *how* the feedback was used to refine the proposal was not clearly outlined.

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

	Available	Score
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(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	8
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>This plan presents as a high quality plan and addressed some tenets of this criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementation of learning teams - student, mentor, parent - to develop personalized learning plans based on college and career ready standards • personalized learning plans will contain supports and timeframes • multi-faceted learning environment options such as: traditional setting, online learning, apprenticeships, and post-secondary enrollment • project-based learning projects using 21st century learning skills to address the various interests of students • multi-level data-driven instructional decisions (student learning objectives, summative, and formative assessments) • access to student information and performance through the Instruction Improvement System. <p>The plan is limited in its scope regarding this criteria and lacks some credibility. More specific information or plans regarding the instructional approaches to address the significant needs of low income and high needs students would have fully supported the lists of options and strategies.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	4
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The plan identifies its partnership with Re-inventing School Coalition (RISC) as its primary vehicle for improving teaching and learning through personalized learning environments - moving forward into 21st century learning skills/classroom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learner-centered approach where students are leaders in their learning, teachers are facilitators and partners; and students demonstrate high level of mastery • learning being the constant • four elements of RISC to be incorporated into the plan: shared vision (all stakeholders); personalized mastery (relevant standards; multiple assessments; effective instruction using research-based strategies; transparent curriculum); continuous improvement (refinement, innovation). <p>Although this portion of the application meets the general criteria of a high quality plan, the plan failed to fully address the criteria and was limited in its scope regarding professional development for leaders/teachers in executing the tenets of RISC to close achievement gaps and a structure for ensuring teachers and leaders are highly effective. It was also unclear how the transition would occur and what supports would be in place to assist teachers in the transition to RISC.</p>		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	10
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The school district's plan provides a brief overview of the three-tiered structure used to engage and organize stakeholder to service participating schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • district leadership team comprised of 50% teachers with community members, administrators, government leaders, and families for the remaining members • building leadership team with the same structure and a designated leader who is also a member of the district leadership team • implementation team from external oversight personnel from the area educational service center, who supports schools • each district expressed commitment to ensuring policies and structures that promote student achievement • development of grading system to match personalized learning options (to be developed) • students with disabilities or language needs will be serviced through personalized learning plans. <p>The plan was vague in fully addressing the subcomponents of this criteria. Specifically, information about how the leadership teams would function, have autonomy, and create school schedules/calendars that match the school reform initiatives were not included. The outlined shell narrowly met the criteria to be considered a high quality plan. While the</p>		

deliverables, timelines, and persons responsible were included, the overall plan was missed key components of this criteria.

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

10

3

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The information contained in this section meets the criteria for a high quality plan; however, the Information contained in the plan narrowly addresses the criteria. The plan sufficiently addresses the "what" for some proposed actions, but did not fully explain "how" the ideas would translate to benefit students or authentic transparency. For example, the HR and fiscal information is secure, yet transparent. But, an explanation of how the information is made transparent is not evident. In addition, the personal device mentioned for freshman in high school, but makes no mention of the specific device and what provisions would be made for elementary and middle school students. The application includes planned learning experiences that targeted key stakeho

- high school students will receive appropriate technology device to access online learning
- families will access the building during and after school to use available technology
- technology support for families to access Progress Book, web-based student data portal
- full implementation of the Instructional Improvement System (IIS).

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

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

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The high quality plan lists a combination of strategic avenues to collect, discuss, analyze, and evaluate effectiveness and performance of the personalized learning environments:

- comprehensive strategic plan with a team consisting of a wide representation of stakeholders
- methods for seeking input, analyzing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats through the district and building leadership teams
- community forums to share information and receive feedback
- external evaluators to process observe, monitor implementation, and impact
- internal comparison groups
- guiding questions to lead improvement process.

The plan did not include the frequency/intervals of the feedback, how adjustments would be implemented, or a specific measures for evaluating the effectiveness of the plan.

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

5

3

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The high quality plan described a clear approach to communicating with various stakeholders regarding and specific timelines for doing so:

- annual progress report
- ProgressBook
- elementary newsletters, district newsletters, district web blog
- building websites
- monthly one-call system to parents
- good news cards for individual students
- special events, parent conference, grade card fairs quarterly
- schools pride awards.

The hiring of a communication specialist to assist in providing opportunities and formalized structures to solicit feedback and convey updates is included in the plan and reflect forward-thinking on the district's part to ensure a continuous feedback cycle.

While this plan contains typical communication methods, it is unclear as to what specific structures will be in place for dialog along the way, the specific outcomes related to the grant, and the communication plan for internal personnel.

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

5

4

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The plan clearly identifies the 12 targeted performance measures along with an adequate rationale for selecting that particular measure including its intended impact on student achievement:

- all schools with implement the state and teacher evaluation systems including student growth measures in 2013-14
- K-3 state assessments used to gage grade level reading performance to provide early intervention
- begin monitoring student behavior/discipline with a specific lens on disproportionality and root cause
- track student performance in grade eight reading and math for targeted population
- increase the number of students completely the FAFSA
- analyze pass rate of state assessments, end of course exams.

Additionally information about the evidence used in the identified performance measures will inform practice along the way (leading data) would have provided significant relevance to the plan based on the logic model. Formative data measures were not mentioned to gage students' current performance and interventions needed.

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

5

2

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The plan states that the investments from the grant award will be one-time expenditures and will be self-sustaining due to the opportunities for professional development that will have lasting effects on the district's plan through demonstration classrooms.

Specific information regarding activities that employ technology was not included. This portion of the application does not meet high quality standards.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	5
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>An adequate budget is included in the plan that addresses the four core educational assurance areas. The plan accounts for existing investments and initiatives through state RTTT funds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • budget indicates reasonable budget categories and projected funding needed to implement personalized learning environments • partners, evaluators, training, and contracted services for continuous improvement were identified • costs incurred by the district were also included. <p>The plan lacked specificity in many areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriate rationales and details to justify expenses • inflation over the next several years (life of grant) not addressed • start-up requirements • delineation of one-time investments. 		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	3
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The district documents professional development, communication tools, and the continuous improvement plan as sustainable.</p>		

A fiscal plan to sustain personnel and direct services has not been developed and cannot be sustained. The key elements of a high quality plan are present despite many of the items such as deliverables and parties responsible are identified in other portions of the plan. Much of the existing work is in place based on the state's initiatives and can be sustained by the district; however, plans to monitor the effectiveness of the expenditures or to re-evaluate the identified fiscal areas were not listed.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	4

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

Plan proposes expanding an existing partnership with Greene County Educational Service Center Mental Health Services (GCESC) through:

- family and student support to eliminate non-desirable behaviors to reduce disciplinary occurrences and improvement satisfaction surveys
- reduction of disciplinary actions in grades six through eight by 20% per year through 2017.

Services offered to students and families through GCESC:

- counseling and mental health services for students who are special needs, physically challenged, speech/language challenges, intense emotional or mental needs, vocational transition, gifted, or addicted
- SED - severe emotional disturbed students with diagnosis of modd disorders, anxiety disorders, pervasive developmental disorders, post-traumatic stress disorders, and psychotic disorders
- onsite mental health services (at school or home)
- diagnostic assessments individual, group, family therapy, parent support, crisis intervention, etc.

No evidence was proffered related to the alignment of GCESC services to the discipline goals of the school district. The correlation of the discipline data and emotional/mental needs was unclear. Engagement of parents in the process outside of GCESC's referral requirements was not included.

Additionally, the outcome does not appear significant relative to the number of participating students.

The criteria for determining the student qualifications for this program is not evident in the plan nor is how staff capacity at the school level would be addressed.

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The school district's efforts to extend the work of the state's RTTT award is adequately identified in this plan specifically around two core education assurance areas of data systems and great leaders and teachers.

- achievable goals
- transparent processes and structures (district and building leadership teams)
- Ohio Standards for Teaching Profession as well as effective principal and superintendent evaluations
- migration and expansion of the Instructional Improvement System (IIS)
- college and career ready curriculum with a specific plan to address high school graduation rates (dual enrollment, mentoring, online learning)
- technology devices
- partnerships with local businesses, colleges, and educational services.

Although the plan relies heavily on the state's strategic plan and the priorities/assurance areas, the current plan for these districts lacked detailed information about its own execution and plan for accelerating student learning.

Total	210	121
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0189OH-3 for Xenia Community City Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- the application presents a comprehensive reform vision containing exhaustive details associated with each core educational assurance area. Rather than have a theme of "all students can learn", the more appropriate theme is "each student learns." The former places the onus more on the student whereas the latter introduces accountability to the school. This twist introduced by the applicant supports the focus on personalized learning where teaching and activities are specifically focused on a student's individualized needs.
- the vision incorporates examples of how learning is enriched by going beyond the walls of a traditional classroom, which deepens student learning by using real life activity.
- extensive work is already underway and will be continued to incorporate state standards based on descriptions of what student learning will look like for each curricular standard.
- assessment literacy is incorporated as part of the state's initiative for supporting college and career readiness. The applicant understands how this focus is foundational to academic success for accelerating student achievement.
- demonstration classrooms are in all schools facilitating observations for teachers wanting more ideas on developing personalized learning environments.
- a complete and convincing explanation describes how data systems will be used to inform teachers and principals for improving instruction. Building a data system for each student facilitates an individualized focus when designing instruction, and provides students, parents and educators with information on achievement that is readily accessed.
- deepening student learning and encouraging acceleration will be accomplished by dual-credit opportunities.
- assessment as a tool for personalized learning is enhanced by the applicant's commitment for both formative and performance-based assessments. The former provides more indepth analysis on where the student requires instruction while the latter demonstrates how well the student has progressed in achieving standards.
- data systems available to the applicant allows for extensive gathering and use of student information from many sources to determine growth and success.
- by 2015, personalized learning will be enhanced by the addition of a data system which will provide standards-based reporting on student achievement.
- the vision commits to ensuring that students benefit from an association with competent teachers and principals by adopting annual evaluations, incorporating training and credentialing, and reporting teacher and principal performance relative to student growth data.
- ensuring that teachers and principals are where they are most needed will be accomplished by a statistical tool that looks at the effectiveness rating for each staff so that appropriate placements are made.
- the narrative recognizes the importance of engaging student interest as a necessary component in triggering academic

learning.

- the narrative outlines in considerable detail what the classroom experience might look like for two levels - elementary and high school - of students and teachers who are involved in a personalized learning environment which clearly represent an individualized focus for accelerating student achievement. This illustration demonstrated how personalization occurs with a student where meetings occurred between the teacher and a small group of students engaged on the same task; the teacher undertook pre-assessment to determine what teaching relative to state standards was required for which students; the teacher was regularly recording information on the data management system; the student was engaged in a multi-disciplinary project which he selected in consultation with his mother; this project provided an opportunity to work in a nursing home near the school which increased his motivation and deepened his knowledge; and some students in this class participated in afterschool care. These address key aspects of how personalized learning can accelerate student achievement and deepen learning by increasing relevance and interest in academic learning.

- in summary, the vision described in this section provides a comprehensive and descriptive explanation regarding all requirements of the competition's selection criteria.

- overall, this section is assessed at the high range and at the high end of the range.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	7
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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- a brief but reasonable description of the decision-making process explains the rationale for incorporating all schools within the two LEA's into this application. In essence, leadership considered contextual elements regarding current efforts, challenges and successes, and made the decision. The process is weakened by not conducting a more encompassing set of consultations such as involving school personnel and community organizations. Involving stakeholders in decision-making will increase their active support for the initiative and, ultimately, greater commitment in implementing necessary reforms.

- The participating schools collectively meet the competition's eligibility requirements, and all participating schools are identified.

- the total number of students for each sub-group identified in the selection criteria are listed.

- the overall assessment of this section is at the upper end of the medium range because it fully addresses the criteria for participant students and schools but is weakened by the lack of involvement from a more complete set of stakeholders.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	0
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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- a narrative for this section is not provided. The applicant does not include a high quality plan for scaling-up meaningful reform to support district-wide change, which is a significant weakness for this aspect of the application. Goals specifically related to the scaling-up process, activities along with a rationale for these activities, deliverables, timelines and persons responsible for scaling-up are not provided.

- the applicant indicates that all schools are participating in the project, which may be the reason why this specific focus was omitted; however, including a response presenting their logic model or theory of change would demonstrate their capacity to scale-up reform in support of district-wide change. Not including a logic model in its proposal weakens the evaluation for this section.

- there was no evidence in other sections that indicated this plan was addressed.

- the overall assessment for this section is in the low range.

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

- the narrative meets criteria to provide targets for performance on summative assessments based on "proficiency and above" and are depicted in tables for each school and for both LEA's, and are broken down for each sub-group. Baselines for 2012/2013 are provided in all cases.

- incremental improvement targets for the duration of the project are identified.

- detailed tables identify existing achievement gaps for the sub-groups, and improvement targets are identified.
- the information provided in this section also incorporates performance relative to state performance. Current performance is below standard in reading and math for all students. This disclosure does not impact on the assessment of this section because it pertains to the past, but it does provide greater transparency in understanding the LEA's need to improve.
- requirements regarding graduation rates are similarly addressed with tables depicting baseline data and targets for sub-groups. Relative to state performance, this consortium is generally performing above.
- college enrollment requirements were not previously monitored and are not available in time for this application; however, the table for capturing this new measure is prepared according to the specifications of the previous performance elements. The historical element of this measure is a weakness.
- the optional element (and not included in this assessment) regarding post-secondary degree attainment is also a new measure with intentions to incorporate it permanently.
- in summary, the required elements for this section are all documented which support accurate measurement of the project. A review of the targets identified for each of the measures indicates that they project annual growth in student achievement and increased equity between groups that are achievable.
- the overall assessment for this section is at the high range and at the mid point of the range.

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	12
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - four years of data are provided demonstrating trend line information. - in reading, student's achievement levels are generally improving. One district never demonstrated an overall decline while the other district experienced one year when results declined. - in mathematics, student achievement in both districts for the fourth year are the highest in all but 1 of the 7 categories. In several of these categories, improvement occurred year over year, but in only one instance was the first year of achievement higher than any of years two and three. - in summary related to reading and math, while consortia results are below state results, the four year period demonstrates a reasonable level of success in improving student achievement. - graduation rates in one LEA have declined quite substantially. In the other LEA results are mixed but the final year's results are higher than the preceding years. - numerous reform activities are underway in these districts aimed at improving teacher practice, learning intervention programs, use of technology programs in the classroom, and increasing parental involvement. These areas also are consistent with the goals of the RTT-D initiative. - technology is used extensively to ensure that parents and their child have on-line access to information regarding classroom activities and learning progress. Again, this emphasis is consistent with the intent of RTT-D. - a data base on individual student performance is readily accessed by staff. - mentors are assigned to each student to shepherd them through their time in the school and facilitate their success. - overall, this section addresses almost all of the competition's requirements and, with some exceptions, demonstrated improved performance. - overall this section is assessed at the high range and at the low level of the range. 		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	1
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:		

- requirements for publishing personnel salaries consistent with this grant's specifications are somewhat confusing. While the applicant indicates that the actual salaries for the four categories specified in the competition are published, the two examples published in the narrative do not specifically show these requirements, which is a significant shortcoming in providing required evidence for this section.
- this consortia provides additional transparency by also publishing school budget documents annually during public forums related to the district's strategic planning process and school funding requests.
- the narrative indicates that the state's website, and included in this application, is a detailed budget statement for the last 3 years as well as forecasted statements for 5 years.
- this section is silent on transparency issues regarding non-fiscal items but a previous section in this proposal also indicates that board business is on-line for public perusal.
- overall, this section does not address adequately the transparency requirements for the four categories identified in this section and is assessed at the low range.

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

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- the applicant's conditions for reform are strengthened by the state's and LEA's involved with implementing the RttT core assurances. Schools have transitioned to the college and career standards.
- the appendix provides a comprehensive state document outlining a vision with strategies for achieving personalized learning environments. Since the state has aligned its support with RttT and the LEA is aligned with the state's support, it is implied that successful conditions and sufficient autonomy to implement the reforms are achieved.
- the appendixes also provide numerous LEA policies regarding independent study; alternative means by which students achieve educational outcomes; promotion, acceleration and retention; and credit flexibility. These policies further exemplify how schools have autonomy to support personalized learning.
- personalized learning environments will be achievable because these LEA's have completed its technology upgrading and are prepared for the implementation of PARCC assessments. These assessments are individualized rather than standardized, and focus on the specific achievement of outcomes. The data from these assessments provide students, parents and teachers with vital information regarding progress relative to standards as well as information necessary in personalized planning.
- an impressive implementation of teacher and principal evaluation systems consistent with RTT-D requirements has occurred. This implementation rewards teaching and leading based on student growth.
- overall, this consortium is consistent with the necessary conditions outlined for this grant.
- the assessment of this section is at the high range and at the high end of the range.

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

15

14

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- the application contains numerous letters of support from the mayor, bargaining unit representatives - which is a key requirement in a proposal -, business and church leaders, community, and educational organizations in the community. These provide a convincing demonstration of the level of interest and support for the RTT-D initiative's principles.
- one of the letters from the Southern Ohio Educational Service Center's superintendent confirms that the "activities in the grant mirror that work that has already begun" in these LEA's.
- interest in the RTT-D did not originate with senior leadership but was expressed by school leadership who, then, communicated the vision to senior leadership.
- engagement in preparation of the application involved many stakeholders, which contributes to a wide-spread commitment for the goals in the core assurance areas and, ultimately, in this project's success for providing personalized learning environments. It is indicated that their input was instrumental in making revisions, but lacking in the submission are examples of specific revisions made as a result of the consultations.
- overall, this section is assessed at the high range and at the high end of the range.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	7
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - efforts toward helping students in being engaged in their learning and understanding the importance of that learning will be more achievable by the LEA's commitment to utilize mentors assigned to each student. - strategies - e.g. credit flexibility, credit recovery, and online courses - are in place to support learning that is not time-bound. - the application indicates that teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving are being addressed. Details of how this occurs are lacking which weakens this application. - by implication, data gathering consistent with competition requirements are in place because the state's requirements address RTT-D requirements. Students and families have ready access to examine data specific to a student's success in the personalized learning environment. - the application is weakened by lacking sufficient information on how most of the requirements in this section are evidenced. Beyond the elements listed above, information is inadequate or non-existent to demonstrate that a high-quality plan has been developed to ensure the learning goals necessary for college- and career-ready graduation. The applicant may assume that the state's commitment to the goals of RTT-D are automatically extrapolated to each LEA, but this is insufficient to ensure that the learning environment proposed is consistent with the goals of RTT-D. - overall, this section is evaluated at the medium range but at the low end of this range because most of the selection criteria are not addressed. 		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	3
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the applicant has reiterated the vision along with definitions of key concepts in the vision. This would be acceptable if the action plan for the vision was sufficiently described so that teaching and leading issues were supported. There is no evidence of high-quality plans, and specific strategies for achieving the necessary environment for high-quality teaching and leading are completely undocumented. In summary, the applicant has not responded to the competition's requirements outlined in this section. - while examination of other sections deal with goals related to teaching and leading, they do not contain the remaining elements of a high quality plan as required in this section. Therefore some credit can be given for at least articulating a commitment to the goals. Specifically, the LEA espouses in its vision a commitment to support implementing a personalized learning environment, adapting content and instruction and providing opportunities for individual tasks, frequently measuring student progress and using data to inform action, and improve teachers' and principals' practice. - the overall assessment of this section is at the low range and at the high end of this range. 		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, and rules (15 points)	15	5
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the application describes a sufficient organizational structure of leadership teams involving key stakeholders within each building to support participation in the grant. - each LEA is providing one key central office person to work together in coordinating district resources so that there is a 		

distinct line of authority.

- the consortium and school leadership teams are supported by the team from the educational service center which is pursuing the state's mandate for implementing RttT goals.
- organizational support structures are in place, and the application indicates that these teams have the flexibility to implement practices, policies and rules which will facilitate personalized learning. However, evidence regarding the degree to which this has occurred is sparse except relative to those related to progress and earn credit.
- required elements of a high-quality plan are completely lacking.
- overall, this section is assessed at the medium range and at the low level in this range because a high-quality plan is not provided, and required elements such as students opportunity to demonstrate mastery in multiple times and ways as well as providing learning resources and instructional practices that are fully adaptable and accessible to all students are not addressed.

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

10

2

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- the requirement to provide a high-quality plan to support implementation is not achieved.
- a requirement that students have access to a technology tool regardless of income is ensured. Family access to technology necessary to monitor student progress in personalized learning is suitably available to all families by providing access to buildings where the internet can be accessed.
- the competition's requirement related to technical support, using technology systems, and ensuring interoperable data systems are undocumented.
- overall, this section is assessed at the low range because of the significant lack of response to the required elements.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	5

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- a commitment is made for transparency by sharing information at community forums; however, there is no indication of the frequency, participants or structure of these events. This lack of information makes it difficult to project timely and regular feedback on progress during and after the term of this grant.
- an appropriate set of guiding questions dealing with support issues, perceptions about personalized learning as well as impacts on student success are formulated to assist external evaluators in monitoring the impact of this initiative.
- limited information is provided on how the applicant will monitor the quality of this investment funded by RTT-D. Indeed, evidence of high-quality planning required in this section is not documented.
- the consortium indicates that services were contracted to develop a strategic plan. The applicant appears to imply that this plan can be migrated to this competition without addressing specifically how the RTT-D initiative can be continuously improved.
- the overall assessment of this section is at the medium range and at the low end of this range.

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

5

1

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- the applicant's response to this section's requirements is to parachute in one aspect of the LEA's strategic plan related to communication. It is indicated that the other LEA will replicate this plan. Therefore, it is deduced that the narrative for this section is not coordinated and specifically aimed at The RTT-D initiative. The communication plan should address the outcomes related to this grant.
- hence, there is not a high-quality plan in place to address ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders associated with the RTT-D initiative.

- overall, this section is assessed at the low range and at the low end of the range.

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

5

3

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- the application indicates that the state-wide measures applicable to all populations will be incorporated, and that these measures are consistent with the RTT-D requirements implementing the teacher and principal evaluation requirements including student growth measures. Baseline data is currently being collected and then will lead to target setting.
- two PreK-3 measures with appropriate rationale are indicated. Specifically they pertain to reading and student discipline.
- several measures and rationale for selection are included for grades 4-8 as well as for 9-12. In grades 4-8, assessments in reading and mathematics by sub-groups will measure academic achievement, while student discipline issues will assess the behavioral component. In grades 9-12, completion of the FAFSA form, student success on state-wide examinations, students achieving benchmark success on the state's PLAN assessment, graduation rate and student disciplinary occurrences.
- charts depicting progress on these measures are completed for measures which have baseline data. Targets for each of the years are identified but determining the voracity of these targets is difficult because there is no trend data available. Therefore targets which are supplied appear to be ambitious yet achievable in view of where the applicants want to be at the conclusion of this project.
- the total number of measures identified meets the criterion of 14.
- there is no indication of how the measure will be reviewed and revised if necessary.
- the overall assessment of this section is at the medium range and at the high end of the range.

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

5

0

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- the narrative does not provide any any details relative to a high-quality plan or any activities related to evaluation. This planning requirement was also not evident within other sections of the proposal.
- overall, the assessment of this section is at the low range and at the low end of the range.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	4

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- the narrative does not respond to the requirement that funds from other sources be identified. Presumably RTT-D is the only source.
- it is unclear in the narrative as to which funds will be one-time investments versus ongoing operational costs; however, the principle for the post-grant era is that schools will determine and fund programs and services each wishes to retain from its annual operating budgets. This is a sound principle because schools can compare its various program supports and determine for itself which provide the greatest impact.
- the budget chart expends the same amount of funds for each category and for each year. This suggests that there are no start-up funds required but that staff hired to support the project in the first year will continue for each year thereafter. The weakness of this is that inflationary wage increases are not addressed.
- details of how funding will be spent are sparse especially since details in section "C" were generally inadequate to determine what funding would be necessary.
- a review of the amounts designated for each area indicates that expenditures for items such as supplies and travel are reasonable, and that the vast majority of funds are designated for staff, equipment, training and contracted services.
- overall, this section is assessed at the medium range and at the low end of the range.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	2
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the application does not address the requirement of a high-quality plan to determine sustainability. It does indicate that sustaining the plan will not be feasible. - it does indicate that sustainability will be a local decision at each school based on the district's strategic planning process. This will be insufficient to determine whether the aspects related to RTT-D have produced desired outcomes. - the overall assessment of this section is at the low range. 		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	3
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the applicant describes its partnership with a certified community mental health agency as well as a variety student-focused educational services. All aspects of social, emotional or behavioral needs are served through this partnership. - only 1 measure is proposed and only at the middle school level for this partnership. This measure contains the necessary baseline data and targets for the duration of the grant. - the application does not satisfy requirements to demonstrate how data would be used to improve results over time. - it also lacks a description of how staff capacity would be built to provide greater support to the partnership. - the overall assessment of this section is at the low range. 		

Absolute Priority 1: Personalized Learning Environments

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1		Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the plan presented definitely describes the consortium's commitment to create learning environments that are designed to improve teaching and learning through personalization, and implement strategies assuring students are college- and career-ready. - the proposal repeatedly refers to the state's efforts in pursuing reform which are consistent with RTT-D requirements. In doing this, the application does not adequately provide the planning detail for its own proposal. - the overall weakness of the plan emanates from the author's perception that the district's strategic planning process is sufficient to deal with the planning and evaluation components required for the grant. In this model, the grant's accountability is muted because it is subsumed in each district's strategic plan. 		

Total	210	98
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