



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0934CA-1 for Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District

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 applicant has comprehensively described a sustainable plan that is built on the four educational assurance areas and articulates a clear approach to the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning and increasing equity through personalized student support. The well thought out plan for continuous improvement includes accessing the current status of student learning, developing an action plan, monitoring implementation of the plan and reporting successes and ongoing areas of improvement to stakeholders.		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: a. The applicant has adequately described that they chose the selected schools because they have been among the lowest achieving schools in the district. b. The applicant has provided a comprehensive list of the schools that will participate in the grant. c. The applicant has sufficiently provided a total number of participating students, those from low income families, those who are high need students and the number of participating educators.		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	0
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: The applicant did not respond to this criteria.		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	10
(A)(4) Reviewer Comments: a. The applicant has identified achievable and ambitious goals to increase summative assessments. b. The applicant has identified achievable and ambitious goals to decrease the achievement gap. c. The applicant has identified achievable and ambitious goals to increase the graduation rates. d. The applicant has identified achievable and ambitious goals to increase college enrollment rates. e. The applicant did not provide any goals for this criteria.		

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	10
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: a. The applicant has provided complete evidence through charts that shows that they have improved student learning outcomes and closed some achievement gaps in participating schools.		

- b. The applicant has provided complete charts to evidence that they have achieved ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest achieving schools
- c. The applicant did not address this criteria.

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

- a. The applicant indicated that personnel salaries for school level staff are available on the district website, however, they did not provide the website or the salaries.
- b. The this criteria was not addressed
- c. This criteria was not addressed
- d. This criteria was not addressed.

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

The applicant ha provided evidence that opportunities for waivers for the some of the project goals exists under the California state requirements, however, very little additional information was provided to show full authority under the State's legal, statutory and regulatory requirements to implement the learning environments described.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	2
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- a. This criteria was not addressed
- ai. The applicant has submitted an MOU with the local teachers association that provides evidence of support for the proposal from teachers in participating schools.
- b. This criteria was not addressed.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	0
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not provide any evidence to show the current status of implementing personlized learning environments nor the logic behind the current proposal.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	2

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- a1. This criteria was not addressed.
- a2. This criteria was not addressed
- aiii. The applicant adequately demonstrated that students have the opportunity to be engaged in learning any time even beyond the school day through online and blended learning programs, however, did not provide evidence that the material is in the area of the child's academic interest.
- aiv. The applicant did not address this criteria
- av. The applicant did not address this criteria.
- b1. The applicant did not address this criteria

- bii. The applicant did sufficiently demonstrate that students are exposed to online and blended learning opportunities.
- biii. While the applicant did sufficiently demonstrate that the students are offered high quality digital learning experiences, they did not provide evidence that these learning experiences are aligned with college/career goals.
- biva - the applicant did not address this criteria
- bivb - the applicant did not address this criteria
- bv - the applicant did not address this criteria
- c- the applicant did not address this criteria

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

20

5

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- a1. The applicant did not sufficiently address this criteria
- a ii - the applicant did not address this criteria
- a iii - the applicant did not address this criteria
- a iv.- the applicant did not address this criteria
- bi- the applicant did not provide sufficient evidence of a professional development plan that will allow teachers to address the needs of students. Although teachers will be involved in the Cycle of Inquiry, it is unclear if individual student needs will be addressed through this process.
- bii - the applicant did not address this criteria
- biii - the applicant did not address this criteria
- ci. the applicant did not address this criteria
- cii- the applicant did sufficiently provide evidence that the professional development program is being revamped toward the goal of increasing student performance
- d- the applicant did not address this criteria

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	5

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- a. The applicant has comprehensively provided an explanation of the role of the key district officers who will provide support and services to participating schools.
- b. This criteria was not addressed
- c. This criteria was not addressed
- d. This criteria was not addressed
- e. This criteria was not addressed.

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

10

3

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

- a. the applicant did not address this criteria
- b. This criteria was not addressed
- c. The applicant has indicated that parents have 24 access to a student information system to obtain student data, however, it

is unclear if this is exportable information

d. This criteria was not addressed.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant has adequately provided outcomes and responsible parties who will be involved throughout the continuous improvement process to provide feedback toward project goals.		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant has sufficiently provided a detailed plan that indicates that stakeholders will be provided with communication and feedback throughout the district and individual school website, and through press releases to the local media.		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
(E)(3) Reviewer Comments: a. The applicant provided no response to this criteria b. The applicant did not address this criteria c. The applicant did sufficiently provide evidence that each performance measure will be measured to gauge the implementation progress.		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0
(E)(4) Reviewer Comments: The applicant did not address this criteria		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: a. The budget sufficiently indicates that all funds will support the project goals. b. The budget is reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation for the applicant's proposal. ci. The budget sufficiently provides a description of all funds related to the project cii - the applicant did not address this criteria.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	0
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: The applicant did not address this criteria		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: The applicant did not address this criteria		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: The applicant did not provide a high quality plan that will likely increase in student achievement or the creation of personalized learning environments for students. The applicant does not appear to have much support from key community stakeholders and the teachers union is unsure as to how the full implementation will affect teachers. The buy in from critical stakeholders appears to be lacking. Likewise, there was no evidence of a plan that clearly targets the goals of increased student achievement.		

Total	210	93
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0934CA-2 for Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	4
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: The application presents a reasonable plan for building upon the District's existing objectives to improve student educational performance and eliminate the achievement gap. The plan is particularly impressive in its articulation of striving for ambitious targets that are double what the State requests and that the District has chosen to focus all of its attention in this project on its lowest performing schools, consistent with one of the four core educational reform areas as required by the criterion. The plan also addresses the core educational reform area regarding standards by comprehensively describing the District's commitment to and implementation of Common Core Standards. Further, the plan illuminates a commitment to strengthen the District's data system along with a set of characteristics of the expected process from the plan for collecting and analyzing data. The plan does not, however, address the core educational reform area for recruiting, developing, rewarding and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most. The narrative is silent on any objectives the District might have to improve teacher and principal effectiveness in low performing schools. In general, the plan lacks depth of vision and the narrative does not succeed in inspiring confidence that the District will undertake bold steps as envisioned by the spirit of this competition and also required by the criterion to accelerate student achievement, deepen student learning and increase equity through personalized student support. The plan states an objective to build personalized learning plans for students without detailing what this would look like or how it would be done.		

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	4
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: Beyond a very few general statements and providing a list of the four low performing schools identified to participate in the project, the plan does not offer a comprehensive description for the District's approach to implement its proposal as required by the criterion. The plan does provide the required detail for the number of participating students, by sub-group, as required by the criterion. The glaring absence of detail diminishes the ability of the application to rise to the standard of high-quality.		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	0
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: The plan omits any reference to (A)(3).		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	4
(A)(4) Reviewer Comments: The application fails to present any detailed or comprehensive vision from which any reasonable assessment might be made to judge a likely result in improved student learning and performance. This is particularly unfortunate as the committed performance goals on summative assessments are ambitious and impressive demonstrating growth targets averaging between 20% and 25%. Absent any supporting narrative addressing the District's vision for achieving these bold goals, however, it is not possible to reach a conclusion as to reasonable expectation of accomplishing these goals. The goals established for closing the achievement gap are not ambitious. For example, the baseline demonstrates an achievement gap between White and African-American students of 15%. At the end of the grant period, the gap persists at 11% -- not a particularly significant improvement. Graduation rates for each sub-group are expected to exceed 90% or better which is ambitious. Similarly, the performance goals across sub-groups for college enrollment are also reasonably ambitious. As mentioned earlier, however, absent sufficient explanation for the applicant's vision, as required by the criterion, the opportunity to evaluate ambitious and achievable is not available.		

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: The application references the State's requirement of an Academic Performance Index (API) score of 800 for each school. As evidenced in the chart provided, the four participating schools demonstrated modest incremental growth over the previous four years as required by the criterion as well as sustained growth in learning outcomes across most sub-groups where the data are available demonstrating a narrowing of the achievement gap. However, the data presented indicate disturbing decrease in scores for Hispanic student at Joe Michell K-8 and Junction Avenue K-8. The narrative acknowledges the disappointing results in Junction Avenue K-8. As all of the participating schools in this plan are identified as persistently lowest-achieving, and given the comments above about Hispanic scores in two of these schools, the plan does not meet the criterion for demonstrating a clear record of success in achieving ambitious and significant reforms in lowest-achieving schools as required by the criterion. The narrative asserts that student performance data through the District website, published District reports and at school sites. The number and frequency of published District reports is not addressed which might have helped to strengthen the application.		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	1
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: The application states that the District provides transparency with regard to LEA financial reporting information but does not specify if the salary information is broken down by individual position at the school-level or if the reporting numbers are in the aggregate for these positions. Further, the application does not meet the criterion for evidence that actual personnel salaries at the school level are broken down by instructional staff, teachers and non-personnel expenditures.		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	7

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The plan emphasizes that necessary successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under State legal requirements are in place to implement the personalized learning environments briefly described in the plan. Evidence of successful waiver permission granted in the past in order to allow for reform is provided in addition to an assertion that the option of converting one or some of the participating schools into a charter school granting the school much more significant flexibility would be pursued as an additional option.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	2
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The plan references that a "series of meetings" have taken place with teachers, families, administrators and other interested community members at the school level or each of the participating schools however the narrative fails to describe in any detail how many meetings took place, the proportion of teachers involved in those meetings or the outcome of the discussions that would inform the development of the proposal as required by the criterion. No evidence is provided to meet the criterion for (a)(i) nor are any letters of support from stakeholders included with the application.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	0
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(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The plan fails to meet the requirements of this criterion by providing sufficient, meaningful detail as to any analysis that has been done to evaluate the applicant's current status in implementing personalized learning environments. The narrative offers a weak commentary on the value of personalized learning systems, features of these systems and why they are important without linking any of these to the District's own vision for a high-quality plan.

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

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	7
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>(a) The application presents a high-quality, thoughtful and detailed plan for designing and implementing comprehensive personalized learning plans for participating students. The substantial and coherent description of the rationale and implementation strategy of the District's identified five core components of personalized learning provides ample evidence in meeting the requirements of most of the elements required by this criterion. However, the narrative does not link the core components of the plan to how students will better understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals. Nor does the application specifically address how the plan's goals are linked to college- and career-ready standards and graduation requirements. The plan fails to speak to access and exposure to cultural diversity but does make a substantial case for how students will use a variety of strategies to master critical academic content and develop skills and traits required by the criterion. The plan also describes the thoughtful, impressive leverage of the nearby Lawrence Livermore and Sandia National Laboratories as strong supports for deep learning experiences by students in areas of academic interest in the sciences.</p> <p>(b) The five core components provide ample evidence of a variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments as well as demonstrates an approach to provide a personalized sequence of instructional content to enable the achievement of a student's personal learning goals specifically through a CAFE model in reading and VOICES model in writing. The criterion also require evidence of an approach to include high-quality digital learning content but the plan only describes the features of technology in a customizable, scalable and flexible platform as a means to manage personal portfolios for each student and fails to link this or any other section of the narrative with digital learning content or further expand on any digital content to support college- and career-ready standards. The plan does demonstrate an intent to purchase individual technology systems for participating students but does not offer any indication of the kinds of learning content that might be deployed. The narrative does not discuss a plan for ongoing and regular feedback addressing the two minimum requirements of the criterion. High-quality strategies for high-need students are not provided nor are they addressed in the narrative. Evidence of mechanisms in place to provide training and support to students is not included in the plan.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	2
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:		

- (a)(i) The application presents a Cycle of Inquiry, a continuous, multi-step improvement process to support teachers in determining the effectiveness of their strategies to create learning environments that foster high levels of achievement by all students, as one of a variety of strategies for participating educators to support the implementation of personalized learning as required by the criterion.
- (a)(ii) The Cycle of Inquiry includes demonstrated strategies for professional development for educators along with continuous reflection and analysis of data to meet student academic needs, academic interests and optimal learning approaches. The plan also describes a commitment to support flexibility in teaching practices to meet student needs by altering long-standing funding models which, along with the Cycle of Inquiry strategy, combine to present a high-quality plan for adapting content and instruction in response to student's academic needs. The goals articulated as part of the District's professional development program also support the elements of this criterion.
- (a)(iii) The plan does not specifically address any approach or strategies to frequently measure student progress toward meeting college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements. The narrative does discuss strategies for accelerating student progress through a focus away from the traditional Carnegie unit/seat time requirement but this fails to fully meet the requirement of the criterion. The professional development program goals nor the five identified areas to support the needs of personalized learning plans address an approach to utilize data to inform the acceleration of student progress as required by the criterion.
- (a)(iv) The application is silent in describing any use of the evaluation system for teachers and principals in any meaningful way to provide feedback to improve practice and effectiveness. The evaluation systems are not discussed at all.
- (b)(i) The narrative does not address how actionable information would be identified or utilized in helping educators identify optimal learning approaches or respond to individual student academic needs as required by the criterion.
- (b)(ii) The plan does demonstrate evidence for any specific, high-quality learning resources nor does the narrative focus on alignment with any strategies with college- and career-ready standards or graduation requirements.
- (b)(iii) The plan is silent with regard to specific objectives to provide processes and tools to match student needs with resources and approaches. Overall, the plan lacks coherence and specificity in addressing the elements of this criterion.
- (c)(i) There is no discussion in the plan with regard to how information from the District's teacher evaluation system might be used to assess and take steps to improve individual and collective educator effectiveness. While the narrative describes the support of a number of policies in theory, the plan fails to delineate any specific policies, tools, data or resources that would enable school leaders to structure effective learning environments as required by the criterion.
- (c)(ii) The plan is silent with regard to linking any training, systems and practices to continuously improve school progress toward the goals of increased student performance and fails to meet the criterion.
- (d) The plan does not include any discussion about increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	0

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

- (a) The narrative simply states the job descriptions of central office personnel and mentions that a Race to the Top grant coordinator would be hired but fails completely to present any thoughtful rationale or evidence that the LEA will be organized to specifically provide support to the four participating schools in this project.
- (b) The plan states that the school leadership team is given a tremendous amount of flexibility without ever describing what that flexibility consists of nor does the narrative describe any autonomy that may or may not exist to support this project as required by the criterion.
- (c) The plan is silent on this element of the criterion.
- (d) The plan does not address this element of the criterion.
- (e) The plan does not address this element of the criterion.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	0
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: The narrative offers an extremely weak description of a 24-hour accessible student information system and does not address any of the elements required in this criterion.		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	3
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: The narrative describes "Nine Stages of Continuous School Improvement Process" as well as nine characteristics of successful schools. Unfortunately, the plan fails to fully elaborate on each of the elements and lacks coherence consistent with what would be required for a high-quality plan. There is no discussion of what might be done to sustain continuous school improvement beyond the grant nor is there any sense of a strategy for any regular feedback or how that feedback will be used to support ongoing corrections and improvements as required by the criterion. Overall, the description is less a strategy reflective of vision, innovation and thought, which are characteristics of a high-quality plan, and more of a check-list against a small sub-set of unsubstantiated metrics that fail to meet the requirements of the criterion.		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	2
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: The application states how the District intends to communicate with internal and external stakeholders primarily through websites, a Board report, and through press releases to local media. The frequency of these elements is not addressed nor does the plan demonstrate a clear and high-quality approach as required by the criterion.		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1
(E)(3) Reviewer Comments: The application includes a description of 12 performance measures which are within the allowed number of measures, however, Performance Measure #7 fails to provide any metrics which brings the overall number of qualifying performance measures below 12 which does not meet the requirements of the criterion. The plan does not address the rationale for each of the performance measures as required by the criterion nor does it address how the measures will provide rigorous, timely and formative leading information. The plan also fails to describe how it will review and improve the measures over time. Performance Measure #1 regarding the number of participating students whose teachers and principals of record are highly effective is not reasonably ambitious given that more than half of participating students will still not have a highly effective teacher or principal at the end of the grant term which suggests the targets should be higher. Performance Measure #2 seeks to achieve a goal where at least 90% of all students will have an effective teacher and principal by the end of the grant period which is ambitious yet achievable as required by the criterion. The additional performance measures do include a metric for 3rd grade literacy which is ambitious and achievable by most subgroups but the stated target gains of 50% for ELL students across the term of the grant, twice as high as any of the targets for the other subgroups, does not seem realistic. Performance Measure #8 is a metric for attendance for all participating students however the baseline for all subgroups is in excess of 95% without much room for improvement which nullifies the impact of this metric altogether. The criterion requires that a performance measure be proposed for K-3 participating students for non-cognitive indicators of growth which is not provided in the application. The performance measures proposed for grades 4-8 meet the criterion for identifying a metric of an academic leading indicator though the plan does not provide an explanation of how or why this metric would evaluate the successful implementation of the District's plan as required by the criterion. No performance measure is proposed that meets the criterion for demonstrating that participating students in grades 4-8 are on track to college- and career-readiness. The plan fails to meet the criterion for identifying the number and percentage of participating FAFSA students for grades 9-12 nor does the plan include a proposed performance measure for career-readiness, an academic leading indicator of successful implementation of the District's plan, or a grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator as required by the criterion.		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The application fails to address any specific plans to evaluate the effectiveness of Race to the Top - District funded activities consistent with any of the elements required by the criterion.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	5

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The budget does identify all funds intended to support the project including applicable non-grant fund sources as required by the criterion.

(b) The budget request is for \$5.2 million however half of this amount, \$2.6 million, is to be used for a one-time, five day Professional Development Summer Institute. The narrative fails to make a compelling case for how a five-day Institute out of a four-year grant term justifies such a large investment of funds while also failing to link and meaningful metrics or expected outcomes with this significant expenditure. Overall, the budget is not reasonable and does not meet the requirements of the criterion.

(c)(i) The application does provide a description of the funds that will be used to support the implementation of the proposal but the overall rationale and coherence of the investment strategy is weak. In addition to the comment above in (b), the narrative fails to address what the investment in personalized learning devices, at \$350 per student, will buy in terms of specific numbers of ipads, e-readers or notebooks, or how the investment in the devices will be protected with regard to damage, loss and theft. The budget seems to indicate a placeholder for these investments as the makes, models and brands are not to be determined until after the grant is received. This makes it difficult to evaluate the appropriateness of the budget request in this regard.

(c)(ii) The application does not directly identify funds used for one-time investments though it can be inferred from the narrative what some of these might be, for instance, with regard to the technology upgrades.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	0
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The application does not address a plan for sustainability of the project's goals, including support from State and local government leaders and financial support, after the term of the grant as required by this criterion.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The application does not address any of the elements required by this criterion.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

This application is incomplete in that seven sections are totally ignored, the quality of the sections which are addressed is very

inconsistent and does not come close to reaching the level of a high-quality plan as demanded of this competition. The plan is fails to specifically address how student achievement would be accelerated and lacks any coherent strategy to describe how student learning would be deepened by meeting their academic needs. There is little evidence of any visionary approach to increase the effectiveness of teachers beyond an egregious proposed expenditure of half of the requested grant on a five day Summer Institute without providing any detailed rationale for such an investment. Any discussion of decreasing achievement gaps is barely mentioned at all and the narrative never addresses what exactly are the college- and career-ready standards this project is aligned with or why. In sum, this application fails to incorporate any substantial evidence or coherence for building on the core educational assurance areas and its overall quality does not meet the standards of this competition.

Total	210	46
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0934CA-3 for Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

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

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The LEA has outlined a plan that includes varying levels of attention to each of the four core educational assurance areas. The application includes a comprehensive vision built around their mission that each student will graduate with the skills needed to contribute and thrive in a changing world. The vision includes addressing the four core educational assurance areas by:

- (1) Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace, and to compete in the global economy: the LEA is in the process of adopting Common Core State Standards
- (2) Building data systems that measure student growth and success: The LEA is planning to rely on technological tools and upgrades that will provide continual data regarding student progress toward meeting standards.
- (3) recruiting, developing, rewarding and retaining effective teachers and principals: A new focus on recruiting top candidates is discussed in the proposal for filling teaching positions, although recruitment and retention of principals was not addressed.
- (4) turning around lowest-achieving schools: The LEA has selected four schools to participate in the grant program. While the description of the selection process and the data provided for determining that these four schools are the lowest achieving was vague, they are addressing serving these sites as the lowest achieving.

The fact that all four of the educational assurance areas were addressed led to a score in the top point value range, with the score falling in the lower range of the top score due to the lack of detail in a couple of the areas.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	5
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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The description of the selection process of the participating schools, labeled the "reform cohort," is vague, stating only that these four schools have, "historically been among our lowest achieving schools in the district." Data was not provided to support this claim. Four elementary schools have been selected for participation and the required information was provided for these four schools.

The lack of data regarding the placement of these schools' performance within the district and the lack of detail about the selection process led to the point value awarded.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	0
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The grant proposal failed to include an explanation of how the grant projects will be moved from only the four participating elementary schools to all schools in the district. While there is mention of expanding the projects in this grant application across the district, section A(3) was not included in the grant application. No other sections in the application were found to include a high-quality plan describing how the district plans to expand the programs across all school sites, including goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and persons responsible for each portion of the plan.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Data charts were provided for the requested information in (a) - (d) as outlined in the application requirements; however, the data was insufficient to create support for the applicant's vision resulting in improved student learning and performance. The district stated that the growth expectations have been set at twice the state guidelines, indicating that these are ambitious goals, however, information on the state expectations for growth was omitted, so it is not possible to determine this claim.</p> <p>Data included by the district is insufficient to support the district's vision for improvement. The data for (a) provides only results for 2nd-5th grades on the California Standards Test/English Language Arts. The data here is not separated by school site, making it appear to be data for the whole district, which would include 10 school sites offering these grade levels, not just the four identified schools. The data is reported by subgroup. No information is included for mathematics assessments, or for grades past the initial school grade span range identified in the grant.</p> <p>For part (b) data presented for decreasing achievement gaps was presented using only the Academic Performance Index (API) for grades 2-8, which is calculated using student achievement in both mathematics and language arts. This data is insufficient for determining academic areas where focus may be needed as it is masked by combining the achievement data. The data and goals for decreasing the achievement gap are confusing as they appear to be listed as percentages, yet the API is calculated with expectations of scores of 800 or above, so it is unclear what the figures in the chart represent and how they represent decreasing achievement gaps.</p> <p>Graduation rates are provided for the district as a whole, not by site, and the goals for graduation rates in four years range from 90-99 percent.</p> <p>College enrollment data was provided by subgroup. Growth is projected for each subgroup, although while increases are projected, the projections do not represent closing achievement gaps between subgroups.</p> <p>Postsecondary attainment, which was optional, was not addressed.</p> <p>Narrative explanations and descriptions were not provided to support the data charts.</p> <p>The lack of complete data for English Language Arts and Mathematics and other issues outlined above led to the point score indicated.</p>		

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

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	5
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The data presented in this section includes API calculations, which include a combination of mathematics and English Language Arts achievement data. Using this data to demonstrate closing achievement gaps is insufficient. While the API</p>		

represents figures used to show overall academic performance and growth, using it to compare groups in order to demonstrate growth in one or more areas is not possible.

Other than identifying the four participating schools as Title I schools, and four of the lowest performing schools in the district in 2009, no specific reforms were highlighted that have been implemented in order to shape the improving achievement being presented. Three of the four participating schools have already reached the state goal of an API of 800 or above. One school was identified as being created in 2009 by combining two existing schools. It was stated that, "though the combining of the two schools has been praised by many in the community and has widespread support of staff and parents, we have yet to see the academic gains that we are hoping for." This statement makes it appear that this school reconfiguration was aimed at improving student achievement, but no detail of the process or implementation of this school reform was included in the application.

Overall district reform projects were included focusing on improving teaching and learning in the district. These reforms included implementing Professional Learning Communities, Instructional Rounds (a process of observing peer teachers and discussing instructional practices that are working to engage students), a Leadership Institute, and revisions to hiring practices to place teachers in the district. The focus on Professional Learning Communities and Instructional Rounds demonstrate the district's commitment to involving teachers in continual professional improvement.

The narrative states that the data provided in the grant is available to parents and community members through the district website, district reports, and at district school sites; however, no examples of these reports or websites are included.

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

The narrative states that the required information has been made available online to the public for the past two years for both personnel and non-personnel expenditures, as well as being explained at public board meetings, which are also televised in their area. Detailed information or examples of the information were not included.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	8
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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The district explains the opportunity for obtaining waivers for some requirements in their state, and cites a past waiver that the district was able to secure for modifying the daily schedule in one of the district high schools. They state that their board of education is encouraging of their efforts for school reform and that the board has been willing to revise policies to help the district reach their goals.

The district recognizes that the personalized learning goals that are being proposed will require significant changes to district learning environments. The district believes that the availability of waivers, and possible conversion of sites to charter schools, would allow them to work within the state policy environment to ensure the autonomy needed for the implementation of their proposal components.

No evidence was provided to document the policies in the state.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	2
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(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

While stakeholder engagement is referenced in the application, details of their involvement are lacking. Community members are listed in the participant list for the Leadership Institute, as well as being involved in meetings at each of the four participating schools, but no documentation is included regarding the meetings, discussions and process of involvement in the development of the grant proposal.

The narrative mentions that the district has local collective bargaining units and that their support has been strong, while mentioning that concern exists about how the changes will impact the teacher evaluation process. A Memorandum of Understanding is mentioned as having been signed with the Livermore Education Association, but no documentation of such a memorandum is included. This discussion is confusing as to whether there are multiple associations that work with the district, or just one. The application does mention that the district and the education association have a strong relationship and that they are optimistic that the reform process will move forward with the support of the organization and its members.

Only two letters of support are included in the appendix. One is from the State of California's Department of Education/Board

of Education, and while they declined to include specific comments related to the grant proposal, the letter does say that they are "proud to have such innovative and groundbreaking school districts here in our State and thank you for your continued efforts to improve the education of our students." The second letter is from the Mayor of Livermore and expresses "strong support" for the application, citing that it would provide critical resources and jump-starting the transformation of schools in the district.

The limited documentation of the parent and community stakeholders, teacher and teacher organization involvement in the process and support of the application proposal resulted in the point score indicated.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)

5

3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal includes an overview of the elements of personalized learning that the district is planning to implement in order to engage and empower all learners and the fundamental shifts in teaching and leading that will be involved in order to implement the plan. Their goal is to shift the emphasis and use of time and place in the day to day facilitation of student learning.

No high quality plan is outlined to provide information on the district's status of implementing their plan for personalized learning environments. This requirement would have laid out the goals and activities to be implemented, along with timelines, deliverables, and persons responsible for each.

The balance of the inclusion of the discussion of the logic for the personalized learning environment with the lack of the high quality plan led to the point score assigned.

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

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

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district is proposing sweeping changes in the approach and implementation of instruction for the students in the participating schools. The plan proposed personalized learning plans for students in the participating schools, making use of technological devices that will allow students to complete learning activities regardless of time or place. Students will be working on mastery of Common Core Standards, and will also have the ability to include learning tailored to their abilities, interests and preferences. The district is considering major changes in policy and facilitation of learning in order to implement their plan for personalized learning, including changes in assessment schedules, time counted for progression through academic units, and not requiring learning and evaluation to occur in school during the school day. The technological tools have not been identified specifically, but there was discussion of teaching the students to use the resources that are eventually selected. They justified the implementation of the personalized learning plans with information on two programs that they already have in place for developing specific learning goals for reading and writing. The district is also considering ways that students can demonstrate learning through mastery or competency based performance, and may also show their learning with project-based and authentic learning opportunities, which it justified as fitting with the implementation of the Common Core Standards.

Parent participation in the process by moving conferences with parents to the beginning of grading periods to help with planning rather than at the end of grading periods for reporting purposes is planned for the participating schools.

While the district has laid out their plan for implementing personalized learning plans for the students enrolled in the four participating schools, the elements of a high quality plan are not all included as required in the application. A high quality plan would have included identified goals and activities, along with identified timelines for implementation, a list of deliverables aligned with the timeline, and the persons responsible for each. This important requirement was lacking as a complete plan, even though portions of the plan are included in the application.

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

20

12

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The district has identified important policy and systemic reforms necessary in order to implement their plan for personalized

learning. These include: redefining the use of time; implementing performance-based, time-flexible assessments, ensuring equity in access to technology, funding appropriate models to facilitate implementation, and adopting a P-20 curriculum continuum and a non-grade band system of looking at academic advancement.

The district's narrative provides a convincing argument that they are committed to implementing personalized learning by the inclusion of major reforms that may help restructure the learning environment in order to facilitate implementation of their plan. These reforms include proposing changes in expectations of a given amount of "seat time" to complete a course moving to mastery and/or project learning to proposing alternate state summative assessments for students that move through the curriculum at a different pace.

The personalized learning plan that they have laid out is dependent on technological access, but improved teaching is also key to the implementation. To that end, the district has helped to guide the implementation of Professional Learning Communities in order to help faculty focus on the specifics affecting the learning of each students, as well as supporting ongoing professional development opportunities and resources. The proposal narrative discusses a range of professional development opportunities. Appendix C is referenced to include information on the district professional development offerings, but this information could not be located in the electronic or print copies of the application.

While many aspects of this program have been addressed in order to improve teacher performance and provide personalized, content driven learning opportunities for students tied to the Common Core Standards, some important features of the program have been left out or described in only a vague manner. One issue is that the identified participating students are all at elementary schools, which serve students through 5th grade. While these students will be involved in college and career ready standards, a process for their continued progress to be measured as they progress past the schools identified as participating in the grant project, to ensure that they graduate college and career ready from the goals and plans laid out in this proposal has not been described.

Additionally, while much information has been provided about the development and implementation of the personalized learning programs that will be used under this grant, if funded, a complete high-quality plan was lacking in the proposal. This plan would have included goals, activities, timelines, deliverables and persons responsible for implementation. While portions of this information were included throughout the proposal, evidence of the complete plan required was not found.

While professional development was addressed through the proposal, specific data regarding the increase of effective and highly effective teachers and principals working with the students in participating schools was not addressed. The proposal was lacking a high-quality plan for this area laying out the goals, activities, timelines, deliverables and persons responsible for increasing the number of effective and highly effective teachers and principals.

Balancing the items that are lacking with the portions of the grant providing information about implementation of their plan led to the point score that was awarded.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	9
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The district has outlined personnel in the central office responsible for the operation of the district, including the oversight of the grant, if funded. The narrative provides a brief discussion of the flexibility available to the site administrators, and the fact that new administrators are chosen in part based on their ability to research, evaluate and implement instructional strategies aimed at improving students' college and career readiness. While these features are mentioned, the discussion is not detailed enough to support a high quality plan which would have included goals, activities, timelines, deliverables and personnel responsible for each goal and activity, not just a list of involved administrators across the district.</p> <p>The district has laid out a plan to address students being given the opportunity to demonstrate mastery in content rather than seat time spent on a topic.</p> <p>The lack of inclusion of a high quality plan led to the point value assigned.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	6
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The district 's plan includes funds to purchase individual technology devices for each student in participating schools to be able to use to help direct their own individualized learning plan. No details have been specifically included or described on policies</p>		

for enabling access for all students, but the presumption would be that the devices would be available for the students to check out and take home in order to meet the requirement that learning does not take place in specific places or during certain hours.

The district has not included a high-quality plan addressing the implementation of policies and infrastructure necessary for successful grant implementation, as defined as including the goals, activities, deliverables, timeline and responsible personnel.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	10
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district has outlined a set of characteristics common to successful schools. These characteristics are used in the district to guide faculty, staff and administration in their daily work. These nine characteristics are explained in terms of the characteristic, the outcomes that will come from monitoring the characteristic, and the personnel involved in the implementation of that characteristic. This section provides most of the information that was required to be included in a high quality plan, if outcomes are considered deliverables, and realizing that timelines have been omitted. This overall vision of school improvement provides a framework for continual assessment of activities and plans, yet details specific to the implementation and revision needed to assist implementation of the Race to the Top grant are lacking.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The communication for ongoing renewal is described in general in the overview of the nine areas for school success identified in the application. The first eight of the characteristics are mainly aimed at internal communication. The ninth area identified for school success is "Report Successes and Ongoing Area of Improvement to Stakeholders." This is the only area that addresses external stakeholders and it names websites, board reports, and local media as methods of informing the community, however, avenues for engagement with these external stakeholders were not identified.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district identified 11 performance measures (Number 3 was omitted) within the proposal. The proposal includes performance measures across all grade spans, even though the identified participating students and schools do not include each grade span level.</p> <p>The first two performance measures address having students taught by effective or highly effective teachers and principals, and while the data shows that growth is needed in these areas, plans have not been included within the proposal for improvement.</p> <p>While mathematics and English language arts assessment data were not both included in supporting the district's previous reform efforts and selection of the participating schools, one grade level of performance on district-wide literacy assessment and one grade level on the California State Test in Mathematics is included. The remaining performance measures are for grade levels above the participating schools' grade spans, and for measures including all district students (attendance).</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Section E4 was not specifically addressed within the outline provided in the application, other than in the overall description of using the nine components of school improvement and how those guide the continuous improvement process in the district.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The budget narrative outlined the level of importance of projects within the grant proposal, focusing on the technology upgrades and purchases necessary to implement the personalized learning plans proposed, professional development and training, and the extension of the school day, as well as learning coaches and grant coordination. Non-grant funds are included in the budget forms and narrative. In general the expenditures are labeled as one-time investments or ongoing expenses. Some areas could have used more explanation, for example, contractual services for experts in Common Core State Standards are expected to cost more in the last two years than the first two years. The cost for these services over the length of the grant appears to be low.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	2
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The sustainability of the grant is discussed only briefly in the grant proposal, with detail lacking for sources of funding that would allow the district to expand the grant activities to other school sites and grade level spans. There is only one letter of general support from the mayor of Livermore, but it does not include a commitment of financial support. The application required a high quality plan that would have addressed the details of the sustainability of the proposal, including the goals, activities, timelines, deliverables and personnel responsible for the continuation of the grant projects.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Competitive Preference Priority section was omitted from the grant proposal.</p>		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The grant was comprehensive in proposing the implementation of personalized learning plans for students in the participating schools in the district, utilizing individual technology devices, improved access to teachers who are involved in improving their professional knowledge and practice, and extended learning time across all sections of the grant.</p> <p>Areas that were lacking in explanation were addressed in separate scoring sections of the grant. A major area that was described in only vague, general ways was how the district plans to fund and implement the expansion of the grant activities and strategies across all school sites and grade spans in the district.</p>		

Total	210	108
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