

**U.S. Department of Education - EDCAPS
G5-Technical Review Form (New)**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/21/2023 05:46 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Region 18 Education Service Center (S411B230029)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	0
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	40	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	15	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	29
Sub Total	100	29
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	5	0
Sub Total	5	0
Total	105	29

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Mid-phase - 1: 84.411B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Region 18 Education Service Center (S411B230029)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. The Secretary considers the strategy to scale the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Sub

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

3. (3) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

4. (4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

5. (5) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

3. (3) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).

Strengths:

The applicant's proposed evaluation is very strong and comprehensive. The project team will use AIR as the project's external evaluator, who has a strong history of meeting the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards (pg. e11). Dr. Michaela Gulemetova, the lead evaluator, has detailed randomized controlled trial (RCT) experience and serves as a major contributor to the project team to support the project throughout implementation and to address potential evaluation and fidelity issues, such as power and attrition (pp. e40-41). The applicant also identifies two additional team members with a variety of successful RCT evaluations that will support the project evaluation and participate in the leadership of the project (pp. e29-30). The evaluation utilizes a delayed intervention intent-to-treat block cluster RCT with 50 schools and 15,000 6th through 8th grade students (pp. e39-40). There will be blocks by district and controls for prior achievement which will help identify significant differences between the control and experimental groups. The outcome measures are state assessments -- State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) and the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS). These assessments will present data for reliability and consistency which will allow them to be WWC-approved outcome measures. Additionally, the analysis will add fixed effects and controls for student, teacher, and school-level characteristics which could impact the effectiveness evaluation.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not present the specific experience of the evaluators with the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC). Even though this experience is implied with AIR's history of working with past evaluations and all evaluators named have vast experience implementing and conducting randomized controlled trials, there is no evidence in resumes of their knowledge of the intricacies of the What Works Clearinghouse standards and review protocols (pp. e84-93).

2. (2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

Strengths:

The applicant's evaluation partner, AIR, presents a very good plan that should enable the evaluation to provide replication strategies to address diverse audiences (pg. e42). Additionally, based on the evaluation presented, the controls used for student, teacher, and school-level moderators will also provide strong evidence that this intervention can be shared and used in other settings (Exhibit 8 on pg. e42). The evaluation team will also collect artifacts from teacher meetings, data on usage, and teacher interaction with the virtual platform to identify potential areas of strength and concern which will support the application of this intervention to others. Additionally, AIR will also include a comprehensive cost effectiveness study to measure the intervention compared to the costs. The implementation and evaluation team will discuss potential issues and how to address those at monthly check-in meetings (pg. e46).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

3. (3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project

Sub

components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.

Strengths:

The applicant has an excellent presentation of key project components, mediation events, and relevant outcomes. Teacher surveys, self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and retention rates will provide feedback on the key project implementation components and outcomes (pg. e45). The applicant has provided minimum thresholds for the key project components (pg. e45). Mediators have been included in the structural equation modeling (Appendix J.6) and will examine the interactive effects of the intervention on the student outcome – student academic achievement.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

- 4. (4) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**

Strengths:

The integration of the AIR's evaluators into the project management provides a strong foundation to ensure that the intervention will provide performance and ongoing feedback of the project to meet the identified outcome – student academic achievement (pg. e29-30). Additionally, regular monthly meetings will provide the interaction between the evaluation team and the implementation team to determine any issues and make adjustments as needed for the success of the intervention. AIR will also include a mixed methods implementation study which will look at teacher's experiences, participation, and engagement (pg. e46).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities: Implementers and Partners (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate how the project will be implemented by or in partnership with one or more of the following entities:

- (a) Community colleges (as defined in the NIA)**
- (b) Historically Black colleges and universities (as defined in the NIA)**
- (c) Tribal Colleges and Universities (as defined in the NIA)**
- (d) Minority-serving institutions (as defined in the NIA)**

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: **0**

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Region 18 Education Service Center (S411B230029)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	0
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	40	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	15	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	29
Sub Total	100	29
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	5	0
Sub Total	5	0
Total	105	29

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Mid-phase - 1: 84.411B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Region 18 Education Service Center (S411B230029)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. The Secretary considers the strategy to scale the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Sub

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

3. (3) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

4. (4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

5. (5) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

3. (3) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 29

Sub

- 1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).**

Strengths:

The proposed project describes clearly articulated methods to generate evidence that meets What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Standards without reservations with methodological procedures to minimize attrition (e23). The American Institutes for Research (AIR) plans to use a blocked cluster randomized controlled trial (RCT), which includes two middle school cohorts (Cohort 1 = 26 schools, Cohort 2 = 24 schools) in diverse school districts in Texas (e40). The two-cohort design model is very beneficial in maintaining effective recruitment targets in the second cohort if the first cohort is below target (e40).

Weaknesses:

The evaluators' prior WWC experience is not stated (e34-93).

Reader's Score: 14

- 2. (2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.**

Strengths:

The Texas Center for Educator Excellence housed at Region 18 Education Service Center (ESC 18-TxCEE) identified four compelling strategies (e42-43) to demonstrate that its evaluation would provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings. For example, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) plans to collect and analyze implementation data from multiple sources (i.e., attendance records, lesson guides, short videos, etc.) in all treatment schools during the intervention year. AIR would analyze the data regarding the fidelity of implementation and identify factors associated with poor or strong implementation of the project replication (e43).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

- 3. (3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.**

Strengths:

ESC 18-TxCEE has effectively articulated the key project components (i.e., summer institute), mediators (i.e., Middle School Collaborative Language Acquisition Strategies for Success (MS CLASS)) program's impact on students' English Language Arts (ELA) and math achievement and on EBs' (emergent bilingual) English language proficiency), and outcomes (i.e., Grades 6-8 ELA and math achievement) in its evaluation plan as outlined in Exhibit 9. Key Program Components, Fidelity Indicators, and Data Sources (e44). The proposed project contains a clear measurable threshold for acceptable implementation (e44). For mentoring teachers, they are expected to complete at least 24 weekly sessions per year with their mentee.

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

4. (4) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Strengths:

ESC 18-TxCEE described how the American Institutes for Research's (AIR) methods of evaluation should provide performance feedback by conducting an in-depth, mixed methods implementation study and leveraging the multiyear design to assess progress (e46). For example, AIR's analysis of implementation data should provide ESC 18-TxCEE with a deeper understanding of the ongoing implementation that should positively impact program improvements.

ESC 18-TxCEE clearly articulated how its methods of evaluation should permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. For example, AIR plans to report to ESC 18-TxCEE during monthly check-in meetings on program implementation progress and fidelity (e46). Additionally, AIR plans to create summary memos after each round of surveys and focus groups, which should be highly beneficial for ESC 18-TxCEE to make any necessary adjustments to ensure progress toward achieving intended outcomes (e46).

It should be noted that the implementation and evaluation teams are integrated into monthly meetings, which should be highly effective in providing performance feedback toward achieving intended outcomes.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities: Implementers and Partners (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate how the project will be implemented by or in partnership with one or more of the following entities:

- (a) Community colleges (as defined in the NIA)
- (b) Historically Black colleges and universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (c) Tribal Colleges and Universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (d) Minority-serving institutions (as defined in the NIA)

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Region 18 Education Service Center (S411B230029)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	15
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	40	39
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	15	12
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
Sub Total	100	66
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	105	71

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Mid-phase - 1: 84.411B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Region 18 Education Service Center (S411B230029)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 15

Sub

1. The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

Strengths:

The applicant clearly states that the proposed grant builds on existing strategies and has three goals that will fully support project development. First, is to increase teacher learning opportunities for Emergent Bilinguals (EB) strategies. The second goal is to increase teacher retention. The last goal is to improve linguistic and academic outcomes for EB teachers. The project will implement collaborative learning communities (CLCs) and include beginning teacher mentoring and student growth measures (e19-20), while integrating evidence-based (Emergent Bilingual) instructional strategies to improve student outcomes.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses Noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. The Secretary considers the strategy to scale the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 39

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant clearly states they are building on an existing strategy; there are three barriers to the proposed project's success and solutions for those barriers. (e21-24) For example, the first barrier to overcome is the lack of training for teachers to address teaching Emergent Bilinguals strategies to students. To remedy this, all teachers at partnering campuses will participate in weekly CLCs that will guide the integration of teaching practices and reflection on classroom learning. The applicant provides references to effectively document their project approach.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses Noted.

Reader's Score: 10

- 2. (2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides a detailed budget and a budget narrative that support the completion of project activities. The budget adequately covers training costs for the projects. Key responsibilities for project personnel are provided and some project milestones. (e28-30)

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide specific dates for the completion of some project milestones. (e34). For example, one project milestone is to refine project activities based on feedback, and three semesters are allotted for accomplishing the milestone. There is no explanation about who is providing the feedback to guide refinements. The budget for the project lacks compensation for teachers on the committee.

Reader's Score: 4

- 3. (3) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides resumes for project staff to demonstrate their specific skills that will support their role in the project. For example, the Principal Investigator has experience in that role on other projects. (e61-93) One project partner provides a letter detailing their financial support of the project, and the project's partnering schools and districts also provided letters of support. (e104)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

- 4. (4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.**

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant states they will develop training materials, guidebooks, presentations, and provide webinars on the project. The applicant will also provide project information and materials on their website. Social media is also being used to make potential users aware of the project. (e32-33)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

5. (5) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

Strengths:

The applicant presents a sound plan that explains how their project materials can be used in a variety of settings. The applicant will provide a list on the project website of modules from the What Works Clearinghouse practice guides to which districts can request access. The materials will include a professional learning library of modules, interactive discussion boards, and a monitoring rubric that will help districts ensure the quality of training implementation. (e34-35)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 12

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

Strengths:

The applicant provides research strongly supporting their project's conceptual framework. (e47-55) The logic model has clear inputs, activities, and teacher and student outcomes. For example, the project coaching and training will be supported by conducting weekly site visits. (e 25, e102)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Sub

2. (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

Strengths:

The applicant has several project goals and objectives, which are achievable. For example, 80% of teachers will report perceptions of self-efficacy and job satisfaction which will be measured by the results of a teacher survey. (e35)

Weaknesses:

The applicant presents a chart with four project objectives that are not clearly specified or measurable. (e35-36) For example, the second objective in strategy two says there will be an increase in teacher knowledge of effective strategies for Emergent Bilinguals and success will be measured by having 80% of teachers reporting improved knowledge and use of effective Emergent Bilingual strategies. (e.36) There is no explanation of how this increase will be determined or what the baseline is for this objective. Another measurement is that teacher retention increases by 1% by the end of implementation. The applicant did not define how retention will be measured or a baseline for this objective. The project outcomes were also not well defined. For example, one outcome is to refine project activities based on feedback. This objective is not well explained, the applicant does not explain which project activities will be monitored and how they will be refined.

Reader's Score: 2

3. (3) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

Strengths:

The applicant states that meaningful stakeholder engagement will provide consistency and a deeper understanding of Professional Learning that can be shared with their other teachers. The refinements made by the community of teacher support (CLC) ensure the project fits the needs of educators and students.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).

Sub

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

3. (3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

4. (4) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities: Implementers and Partners (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate how the project will be implemented by or in partnership with one or more of the following entities:

- (a) Community colleges (as defined in the NIA)
- (b) Historically Black colleges and universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (c) Tribal Colleges and Universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (d) Minority-serving institutions (as defined in the NIA)

Strengths:

The applicant explains they address the Competitive Preference Priority by partnering with a Hispanic-Serving Institution to collaborate on new teacher support strategies. (pp. e23-24, e37) The applicant clearly explains that the project is designed to address the challenges faced by schools with high populations of Emergent Bilinguals and to support teachers in learning and applying best practices for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted
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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Region 18 Education Service Center (S411B230029)

Reader #4: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	15
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	40	39
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	15	13
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
Sub Total	100	67
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	5	4
Sub Total	5	4
Total	105	71

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Mid-phase - 1: 84.411B

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: Region 18 Education Service Center (S411B230029)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 15

Sub

1. The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

Strengths:

The applicant proposes to use data supported practices such as collaborative learning communities (CLCs), mentoring systems, and evidence-based instruction for beginning teachers, experienced teachers, and teacher leaders to ensure that instruction for emergent bilinguals (EBs) include students' and families' values, and linguistic and cultural assets (pp. e18-19). The comprehensive intervention is based on previous work by the applicant in supporting teacher leaders (p. e19). The applicant will use CLCs to test, reflect and refine innovative approaches to EB student learning to address inequities (p. e19).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. The Secretary considers the strategy to scale the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 39

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant provides three barriers experienced during implementation and realistic strategies to address those barriers (pp. e21-25). For example, few teacher preparation programs provide exposure to teaching pedagogy that is successful for EB students, leaving new and inexperienced teachers to work with EB students on their own (p. e21). A second example: small group work has proven to be successful when scaffolding new learning; however, this concept is rarely used as a middle school strategy (p. e21).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

- 2. (2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides four achievable objectives with a timeline, measures, and milestones (pp. e109-111). The key personnel are provided with some defined responsibilities (pp. e28-30). An organizational chart is provided (p. e60).

Weaknesses:

Clearly defining the responsibilities for the key personnel and how they will work with the two partner entities would strengthen the application.

Reader's Score: 4

- 3. (3) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.**

Strengths:

The applicant has extensive experience working with American Institutes for Research (AIR) in working on statewide initiatives and federal grants in rural, suburban, and urban Texas (p. e27). Additionally, the applicant is a part of the regional network in collaboration with AIR (p. e28). The applicant has experienced key personnel, as does the external evaluator (pp. e28-30).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

- 4. (4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.**

Strengths:

The applicant uses a comprehensive three-pronged approach for dissemination, and includes local/partner dissemination, statewide and national dissemination for practitioners, and national dissemination for research audiences (p. e31). AIR will use its social media presence, electronic newsletters, and websites to share key findings (p. e32).

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

5. (5) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

Strengths:

The applicant will provide comprehensive professional learning (PL) modules for Texas educators in rural, suburban, and urban districts (p. e32). The applicant, in collaboration with AIR, will create practitioner materials that include briefs, research publications and a practitioner toolkit (pp. 32-33). The materials will allow districts and practitioners to replicate success results (p, e33).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 13

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

Strengths:

The applicant provides a clear project timeline that illustrates how the project will be rolled out in five phases (pp. e33-34). A logic model, based on evidence-based practices for PL and mentoring to improve EB academics and linguistic achievement (p. e34) is provided.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

2. (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

Strengths:

Many of the measures/milestones have a target percentage and include ways the data will be collected. The target percentages that are identified are reasonable (pp. e35-36).

Sub

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide how the data will be collected for all objectives. Baseline data is not provided. For example, for strategy 1.a., Measure 1. A. states that 80% of the Advisory Committee members will agree that PL will meet the needs of the teachers; however, no data collection mechanism is provided (p. e35). Additionally, asking the teachers if the PL meets their needs would seem more appropriate, as how the Advisory Committee would know appears unclear.

Reader's Score: 3

3. (3) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

Strengths:

The applicant provides a detailed design that meets the needs of schools with high populations of EBs. Providing evidence-based PL and CLCs for teachers of linguistically diverse students provides a unique opportunity to examine problems of practice, encourage authentic discussions, collaborative planning, engagement, and reflection (p. e37).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

2. (2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

Sub

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

3. (3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

4. (4) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities: Implementers and Partners (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate how the project will be implemented by or in partnership with one or more of the following entities:

- (a) Community colleges (as defined in the NIA)**
- (b) Historically Black colleges and universities (as defined in the NIA)**
- (c) Tribal Colleges and Universities (as defined in the NIA)**
- (d) Minority-serving institutions (as defined in the NIA)**

Strengths:

The applicant proposes to collaborate with the University of Texas Permian Basin (p. e24) and the American Institutes for Research (AIR) (p. e20). Quarterly meetings will be held with the University of Texas Permian Basin to examine and connect trends to novice teachers and provide information on mentoring supports, curriculum, and authentic practices for

the Educator Preparation Program (p. e24).

Weaknesses:

There is no discussion around how the three different entities will work collaboratively to provide educational resources and opportunities for the teachers or students in the program. This represents my professional opinion.

Reader's Score: **4**

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Last Updated: 08/21/2023 05:46 PM

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Region 18 Education Service Center (S411B230029)

Reader #6: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	15
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	40	37
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	15	8
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
Sub Total	100	60
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	105	65

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Mid-phase - 1: 84.411B

Reader #6: *****

Applicant: Region 18 Education Service Center (S411B230029)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 15

Sub

1. The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

Strengths:

The application provides strong justification for the need to develop the skills of emergent bilingual (EB) students and their teachers. Depressed test scores of emergent bilingual students are correctly addressed as an equity issue (page e19). The applicants' inclusion of the idea that successful EB instruction values and nurtures students' and their families' linguistic and cultural assets is a strength and correctly identifies the importance of school culture. Professional learning for teachers that prioritizes self-awareness, empathy, self-efficacy, school-family relationships, and shared responsibility for emergent bilinguals' academic success is innovative.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. The Secretary considers the strategy to scale the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 37

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

Sub

Strengths:

Barriers are identified that justify the need for the program. The strategies to address the barriers, such as the CLASS CLC model on page e21, high quality coaching on page e23, and leadership opportunities on page e24 are likely to be effective. Teacher leadership is appropriately identified as an important element on page e24.

Weaknesses:

The difference between barrier one on page e25 (Teachers may not have the knowledge and skills to address the needs of their EB students.) and barrier two (Surveys from novice teachers in Texas indicate that the majority do not feel well-prepared to work with EBs.) is not clear. Overall, the applicant fails to describe how the three barriers are different; all seem to be related to teacher knowledge, with only slight differences. This represents my professional opinion.

Reader's Score: **8**

- 2. (2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**

Strengths:

The application specified four achievable goals, and the timeline is realistic (page e109-e111). The responsibilities of key personnel are detailed on pages e28-e30. On page e28 and e29, each person is listed with a summary of their responsibilities.

Weaknesses:

There is no budget to compensate the educators on the advisory committee for their time. Responsibilities of key personnel are not clear beyond the descriptive summary on page e28 and e29. The application does not provide more detailed descriptions of project personnel responsibilities.

Reader's Score: **4**

- 3. (3) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.**

Strengths:

The plan proposed for this project reflects a strong and well-qualified team that is necessary to perform the program tasks. The proposal clearly provides the qualifications of the key project personnel. It includes credentials demonstrating they are well-positioned to implement the project successfully. Many have PhDs and all highly experienced with large scale projects (page e29 and e30).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: **10**

- 4. (4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.**

Sub

Strengths:

The plan includes specific plans for research dissemination. Dissemination plans organized by audience is a strength. For example, the dissemination plan is organized by local, state/national, and national research (page e30). The partnering with AIR to dissemination via their networks is also a strength. (page e32). The use of social media is a strength (page e32).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

5. (5) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

Strengths:

Products to be used are well-specified and represent key outcomes from the project and the Project Learning modules will be able to be used by multiple school districts (page e32). The content learning modules are comprehensive (page e32), i.e., they are planned to include short briefs with findings, a final research publication, and a practitioner toolkit to be made available online. The product will enable replication via the online availability of the modules, the professional learning module, and training materials to be disseminated via webinars. (page e33)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 8

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

Strengths:

The logic model on page e35 specifies the proposed inputs, activities, and outputs.

Weaknesses:

There is no educational research cited in the conceptual frame justifying the goals of the Middle School Collaborative Language Acquisition Strategies for Success (MS CLASS). Thus, the conceptual framework does not make clear how the proposed program will return positive results. While on page e34, the application states. "The logic model is supported by rigorous research demonstrating the potential for PL and mentoring to improve academic and linguistic achievement of EBs.", only two studies are provided, Baker et al., 2014 and Young et al., 2017. This reflects my professional judgement.

Sub

Reader's Score: 2

2. (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

Strengths:

Many goals are appropriate and associated with reasonable increases, as specified on page e35. The three goals are aligned with the broader project.

Weaknesses:

There are no steps noted for iterative action, where needed. It is unclear, for example, what actions would follow if less than 80% of the advisory committee members do not agree that the professional learning will meet the needs of teachers of emergent bilinguals (page e35). Means of measuring goals and their baselines (page e35) are missing (i.e., goal 1a on page e35).

Reader's Score: 3

3. (3) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

Strengths:

The application provides strong justification for need for the program and the capacity of the team to meet stated goals. The application plans evidence-based professional learning (page e37).

Weaknesses:

Although the application notes that there are rural sites, the application does not demonstrate knowledge about the intersection of place and language learning and is not positioned to implement the body of research about rural emergent bilinguals. It is not clear that the project is well-positioned to improve rural emergent bilingual learners. It is unclear why rural was identified and how rural emergent bilingual needs will be met. This reflects my professional judgement.

Reader's Score: 3

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).

Strengths:

n/a

Sub

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

Strengths:

n/a

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

3. (3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.

Strengths:

n/a

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

4. (4) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Strengths:

n/a

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities: Implementers and Partners (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate how the project will be implemented by or in partnership with one or more of the following entities:

- (a) Community colleges (as defined in the NIA)
- (b) Historically Black colleges and universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (c) Tribal Colleges and Universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (d) Minority-serving institutions (as defined in the NIA)

Strengths:

The application states that they will partner with the University of Texas Permian Basin (UTPB), which is a Hispanic-Serving Institution, to collaborate on novice teacher needs and strategies for support. Quarterly meetings are planned to examine and connect trends to novice teacher practice based on needs. The planned partnership will benefit the proposed project and teacher candidates at University of Texas Permian Basin (UTPB).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: **5**

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