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

**Applicant:** Cook County School District 104 (U351C170038)  
**Reader #1:** **********

### Questions

#### Selection Criteria

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#### Priority Questions

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**Total**                                      | 105             | 100           |
Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Professional Development for Arts Educators - 3: 84.351C

Reader #1: **********
Applicant: Cook County School District 104 (U351C170038)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

   (1) The extent to which the proposed project will focus on serving or otherwise addressing the needs of disadvantaged individuals.

   (2) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

Strengths:

   (1) Application was preceded at by extensive and comprehensive needs assessment to determine those areas that will be addressed by PACTT. (e29) A comprehensive needs assessment was conducted in the district to reveal specific needs of students who are low-income, low performing, lack English proficiency, and lack academic engagement. Documentation supporting data claims is included. (e80-82) In addition to other demographics, arts educators (80%) self-reported a lack of adequate professional skills to teach the arts. In addition, non-arts teachers self-report a lack of resources and knowledge to support arts integration as a way to deepen content knowledge. This need was also identified as part of the needs assessment.

   (2) The applicant clearly targets those areas that will be addressed by the project to include professional development opportunities that help to deepen art educators’ skills to teach the arts and explore methods to deepen students’ understanding of core subject areas as well as assist non-arts teachers in accessing the resources and knowledge to integrate the arts in instruction of all disciplines. (e33)

Weaknesses:

   (1) No weaknesses noted.

   (2) No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

   (1) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

   (2) The likely impact of the services to be provided by the proposed project on the intended recipients of those services.
services.

(3) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

Strengths:

(1) Recent research and effective practices are reflected for all described objectives. Highlights include a structure for collaboration (e37), a focus on a progressively complex range of PD experiences (e37, and an emphasis on creating a shared-vision in the first year of implementation (e39).

(2) The design of the services to be provided are targeted, specific and are of sufficient quality and quantity to impact the intended recipients. (Objective 1) There is a specifically designed structure for collaboration that is research based. (Objective 2) Professional development activities are sustained and of an intensity and frequency to practice skill development. (Objectives 3&4) Activities will be designed to be culturally relevant and require deep inquiry in all content areas, including the arts. (e37-39)

(3) Proposed professional development is standards-based in design, incorporates cross-team teaching, coaching, and reflection. (e48) The program is designed to span 10 months each project year in years 2-4 as well as summer opportunities. Teachers will not only be able to participate in at least 40 hours of PD each year but will also be able to choose from workshops and follow-up support. (e49)

Weaknesses:

(1) No weaknesses noted.

(2) No weaknesses noted.

(3) Much of the first year of the plan, October 2017 through April 2018 is devoted to establishing organization and communication structures and developing and validating evaluation tools. Professional development delivery does not begin until year two of the grant period.

Reader’s Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

   (1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

   (2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

   Strengths:

   (1) Resumes reflect training and experience in areas of expertise related to all facets of project including curriculum design, English language learning, bilingual education, diverse populations, specific arts disciplines, project management, and evaluation. Project Manager job description of skills and responsibilities is included.

   (2) In-kind references indicate support of the project. Letters of support are specific to the roles they will play in project implementation.
Weaknesses:

(1) No weaknesses noted.

(2) No weaknesses noted.

Reader’s Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

   (1) 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.

   (2) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

   (3) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

Strengths:

1) Composition and responsibilities of the management team are clearly defined (e55). Principals at the school level share in the responsibility of implementing a successful plan. Additional teams to support the project are also described. All objectives, activities, timelines and milestones are aligned to responsible personnel. Fiscal management is the responsibility of the Project Director and has the support of the Summit School district accountants. (e56)

(2) While the Management Team has broad oversight responsibilities, the project also provides for the five school principals to function as a Governance Council to provide leadership the work. School teams have assigned responsibilities including planning for pent involvement. (e56)

(3) Time commitments of all key project personnel are designated and described responsibilities are aligned and sufficient to achieve the objectives. (e63)

Weaknesses:

(1) No weaknesses noted.

(2) No weaknesses noted.

(3) No weaknesses noted.

Reader’s Score: 20

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:

   (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the
possible.

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

(3) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory (as defined in this notice).

Strengths:
1) The quasi-experimental design of the evaluation is appropriate for the project. Sample size is sufficient to produce evidence of the design for promise and replication. Evaluation will focus on both qualitative and quantitative data. (e65-67)

(2) Evaluation methodologies and activities are aligned to objectives and should easily translate into usable feedback to facilitate ongoing improvement. (e68-72)

(3) Design of evaluation is theory-based and current and is supported by a logic model. (e77)

Weaknesses:
1) No weaknesses noted.

2) No weaknesses noted.

3) No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 30

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Leveraging Technology

1. Projects that are designed to leverage technology through one or more of the following:

   (a) Using high-speed Internet access and devices to increase students’ and educators’ access to high-quality accessible digital tools, assessments, and materials, particularly open educational resources.

   (b) Implementing high-quality, accessible online courses, online learning communities, or online simulations, such as those for which educators could earn professional development credit or continuing education units through digital credentials based on demonstrated mastery of competencies and performance-based outcomes, instead of traditional time-based metrics.

Strengths:

(a) District schools currently have access to high speed internet and have hardware to support instructional practice. (e26)
Application is specific regarding digital tools and how they will be embedded and used in all disciplines of the arts. Specific expertise will be provided by university consultants to assist in skill development of teachers. (e28-29)

(b) An on-line learning community will be established to share reflections and resources. Support for instruction and to collaborate and share resources, the Illinois Institute of Technology has been identified.

Weaknesses:

(a) No weaknesses noted.

(b) No weaknesses noted.
Technical Review

Applicant:  Cook County School District 104 (U351C170038)
Reader #2:  **********

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Panel #3 - Professional Development for Arts Educators - 3: 84.351C

Reader #2: **********
Applicant: Cook County School District 104 (U351C170038)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

   (1) The extent to which the proposed project will focus on serving or otherwise addressing the needs of disadvantaged individuals.

   (2) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

Strengths:

1. The applicant clearly indicates that the target audience is a disadvantaged group of students, including a population of 86% minority students, and 75%-87% of the target population is identified as being low-income. The applicant thus provides strong evidence the target population is disadvantaged. (e15).

2. The applicant also notes deficiencies in Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment scores for students in the target population, relative to the rest of the state. This is a well-known assessment to scholarly researchers and demonstrates that the target population is particularly weak academically, relative to the rest of the state. (e33). Also, the applicant indicates that there is a lack in professional development in arts education, noting a 75% reduction in PD activities for these educations. The applicant also notes budgetary crises in the state directly impacting students and teachers (e34). The applicant has thus provided strong evidence of gaps and weaknesses and services directly related to the goals of this grant application.

Weaknesses:

1. No weaknesses noted.

2. No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

   (1) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

   (2) The likely impact of the services to be provided by the proposed project on the intended recipients of those services.

   (3) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.
Services.

Strengths:
1. The authors clearly indicate that the interventions planned for this grant program are based on recent scholarly research directly relevant to this grant program. The applicant indicates that the proposed model includes five essential supports to be leveraged for the program including leadership, professional development, parent/community interaction, school climate, and standards based learning. (e36). This is strong evidence the proposed project is leveraging strong research to deliver effective practice.
2. The applicant notes their commitment to equal access of services regardless of any student characteristic, indicating a commitment to directly impacting the target group of the grant funding. (e35). The applicant also notes that traditionally underrepresented students are a majority group within the target population which is strong evidence to the commitment to assisting students particularly at risk for low student achievement. (e36). The applicant also lays out clear objectives in specifically how students and professionals will be impacted throughout the application (e39—46).
3. The applicant notes that the PD program will be rigorous and research based on programs with proven success. This is clear evidence the applicant intends to leverage proven practices to deliver effective professional development. (e47). The applicant also notes that the PD program will employ data based decision making to ensure success and improvement of the program. The applicant also clearly notes the program for professional development will require a minimum of 40 PD hours, with a total potential maximum of 60, providing strong evidence of sufficient duration and intensity of PD activities.

Weaknesses:
1. No weaknesses noted.
2. No weaknesses noted.
3. No weaknesses noted.

Reader’s Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.
(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

Strengths:
1. The proposed project director has demonstrated a strong educational background and nearly two decades of relevant experience. Similarly, the curriculum advisors hold educational credentials and have had sufficient experience to ensure quality leadership. All other key staff include sufficient educational backgrounds, training and experience that demonstrate a very strong management and operations team to conduct the work required under this grant. (e50-53).
2. The proposed consultants include a variety of relevant strengths that will assist in ensuring the success of the grant program. Specifically, leveraging institutions of higher education such as DePaul University and the Illinois Institute of Technology for PD expertise and evaluative expertise demonstrates a well thought plan of partnerships to address the needs of the project. (e53-54). Also, partnerships with arts related institutions listed demonstrate further collaborations that will assist with the work of this program.
Weaknesses:
1. No weaknesses noted.
2. No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

(1) 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.

(2) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

(3) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

Strengths:
1. The applicant has provided a management plan that clearly indicates commitment to reaching milestones in a timely manner, commitment to management structures and responsibilities, budgetary awareness, roles and responsibilities, and incorporation of feedback. (e55-56). This indicates a clear commitment to efficient operations. Clear procedures of budgetary monitoring and reporting are included suggesting forethought on the difficulties of maintaining a large grant within budget. (e56). The applicant also provides a detailed timeline of milestones and responsibilities further indicating the application is cognizant of the need for continuous future planning. The timeline also directly maps to stated objectives which is ideal (e57).

2. The applicant clearly indicates the incorporation of continuous monitoring for the purposes of improvement which clearly addresses this criterion. (e56). The applicant also notes how and when continuous improvement related data will be collected and analyzed. Also, the applicant lays out a clear process for how continuous improvement will occur. This is clear evidence the applicant understands the importance of continuous improvement. (e62).

Weaknesses:
1. No weaknesses noted.
2. No weaknesses noted.
3. No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

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:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.
1. The applicant notes the use of a quasi experimental design study to evaluate the project's outcomes. This is ideal given the nature of this project. (e64). The use of an external evaluator will assist in the objective evaluation of project goals. (e64). The authors lay out all performance measures as well as the data collected and analyzed to obtain results. Additionally, these outcomes map to the goals of the project as proposed and are extensive. (e64-73).

2. The applicant indicates that on a monthly basis evaluative information will be obtained for formative assessment purposes, which directly speaks to this criterion. (e49). Further evidence of the effective plan to address this criterion include leveraging focus groups to assess outcomes, interviews and case studies with students and parents, and longitudinal analyses of teacher and student assessments. (e74).

3. It is clear that the proposed project is supported by strong theory in that it is grounded in scholarly research of programs and interventions that have proven success as well as the evaluative plan that includes a robust quasi experimental design that is in line with What Works Clearinghouse standards. (e74-76).

**Strengths:**

1. No weaknesses noted.

2. No weaknesses noted.

3. No weaknesses noted.

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Leveraging Technology**

1. Projects that are designed to leverage technology through one or more of the following:

   (a) Using high-speed Internet access and devices to increase students' and educators' access to high-quality accessible digital tools, assessments, and materials, particularly open educational resources.

   (b) Implementing high-quality, accessible online courses, online learning communities, or online simulations, such as those for which educators could earn professional development credit or continuing education units through digital credentials based on demonstrated mastery of competencies and performance-based outcomes, instead of traditional time-based metrics.

**Strengths:**

1. The applicant clearly indicates that high-speed internet access will be provided to the target audience, and the applicant notes hardware is available to leverage this resource (e26). They also note that the potential of this funding will assist professionals in more effectively using these resources. The applicant also notes this grant will assist the target population in leveraging open-source materials for instruction. Additionally, the applicant notes online tools will be leveraged in data analysis. (e26). There is clear evidence the applicant has plans to fully address this criterion.

2. The applicant also notes that digital badging will be used to assist with professional development credit which directly speaks to this criterion. (e27). The applicant also notes that online collaborative efforts will occur to further expand the professional development activities associated with this grant application. (e28).

**Weaknesses:**

1. No weaknesses noted.

2. No weaknesses noted.
Technical Review

Applicant: Cook County School District 104 (U351C170038)  
Reader #3: **********

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Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

   (1) The extent to which the proposed project will focus on serving or otherwise addressing the needs of disadvantaged individuals.

   (2) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

   Strengths:

   A comprehensive needs assessment of the district population identified disadvantaged students in need of services. The arts have been identified as a means to support students. The need of building literacy for students is provided through information about gaps in services. The solutions identified highlight collaborative work between partners and the school community. Learning and a focus on literacy is both a teacher and student goal for the project.

   Weaknesses:

   It is unclear how the work will be sustained through changes in infrastructure. The collaborative learning environment identified also did not highlight the beneficial staff and student learning potentials.

Reader’s Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

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   (3) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

   Strengths:

   Research is identified and points to the choices of building staff capacity and the integrating of the arts through content areas to support student learning. (pg. 36-e37) Support to ensure access to all participants includes translated materials. Additional support includes the use of alternate formats of resources. The application mentions building the capacity of participants through up to date strategies for learning.
Weaknesses:
The statement of impact for services and the participants needs more detail.

Reader's Score: 21

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

   (1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

   (2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

Strengths:
Leads for the project are mentioned with experience and the roles they will be involved with for the project. (pg. e50-e53, appendices) Employment practices are shared within the application. This identifies the process of supportive practices.

Weaknesses:
Several partner contacts are not shared within the descriptions. (pg. e53-e55) The missing information does not offer the opportunity to review specific personnel's experience, expertise, or interest in the project.

Reader's Score: 12

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

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   (2) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

   (3) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

Strengths:
The management plan includes follow up work with coaching to support participants. Reflection activities are mentioned within the application (pg. e59) to build staff capacity in the project. The budget, roles, timeline, and continuous feedback are outlined within the application (e58-e61).

Weaknesses:
No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20
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:

   (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

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

   (3) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory (as defined in this notice).

Strengths:
Ongoing feedback will be collected in the project. Multiple tools for assessment are highlighted within the application (pg. e73). A theory of practice is prevalent in the application and choices of evaluation.

Weaknesses:
Project goals could use more descriptive support in alignment to the impact on the population being served.

Reader's Score: 28

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Leveraging Technology

1. Projects that are designed to leverage technology through one or more of the following:

   (a) Using high-speed Internet access and devices to increase students’ and educators’ access to high-quality accessible digital tools, assessments, and materials, particularly open educational resources.

   (b) Implementing high-quality, accessible online courses, online learning communities, or online simulations, such as those for which educators could earn professional development credit or continuing education units through digital credentials based on demonstrated mastery of competencies and performance-based outcomes, instead of traditional time-based metrics.

Strengths:
Use of technology materials and open educational resources are identified within the description (pg. e26). Credentialing options are available for participants.

Weaknesses:
No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/31/2017 09:21 PM