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

# Technical Review

**Applicant:**     Illinois State University (U423A170072)
**Reader #1:**     \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

|  | **Points Possible** | **Points Scored** |
|---|---|---|
| **Questions** | | |
| **Selection Criteria** | | |
| **Quality of Project Design** | | |
| **1.** Project Design | 40 | 35 |
| **Significance** | | |
| **1.** Significance | 15 | 15 |
| **Quality of the Management Plan** | | |
| **1.** Management Plan | 25 | 17 |
| **Quality of the Project Evaluation** | | |
| **1.** Project Evaluation | 20 | 18 |
| | | |
| **Priority Questions** | | |
| **Competitive Preference Priority** | | |
| **Promoting Diversity in the Educator Workforce** | | |
| **1.** CPP 1 | 5 | 0 |
| **Support for Personalized Learning Environments** | | |
| **1.** CPP 2 | 3 | 3 |
| | | |
| **Total** | 108 | 88 |

# Technical Review Form

**Reader #1:** \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

**Applicant:** Illinois State University (U423A170072)

**Questions**

**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:**

    **(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.**

    **(2) 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.**

    **(3) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.**

    **(4) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs.**

    **(5) 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 project is design to support professional development for leaders (p.9), which is highly important in low-achieving schools. It aims to provide principals with tools that will remove roadblocks for them to be active participants in the learning process, particularly the classroom. The team recognizes this in area highly linked to student academic achievement and, if we are growing leaders, having this support is key. The staff involved in providing professional development is highly qualified with proven success.

    **Weaknesses:**

    While teaching leaders to manage their time and focus on instructional practices is a great idea, there is little to no information on how leaders will make time for the school building management piece. Not addressing this issue could create a great pressure on leaders who manage budgets, parents, learning, building needs, and employee evaluations.

**Reader's Score:** 35

**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:**

    **(1) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and Student Achievement.**

    **(2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits.**

**(3) The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of the grant.**

**(4) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.**

### Strengths:

Most administrators these days are inundated with paper on a daily basis. This project addresses this challenge by designing routines that will create conditions for leaders to be in the classroom, monitoring instruction and supporting teachers. The project shows emphasis on the development of leaders. Participants will be excited to learn that the project will integrate the use of micro-credentials (p.9) to ensure fidelity. Being intentional about supporting leaders on what areas need urgent attention and which can be delegated can result in growing future leaders. Another area of strength is the fact that participants will have access to the modules at any time, having access if they have questions or need to revisit the information.

### Weaknesses:

None 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 extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.**

    **(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.**

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

### Strengths:

The project presents lots of research on systems that support instructional improvements and how these can be used to support this project. There are multiple tools listed, promising leaders the ability to be more in the classrooms and support student learning. The strategies listed in the application focus on creating systems that will allow leaders to step out of the office and serve as coaches, supporting instruction. This will prove beneficial, specially if leaders are trying to get a pulse on their building and learn more about student needs.

### Weaknesses:

Additional improvement will be needed to find and/or remove any barriers that interfere with the project's implementation (p.10) The goals is to create a team that will support principals in their efforts towards continuous improvement, and there is no clear evidence on how this will be accomplished. There is a concern on how those who are not comfortable with digital tools will engage and benefit from the blended learning and the tools suggested.

**Reader's Score:        17**

## Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. **The Secretary considers 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 will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**

    **(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on Relevant Outcomes.**

    **(3) 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 Evidence Standards with reservations.**

    **Note: Applicants may wish to review the following technical assistance resources on evaluation: (1) WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook 3.0: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Handbooks; and (2) "Technical Assistance Materials for Conducting Rigorous Impact Evaluations" to the list of evaluation resources: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/projects/evaluationTA.asp; and (3) IES/NCEE Technical Methods papers: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech_methods/. In addition, applicants may view two optional webinar recordings that were hosted by the Institute of Education Sciences. The first webinar discussed strategies for designing and executing well-designed Quasi-Experimental Design Studies and is available at: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Multimedia.aspx?sid=23. The second webinar focused on more rigorous evaluation designs, discussing strategies for designing and executing studies that meet WWC evidence standards without reservations. This webinar is available at: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Multimedia.aspx?sid=18.**

    **Strengths:**

    The project is driven by multiple data points (p.23). Evidence throughout the project will be collected to measure progress and success in its implementation. A focus has been placed on supporting high-need students in Title I Schools. A strength is the balance proposed for assessing duration, intensity, and quality control. Districts and schools will be involved in scheduling and supporting the project, allowing for flexibility in calendar and ownership of the process. The staff involved in the process appears to be diverse in their backgrounds and educational experiences. This will prove valuable in the process as they will bring different experiences and perspectives.

    **Weaknesses:**

    Title I schools are required to provide multiple data points and reports to justify funding. It is unclear if schools will be able to utilize this information as part of the evaluation process for this project. BY considering this, schools can devote more time for implementation rather than create documents with the same information.

**Reader's Score:        18**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting Diversity in the Educator Workforce**

1. **Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to address both of the following priority areas:**

    **(a) Providing educator development activities designed to improve cultural competency and responsiveness skills that contribute to an inclusive school culture; and**

    **(b) Improving the recruitment, support, and retention of educators from diverse backgrounds.**

    **Applicants must respond to both of the priority areas in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.**

    **Strengths:**

    Applicant did not address this priority.

**Weaknesses:**

Applicant did not address this priority.

**Reader's Score:** 0

**Competitive Preference Priority - Support for Personalized Learning Environments**

1. **Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to support teachers, principals, or other School Leaders implementing personalized learning environments in their classrooms or in classrooms in their schools, using data to inform their instruction, and increasing students' engagement, voice, and choice in their learning. Projects may support educators' implementation of college and career ready strategies such as project based learning, competency based education, or blended learning.**

   **Strengths:**

   There is a focus on personalized learning to address the needs of the individual participants.

   **Weaknesses:**

   None noted.

**Reader's Score:** 3

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**Status:** Submitted
**Last Updated:** 08/13/2017 03:39 PM

Status:     Submitted
Last Updated:     08/15/2017 09:14 AM

# Technical Review

**Applicant:**     Illinois State University (U423A170072)
**Reader #2:**     **********

|  | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|---|---|---|
| **Questions** | | |
| **Selection Criteria** | | |
| **Quality of Project Design** | | |
| **1.** Project Design | 40 | 35 |
| **Significance** | | |
| **1.** Significance | 15 | 13 |
| **Quality of the Management Plan** | | |
| **1.** Management Plan | 25 | 21 |
| **Quality of the Project Evaluation** | | |
| **1.** Project Evaluation | 20 | 20 |
| | | |
| **Priority Questions** | | |
| **Competitive Preference Priority** | | |
| **Promoting Diversity in the Educator Workforce** | | |
| **1.** CPP 1 | 5 | 5 |
| **Support for Personalized Learning Environments** | | |
| **1.** CPP 2 | 3 | 3 |
| | | |
| **Total** | 108 | 97 |

# Technical Review Form

**Reader #2:**     **********

**Applicant:**   Illinois State University (U423A170072)

**Questions**

**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:**

   **(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.**

   **(2) 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.**

   **(3) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.**

   **(4) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs.**

   **(5) 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 proposes to support a large number and range of students with 44,000+ students in a total of 101 schools (86 public and 15 private), in rural, suburban and urban settings. The students range from elementary to high school in rural, suburban, urban both public and private schools. These schools and leaders are identified as those having the highest need with 47% receiving free or reduced lunches, and roughly 13% with special needs. Further, 59% of schools are located in rural areas. It is refreshing to see the range of support being provided. The wide variation and diversity of support strengthens this proposal with inclusivity and the magnitude of support.

   The applicant has created a proposal that is comprehensive with components that have been carefully thought out to support both school leaders and high-need students. In particularly, work around the change process is important to aid leaders in seeing the cycle or continuum of change, which guides understanding of the ebb and flow of new initiatives and provides reinforcement around how to stick with those initiatives long enough to see the impact.

   The applicant demonstrates research-based quality, intensity, and duration standards to produce the desired outcomes. TEAM Lead is an intensive professional development and support model that can result in demonstrated changes in leadership and instructional practice, leading to improvements in student learning.

   The applicant proposes partners with a proven record of success and prior research to support implementation. The identified partners greatly enhances the applicant's capacity to meet objectives.

   **Weaknesses:**

   While the applicant has composed a wonderful variation of school types, there is no opportunity for school leaders from these different schools to discuss the issue of how high-need students are served and supported to learn from one another. The absence of sharing information is a missed opportunity for problem-solving.

**Reader's Score:          35**


## 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:**

    **(1) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and Student Achievement.**

    **(2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits.**

    **(3) The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of the grant.**

    **(4) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.**

    **Strengths:**

    The applicant demonstrates a strong network of partners with the capacity for large-scale dissemination of research outcomes. A total of 70 public schools will participate in the TEAM Lead evaluation, and AIR will identify at least 140 comparison schools from among a larger set of Illinois public schools, impacting an estimated 44,000 students. The SAM network currently serves 22 states, allowing TEAM Lead to reach over 874 schools. The applicant demonstrates ample dissemination methods.

    **Weaknesses:**

    The applicant indicates the cost per student for the TEAM Lead intervention is roughly $0.50 per student/per year, or $1900 per participant/per year. The cost estimate for training both in-person, online, via phone calls and some travel does not appear to be enough to cover the project.

**Reader's Score:          13**


## 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 extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.**

    **(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.**

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

    **Strengths:**

    The applicant provides a well-designed planning and implementation management plan. The management staff presented have sufficient experience and expertise to accomplish grant objectives. The roles and responsibilities of management staff are well outlined with clear pathways of accountability. The applicant's partners greatly increase the capacity to meet the outlined objectives. The organizational chart demonstrates layers of supports and expertise.

**Weaknesses:**

The timeline presented for some of the activities does not appear to be long enough for adequate phase completion.


**Reader's Score:** 21



**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation**

1. **The Secretary considers 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 will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**

    **(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on Relevant Outcomes.**

    **(3) 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 Evidence Standards with reservations.**

    **Note:Applicants may wish to review the following technical assistance resources on evaluation: (1) WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook 3.0: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Handbooks; and (2) "Technical Assistance Materials for Conducting Rigorous Impact Evaluations" to the list of evaluation resources: http://ies.ed. gov/ncee/projects/evaluationTA.asp; and (3) IES/NCEE Technical Methods papers: http://ies.ed. gov/ncee/tech_methods/. In addition, applicants may view two optional webinar recordings that were hosted by the Institute of Education Sciences. The first webinar discussed strategies for designing and executing well-designed Quasi-Experimental Design Studies and is available at: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Multimedia.aspx? sid=23. The second webinar focused on more rigorous evaluation designs, discussing strategies for designing and executing studies that meet WWC evidence standards without reservations. This webinar is available at: http: //ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Multimedia.aspx?sid=18.**


    **Strengths:**

    TEAM Lead will ensure quality control by standardizing 80% of professional development and supports across regions, while customizing 20% of content, allowing the project to align support to specific school partners' priorities and needs. The external evaluator for the proposed project, the American Institutes for Research (AIR), has been an integral partner in the IL-PART project. AIR evaluators provided regular, on-going, and meaningful feedback to inform course corrections, leading to better outcomes. Regional Office of Education (ROE) Project Coordinators will collect specific process measures on a monthly basis, including each school's activities and challenges. Quarterly Formative Feedback Reports will be developed by ROE

    coordinators and include a 1-page visual summary of the initiative's progress through data benchmarks. The applicant injects sufficient feedback loops to modify implementation when needed to remain on track for completion. The evaluation includes both formative and summative components and the collection of quantitative and qualitative data to strengthen evaluation and analysis.

    **Weaknesses:**

    None noted.


**Reader's Score:** 20



**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting Diversity in the Educator Workforce**

1.  **Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to address both of the following priority areas:**

    **(a)  Providing educator development activities designed to improve cultural competency and responsiveness skills that contribute to an inclusive school culture; and**

    **(b)  Improving the recruitment, support, and retention of educators from diverse backgrounds.**

    **Applicants must respond to both of the priority areas in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.**

    **Strengths:**

    The applicant indicates efforts to ensure that principal candidates are more reflective of the

    demographic and cultural characteristics of their school and community. Participating districts will collaborate with partner universities to recruit and retain more diverse principal candidates. The SEED grant will fund professional development for school leaders and principal candidates in the four partner universities, enabling practicing and pre-service principals to implement new equity policies in schools.

    **Weaknesses:**

    None noted.

**Reader's Score:        5**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Support for Personalized Learning Environments**

1.  **Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to support teachers, principals, or other School Leaders implementing personalized learning environments in their classrooms or in classrooms in their schools, using data to inform their instruction, and increasing students' engagement, voice, and choice in their learning. Projects may support educators' implementation of college and career ready strategies such as project based learning, competency based education, or blended learning.**

    **Strengths:**

    The applicant strongly addresses this CPP. Ongoing one-on-one coaching support will be specifically focused on individual principal professional development plans and on-site professional development will address specific problems of instructional practice.

    **Weaknesses:**

    None noted.

**Reader's Score:        3**

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**Status:**        Submitted
**Last Updated:**        08/15/2017 09:14 AM

# Technical Review

**Applicant:**     Illinois State University (U423A170072)
**Reader #3:**     **********

|  | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|---|---|---|
| **Questions** | | |
| **Selection Criteria** | | |
| **Quality of Project Design** | | |
| **1.** Project Design | 40 | 40 |
| **Significance** | | |
| **1.** Significance | 15 | 15 |
| **Quality of the Management Plan** | | |
| **1.** Management Plan | 25 | 25 |
| **Quality of the Project Evaluation** | | |
| **1.** Project Evaluation | 20 | 20 |
| **Priority Questions** | | |
| **Competitive Preference Priority** | | |
| **Promoting Diversity in the Educator Workforce** | | |
| **1.** CPP 1 | 5 | 5 |
| **Support for Personalized Learning Environments** | | |
| **1.** CPP 2 | 3 | 3 |
| **Total** | 108 | 108 |

# Technical Review Form

**Reader #3:** \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

**Applicant:** Illinois State University (U423A170072)

**Questions**

**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:**

    **(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.**

    **(2) 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.**

    **(3) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.**

    **(4) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs.**

    **(5) 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 Invitational Priority was addressed by the application.

   The project design is based upon research in the field, as well as the applicant's prior experience with the targeted schools (p. 21-22). The latter informs the practical aspects of implementation to meet goals and objectives. The established and ongoing working relationship among the stakeholders in various contexts (i.e. private, public, rural, urban, etc.). While the various contexts could pose a challenge for some interventions, the applicant had data from its targeted local education agencies (LEAs) that demonstrated that principals need to manage their time more effectively to attend to issues of instructional leadership. Making those adjustments can represent significant change for some principals, and that was factored into the implementation as well. The LOGIC model presented on p. 24 demonstrated a confidence in successfully implementing comprehensive interventions in school settings. For example, multi-prong approaches (e.g. PD, coaching) were mentioned to enable the change in behavior.

   **Weaknesses:**

   No weaknesses were noted in the Quality of the Project Design.

**Reader's Score:**     40

**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:**

    **(1) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and Student Achievement.**

**(2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits.**

**(3) The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of the grant.**

**(4) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.**

**Strengths:**

The goals and objectives of the project are realistic and attainable, which is significant based on the number of schools being targeted.  The prior experience of the applicant in successfully delivering professional development (PD) to the LEAs speaks to the quality of their prior work, as well as their capacity to do the proposed activities.  Further, to provide the PD across different institutional type (i.e. private vs. public) and contexts (i.e. rural vs. urban) is truly significant in how the results of this project can inform research in this field (p. 22). On pp. 33-34, the confidence of the applicant is demonstrated in stating their expectation that the participants will demonstrate " a level of impact as least as strong as the participants in the qualifying study." That statement was supported by the research and prior work that the applicant had conducted.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted with regard to significance.

**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 extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.**

**(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.**

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

**Strengths:**

The Management Plan contained evidence that this project emanated from ongoing collaboration among and between the partnering schools and applicants. The forethought to discuss role differentiation of the partners (p. 30) speaks to the mutual respect that the applicant brings to the proposal. The collaborative approach is evident again on p 37 when the applicant notes the project directors and the project evaluators will work with the ROES to develop a tracking mechanism. Again, the LOGIC Model (p. 24) presents a graphic display of the steps that will be followed, the flow of information to continually improve the project, and to keep stakeholders informed. The Table on pp. 40-43 presents sufficient specificity of intended activities (who, what, when, and why) that will be required to meet the goals and objectives. The milestones that were presented on p. 44 further conveyed the experience and capacity of the applicant to manage this project successfully. The organizational structure and key personnel further support the integrity of the applicant to successfully manage the project.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted in the Management Plan.

**Reader's Score:**     25

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation**

1.  The Secretary considers 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 will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**

     **(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on Relevant Outcomes.**

     **(3) 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 Evidence Standards with reservations.**

     **Note: Applicants may wish to review the following technical assistance resources on evaluation: (1) WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook 3.0: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Handbooks; and (2) "Technical Assistance Materials for Conducting Rigorous Impact Evaluations" to the list of evaluation resources: http://ies.ed. gov/ncee/projects/evaluationTA.asp; and (3) IES/NCEE Technical Methods papers: http://ies.ed. gov/ncee/tech_methods/. In addition, applicants may view two optional webinar recordings that were hosted by the Institute of Education Sciences. The first webinar discussed strategies for designing and executing well-designed Quasi-Experimental Design Studies and is available at: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Multimedia.aspx? sid=23. The second webinar focused on more rigorous evaluation designs, discussing strategies for designing and executing studies that meet WWC evidence standards without reservations. This webinar is available at: http: //ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Multimedia.aspx?sid=18.**

**Strengths:**

A project of this scope and one that attempts to implement change in behaviors of school leaders requires trust among stakeholders. The applicants have presented the collaborative nature of their work, and in the Evaluation Plan, the applicant demonstrates how data will be collected, used for further improvement or modifications (p. 51).  The presentation of this proposal from start to finish helps this reader to see what the goals are, how modifications may be made based on formative assessments, and how the project will achieve its overall goals. The reliance on a Rapid Cycle Improvement Approach will ensure that the project evolves appropriately, yet within the scope of work outlined in the proposal guidelines.

The deployment of formative and summative assessments will assist project staff in maintaining a focus on overall goals without being bogged down in a formative finding; balance and appropriate action are factored into the Evaluation Plan via multiple points of evaluation, analysis by the external evaluator and processed by the project leadership. Likewise, the inclusion of quantitative and qualitative data will enrich the findings of the project for further use in similar and/or different school settings.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted in the Evaluation Plan.

**Reader's Score:**     20

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting Diversity in the Educator Workforce**

1. **Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to address both of the following priority areas:**

   **(a) Providing educator development activities designed to improve cultural competency and responsiveness skills that contribute to an inclusive school culture; and**

   **(b) Improving the recruitment, support, and retention of educators from diverse backgrounds.**

   **Applicants must respond to both of the priority areas in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.**

   **Strengths:**

   The approach of not only providing PD activities regarding cultural competency to practicing principals, but also to emerging leaders was impressive; this also spoke to the sustainability of the tenets of the project beyond the funding period.

   **Weaknesses:**

   No weaknesses noted in the approach to Competitive Preference Priority #1.

**Reader's Score:**     5

**Competitive Preference Priority - Support for Personalized Learning Environments**

1. **Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to support teachers, principals, or other School Leaders implementing personalized learning environments in their classrooms or in classrooms in their schools, using data to inform their instruction, and increasing students' engagement, voice, and choice in their learning. Projects may support educators' implementation of college and career ready strategies such as project based learning, competency based education, or blended learning.**

   **Strengths:**

   Presenting strategies to teachers, via the PD that principals will receive, and doing so through Cycle of Inquiry appears to empower teachers to become instructional leaders within their classrooms (p. 27).

   **Weaknesses:**

   No weaknesses noted in Competitive Preference Priority #2.

**Reader's Score:**     3

**Status:**            Submitted
**Last Updated:**      08/05/2017 02:26 PM