

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/15/2017 04:29 PM

Technical Review

Applicant: TNTP, Inc. (U367D170012)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	10
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design & Services	35	35
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Sustainability		
1. Sustainability	15	10
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	20
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priorities		
CPP 2: Improving Efficiency (Cost Effectiveness)		
1. CPP 2	1	1
CPP 3: Promoting STEM education		
1. CPP 3	2	2
CPP 4: Supporting High-Need Students		
1. CPP 4	3	3
Total	106	101

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - SEED - 6: 84.367D

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: TNTP, Inc. (U367D170012)

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:

- (1) The significance of the proposed project on a National Level.
- (2) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of teacher and school leadership theory, knowledge, and practices.
- (3) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and Student Achievement.

Strengths:

- (1) The applicant presents a detailed and effective narrative to justify the need to improve the quality of teaching by supporting inservice and novice teachers. The project proposes to enable a diverse cohort of school systems within three regional sites that will impact teachers and students across regions as well as providing lessons for preparation program providers across the nation (p.6-8).
- (2) The proposal describes how the refined model will be integrated into the professional development efforts across sites and how it would be easily replicable within rigorous research that will impact a large number of students nationwide (p.8-9).
- (3) The applicant discusses effectively how the program will serve to improve the education field by preparing a significant number of novice teachers who will, in turn, teach over 67K students (p. 9-10). In addition, the proposal describes the model's impact on teacher retention through coaching supports.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design and services of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design and services of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, aligned, and measurable.
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.
- (3) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project will be of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project will prepare personnel for fields in which shortages have been demonstrated.
- (5) The extent to which the proposed project will focus on serving or otherwise addressing the needs of disadvantaged individuals.

Strengths:

- (1) The goals, objectives, and outcomes as well as participants' outcomes are clearly specified and aligned through a detailed narrative as well as the use of summary tables and figures. Each goal will be measured objectively and easily collectable (p. 12-14).
- (2) The applicant demonstrates a comprehensive effort in the proposal by describing the program's online training implementation within each regional site's PD standards plan and course content (p. 14-16). It was helpful to read how the model has been implemented and how the research-based online coursework will contribute to the teachers' improved outcomes.
- (3) The applicant addresses the program's quality, intensity and duration by implementing a sequential skills development, intensive practice, use of observations and feedback and maintaining high standards (p. 17-21). Particularly promising would be the program's training features: fast start skills, practice teaching, performance screening, and effective coaching—which will ensure the quality of the program.
- (4) The applicant effectively demonstrates how the project has and will serve several populations identified with shortages, such as ESL, Special Education, and STEM (p. 22, 24). The applicant describes how their personnel will execute strategic recruitment procedures such as forecasting school-level vacancies, marketing schools, monitoring candidate performance, and training district recruiters.
- (5) The proposal establishes a strategic selection of participants that would be representative of high-need, disadvantaged populations such as ESL and special education (p. 29). The program will recruit individuals who believe that all students can learn and will serve at-risk students with highly-qualified trained teachers.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project and of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and the project personnel, the Secretary considers:**

- (1) **The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director, key project personnel, and project consultants or subcontractors.**
- (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 extent to which the proposed management plan includes sufficient and reasonable resources to effectively carry out the proposed project, including the project evaluation.**

Strengths:

- (1) Key project personnel demonstrates extensive expertise. The applicant proposes to collaborate with identified staff across regional sites as outlined in helpful tables and figures (p. 30-33). This is particularly positive to ensure the collaboration and support of district leaders. TNTP's staff demonstrates previous experience in the implementation and support of projects of this dimension across similar sites. The proposal is strengthened by the use of an independent evaluation team to maintain a rigorous process.
- (2) The management plan is presented effectively through the use of a helpful table that summarizes responsibilities, timeline, and milestones aligned to each objective. All roles, milestones, and timelines are considered realistic within the scope and length of the proposed project, especially when the measures will be easily collected from the school districts. The applicant states that goals will be calibrated, which demonstrates a genuine collaboration and attention to the project needs (p. 35-38).
- (3) The proposal successfully describes adequate, sufficient and reasonable resources across partners to implement and manage the project effectively (p. 38-41). The project incorporates essential components for success, such as district commitment and support, the promise to continuously review goals based on delineated objectives and

timelines, and commitment of the grant management team.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Sustainability

1. **The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources to continue the proposed project after the grant period ends. In determining the adequacy of resources and the potential for utility of the proposed project's activities and products by other organizations, the Secretary considers:**

- (1) **The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.**
- (2) **The extent to which the proposed project is likely to yield findings and products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that may be used by other agencies and organizations.**
- (3) **The extent to which the applicant will disseminate information about results and outcomes of the proposed project in ways that will enable others, including the public, to use the information or strategies.**

Strengths:

- (1) The applicant addresses the project's plan to increase teacher capacity based on previous success with similar programs and how lessons learned offer positive insight for district leaders (p.41-42). Among the strengths of the proposal is how the project will recruit qualified district staff, offer ongoing training, and develop accountability measures as well as technology tools that would be available after the funding period.

Weaknesses:

- (2) The applicant lacks specificity of how the proposed project will produce research findings, new tools, and resources that would provide significant insight for teacher preparation programs (p. 42-43). A more specific connection to teacher and student outcomes would have strengthened the proposal.
- (3) The applicant's dissemination plans includes publishing findings; however the applicant focuses on dissemination venues of previous projects and provides a rather short view of the dissemination plan for the proposed project (p.42-43).

Reader's Score: 10

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:**

- (1) **The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.**
- (2) **The extent to which the evaluation includes the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data.**
- (3) **The extent to which the evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**
- (4) **The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.**

Strengths:

(1) The proposed research methods and evaluation components will address the PD intervention thoroughly and with rigor. The project will encompass a sound scientific research design (p.45-47) evidenced by an analysis of fidelity of implementation, measures of teacher outcomes impacted by the model, and a randomized control trial study. The proposal is strengthened by a discussion of how the external evaluators will test the model for effectiveness and how the evaluation study will answer specific research questions.

(2) The proposed evaluation plan employs appropriate and balanced statistical processes to gather qualitative and quantitative data that are frequently used in education research (p. 47-48). The applicant provides a clear discussion of how and which data collected will serve to assess the impact of the model on student and teacher outcomes and effects of the program on the districts' hiring, retention and equitable distribution of teachers.

(3) The proposal demonstrates a high quality implementation and evaluation plan that will be reviewed periodically and includes regular opportunities to provide feedback (p. 49). The discussion is specific and details the yearly process to revise and tailor the program components to address each district's needs. The proposal is strengthened by a discussion of the mechanisms that external evaluators will assess and provide feedback on performance measures and outcomes

(4) The applicant discusses in detail how the evaluation process of each goal will satisfy rigorous WWC evidence standards using a quasi-experimental research design including a randomized control trial at the teacher level (p. 50).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 20

Priority Questions**Competitive Preference Priorities - CPP 2: Improving Efficiency (Cost Effectiveness)**

- 1. Projects that will identify strategies for providing cost-effective, high-quality services at the State, regional, or local level by making better use of available resources. Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of Open Educational Resources, or other strategies.**

Strengths:

The proposal addresses this priority by explaining that courses will employ tailor-made technology to ensure cost-effectiveness and sustainability (p.28).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 1

Competitive Preference Priorities - CPP 3: Promoting STEM education

- 1. This priority funds projects that address one or both of the following priority areas:**

(a) Increasing the opportunities for high-quality preparation of, or professional development for, teachers of STEM subjects.

(b) Increasing the number of individuals from groups traditionally underrepresented in STEM, including minorities,

individuals with disabilities, and women, who are teachers of STEM subjects and have increased opportunities for high-quality preparation or professional development.

In addition, applicants must describe how they plan to measure the impact the proposed project activities have on teacher effectiveness. Applicants must determine teacher effectiveness through a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation in which performance is differentiated using multiple measures of effectiveness and based in significant part on Student Growth.

Note: Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

*For the purposes of this notice, STEM may include computer science.

Strengths:

The proposal includes a detailed description of how the program will increase the opportunities of disadvantaged students in STEM-related fields (p. 24-26).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priorities - CPP 4: Supporting High-Need Students

1. This priority funds projects that are designed to improve academic outcomes for one or more of the following groups of students:

- (i) Students served by Rural Local Educational Agencies.
- (ii) Students with disabilities.
- (iii) English learners.
- (iv) Students who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.

Note: Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

Strengths:

The applicant describes a detailed selection process for recruiting participants who will support students with disabilities and English learners (p. 27).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted
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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 04/25/2017 06:17 PM

Technical Review

Applicant: TNTP, Inc. (U367D170012)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	8
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design & Services	35	35
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Sustainability		
1. Sustainability	15	13
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	19
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priorities		
CPP 2: Improving Efficiency (Cost Effectiveness)		
1. CPP 2	1	1
CPP 3: Promoting STEM education		
1. CPP 3	2	2
CPP 4: Supporting High-Need Students		
1. CPP 4	3	3
Total	106	101

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - SEED - 6: 84.367D

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: TNTP, Inc. (U367D170012)

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:

- (1) The significance of the proposed project on a National Level.
- (2) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of teacher and school leadership theory, knowledge, and practices.
- (3) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and Student Achievement.

Strengths:

TNTP has 19 years of experience recruiting or training over 50,000 teachers to teach shortage subjects in multiple districts and charter networks (p.2). The applicant emphasizes the resounding research that highly effective teachers have a long-term positive impact on student achievement. A significant component of the TNTP Fellows program is the requirement for perspective Fellows to earn their license through demonstration of effective teaching performance using the Assessment of Classroom Effectiveness (ACE) screener (p. 3). Additional evidence of scalability is the successful implementation of the ACE screener in urban districts across the nation resulting in Fellows teaching over 450,000 students from high needs schools.

Current efforts to work with districts on recruiting for hard-to-fill positions have focused on the issue of supply and not considered the root causes of the need for teachers experienced by districts across the country (p.6). The applicant has strategically selected districts that are impacted by two noted issues in hiring highly qualified candidates including: recruitment of diverse highly-qualified teachers and retention of these individuals due to limited compensation and district policies that reward teachers based on tenure as compared to demonstration of improved student outcomes on academic measures (p. 3-4). This project seeks to work with a diverse group of school systems to realign policies, hiring practices and professional development to provide the incentives and training that lay the foundation for a long-term career that has proven success in positively impacting achievement for high needs students (p. 6). Multiple examples of the applicant's current work in this area further support the premise that districts must be involved in designing a process to provide a comprehensive program of support for first year teachers that meets the needs of their organization to increase teacher recruitment and retention (p.6-7). TNTP is well-poised to share the proven TEACH model that includes the key methods of providing first year teachers the opportunity to practice, observe other teachers and receive feedback throughout their first year teaching with the districts. In addition, the provided examples demonstrate the probability that the proposed extension of TNTP's support to work with districts in the development of a customized design method to accurately assess the impact of teaching using local evaluation methods is probable.

The broad scope of the project is anticipated to impact multiple school districts with 88% or higher levels of poverty. TEACH will recruit and enroll approximately 750 candidates that are likely to directly teach over 67,000 students.

Weaknesses:

"Strong potential" is used to reference the ability of the teachers that have completed the TNTP program and it is unclear how many of the 50,000 teachers have excelled in the districts or charter networks in which they are employed (p. 2).

While lessons learned will be shared with the field including evaluation findings, access to TNTP training enhancements is

limited to district and community partners (p. 8).

The applicant suggests a perceived impact on all teachers and students in the district but does not provide information on how or if this impact would be measured (p.9).

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design and services of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design and services of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, aligned, and measurable.**
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.**
- (3) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project will be of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.**
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project will prepare personnel for fields in which shortages have been demonstrated.**
- (5) The extent to which the proposed project will focus on serving or otherwise addressing the needs of disadvantaged individuals.**

Strengths:

The described project goals are clearly aligned with the objectives and measures (p.12-13).

Through hands-on exposure to the academic content, preservice training and an on-line training platform, novice teachers will build a foundation of content knowledge and instructional skills that will accelerate their ability to prepare students to meet the rigor of the college and career ready standards selected by each partnering state. The planned approach to provide novice teachers hands-on experience during the summer session benefits not only the teachers but the students who are typically selected for extended year school based on skill areas that need further development. This plan provides teachers who are enthusiastic and motivated opportunities to develop and/or strengthen their instructional skills based on each district's teaching standards. The planned approach to begin with pre-designed lesson plans and having teachers use these plans as templates to design their own provides novice teachers with real world experience in developing effective lessons on a real, but typically smaller scale, prior to the start of the school year (p. 15).

The primary venue for professional learning is on-line coursework with an emphasis on lesson construction (p. 16). On-line learning provides flexibility to accommodate the busy schedules of millennial teachers and the courses are monitored by a district course facilitator that is highly skilled in his/her content. TNTP will train these course facilitators to effectively deliver the content of these courses.

The comprehensive professional learning plan description includes in person and virtual coaching to provide immediate and useful feedback (p. 17). A thorough process for effective and actionable feedback is described in detail. Strong data collection provided by TEACH Prep training Fast Start Skills component will be essential in selecting the most capable candidates to receive contracts in the partnering districts (p.18). The program training places a focus on effective instructional techniques that have garnered positive principal ratings in evaluations of novice teachers (p.19). An additional focus to leverage the existing teacher talent in various subject areas will provide additional training to these individuals so that they are poised to provide the critical side-by-side coaching during the preservice program. A strong partnership between TNTP and districts will result in the design of a coaching role that best meets the districts individual needs.

The known success of the TNTP Fellows program will provide the leverage these districts need to recruit as they are competing with affluent suburban districts for the same talent (p. 21-22). In a recent study TNTP received 10,000 applicants for 986 positions allowing districts to be highly selective in identifying staff to become program participants.

Multiple examples of successful recruitment further strengthen the applicant's ability to successfully scale-up their proven processes to meet the needs of the partnering districts (p. 23-25).

The recruitment process described by the applicant is built on a foundational belief that all children can learn and it is articulated that perspective candidates must demonstrate through the interview process that they are fully aligned to this mindset (p.26). This is critical in selecting the most highly skilled individuals to work with at-risk students. Successful candidates will have the skillset to connect emotionally with at-risk learners that goes beyond a strong skillset in the ability to present the content.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project and of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and the project personnel, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director, key project personnel, and project consultants or subcontractors.**
- (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 extent to which the proposed management plan includes sufficient and reasonable resources to effectively carry out the proposed project, including the project evaluation.**

Strengths:

The identified personnel at each site will be comprised of TNTP and district staff. The qualifications of these individuals include numerous years of experience in education and working with various TNTP projects (p.31-32). The TNTP leadership team has contributed to the grant plan and will provide their full support of the project along with an identified project leader in each district. TNTP will hire site-based individuals taking on the burden of hiring, training and accountability of these individuals from districts that likely do not have the capacity to manage these positions. This will also ensure consistency to project goals while supporting districts in addressing their unique needs. The budget narrative (Section C) indicates that many of the added FTE are decreased annually over the course of this grant as each district builds the capacity to assume the responsibilities they have fulfilled.

A detailed plan to accomplish project milestones is outlined (p. 35-37) highlighting critical timelines that TNTP and the partnering districts have committed to following. Focused objectives support each of the three goals and adequate staff are identified to ensure the successful completion of each component in a timely manner.

In their letters of support (Appendix C), district partners commit to the implementation of the TNTPs proposed grant plan and to working in tandem to customize the proposed plan to meet their needs in the development of a sustainable program plan. TNTP has identified measurable goals and stated that progress will be monitored at regular intervals by internal analysts and the outside evaluator. Team members will reflect on the data gathered and if needed, the course of action will be altered to ensure that the project goals are achieved (p. 38). TNTP has a focus and documented experience using a data based approach to recruit staff that have risen to the challenge to staff high needs, hard-to-fill positions across the country (p. 40). The SEED grant management team is comprised of individuals with multiple years of experience in large federal grant management. Their combined experience provides credibility to the applicant's ability to successfully achieve the grant goals within all parameters set forth in the SEED guidelines including detailed oversight of the financial reporting requirements (p.40-41).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Sustainability

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources to continue the proposed project after the grant period ends. In determining the adequacy of resources and the potential for utility of the proposed project's activities and products by other organizations, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.**
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to yield findings and products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that may be used by other agencies and organizations.**
- (3) The extent to which the applicant will disseminate information about results and outcomes of the proposed project in ways that will enable others, including the public, to use the information or strategies.**

Strengths:

based on their experience in working with districts to expand their human capital resources to increase the capacity of each district to not only recruit but retain new highly qualified talent. TNTP has identified a critical need for public school districts to use grant funds to update outdated technology systems that will ease the burden of understaffed human resource departments in capturing data that is essential for effective recruitment and retention of teachers. TNTP acknowledges that outdated policies do little to support district administrators in providing compensation packages that provide adequate wages and incentives for advancement to retain their top talent (p. 42). TNTP also acknowledges the need to build the capacity of existing personnel to acquire the skills to maintain this work at the completion of the grant and they have included a plan to transfer the knowledge and establish the tools and resources that district personnel will utilize to continue the initiatives beyond the grant sunset date.

This project spans three states and multiple districts having a similar structure to multiple, successful project designs led by TNTP. They have success in sharing case studies both informally and formally through media outlets and published documents (p. 43). The intentional selection of diverse areas to implement this project will lead to new findings and recommendations that will be meaningful to the field in addressing the teacher acquisition and retention crisis that is threatening school districts across the country.

The applicant shared four large scale studies that have resulted in published findings that have and continue to provide valued information in the field.

Weaknesses:

A stated commitment (p. 44) to publishing the findings is vague and does not indicate how the findings will be shared beyond study partners.

Reader's Score: 13

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:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.**
- (2) The extent to which the evaluation includes the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data.**

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

(4) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.

Strengths:

Internal and external evaluators will focus on accountability to the goals and accomplishments outlined in the grant application using multiple measures. (p. 44). The applicant describes extensive experience in selecting reputable research firms and managing their work to ensure the fidelity of implementation for all grant components A comprehensive randomized control trial of face-to-face and virtual coaching methods will provide evidence of the most cost-effective and sustainable coaching format with documented results to support increased teacher effectiveness (p. 45).

Appropriate evaluation measures will be systematically obtained from partnering districts and schools to assess the impact of the TEACH model on both students and teacher outcomes as well as on the district level activities of hiring, retaining and equitably distributing highly qualified staff to high needs open positions (p. 47).

A strong process for continuous review of performance feedback upon receipt by TNTP and the partner districts will make it possible to make adjustments as needed (p.49). The applicant has focused the annual revisions of program components in order to tailor the program plan to the identified district needs. The focus on the needs of individual districts and the flexibility of the grant design to make adjustments to the district plans based on performance feedback will increase the likelihood of producing a project plan that will be replicable at a national level. A consistent and on-going process for external evaluators to provide regular feedback on outcomes through monthly phone calls, biannual briefings and annual interim reports adds another layer of credibility to the evaluation design (p. 49).

The applicant will collect teacher survey information and student assessment data over various time intervals to measure the immediate and long-term impact of the grant project. The evaluation process is intentionally designed to meet the What Works Clearinghouse Standards in 2017 With Reservations (p.47).

Weaknesses:

The applicant states that teacher attrition is expected to be low and a description of how this will be addressed should the rates be higher is not included (p.50). Although unexpected, a plan to address this concern would enable an immediate proactive response should this situation occur.

Reader's Score: 19

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priorities - CPP 2: Improving Efficiency (Cost Effectiveness)

- 1. Projects that will identify strategies for providing cost-effective, high-quality services at the State, regional, or local level by making better use of available resources. Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of Open Educational Resources, or other strategies.**

Strengths:

The use of grant funds to develop district technology systems to increase efficiency in collecting student data and streamlining recruitment will support the sustainability of the project. School districts must leverage technology to become more efficient as education funding decreases and too often reduces critical central office staff that provide essential behind-the-scenes support of innovative instructional strategies and practices. In addition technology will be maximized to offer on-line courses that provide novice teachers with the flexibility they desire to advance their skill on their own time. Finally, the applicant has placed resources to extend the virtual coaching component so that novice teachers continue to benefit from the experience of teacher leaders (p.28-29).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 1

Competitive Preference Priorities - CPP 3: Promoting STEM education

1. This priority funds projects that address one or both of the following priority areas:

(a) Increasing the opportunities for high-quality preparation of, or professional development for, teachers of STEM subjects.

(b) Increasing the number of individuals from groups traditionally underrepresented in STEM, including minorities, individuals with disabilities, and women, who are teachers of STEM subjects and have increased opportunities for high-quality preparation or professional development.

In addition, applicants must describe how they plan to measure the impact the proposed project activities have on teacher effectiveness. Applicants must determine teacher effectiveness through a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation in which performance is differentiated using multiple measures of effectiveness and based in significant part on Student Growth.

Note: Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

*For the purposes of this notice, STEM may include computer science.

Strengths:

The applicant provides a detailed plan of the TNTP's active teacher recruitment programs that seek math and science degree candidates to consider educating the most at-risk populations in the grant identified areas of the country. It is evident that the applicant is realistic about the depth and breadth that will be required to fill the demand for highly skilled teachers in the STEM field as evidenced by their commitment to "generate ten times as many applicants as our target number of STEM teachers" (p. 24). In addition to recruitment strategies the applicant has described a variety of "creative cultivation strategies" (p. 25) to retain the recruits. TNTP is capturing the millennial population through their planned efforts to connect novice teachers with veteran teachers who made this career change due to a strong desire to give back to the community. Another important component of the applicant's proposal is the use of the TEACH Prep model and screening to determine the effectiveness of the applicants prior to certification. The proven success of candidates who have successfully met the criteria and had success in their teaching careers provides an additional assurance that the incoming novice teachers have the tools, the passion and the commitment to persevere in the most challenging, yet rewarding classrooms of "at-hope" learners.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priorities - CPP 4: Supporting High-Need Students

1. This priority funds projects that are designed to improve academic outcomes for one or more of the following groups of students:

- (i) Students served by Rural Local Educational Agencies.
- (ii) Students with disabilities.
- (iii) English learners.
- (iv) Students who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.

Note: Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

Strengths:

Each of the participating districts identifies a percentage of students identified as students with special needs and/or English language learners that will be served by this grant project. (p.27).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 04/25/2017 06:17 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/14/2017 10:33 AM

Technical Review

Applicant: TNTP, Inc. (U367D170012)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	10
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design & Services	35	35
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Sustainability		
1. Sustainability	15	12
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	20
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priorities		
CPP 2: Improving Efficiency (Cost Effectiveness)		
1. CPP 2	1	1
CPP 3: Promoting STEM education		
1. CPP 3	2	2
CPP 4: Supporting High-Need Students		
1. CPP 4	3	3
Total	106	103

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - SEED - 6: 84.367D

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: TNTP, Inc. (U367D170012)

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:

- (1) The significance of the proposed project on a National Level.
- (2) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of teacher and school leadership theory, knowledge, and practices.
- (3) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and Student Achievement.

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrated adequate significance of ending educational inequality by providing excellent teachers to the students who need them most and by advancing policies and practices that ensure effective teaching in every classroom throughout the nation by providing rigorous teachers the opportunity to take part in Teaching Fellows and TNTP Academy programs. The program prepares people to teach shortage subjects in challenging school environments (p. 32).

Having trained over 50,000 individuals, the program ensures that TNTP Fellows earn their licenses through their ability to demonstrate effective classroom teaching performance by assessing using classroom observations, student and principal surveys and student achievement outcomes or Assessment of Classroom Effectiveness (ACE) (p. 32). The design includes training enhancements that are online learning systems designed to be used by various districts and university partners throughout the country and will contribute practical advances to the field (p. 38).

The results likely to be obtained from this design include TEACH Prep teacher (750 candidates) directly teaching over 67,000 students during the grant period, and approximately 10,000 in their first year (p. 39). The design accommodates smaller districts in also solving their problems with teacher inequality.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design and services of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design and services of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, aligned, and measurable.
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.
- (3) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project will be of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project will prepare personnel for fields in which shortages have been demonstrated.

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

Strengths:

The goal of recommending teachers for certification only after they have met a rigorous performance bar that includes an assessment of effective teaching will be measured by monitoring district vacancy reports, district evaluation ratings, observation ratings, and student learning measures for all first-year teachers (p. 43). The projected outcome will be to increase availability and access to effective and highly effective teachers with the potential of retaining effective teachers at a higher rate (p. 43). The goals are clearly specified, aligned, and measurable.

TEACH Prep has aligned their services to accommodate rigorous, college-ready standards that the state they have chosen to partner with uses. This comprehensive effort will provide teacher candidates with hands on practice with the precise academic content in which they will teach through their Pre-service Training (p. 44). Students are provided 6 weeks of summer learning opportunities as the novice teachers practice their craft (p. 45). The attrition rates of teachers present in the study sample is expected to be low and mainly due to teachers who exit the program for not meeting the screening bar (p. 80).

TEACH Prep's approach to professional development involves sequential skills development, intensive practice, observations, rich feedback, and high standards. It has day to day training and coaching that is tailored to each district's curricula and teaching competency rubric (p. 47). Based on the provided description of rigor of the program, there is high probability that there will be sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvement of the participants.

In 2015, an average of 50 percent of TNTP's newly recruited teachers that successfully completed Pre-service Training and began their first year of teaching were people of color for STEM and Bilingual education. The applicant has demonstrated success with results from previous years in these fields. This was the case for Boston and Dallas, with new teacher cohorts of 47 percent minority candidates beginning training in Boston, and 74 percent in Dallas (p. 52). The program design is structured to attract and train teachers of color for high need areas. Based on the applicant's reported track record, there is high probability that they will be able to prepare personnel for fields of shortages.

Since nearly all 72,000 students in the project sites attend schools with high percentages of poverty where teacher turnover and shortages also happens to be the most problematic, the program meets its goal of increasing the overall concentration of effective teachers, by allowing each district to better to meet the needs of its disadvantaged students (p. 55).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project and of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and the project personnel, the Secretary considers:**
 - (1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director, key project personnel, and project consultants or subcontractors.**
 - (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 extent to which the proposed management plan includes sufficient and reasonable resources to effectively carry out the proposed project, including the project evaluation.**

Strengths:

The applicant provided thoroughly describes the qualifications of the president of TNTP, and provided a description of her job to oversee TNTP's efforts to shape teacher training policy, recruit and select top-notch teachers, and develop internal expertise around teacher effectiveness (p. 60). At each district, a site-based team made up of TNTP and district personnel will collaborate to meet the project milestones (p. 61). The project director is allotted 100 percent of time to work towards proposal goals. A research firm equipped to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of this project as well as to answer the research questions chosen for exploration will be included as a project contractor (p. 64). The applicant will incorporate an analyst to support TNTP Partners and District directors to complete comparative project budgets to analyze the effect of new expenses, savings and return on investments (p. 68).

In addition to key personnel, this project will sustain the full support of TNTP's 15-member senior leadership team with over 250 years of collective experience in education and organizational management. Since they review district-facing content, have weekly touch points, and track progress toward promised outcomes, there is a high probability that this will be a well implemented management plan (p. 63). Based on the noted experience of this applicant, there is a high probability that the goals within the plan will be adequately met.

Evidence is provided to include sufficient resources to effectively carry out the proposed project. In their letters of support, each representative has pledged support to integrate TNTP's program model in a comprehensive strategy to address teacher shortages (p. 69). Eight percent of the project budget (\$1,227,825) will be used for a contract with an independent research team who will rigorously evaluate the impact of TEACH Prep on the teacher workforce in the partner districts, and the efficacy of coaching as a key input on student achievement (p. 74). Due to their previous experience with managing grants of this magnitude, it is probable that the noted amount is adequate.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Sustainability

- 1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources to continue the proposed project after the grant period ends. In determining the adequacy of resources and the potential for utility of the proposed project's activities and products by other organizations, the Secretary considers:**

- (1) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.**
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to yield findings and products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that may be used by other agencies and organizations.**
- (3) The extent to which the applicant will disseminate information about results and outcomes of the proposed project in ways that will enable others, including the public, to use the information or strategies.**

Strengths:

Tracking shows that across TNTP Fellows programs in 2014, their strategies yielded interest from over 44,000 people, and attracted nearly 10,000 applications in order to staff 986 high-need teaching positions (p. 52). The applicant is capable of building capacity, and has documented success of yielding positive results. It is very likely that this proposed project will also yield results beyond the Federal financial assistance period.

The applicant proposes using formal and informal publications, journal articles, blog posts, peer organizations, host a professional conference as a means of discriminating findings and information to the public (p. 74).

The applicant noted that the external evaluator will contribute to publishing findings (p. 74).

Weaknesses:

Additional information was needed to determine in what capacity the external evaluator would present findings, and what type of date would be presented to share with the public.

Reader's Score: 12

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:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.
- (2) The extent to which the evaluation includes the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data.
- (3) The extent to which the evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.
- (4) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.

Strengths:

A variety of measures will be collected by TNTP and its district partners over the course of this grant to ensure they can be accountable to their goals and deliver evidence on key aspects of their theory of action that meet What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations. This evaluation will include an analysis of fidelity of implementation, district wide to determine if shifts in teacher workforce impacted by TEACH prep, and a randomized control trial (RCT) study of coaching supports provided during the first year of teaching (p. 77).

Evaluation measures will be used to assess impact of the TEACH prep coaching model on student and teacher outcomes (RQ2-3) and district wide effects of the TEACH program on hiring, retention, and, equitable distribution (RQ 4), while implementation measures will serve both to evaluate implementation fidelity (RQ 1) and to inform our understanding of the mechanisms underlying any observed effects of the TEACH program (p. 77). From the gathered knowledge, there is great probability that the evaluation process will provide performance feedback.

TNTP will work closely with partner districts to set goals and make improvements to the recruitment, selection and preparation model (p. 79). Training and support components of the program will be revised annually and tailored specifically to each district's needs. Since performance feedback and periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes were demonstrated within the proposal, there is a good chance that a successful evaluation process will take place.

The applicant's external evaluators will simultaneously assess the full program impact on the district through a quasi-experimental design that will meet WWC standards with reservations (p. 67).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priorities - CPP 2: Improving Efficiency (Cost Effectiveness)

- 1. Projects that will identify strategies for providing cost-effective, high-quality services at the State, regional, or local level by making better use of available resources. Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of Open Educational Resources, or other strategies.**

Strengths:

TEACh Prep generates a small amount of revenue through participant tuition, and it is projected that the ongoing maintenance and costs to scale the program will be offset by this income (p. 58). Using Virtual content, the applicant will create online courses with each district partner that fit into the in-house teacher certification program they will launch in the model of TEACh Prep Academy (p. 59).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 1

Competitive Preference Priorities - CPP 3: Promoting STEM education

- 1. This priority funds projects that address one or both of the following priority areas:**

(a) Increasing the opportunities for high-quality preparation of, or professional development for, teachers of STEM subjects.

(b) Increasing the number of individuals from groups traditionally underrepresented in STEM, including minorities, individuals with disabilities, and women, who are teachers of STEM subjects and have increased opportunities for high-quality preparation or professional development.

In addition, applicants must describe how they plan to measure the impact the proposed project activities have on teacher effectiveness. Applicants must determine teacher effectiveness through a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation in which performance is differentiated using multiple measures of effectiveness and based in significant part on Student Growth.

Note: Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

***For the purposes of this notice, STEM may include computer science.**

Strengths:

TNTP has a strong track record of preparing STEM teachers in tough markets through a variety of best practices. In order to have more people of color in the selection of potential STEM teachers, they propose to start by cultivating a large candidate pool, then by tapping groups traditionally underrepresented in STEM. This process will allow them to be highly selective and advance only the most promising candidates to their programs (p. 56). This plan appears to be adequate in obtaining a large pool of potential candidates for the program.

Through their planned work with each site to strategically shift resources toward developing and recognizing strong teachers from among their experienced ranks, they aim to set a course for better retention rates of effective teachers (p. 57).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priorities - CPP 4: Supporting High-Need Students

1. This priority funds projects that are designed to improve academic outcomes for one or more of the following groups of students:

- (i) Students served by Rural Local Educational Agencies.
- (ii) Students with disabilities.
- (iii) English learners.
- (iv) Students who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.

Note: Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

Strengths:

The applicant starts by growing the teacher talent pool in several ways, by building a better pipeline, developing teacher quality, and retaining top performers. High need students enrolled in profile sites includes large percentages of students on free or reduced lunches, schools with 50 or greater fRM, ELL, and student with disabilities (p. 57).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 3

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