

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/17/2018 11:33 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: University of South Carolina (U310A180058)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	29
Quality of Management Plan/Project Personnel		
1. Management/Personel	20	18
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Resources	20	18
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
Sub Total	100	65
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Competitive Preference Priority 1a or 1b		
1. CPP 1(a) or CPP 1(b)	3	0
Sub Total	3	0
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. CPP 2	3	0
Sub Total	3	0
Total	106	65

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - SFEC - 4: 84.310A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: University of South Carolina (U310A180058)

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—

- (1) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.
- (2) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.
- (3) 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.

Strengths:

1. The conceptual framework presents an extensive discussion of the underlying models and practices that will guide the project. For example, Epstein's model, Mapp's Dual Capacity Building Framework, and Wandersman's "Getting to Outcomes" framework will be the underpinnings of the project work (e23-e26). These strong research articles noted evidenced-based models will provide appropriate support and direction for the various elements of the projects.
2. The services in the project will be guided by up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. In the proposal, the services will be guided by the aforementioned models, all of which are documented with research and reflect up-to-date practices (e6-e8). In addition, programs such as the Positive Parenting Program and Parents as Teachers, both of which are evidenced based, will be elements of the services used in the schools (e32). The combination of strong frameworks and evidenced-based programs provides a cohesive approach to the project.
3. The project builds capacity in several ways. The Carolina Family Engagement Center (CFEC) will be a new arm of the existing South Carolina School Improvement Center (SC-SIC) and will work in conjunction with a wide variety of existing state agencies (e10-e11). In developing the various aspects of the project, these partnerships will leverage the existing relationships to build and foster new programs and connections. The project uses existing ties with the Center for Educational Partnerships at University of South Carolina, PASO (Latino Families), and Family Connection (early childhood and children with disabilities) to support the project and to build capacity for the program (e28-e29). The project's results and systemic initiatives will be shared with and integrated into the larger South Carolina-SIC, which will continue to "provide capacity building training and technical assistance (e31). Using existing relationships and governance to develop capacity demonstrates a commitment to sustainability beyond the scope of the grant.

Weaknesses:

1. No weaknesses noted.
2. No weaknesses noted.
3. Some elements of the program which involve stipends to parents and teachers to participate in family engagement practices are not discussed in terms of sustainability of the project (e 37-e38).

Reader's Score: 29

Selection Criteria - Quality of Management Plan/Project Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, in determining the quality of the management plan and project personnel, the Secretary considers—

- (1) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.
- (2) 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.
- (3) 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.
- (4) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

1. The Carolina Family Engagement Center (CFEC) states that it shares a “deep, fundamental commitment to the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion which will be reflected in the CFEC personnel and programmatic priorities” (e19). In addition, the emphasis of the project will be on serving families which are low-income, English Language Learners, minorities, students with disabilities, homeless children, foster children, and migrant children (e20). A member of the business community, parents, a student, educational groups, and school district will form the advisory board (e38-e39). A diversity of perspectives is apparent in the coherence of the philosophy of the project and in its participants.
2. The proposal is developed with a wide variety of partners from the community and educational settings. Among the community organizations that will be partners are: PASAO (Latino Families), Family Connection (disabled children and early childhood), South Carolina First Steps, South Carolina Center for Fathers and Families, as well as the Children’s Trust (e 29; e59). In addition to the community partnerships, the project will involve various departments from the University of South Carolina as well as offices of the South Carolina Department of Education. The range of collaboration will provide strong partners to maximize services.
3. The management plan describes the responsibilities of the Regional Liaison who will assist in planning, implementing, and evaluating an individualized to the school’s needs (e16-e18). In addition, the responsibilities and roles of the Carolina Family Engagement Center are defined and include trainings for the Parent Leadership Program, equipping the Regional Liaisons with needed tools, training, and assistance, and assessing or adjusting program elements as needed (e35-e36). A post-doctoral fellow and four graduate research assistants are discussed in the budget narrative as supports for coordinating the network(s), updating information, and planning for the state-wide conference in year 3 (e386). Also, the budget, as described, seems reasonable for the activities described. The management plan provides some evidence that the project can be completed on time and within budget. For example, the project will return “82% of the funds to leas, schools and community organizations...” for the programs and activities in the grant (e 47).
4. Key project personnel have outstanding qualifications and experience for their roles in the programs. The project director has many years of experience with school improvement at the University of South Carolina and is conducting an ongoing study of engagement programming (e 41). In addition, other directors and key personnel have many years of experience not only with education but also with school improvement, family engagement, and literacy (e 23-e25). The background, as described, documents the extensive preparation of those involved with the project.

Weaknesses:

1. No weaknesses noted.
2. No weaknesses noted.
3. The timelines and milestones as presented in the chart on page e46 are very limited and vague in its description. Years are presented with no quarterly progress and no defined person(s) responsible for the various tasks. For example, in the budget narrative, graduate assistants are responsible along with the project team for outlining the content and

format for the conference which will occur in year 3 (e386). No breakdown of responsibilities, goals, or objectives for preparing the various parts of a statewide conference is evident either in the narrative or on the timeline (e46). The proposal does not state who is responsible for meeting objectives and suggests insufficient timeline planning for achievement of the project's multiple goals, objectives, and milestone (e 46).

4. No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 18

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers—

(1) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

(2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

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

Strengths:

1. The proposal contains signed MOUs from the key partners as well as letters of support and commitment in the appendices. The MOUs include University of South Carolina, PASOs, South Carolina Center for Fathers and Families, Children's Trust, First Steps, Abraham Wandersman, and Family Connection (e61-e84). The memoranda are specific and detail the commitments in terms of time and money for the various elements of the project. For example, Family Connections will provide \$57, 442.25 in matching funds for project years 2 through 5 (e66). The MOUs demonstrate adequate and relevant support which may lead to the success of the project.

2. Costs are reasonable given the scope of the project and its design. About 80% of the funds from the grant will go directly to the local schools and community-based organizations who serve disadvantaged students (e47). The budget also includes "matching funds from the primary partner the SCDE" (South Carolina Department of Education) (e47). The funds from the grant plus fund from the department of education are adequate to support the goals of the project.

3. The project will work with 24 schools in six regions and will involve parents and students from these schools (e 33). The costs reflect some interesting approaches in terms of stipends for parents who participate in parent leadership training to compensate for their time and completion of the training. In addition, stipends will be included for teachers to develop promising family engagement plans which will be reported out to the state (e393). Such financial support encourages opportunities for the project's potential success.

Weaknesses:

1. No weaknesses noted.

2. No weaknesses noted

3. No information is provided about the number of students or families who will be served by the project. Schools vary widely in size and some indication of the numbers of students and parents who will be targeted is needed to determine if the financial support is reasonable (e 33).

Reader's Score: 18

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 include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.
 - (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.
 - (3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce promising evidence (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) about the project's effectiveness.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Competitive Preference Priority 1a or 1b

1. The Secretary gives priority to projects that are designed to--
 - (a) Create SFECs that will provide direct services to parents and families through evidence-based (as defined in the notice inviting applications, NIA) activities.
 - (b) Provide families with evidence-based (as defined in the NIA) strategies for promoting literacy. This may include providing families with access to books or other physical or digital materials or content about how to support their child's reading development, or providing family literacy activities (as defined in section 203(9) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act).

Note: An application will not receive points for both (a) and (b) under Competitive Preference Priority 1.

Strengths:

n/a

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. The Secretary gives priority to projects that are designed to provide families with the information and tools they need to make important decisions regarding the educational choice (as defined in the NIA) that is most appropriate for their children.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: University of South Carolina (U310A180058)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	0
Quality of Management Plan/Project Personnel		
1. Management/Personel	20	0
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Resources	20	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	28
Sub Total	100	28
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Competitive Preference Priority 1a or 1b		
1. CPP 1(a) or CPP 1(b)	3	0
Sub Total	3	0
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. CPP 2	3	0
Sub Total	3	0
Total	106	28

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - SFEC - 4: 84.310A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: University of South Carolina (U310A180058)

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—
 - (1) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.
 - (2) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.
 - (3) 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.

Strengths:

n/a

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Management Plan/Project Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, in determining the quality of the management plan and project personnel, the Secretary considers—
 - (1) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.
 - (2) 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.
 - (3) 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.
 - (4) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

n/a

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers—

- (1) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.**
- (2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.**
- (3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and the anticipated results and benefits.**

Strengths:

n/a

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.**
- (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**
- (3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce promising evidence (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) about the project's effectiveness.**

Strengths:

#1

The applicant persuasively describes a series of qualitative and quantitative performance measures clearly and appropriately articulated with the project goals. The measures are listed in a table that includes outcome measures, measurement type, and data source (e49-e50) organized by the project goals (also see e20-e21). The presentation specifies the measures as they pertain to the goals. The measures involve both quantitative and qualitative data. The data sources are described in detail (e50-e54). The data sources, for example, include parent and teacher surveys, school climate survey profiles, and implementation rubrics.

Moreover, the applicant describes how the surveys are to be developed and validated. For example, the teacher and parent surveys will be developed from an established parent-involvement model and guided by published scales of known theoretical and psychometric validity (e51-e52). Similarly important information is provided for how the other surveys and

instruments are to be developed as well as the interview protocols and focus group protocols (e51–e53).

For student achievement at grades 3–8, the applicant proposes the use of state administered, standardized assessment (SC READY) for reading and math (e50). High school student achievement will be measured in Algebra 1 and English 1 also using a statewide assessment program (e51).

The applicant's discussion of performance measures is quite thorough and makes clear that they are appropriate for the project goals. The plan is to include both qualitative and quantitative measures; and the applicant is convincing as to the validity of the instruments to be used.

#2 The applicant provides considerable detail regarding the plans for performance feedback to the project (e48, e51–e55). The applicant plans for feedback to include both process and outcome data to “determine the extent to which the project is meeting its goals and associated outcomes” (e48).

In order to assess progress, there has to be a starting point, and for that purpose the applicant proposes to collect baseline data over the first year of the project. Based on the baseline data, “targets for each performance measure and project outcome will be set” (e48). The targets are very important because they indicate that the applicant intends to pay attention to what needs to be accomplished in order to consider the various aspects of the project successful.

Impressively, the evaluation plan calls for implementation rubrics (e51). An implementation rubric is a rubric specifically for assessing implementation fidelity. Thus, the evaluation will be able to feedback to the project information on the fidelity with which project innovations are being implemented.

To be useful the performance data has to be fed back to the project where it can be used. To this end the applicant plans for the evaluation team and the project leadership to work together planning data collection, reviewing draft data collection instruments, sharing updates on data collection, and sharing results. The sharing is to take place in monthly meetings. The monthly meetings are important because that frequency is evidence that the feedback will be timely (e54). In addition, reports from the evaluation will be presented “to school and district personnel at least annually” (e55).

#3

The applicant describes “a quasi-experimental design component capable of producing promising evidence, according to WWC standards” with respect to the increase of student academic performance as a result of the implementation (e48). The study will look at student achievement in light of baseline data collected during the first year the project (e48).

Baseline data will be entered into a propensity scoring system for the purpose of establishing equivalency between treatment and matched, comparison schools. The study will involve four schools from each of the six statewide regions. School mansions will be made within region and matching variables are to include “school climate data, school demographics, and baseline student achievement in the year immediately prior to implementation” (e56). For propensity scoring, the applicant also proposes to use data from the South Carolina school report cards and accountability assessments along with school climate data, as well as school poverty index, gender, race/ethnicity, amongst other factors (e56–e57). The applicant intends to follow WWC guidelines on how much variation between treatment and control subjects is allowable. The applicant quite persuasively explains how propensity scoring is to be used.

Regarding findings, the applicant reasonably intends to use Hedge's g “as an effect size measure to gauge the magnitude of differences in mean scale scores between groups” (e57). Gift treatment effects turned out to be promising, the applicant expects to be able to show “, an effect size of 0.25 standard deviations or larger,” which by WWDC standards would be considered important. The applicant is persuasive that the study will have sufficient power.

Finally, measuring impact assumes that the treatment or treatments were implemented with fidelity and yet this is not something that should be assumed. Appropriately then, the applicant includes implementation rubrics that will be used to “clarify whether the reason for unsuccessful outcomes is because of a flawed program or failed implementation of the program” (e51). Providing this attention to implementation fidelity is indicative of a strong impact study.

Weaknesses:

Regarding feedback for monitoring the progress of the implementation, noticeably absent are any detailed entries in the Timeline and Milestones table on e46. Entering evaluation activity details into this table is essential for clarifying how often feedback will be provided and the persons responsible.

Reader's Score: 28

Priority Questions**Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Competitive Preference Priority 1a or 1b****1. The Secretary gives priority to projects that are designed to--**

(a) Create SFECs that will provide direct services to parents and families through evidence-based (as defined in the notice inviting applications, NIA) activities.

(b) Provide families with evidence-based (as defined in the NIA) strategies for promoting literacy. This may include providing families with access to books or other physical or digital materials or content about how to support their child's reading development, or providing family literacy activities (as defined in section 203(9) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act).

Note: An application will not receive points for both (a) and (b) under Competitive Preference Priority 1.

Strengths:

The applicant cites two research studies that are intended to inform the practices of the proposed project:

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, What Works Clearinghouse. (2017, February). Transition to College intervention report: Dual Enrollment Programs. Retrieved from <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Intervention/1043>.

Bettinger, E.P., & Baker, R. (2011). The effects of student coaching in college: An evaluation of a randomized experiment in student mentoring. Stanford, CA: Stanford University School of Education. Available at https://ed.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/bettinger_baker_030711.pdf.

Regarding first study, while applicant does not use the phrase "strong evidence base" or "moderate evidence base," but says that the "findings were characterized by a 'medium to large' extent of evidence.

Regarding the second study, The applicant says that this study "Meets WWC Group Design Standards without Reservations under review standards 2.1." Regarding the findings of this study, the applicant says that those receiving the treatment were significantly more likely than students in the comparison group to remain enrolled at their institutions."

The strength is that the cited studies appear to meet the CPP 1 standard.

Weaknesses:

The critical problem with the citations is that neither seems to be relevant to the proposed project. The cited research is about student coaching and dual enrollment programs. However, the applicant's description of how CPP 1 is to be addressed makes no mention of either. Neither citation appears to be particularly relevant to the focus of the proposal which is to "develop a state-wide collaborative network of family engagement organizations to increase communication and coordination, increase dissemination of information and resources to families and educators, and strengthen the infrastructure and capacity of SC to serve all families through evidence-based family engagement practices" (E 16). Regarding outcome measures relevant to the cited studies, the applicant mentions "student persistence and degree completion" indicating that these are in the proposal logic model. However, they are not. In fact, nowhere in the application is there any mention of outcomes similar to those of the cited studies.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. The Secretary gives priority to projects that are designed to provide families with the information and tools they need to make important decisions regarding the educational choice (as defined in the NIA) that is most appropriate for their children.

Strengths:

n/a

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/18/2018 02:16 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/18/2018 05:03 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: University of South Carolina (U310A180058)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	29
Quality of Management Plan/Project Personnel		
1. Management/Personel	20	18
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Resources	20	18
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
Sub Total	100	65
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Competitive Preference Priority 1a or 1b		
1. CPP 1(a) or CPP 1(b)	3	0
Sub Total	3	0
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. CPP 2	3	0
Sub Total	3	0
Total	106	65

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - SFEC - 4: 84.310A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: University of South Carolina (U310A180058)

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—

- (1) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.
- (2) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.
- (3) 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.

Strengths:

- (1) The Carolina Family Engagement Center's conceptual framework is grounded in Epstein's model of overlapping spheres of influence and the U.S. Department of Education's Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships (e23). The combination of the two frameworks outlines and sufficiently addresses major domains involved with school-family partnerships including parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with the community (e 24).
- (2) The conceptual framework section of the proposal details adequate background literature to support the selected frameworks. The lead applicant addresses a potential challenge to dual capacity building by asserting that the CFEC will design capacity building opportunities that are relational, developmental vs. service oriented, collaborative, interactive, and linked to learning (e24).
- (3) The proposal states the CFEC will not recreate existing work, rather it will enhance, integrate, and extend the reach of the South Carolina School Improvement Council (SC-SIC), the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) and existing partner organizations (e20). A plan for the CEFC to form a new component of the South Carolina School Improvement Council inclusive of Regional Family Engagement Liaisons put in place to provide technical support, professional development and training, will help sustain the work beyond the project funding term (e10-e11).

Weaknesses:

- (1) No weaknesses.
- (2) No weaknesses.
- (3) The lead applicant offers insufficient evidence that the project is designed to sustain capacity long term as end-user participation is heavily incentivized and lacks detail on how the value of skill building will be impressed on teachers and families. Incentives include hot meals and child care and stipends (e37). In the absence of funding to continue monetary and other incentives, there is no evidence to support the sustainability of the desired goal setting and plan implementation beyond the period of Federal financial assistance (e20).

Reader's Score: 29

Selection Criteria - Quality of Management Plan/Project Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, in determining the quality of the management plan and project personnel, the Secretary considers—

- (1) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.
- (2) 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.
- (3) 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.
- (4) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

- (1) The lead applicant has established an Advisory Board comprised of 15 members including parents, a student, education professionals, business community, the South Carolina Department of Education and a district (e39). Existing partners and Specialists as well as diverse new hires will ensure a diversity of perspectives (e39).
- (2) The proposal cites several key partner organizations whose focus covers the range of issues and outcomes the project is designed to address. Partner organizations listed include: the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE), Francis Marion University Center of Excellence to Prepare Teachers of Children of Poverty, Family Connection of South Carolina, Children's Trust of South Carolina, South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness, South Carolina Center for Fathers and Families, Consortium for Latino Immigration Studies and PASOs at the University of South Carolina's Arnold School of Public Health (e16). The group of partners and their expertise are sufficient to ensure quality service delivery.
- (3) The timeline and milestones table found on e46 as well as the logic model on e86 provide comprehensive evidence to support the on- time completion of project activities. The logic model is inclusive of anticipated numbers of conference attendees, teachers to be trained, as well as training content (e86). This level of specificity demonstrates a level of preparedness that demonstrates the capacity to meet deadlines. The budget narrative aligns with the project timeline offering convincing evidence that the project will be completed within budget (e384 – e394). For instance, expenses for conference travel (e388) and survey analysis (e390) are detailed within the budget narrative; details are congruent with what appears in both the logic model (e86) and the timeline table (e46). With these details present, the lead applicant offers adequate detail to support the plan to complete the proposed project on time and within budget.
- (4) The range of expertise available in the key personnel covers the diverse areas inherent to the statewide family engagement center project. Personnel have expertise in educating and engaging African-American and Latino students and families, general capacity building, evidenced based practices for children, evaluation, family literacy practices, and inclusion (e87 – e312). The lead applicant supplies sufficient evidence to support the qualifications of key personnel.

Weaknesses:

- (1) No weaknesses.
- (2) No weaknesses.
- (3) The proposal lacks clear detail on who will be responsible for the identified objectives (e46). For example, the development of tools, school and teacher recruitment, and website development are identified as project milestones yet no details are given on who will be responsible for the specified activities.
- (4) No weaknesses.

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers—

- (1) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.
- (2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.
- (3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and the anticipated results and benefits.

Strengths:

- (1) The proposal is fortified by a range of partners who have already committed resources, including matching funds, to support the establishment of the Carolina Family Engagement Center. Signed MOUs are present from proposed partners including the following: South Carolina Department of Education, Family Connection of South Carolina, Abe Wandersman, LLC., South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness, Consultant Ellen Still, Children's Trust of South Carolina (e59 – e78). In addition, letters of support from the Consortium for Latino Immigration Studies at University South Carolina, PASOs at the University of South Carolina, South Carolina Policy Center at the University of South Carolina, and Dr. Michelle Bryan, Associate Dean of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the College of Education at the University of South Carolina are provided (e79 – e84). These artifacts provide convincing evidence that the proposed partners have solid commitment to the proposed project.
- (2) The lead applicant states that 80% of funds received through this award will be established and/or expand technical assistance for evidenced-based parent education programs. The determined costs can be considered reasonable given the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.
- (3) Some evidence supporting the reasonableness of cost in relation to the number of persons to be served is present. The lead applicant states that approximately 82% of funds received through this award will serve local education agencies/districts, schools, and community-based organizations that serve high concentrations of disadvantaged students (e30).

Weaknesses:

- (1) No weaknesses.
- (2) No weaknesses.
- (3) The lead applicant offers vague detail with regard to the number of students who will benefit from the work of the proposed South Carolina family engagement center by simply stating that it will yield significant impact on student achievement and school improvements in the state (e18). The proposal does not offer sufficient details on the number of anticipated end-users. In the absence of this information it is difficult to determine the reasonableness of associated costs.

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 include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data

to the extent possible.

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

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce promising evidence (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) about the project's effectiveness.

Strengths:

n/a

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Competitive Preference Priority 1a or 1b

1. The Secretary gives priority to projects that are designed to--

(a) Create SFECs that will provide direct services to parents and families through evidence-based (as defined in the notice inviting applications, NIA) activities.

(b) Provide families with evidence-based (as defined in the NIA) strategies for promoting literacy. This may include providing families with access to books or other physical or digital materials or content about how to support their child's reading development, or providing family literacy activities (as defined in section 203(9) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act).

Note: An application will not receive points for both (a) and (b) under Competitive Preference Priority 1.

Strengths:

n/a

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. The Secretary gives priority to projects that are designed to provide families with the information and tools they need to make important decisions regarding the educational choice (as defined in the NIA) that is most appropriate for their children.

Strengths:

The applicant did not apply for this priority preference.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not apply for this priority preference.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

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