

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 10/27/2016 04:52 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Napa Valley Unified School District (S419C170007)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	10	8
Sub Total	10	8
Quality of the Preschool Program Design		
Quality of the Preschool Program Design		
1. Quality of Program Design	25	18
Sub Total	25	18
Preschool PFS Partnership		
Preschool PFS Partnership		
1. Preschool PFS Partnership	25	23
Sub Total	25	23
Quality of the Work Plan		
Quality of the Work Plan		
1. Quality of the Work Plan	25	18
Sub Total	25	18
Quality of the Project Leadership and Team		
Quality of the Project Leadership and Team		
1. Quality of Leadership	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Budget Narrative		
Budget Narrative		
1. Budget Narrative	10	10
Sub Total	10	10
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority		
1. Competitive Priority	5	4
Sub Total	5	4
Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study		
Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study		
1. Absolute Priority	0	0

	Sub Total	0	0
Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study			
Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study			
1. Absolute Priority		0	0
	Sub Total	0	0
	Total	105	86

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - PFS Panel - 7: 84.419C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Napa Valley Unified School District (S419C170007)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary will consider the needs of the Target Population. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary will consider the magnitude of the need of the Target Population for the services to be provided by a potential PFS project. Applicants should clearly state and demonstrate the extent of the problem facing the Target Population using data and other relevant information.

Strengths:

This proposal is aimed at serving a group of students that is largely low-income and has a very high proportion of limited English proficiency children. In terms of academic achievement in elementary and secondary school, these children are likely to be well behind their wealthier counterparts who often have more regular exposure to the English language. For example, the applicant cites research that shows an achievement gap exists at Kindergarten entry for students that are demographically similar to those served by NCOE.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide enough information on the need for the program among the specific populations in this area.

Reader's Score: 8

Quality of the Preschool Program Design - Quality of the Preschool Program Design

1. The Secretary will consider the quality of the design of the proposed preschool program. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed preschool program, the Secretary will consider the extent to which the intervention strategy is likely to improve student outcomes for the Target Population, based on quantitative, qualitative, or theoretical evidence, including the extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable and will demonstrate student success. In responding to this criterion, applicants should identify clearly specified and measurable outcomes for the preschool program and explain how these outcomes can be achieved by the program. While these outcomes will inform the selection of Outcome Measures for the PFS project, they do not limit a grantee from evaluating additional Outcome Measures in the course of completing the Preschool PFS Feasibility Study.

Strengths:

The applicant has a good strategy for using carefully chosen comparison groups to improvement measurement of success. There is strong integration of advocates of special education, parental involvement, etc., including related to education on the social emotional foundations of learning. Teachers in this setting are well-educated and turnover is low. The outcomes in Table 2 and 3 are straightforward to collect and measure and are comprehensive covering academic and social-emotional skills. There is high digital penetration and the interactive nature of the program should help overcome the limited English proficiency of parents. Pilot study evidence seems good and focus group evidence is positive.

Weaknesses:

The theoretical evidence provided is weak and there are not many citations. The applicant does not discuss how we should think about cost savings from social emotional development. There is no justification provided for how the intervention will affect socio-emotional learning or executive functioning learning. The pilot sample was small and not clearly explained. For example, there was no information provided on how the pilot sample was selected.

Reader's Score: 18

Preschool PFS Partnership - Preschool PFS Partnership

- 1. The Secretary will consider the quality of the Preschool PFS Partnership. In evaluating a Preschool PFS Partnership, the Secretary will consider the following:**

Reader's Score: 23

Sub Question

- 1. (c)(1) The quality of an existing Preschool PFS Partnership, including the history of the collaboration, or, if a Preschool PFS Partnership does not exist, the quality of the plan to form a Preschool PFS Partnership.**

Strengths:

There is an existing partnership between NVUSD, NCOE and non-profits. These groups have worked together on various other projects, including providing early childhood special education services. Based on the information provided, the group should be able to utilize available funds and build on the existing program.

Weaknesses:

There was a lack of clarity around how the PFS team would engage additional business leaders.

Reader's Score: 13

- 2. (c)(2) The extent to which the roles and responsibilities of members or proposed members of a Preschool PFS Partnership are clearly described and are appropriate and sufficient to successfully implement a PFS project.**

Strengths:

Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and seem appropriate. The applicant discusses specific roles of the partnership leader, project coordinator, nonprofits, contractor and evaluator.

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 10

Quality of the Work Plan - Quality of the Work Plan

- 1. The Secretary will consider the quality of the work plan. In determining the quality of the work plan, the Secretary will consider the following factors:**

Reader's Score: 18

Sub Question

- 1. (d)(1) The adequacy of the work plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed Feasibility Study project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks on time. Applicants should identify whether a contractor will conduct the Feasibility Study and, if appropriate, the extent to which the timeline for selecting and hiring the contractor is reasonable and sufficient for completing the project on time and within budget.**

Strengths:

The work plan is clear and delineates milestones for progress that should be adequate for achieve the objectives of the proposed study.

Weaknesses:

The contractor will be hired by month four; not clear how realistic this is. The applicant could have provided information supporting the feasibility of this timeline for hiring a contractor.

Reader's Score: 10

- 2. (d)(2) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring stakeholder feedback in the operation of the proposed Preschool PFS Feasibility Pilot. If the Feasibility Study includes the reduction in special education placement as a Financial Benefit, the extent to which the work plan includes outreach to and involvement of the representatives from the State and local special education community or individuals with special education expertise, including groups representing families.**

Strengths:

The plan does not include reductions in special education placement specifically.

Weaknesses:

Very little detail is given about the plan to form governance group. Without more information about which stakeholders will be included, it is difficult to know the role they will have in providing feedback to the operation and therefore impossible to know if it is adequate.

Reader's Score: 6

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

Strengths:

10% FTE for PI and 20% FTE for each of the other three main staff is appropriate to allow the team a good chance of success.

Weaknesses:

There is not enough information provided on the time commitment of the contractor to know if it is appropriate.

Reader's Score: 2

Quality of the Project Leadership and Team - Quality of the Project Leadership and Team

1. The Secretary will consider the quality of the project leadership and team. The Secretary will consider the extent to which the applicant has the project and financial management experience necessary to manage the Preschool PFS Feasibility Pilot, including:

Reader's Score: 5

Sub Question

1. (e)(1) Managing and overseeing similar projects (e.g., PFS or other project related work, experience with early childhood education) with specific examples of prior accomplishments and outcomes; and

Strengths:

All main staff have experience overseeing and evaluating early childhood education programs. For example, the Director of Early Childhood Services, who will contribute 20 percent of her time, has had decades of experience providing early childhood education services and developed the proposed intervention.

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 3

2. (e)(2) Managing Federal grants, including plans for ensuring compliance with Federal guidelines.

Strengths:

Both PI and Director of Early Education Services have experience with managing Federal grants. There is a system in place for ensuring compliance with Federal guidelines.

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 2

Budget Narrative - Budget Narrative

1. The Secretary will consider the adequacy of resources necessary to complete the Feasibility Study, including any philanthropic or other resources that may be contributed toward the project. In determining the adequacy of resources, the Secretary will consider the extent to which the budget will adequately support program activities and achieve desired outputs and outcomes.

Strengths:

The budget described should be adequate for completing project in given time frame, especially with the notable promise of in-kind resources to complete the work if, for some unanticipated reason, the project is over-budget. The budget includes significant resources for management personnel and contractor fees, which should adequately support program activities and allow the team to achieve desired outcomes.

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 10

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority

1. Competitive Priority: Outcome Measures Across Various Domains

To meet this priority, an applicant must propose a Feasibility Study to evaluate if PFS is viable that would evaluate social and emotional or Executive Functioning Outcome Measures, or both. These potential outcome measures may be predictive of future school success, cost savings, cost avoidance, and other societal benefits, and may appropriate to include in a PFS project. (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

The applicant proposes using clear metrics for measuring social and emotional outcomes using existing kindergarten assessment.

Weaknesses:

However, the applicant is not specific about how to measure cost savings from social emotional development.

Reader's Score: 4

Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study - Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study

- 1. Under this priority, the applicant must propose a Feasibility Study that will determine the viability of using a PFS approach to expand or improve a preschool program for a Target Population, and describe the potential Outcome Measures the applicant proposes to identify and evaluate for appropriateness for PFS. Any applicant that includes a Feasibility Study for a PFS project that proposes to reduce the need for special education and related services as an Outcome Measure must also include at least one other meaningful and substantive Outcome Measure of short-, medium-, or longterm student achievement, such as kindergarten readiness, reading and math growth or achievement, and improved social and emotional skills.**

Yes

Reader's Score: 0

Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study - Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study

- 1. Under this priority, the applicant must propose a Feasibility Study that will determine the viability of using a PFS approach to expand or improve a preschool program for a Target Population, and describe the potential Outcome Measures the applicant proposes to identify and evaluate for appropriateness for PFS. Any applicant that includes a Feasibility Study for a PFS project that proposes to reduce the need for special education and related services as an Outcome Measure must also include at least one other meaningful and substantive Outcome Measure of short-, medium-, or longterm student achievement, such as kindergarten readiness, reading and math growth or achievement, and improved social and emotional skills.**

Strengths:

The applicant proposed a Feasibility Study that will determine the viability of using a PFS approach to expand a preschool program for high need English Language Learners in Napa County. The applicant will include multiple outcome measures, including some at kindergarten entry and some in elementary school.

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: **0**

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Napa Valley Unified School District (S419C170007)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	10	7
Sub Total	10	7
Quality of the Preschool Program Design		
Quality of the Preschool Program Design		
1. Quality of Program Design	25	17
Sub Total	25	17
Preschool PFS Partnership		
Preschool PFS Partnership		
1. Preschool PFS Partnership	25	22
Sub Total	25	22
Quality of the Work Plan		
Quality of the Work Plan		
1. Quality of the Work Plan	25	18
Sub Total	25	18
Quality of the Project Leadership and Team		
Quality of the Project Leadership and Team		
1. Quality of Leadership	5	3
Sub Total	5	3
Budget Narrative		
Budget Narrative		
1. Budget Narrative	10	8
Sub Total	10	8
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority		
1. Competitive Priority	5	3
Sub Total	5	3
Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study		
Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study		
1. Absolute Priority	0	0

	Sub Total	0	0
Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study			
Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study			
1. Absolute Priority		0	0
	Sub Total	0	0
	Total	105	78

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - PFS Panel - 7: 84.419C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Napa Valley Unified School District (S419C170007)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

- 1. The Secretary will consider the needs of the Target Population. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary will consider the magnitude of the need of the Target Population for the services to be provided by a potential PFS project. Applicants should clearly state and demonstrate the extent of the problem facing the Target Population using data and other relevant information.**

Strengths:

The target population is defined as three- and four-year-old preschoolers (n ~ 400) served in 23 state-funded preschool classrooms served by the Napa County Office of Education. Of this group, 81% qualify for free and reduced price lunches, 85% are dual language learners, and 22% are children with disabilities who have an individualized education plan. Data describing the need for high-quality preschool programs and parent involvement in their child's education is provided. Thus, important information demonstrating the extent of the problem facing the target population is included in the project narrative.

Weaknesses:

It is difficult to determine the magnitude of the need for services in the target population to be provided by a potential Pay for Success project. Although data of national achievement trends for children from similar demographic backgrounds is provided, the applicant could provide a stronger argument by demonstrating that local students within the target population (i.e., children from low-income backgrounds, dual language learners, and children with disabilities) lag behind other groups in achieving key literacy, social emotional, and executive functioning outcomes that a future Preschool Pay for Success project would target.

Reader's Score: 7

Quality of the Preschool Program Design - Quality of the Preschool Program Design

- 1. The Secretary will consider the quality of the design of the proposed preschool program. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed preschool program, the Secretary will consider the extent to which the intervention strategy is likely to improve student outcomes for the Target Population, based on quantitative, qualitative, or theoretical evidence, including the extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable and will demonstrate student success. In responding to this criterion, applicants should identify clearly specified and measurable outcomes for the preschool program and explain how these outcomes can be achieved by the program. While these outcomes will inform the selection of Outcome Measures for the PFS project, they do not limit a grantee from evaluating additional Outcome Measures in the course of completing the Preschool PFS Feasibility Study.**

Strengths:

The preschool programs operated by Napa County Office of Education (NCOE) use the California Department of Education Preschool Learning Foundations as their evidence-based curriculum. The NCOE preschool programs also employ an integrated service delivery model for inclusion of children with disabilities. Social-emotional learning is targeted with the Teaching Pyramid for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children program, while early language and literacy is instructed through use of the Digital Early Literacy (DEL) program. Finally, the child-to-staff

ratio for NCOE preschool programs is 8 to 1 or lower, NCOE students with disabilities are served in inclusive settings, and students who evidence risk factors such as experiencing abuse, neglect or other trauma, are in foster or kinship care, or are dual language learners are included in NCOE preschool programs. Evidence that the DEL is likely to improve student outcomes and is appropriate for the target population is discussed.

Weaknesses:

Although the project narrative states that the Preschool Learning Foundations, Teaching Pyramid for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children, and Digital Early Literacy (DEL) programs are evidence-based, little to no information is provided for one to determine the accuracy of this statement. Similarly, the project narrative discusses high-quality professional development, but does not include supporting evidence. With regard to how the preschool program is likely to improve student outcomes, the project's goals, objectives, and outcomes are not fully aligned. For example, if the intervention targets language comprehension and vocabulary, then one would expect language comprehension and vocabulary to be explicitly included as short-term outcome measures. Similarly, professional development and parent training are identified as critical aspects of the program. One would therefore expect a feasibility study to also consider short-term outcomes relevant to these domains. Moreover, the project abstract mentions six goals (i.e., four goals addressing the absolute priority and two goals addressing the competitive preference priority) while the project narrative lists five goals, which is confusing. Adding to the confusion is the lack of clarity regarding the alignment between the potential feasibility study that proposes to compare the outcomes of children in a quality preschool that incorporates DEL with three other groups of students as it relates to other outcomes identified in the proposal. It is not fully clear how these comparisons are related to the outcome measures and project goals. The proposed project could also be strengthened by including specific measurable targets as outcome measures in Tables 2 and 3 of the project narrative. For example, the percentage of children demonstrating improved social-emotional readiness for kindergarten due to the high-quality preschool program could be identified. The discussed limitations reduce the coherence and quality of the preschool program design.

Reader's Score: 17

Preschool PFS Partnership - Preschool PFS Partnership

- 1. The Secretary will consider the quality of the Preschool PFS Partnership. In evaluating a Preschool PFS Partnership, the Secretary will consider the following:**

Reader's Score: 22

Sub Question

- 1. (c)(1) The quality of an existing Preschool PFS Partnership, including the history of the collaboration, or, if a Preschool PFS Partnership does not exist, the quality of the plan to form a Preschool PFS Partnership.**

Strengths:

The project narrative mentions that the Napa Valley Unified School District and Napa County Office of Education have a history of partnering in areas such as alternative school services for students, career and college pathway programs, before and after school programs, and early childhood special education services. Thus, a description of the partnership is provided.

Weaknesses:

The quality of the existing Preschool Pay for Success (PFS) Partnership could be improved by providing details regarding the specific roles of the partners when working on previous projects and the goals that were achieved. Such information is important when considering the quality of the Preschool PFS Partnership.

Sub Question

Reader's Score: 12

2. (c)(2) The extent to which the roles and responsibilities of members or proposed members of a Preschool PFS Partnership are clearly described and are appropriate and sufficient to successfully implement a PFS project.

Strengths:

The roles and responsibilities of the Napa Valley Unified School District, Napa County Office of Education, Napa Valley Vintners and NapaLearn, feasibility study contractor, and external evaluator are clearly described and are appropriate to sufficiently implement a PFS project.

Weaknesses:

No notable weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 10

Quality of the Work Plan - Quality of the Work Plan

1. The Secretary will consider the quality of the work plan. In determining the quality of the work plan, the Secretary will consider the following factors:

Reader's Score: 18

Sub Question

1. (d)(1) The adequacy of the work plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed Feasibility Study project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks on time. Applicants should identify whether a contractor will conduct the Feasibility Study and, if appropriate, the extent to which the timeline for selecting and hiring the contractor is reasonable and sufficient for completing the project on time and within budget.

Strengths:

The Preschool Pay for Success Feasibility work plan is ambitious and lists 15 tasks to be accomplished over the course of the project. For each task, the party responsible for its achievement is listed as are deadlines and milestones for accomplishing tasks on time. The scope of the work appears to be largely complete and the partners can adequately meet the objectives of the proposed Feasibility Study project on time and within budget.

Weaknesses:

The application could be improved by providing details of the process for how a strong feasibility study contractor and external evaluator will be selected.

Reader's Score: 10

2. (d)(2) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring stakeholder feedback in the operation of the proposed Preschool PFS Feasibility Pilot. If the Feasibility Study includes the reduction in special education placement as a Financial Benefit, the extent to which the work plan includes outreach to and involvement of the representatives from the State and local special education community or individuals with special education expertise, including groups representing families.

Sub Question

Strengths:

The feasibility study project team will form a governance group representing key stakeholders to oversee the activities conducted during the entire 24-month project award period, including representatives from partner agencies, preschool program implementers, and preschool experts. Notably, the feasibility study will not include reduction in special education placement as a financial benefit.

Weaknesses:

Given the ambitious work plan and the involvement of various stakeholders in the operation of the proposed Preschool PFS Feasibility Pilot, one would expect some of the stakeholders or specific groups from which the stakeholders will be solicited to be identified within the narrative. It is unclear if the timeline if the procedures and timeline for ensuring stakeholder feedback is sufficient.

Reader's Score: 7

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

Strengths:

The time commitments of the project lead and team may be appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

Weaknesses:

Time commitments of the project lead and team are not fully clear. In particular, specific responsibilities and activities that the project director and team are not provided and their involvement in "stakeholder collaboration and engagement" activities is not described. Therefore, one cannot conclude, for example, that 10% full time equivalence for the project director (or principal investigator) is sufficient because attendance at all five of the proposed monthly meetings, would leave her with little time to contribute to other project activities. In addition, the expected time commitment for the feasibility study contractor and independent evaluator are not included within the project narrative. These limitations make it difficult to determine if their time commitments are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

Reader's Score: 1

Quality of the Project Leadership and Team - Quality of the Project Leadership and Team

1. The Secretary will consider the quality of the project leadership and team. The Secretary will consider the extent to which the applicant has the project and financial management experience necessary to manage the Preschool PFS Feasibility Pilot, including:

Reader's Score: 3

Sub Question

1. (e)(1) Managing and overseeing similar projects (e.g., PFS or other project related work, experience with early childhood education) with specific examples of prior accomplishments and outcomes; and

Strengths:

The leadership team, led by Executive Director of Elementary Education at Napa Valley Unified School District, has relevant experiences managing and overseeing federal and state grants. Areas of expertise for the leadership team

Sub Question

include, for example, migrant education, early childhood and special education, program evaluation and measurement, professional development for teachers, and parent training. The applicant also reports managing annually, over ten million dollars in federal grant contracts, suggesting that applicant has the project and financial management experience necessary to manage the Preschool PFS Feasibility Pilot.

Weaknesses:

In considering the extent to which the applicant and project team have the project and financial management experience necessary to manage the Preschool PFS Feasibility Pilot, it would be helpful to include the credentials of the principal investigator (PI) and details regarding her prior accomplishments (e.g., the budget, funding agency, and the present PI's specific responsibilities). In addition, specific examples of outcomes in regard to prior accomplishments are not provided within the project narrative. Finally, the specific responsibilities of project leaders, the Principal Investigator and Napa County Office of Education Director of Early Education Services, as they relate to the present project are not described, making it difficult to determine the quality of the leadership and team.

Reader's Score: 1

2. (e)(2) Managing Federal grants, including plans for ensuring compliance with Federal guidelines.**Strengths:**

The Napa County Office of Education (NCOE), which will be coordinating the PFS feasibility study work, agrees to conduct the project in accordance with all federal and state laws governing equitable access. They also already have specific mechanisms that help ensure equitable access for students and parents who participate in the Digital Early Literacy (DEL) program. For example, the NCOE DEL team has attended 22 community events since 2014 to reach dual language learners and their parents. The NCOE also runs a full inclusion model for children with disabilities in its preschool programs. The Napa County Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) provides oversight and technical support to SELPA Local Education Agencies to ensure compliance with Federal and State laws.

Weaknesses:

No notable weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 2

Budget Narrative - Budget Narrative

- 1. The Secretary will consider the adequacy of resources necessary to complete the Feasibility Study, including any philanthropic or other resources that may be contributed toward the project. In determining the adequacy of resources, the Secretary will consider the extent to which the budget will adequately support program activities and achieve desired outputs and outcomes.**

Strengths:

The budget includes necessary funding to compensate the principal investigator, information systems specialist, and feasibility study consultant. For each year of the project, responsibilities for which project personnel and contractual workers will be compensated are identified. Should the budget prove insufficient, the applicant is committed to contributing in-kind resources in order to complete the work. Moreover, the applicant has committed to covering expenses related to travel, equipment, and supplies in kind.

Weaknesses:

Although \$74,000 in each year of the project appears to adequately cover 20% full time equivalency of the three Napa County Office of Education (NCOE) team members, their salary and benefits are not provided within the proposal. The absence of such funding makes it difficult to determine the adequacy of resources provided through the contract with the

NCOE.

Reader's Score: 8

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority

1. Competitive Priority: Outcome Measures Across Various Domains

To meet this priority, an applicant must propose a Feasibility Study to evaluate if PFS is viable that would evaluate social and emotional or Executive Functioning Outcome Measures, or both. These potential outcome measures may be predictive of future school success, cost savings, cost avoidance, and other societal benefits, and may appropriate to include in a PFS project. (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

The applicant proposes a feasibility study to determine if PFS is a viable and appropriate strategy for implementing a high-quality preschool program with a digital early literacy component that yields meaningful student outcomes. While the outcomes include, for example, self-regulation and social-emotional development, the feasibility questions focus on cost-avoidance (e.g., reduction in need for English language development services) and cost savings (e.g., reduction in the need for social-emotional services for elementary school students) as outcomes of the Digital Early Literacy program.

Weaknesses:

The proposal does not provide a rationale to support the applicant's questions related to the competitive preference priority. Evidence is not provided within the project narrative to suggest that the Digital Early Literacy program could be associated with reduced need for social-emotional and executive functioning services in elementary school.

Reader's Score: 3

Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study - Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study

- 1. Under this priority, the applicant must propose a Feasibility Study that will determine the viability of using a PFS approach to expand or improve a preschool program for a Target Population, and describe the potential Outcome Measures the applicant proposes to identify and evaluate for appropriateness for PFS. Any applicant that includes a Feasibility Study for a PFS project that proposes to reduce the need for special education and related services as an Outcome Measure must also include at least one other meaningful and substantive Outcome Measure of short-, medium-, or longterm student achievement, such as kindergarten readiness, reading and math growth or achievement, and improved social and emotional skills.**

Yes

Reader's Score: 0

Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study - Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study

- 1. Under this priority, the applicant must propose a Feasibility Study that will determine the viability of using a PFS approach to expand or improve a preschool program for a Target Population, and describe the potential Outcome Measures the applicant proposes to identify and evaluate for appropriateness for PFS. Any applicant that includes a Feasibility Study for a PFS project that proposes to reduce the need**

for special education and related services as an Outcome Measure must also include at least one other meaningful and substantive Outcome Measure of short-, medium-, or longterm student achievement, such as kindergarten readiness, reading and math growth or achievement, and improved social and emotional skills.

Strengths:

The Napa Valley Unified School District proposes a feasibility study to determine the viability of the using a Pay for Success approach to expand access to high-quality preschool programs to 300 preschool children from low-income backgrounds in Napa County that are currently not receiving preschool services. Outcomes include kindergarten readiness as measured in, for example, language, literacy, self-regulation, and social-emotional development.

Weaknesses:

No notable weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 0

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Napa Valley Unified School District (S419C170007)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	10	8
Sub Total	10	8
Quality of the Preschool Program Design		
Quality of the Preschool Program Design		
1. Quality of Program Design	25	20
Sub Total	25	20
Preschool PFS Partnership		
Preschool PFS Partnership		
1. Preschool PFS Partnership	25	21
Sub Total	25	21
Quality of the Work Plan		
Quality of the Work Plan		
1. Quality of the Work Plan	25	22
Sub Total	25	22
Quality of the Project Leadership and Team		
Quality of the Project Leadership and Team		
1. Quality of Leadership	5	4
Sub Total	5	4
Budget Narrative		
Budget Narrative		
1. Budget Narrative	10	10
Sub Total	10	10
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority		
1. Competitive Priority	5	4
Sub Total	5	4
Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study		
Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study		
1. Absolute Priority	0	0

	Sub Total	0	0
Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study			
Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study			
1. Absolute Priority		0	0
	Sub Total	0	0
	Total	105	89

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - PFS Panel - 7: 84.419C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Napa Valley Unified School District (S419C170007)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

- 1. The Secretary will consider the needs of the Target Population. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary will consider the magnitude of the need of the Target Population for the services to be provided by a potential PFS project. Applicants should clearly state and demonstrate the extent of the problem facing the Target Population using data and other relevant information.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides a clear description of the needs of the Target Population in terms of economic status, language acquisition, special needs and disabilities and child learning outcomes. The target community has a significant population that are low wage earners in the agricultural and service industries and are in large part Hispanic or Latino. 34% of the population is Hispanic or Latino with Spanish being spoken in the home rather than English language. English Language Learners make up 85% of the children in the target preschools and elementary schools. The county poverty rate is 10% but the percentage of children living in poverty in the target community is 42%. 81% of the children are eligible for free and reduced lunch. Additionally, 33% of the population are undocumented, unauthorized immigrants as compared to the statewide 26%. There is also a significant percentage of children with special education needs with 22% of all the children in the existing preschool program having Individual Education Plans (IEP.)

Weaknesses:

The applicant has not clearly described or provided data that would demonstrate the areas in which their Target Population is lagging behind other groups of preschoolers in their community in terms of the proposed project focus areas and outcomes. They do not provide data that would show what areas of growth, development and learning that the Target Population have specific needs in that would be addressed through the proposed project.

Reader's Score: 8

Quality of the Preschool Program Design - Quality of the Preschool Program Design

- 1. The Secretary will consider the quality of the design of the proposed preschool program. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed preschool program, the Secretary will consider the extent to which the intervention strategy is likely to improve student outcomes for the Target Population, based on quantitative, qualitative, or theoretical evidence, including the extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable and will demonstrate student success. In responding to this criterion, applicants should identify clearly specified and measurable outcomes for the preschool program and explain how these outcomes can be achieved by the program. While these outcomes will inform the selection of Outcome Measures for the PFS project, they do not limit a grantee from evaluating additional Outcome Measures in the course of completing the Preschool PFS Feasibility Study.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides a strong and clear description of their proposed preschool program that includes a Digital Early Literacy intervention model that is integrated into their overall program. They clearly state an intent to focus their Feasibility Study on assessing and determining if the outcomes that are derived from this existing Digital Early Literacy intervention fit into a Pay For Success approach and to determine if said model could be expanded to more classrooms

and programs to impact the literacy and English language learning of the at-risk children in their community. They intend to share their findings with other communities in their state who have expressed interest as a result of their early findings in this two-year-old project. They plan to compare the outcomes of the children in a quality preschool that incorporates the digital literacy intervention with the outcomes of children from past years in the same preschools that did not have the digital literacy intervention, with the outcomes of approximately 300 preschoolers in the geographic area that are eligible for state subsidized preschool programs but were not served by the agency and the outcomes of children served in state subsidized preschool programs without the digital literacy intervention provided. They anticipate developing a plan to include the use of the Pay For Success approach to expand preschool services to the 300 eligible children for state subsidized preschool services who are currently not being served.

The applicant describes in detail how the program works and what the outcome measures are that are already a part of the existing model. Further, they pose Feasibility Study questions to be answered with the proposed project that include to what extent does the digital literacy intervention model improve literacy skills for dual language learners to cause a reduction in need for English Language Development services in the elementary school age and is the cost avoidance achieved by a reduction in the number of children classified as English Language learners needing English Language Development services? The applicant also proposes to study the extent to which the digital literacy intervention model improves student social emotional skills for all groups of preschool children and reduces the need for social emotional services for elementary school students and will significant cost savings be generated as a result of the intervention. Additionally, they will study the extent to which the digital literacy intervention improves executive functioning skills in the same way.

The applicant explains that they currently have two philanthropic investors who have been a part of their implementation of the digital literacy intervention model that are very interested in the outcome findings of the Pay For Success Feasibility Study as it will assist with future investment decisions and the applicant states that there other opportunities to facilitate a Pay For Success approach in follow up to said Study.

Weaknesses:

The applicant's project goals and objectives are confusing as they are stated in three separate areas of the proposal and they are not consistent. In one section they state the number of project goals is six and in another section they list it as five. The inconsistency makes it difficult to understand exactly what the goals for the project will be and then it makes it difficult to assess the degree to which the outcomes are attainable.

While the applicant provides an extensive description of the Digital Literacy Intervention model, they do not provide the clear Theoretical Framework for the model and they do not fully describe what their successes and challenges have been with the initial implementation of the model. They cite a two year study of their work with the model but they do not provide any data that demonstrates its effectiveness and impact upon child learning and development.

The applicant states that their programs are implementing the Teaching Pyramid for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children that was developed by the Center for Social Emotional Early Learning at Vanderbilt University, however, they do not provide any citations or description of the validity of this model as an evidence-based approach and model. They do not clearly explain how this model is related to or connected to the Digital Early Literacy program.

Reader's Score: 20

Preschool PFS Partnership - Preschool PFS Partnership

- 1. The Secretary will consider the quality of the Preschool PFS Partnership. In evaluating a Preschool PFS Partnership, the Secretary will consider the following:**

Reader's Score: 21

Sub Question

1. **(c)(1) The quality of an existing Preschool PFS Partnership, including the history of the collaboration, or, if a Preschool PFS Partnership does not exist, the quality of the plan to form a Preschool PFS Partnership.**

Strengths:

The applicant describes a strong existing partnership that includes the County Office of Education and at least two philanthropic investors. They propose to expand and recruit more stakeholders that will include service providers and potential financial investors through the Feasibility Study process. The applicant is the unified school district and they have a long standing history of collaboration and partnerships with other entities with regard to quality preschool programs and early interventions for child learning.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not describe how they will engage business leaders who may be potential investors and supporters of the concept framework and design. Based upon their proposed plan to scale up the Pay For Success approach to sustain the funding for the digital literacy intervention and to expand it to all preschool programs in the target community, business stakeholders would be critically important partners to engage in the process and project as a whole.

Reader's Score: 12

2. **(c)(2) The extent to which the roles and responsibilities of members or proposed members of a Preschool PFS Partnership are clearly described and are appropriate and sufficient to successfully implement a PFS project.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides a general description of the proposed project staff team members. They plan to have a Principal Investigator and they will hire an outside feasibility study contractor. These positions will be supported by key staff at the applicant agency and an external evaluator.

Weaknesses:

The applicant's description of the specific roles and responsibilities of the members of the Pay For Success Partnership lacks clarity. While they identify who the principal investigator for the project will be and state that a consultant will be hired to develop and implement the Feasibility Study, it is not fully clear who the Project Director will be and exactly what their responsibilities will entail with regard to overall grant management and task implementation.

Reader's Score: 9

Quality of the Work Plan - Quality of the Work Plan

The Secretary will consider the quality of the work plan. In determining the quality of the work plan, the Secretary will consider the following factors:

Reader's Score: 22

Sub Question

1. **(d)(1) The adequacy of the work plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed Feasibility Study project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks on time. Applicants should identify whether a contractor will conduct the Feasibility Study and, if appropriate, the extent to which the timeline for selecting and hiring the contractor is reasonable and sufficient for completing the project on time and within budget.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides an adequate work plan that includes a timeline that outlines the key project tasks, the responsible parties for each task and the general timeline for the work to take place in or be completed by. They include milestones for each task. The timeline and work plan reflects the full proposed 24-month project period. They anticipate hiring a consultant to develop and implement the Feasibility Study by the fourth month of the project and provide a plan for how the work will be accomplished in the subsequent 20 months. The work plan and timeline are sufficient to achieve the proposed outcomes.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found

Reader's Score: 12

2. **(d)(2) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring stakeholder feedback in the operation of the proposed Preschool PFS Feasibility Pilot. If the Feasibility Study includes the reduction in special education placement as a Financial Benefit, the extent to which the work plan includes outreach to and involvement of the representatives from the State and local special education community or individuals with special education expertise, including groups representing families.**

Strengths:

The applicant describes a plan to form a project governance committee representing key stakeholders to oversee the full project. The committee will include representatives from potential Pay For Success program partner agencies, preschool implementers and experts in the field of preschool education. This committee will be complemented with the existing county Office of Education digital literacy intervention leadership team. The applicant describes a plan for holding monthly in-person planning and discussion meetings for the proposed project.

The applicant does not intend to include a reduction in special education placements as a Financial Benefit in their Feasibility Study. They have however, explained in detail how children with disabilities are provided special education programs and services in the program and they have included an indepth description of how there are safeguards in place to assure that children with disabilities will receive a free and appropriate education.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not describe a plan to outreach or engage outside community stakeholders such as business or other governmental entities that might have an interest or could be potential resource partners to inform them of the project concept and purpose or to involve them in the feedback loop for the project outcome findings.

While the applicant provides an assurance that children with disabilities will receive necessary special education services, they have not articulated a specific plan to reach out and include stakeholders from the special education services community to be a part of the proposed Feasibility Study process.

Reader's Score: 8

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

Sub Question

Strengths:

The applicant proposes that the principal investigator will be committed to the project at a rate of 10% of her time complemented with administrative support from her staff and the agency's Director of Early Education Services will be committed to the project at a rate of 20% of her time to manage the digital literacy intervention component of the project as will the team coordinator for the existing digital literacy intervention project. The Internal evaluator will be committed to the project at a rate of 20% of his time. There will be a temporary hire project consultant that will develop and implement the Feasibility Study.

Weaknesses:

The applicant has not clearly articulated the number of hours that the independent contractor will be committing to the project activities, making it difficult to fully assess if the time commitments of all of the key leadership will be sufficient to meet the objectives of their proposed project. Knowing the number of hours that the contractor will be committing to the work will help to determine if the other personnel's commitments will be sufficient.

Reader's Score: 2

Quality of the Project Leadership and Team - Quality of the Project Leadership and Team

- 1. The Secretary will consider the quality of the project leadership and team. The Secretary will consider the extent to which the applicant has the project and financial management experience necessary to manage the Preschool PFS Feasibility Pilot, including:**

Reader's Score: 4

Sub Question

- 1. (e)(1) Managing and overseeing similar projects (e.g., PFS or other project related work, experience with early childhood education) with specific examples of prior accomplishments and outcomes; and**

Strengths:

The applicant provides a good description of the qualifications and financial management experience of the proposed leadership staff team which includes the agency's Executive Director of Elementary Education who has experience developing and implementing federal grant projects such as Migrant Education and Magnet Schools. She also has state governmental grant experience. The Director of Early Education Services also have significant experience with 35+ years in the Early Childhood field and has managed six federal and state grants. She is the school district's person that directs the early childhood special education programs and is responsible for ensuring the district's compliance with Federal and State Special Education laws. The applicant agency and their partner, the county Office of Education have a 25-year history of managing large-scale projects and significant amounts of federal and state funding.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found

Reader's Score: 3

- 2. (e)(2) Managing Federal grants, including plans for ensuring compliance with Federal guidelines.**

Sub Question

Strengths:

The applicant has a strong history of managing Federal grants and grant projects of similar and larger scope than the proposed project.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not articulate how the funds will be managed nor do they provide any information related to the expenditure authorization process, financial record keeping policies and procedures and they do not identify who the specific person responsible for the fiscal management activities of the project will be.

Reader's Score: 1

Budget Narrative - Budget Narrative

- 1. The Secretary will consider the adequacy of resources necessary to complete the Feasibility Study, including any philanthropic or other resources that may be contributed toward the project. In determining the adequacy of resources, the Secretary will consider the extent to which the budget will adequately support program activities and achieve desired outputs and outcomes.**

Strengths:

The applicant presents a well organized budget worksheet and clear detailed budget narrative that reflects the scope of work in their proposed work plan. They have included the cost calculation for each of the budget line items and have provided a narrative explanation of the expenditure and its alignment with the proposed tasks and responsibilities. The budget is adequate and sufficient to support the proposed activities and achieve the desired outputs and outcomes.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found

Reader's Score: 10

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority

- 1. Competitive Priority: Outcome Measures Across Various Domains**
To meet this priority, an applicant must propose a Feasibility Study to evaluate if PFS is viable that would evaluate social and emotional or Executive Functioning Outcome Measures, or both. These potential outcome measures may be predictive of future school success, cost savings, cost avoidance, and other societal benefits, and may appropriate to include in a PFS project. (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

The applicant proposes to include social emotional and executive functioning measures in their Feasibility Study to address the Competitive Preference Priority. They propose to study the extent to which the Digital Literacy intervention model that they are using will improve student social emotional skills for all groups of preschool children and determine if it will cause a reduction in the need for social emotional services for elementary education age students. They propose to do the same with executive functioning skills.

Weaknesses:

The applicant has not fully explained what the Theoretical Framework of the Digital Early Literacy program is nor have they described how improve language skills impacts a child's social emotional development or their Executive Functioning skills.

Reader's Score: 4

Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study - Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study

1. Under this priority, the applicant must propose a Feasibility Study that will determine the viability of using a PFS approach to expand or improve a preschool program for a Target Population, and describe the potential Outcome Measures the applicant proposes to identify and evaluate for appropriateness for PFS. Any applicant that includes a Feasibility Study for a PFS project that proposes to reduce the need for special education and related services as an Outcome Measure must also include at least one other meaningful and substantive Outcome Measure of short-, medium-, or longterm student achievement, such as kindergarten readiness, reading and math growth or achievement, and improved social and emotional skills.

Yes

Reader's Score: 0

Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study - Absolute Priority – Feasibility Study

1. Under this priority, the applicant must propose a Feasibility Study that will determine the viability of using a PFS approach to expand or improve a preschool program for a Target Population, and describe the potential Outcome Measures the applicant proposes to identify and evaluate for appropriateness for PFS. Any applicant that includes a Feasibility Study for a PFS project that proposes to reduce the need for special education and related services as an Outcome Measure must also include at least one other meaningful and substantive Outcome Measure of short-, medium-, or longterm student achievement, such as kindergarten readiness, reading and math growth or achievement, and improved social and emotional skills.

Strengths:

The applicant has clearly described a plan to conduct a Feasibility Study to determine if a Pay For Success model can be used for their target population as a new financing method to support and expand the implementation of their innovative and proven preschool program that includes a Digital Literacy Intervention. They seek to determine if the model can be used to expand those services to all low income preschool students including 300 target area students that are not currently receiving the services.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

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