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

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Board of Regents, Univ of Nebraska, Univ of Nebraska-Lincoln (U411C190009)
Reader #1: **********

		Points Possible	**Points Scored**
Questions			
Selection Criteria			
Significance			
1. Significance		25	23
Quality of Project Design			
1. Project Design		35	33
Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan			
1. Resources/Management Plan		20	20
	Sub Total	80	76
Priority Questions			
Competitive Preference Priority			
Competitive Preference Priority			
1. Absolute Priority 3		5	0
	Sub Total	5	0
	Total	85	76

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Early Phase Tier 1 - 1: 84.411C

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

Applicant: Board of Regents, Univ of Nebraska, Univ of Nebraska-Lincoln (U411C190009)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. **The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

   (1) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.

   (2) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

   Strengths:

   1.   The FES model proposed seeks to advance the previously funded and established efforts (3) of improving educational outcomes for foster students in the areas of school engagement, home engagement, and family functioning. The FES model is grounded by the evidence-based practices of the On the Way Home intervention which has over a decade of DOE supported work (1). The greatest potential contribution of the proposed project is the opportunity to gain a better understanding of which strategies from the OTWH model have the most substantial short term and long-term impact on foster care students remaining at home, remaining in school, and improving their educational outcomes. By identifying and replicating effective strategies, this project the potential to change adulthood trajectories for individuals who are currently in foster care.

   2.   The proposed FES model sufficiently extends the previously established OTWH model. Table 1 clearly identifies the actions that will be taken in the three core areas to extend from the OTWH model to the FES model (5). It appears the extension activities are designed around building connectedness activities for middle and high school students and parents alike (5-6) in high needs area. In doing so, it is likely that the proposes a looking to advance more educational outcomes for students. The OTWH model proved successful in getting students to remain at home and in school. By establishing further connections, the proposes are seeking to impact the pro-social, emotional and academic benefits of remaining at school and at home.

   Weaknesses:

   (1)   Besides stating that the FES model and OTWH model will serve middle and high school students from high need placed in foster care, the proposers failed to mention the local or state number of students placed in foster care (2). By identifying the total foster care population, the proposers could have given a clear picture of the potential impact for the FES model beyond the grant cycle. Additionally, the proposer did not give the current baseline for the educational outcomes to be impacted including dropout rates, proficiency, absenteeism (abstract), etc.

Reader's Score: 23

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the**

quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

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

Strengths:

1.   Each phase of the project has a stated goal. The goals are clearly stated. The objectives were specific, detailed, and measurable (pp 9-11). The outcomes were specific. The measurement of these goals will identify strategies that other schools might find useful for program design, implementation, replication and modification.

2.   The conceptual framework provides a clear pictorial and written explanation of how the ecological systems interact with each other to influence students and stakeholders during the reunification process to support students and families (13). The design represents the cyclical nature and the layered approach to provide wrap around supports primarily for students but also for the family and school. All students would benefit from this approach, but it is particularly needed for foster students who are often in transition in less than ideal circumstances.

3.   Ongoing feedback is built into the design model. Weekly, quarterly, and ongoing elements are clearly detailed and provided in comparison between FES and OTWH (5). Several stages for development and implementation are concise and cohesive (6-7). The fact that the FES models builds on the OTWH model makes it strong. It is further strengthened by the stages for implementation which allow for evaluation, clarification and further redesign. As a result, improve outcomes should be experienced each year and by the end of the grant cycle a comprehensive model should be ready for replication in other schools, districts and possibly states.

Weaknesses:

1. There were no specific objectives that addressed the educational outcomes for students related to dropout, attendance, standardized tests (9-11), etc which fails to provide a clear picture of how modifying the OTWH model to the FES model will generate better educational outcomes for students.

Reader's Score: 33

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan

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

   (1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

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

   (3) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.

Strengths:

1.   The first paragraph on section C1 (15) presents a thorough explanation of the role that each partner will play in the management of the proposed project. The duties and responsibilities of each agency are defined, which creates a stronger system of checks and balances for accomplishing project tasks, according to established timelines and within budget. The monthly tasks also provide a clear road map for implementation from beginning to end which also supports stainability and replication. Table 8 on pp. 15- 17 details the timeline of activities to be completed by the key persons identified on pp. 14-15. At a glance, the activities to be completed within a year can be identified. The number and type of tasks to be completed are reasonable for each year.

2.   The specific persons identified have an abundance of experience with foster care support services, program evaluation of federally funded programs for at-risk families, and educational leadership (17, Appendix B, e61-e222). Consequently, the wealth of experience and personnel lends itself to timely implementation, limited down time and recovery in the event of personnel turnover, and provides multiple perspectives during times of feedback and revision.

3.   The project proposers have demonstrated commitment to continued funding on the local, regional, and national level (18). Furthermore, at the summation of the grant cycle there will be several deliverables which will be ready for scaling. ██ ████████████ to fully integrate the FES into their service and training options which makes this a very viable option for increasing the data base for evidence-based practices and for national replication.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority

1. Within Absolute Priority 3, we give competitive preference to applications that address the following priority:

Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in computer science (as defined in the notice). These projects must address the following priority area:

Expanding access to and participation in rigorous computer science (as defined in the notice) coursework for traditionally underrepresented students such as racial or ethnic minorities, women, students in communities served by rural local educational agencies (as defined in the notice), children or students with disabilities (as defined in the notice), or low-income individuals (as defined under section 312(g) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended).

Note: Projects addressing this priority must be administered in a manner consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws.

Strengths:

Not addressed.

Weaknesses:

Not addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/12/2019 02:07 AM

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/11/2019 09:54 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Board of Regents, Univ of Nebraska, Univ of Nebraska-Lincoln (U411C190009)
Reader #2: **********

		Points Possible	**Points Scored**
Questions			
Selection Criteria			
Significance			
1. Significance		25	22
Quality of Project Design			
1. Project Design		35	35
Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan			
1. Resources/Management Plan		20	15
	Sub Total	80	72
Priority Questions			
Competitive Preference Priority			
Competitive Preference Priority			
1. Absolute Priority 3		5	0
	Sub Total	5	0
	Total	85	72

Technical Review Form

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

Applicant: Board of Regents, Univ of Nebraska, Univ of Nebraska-Lincoln (U411C190009)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. **The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

   (1) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.

   (2) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

   Strengths:

   (1)The applicant has provided an appropriate overview of nationally significant problems and has presented national data that establishes the need to increase academic proficiency as well as decrease absenteeism, and truancy for students in foster care . Also, to demonstrate the significance of their program, they have provided relevant information regarding students who are reunified with parents and how socioeconomic barriers could be a hindrance to those students' academic success. Their model is designed to address educational problems among students who have left foster care and if effective, could provide a new strategy for other LEA's who endeavor to target educational issues among this subset of students. (30-34)

   (2)The applicant has provided a clear plan to include empirically supported outreach and proactive support services for middle and high school students who have been reunified with families following placements in foster care. They have extensive details regarding how these data proven services such as monitoring school performance, self-management techniques, as well as family skills training will promote homework and school engagement as well as family functioning (38-39). As a promising new strategy, these services could be well suited to be integrated as additional supports into their data proven On the Way Home aftercare program as an innovative method to improve education and stability outcomes of students returning home from foster care.(35-38)

   Weaknesses:

   (1)The applicant has not suitably addressed the demographical background as well as other unaddressed needs that are prevalent within their local target area. Specific information regarding academic proficiency, absenteeism and truancy rates among the middle and high school student population that they aim to serve has not been included. This is needed in order to fully understand and gauge the potential impact of their strategies within the target communities and thus substantiate the local need and significance of their proposed program (33).

Reader's Score: 22

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

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

Strengths:

(1)Project goals and activities are driven by the identified needs of the students. The applicant presents measurable goals and objectives that support recruitment, enhanced academic achievement of schools and families as well as data management among at risk students. As a basis for measurement and to ensure that the program is meeting or exceeding expectations, specific quantifiable baseline projections have also been provided which will be useful as a tool to ensure that programmatic outcomes will be met. (40-41)

(2)The proposed project is based upon a relevant research design, and the Logic Model demonstrates the quality and appropriateness of that design, including the scientific rigor of the support and engagement activities that are involved (i. e., Check and Connect School Support, Homework Engagement Support). These data driven interventions are the basis for, and validate, their conceptual framework as they are appropriately depicted within the model as interventions that drive their intended outcomes (239).

(3)The applicant has provided a sufficient continuous improvement plan. It is enhanced by a commitment to continually monitor program services, improve quality when needed, and regularly assess progress towards the attainment of program objectives. The district has the in-kind support of competent professionals to help sustain their efforts (45, 241).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan

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

   (1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

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

   (3) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.

Strengths:

(1)The applicant provides evidence of how they propose to complete project activities on-time and within budget. For example, the applicant has established a grant management plan that will focus efforts on overall progress monitoring and oversight of coordination of services (47). In another example, there is a comprehensive timeline that is provided that highlights key milestones as well as the Project Director who will oversee implementation, evaluation and data collection to ensure that activities are properly monitored and start and end on time . To ensure that all stakeholders are

communicative and are afforded the opportunity to have adequate input regarding the program, the applicant further postulates to conduct quarterly advisory board meetings and weekly planning meetings (47-48).

(2)The qualifications of key personnel are clearly delineated including relevant education and work experience. The applicant intends to serve a unique target population, students who have recently transitioned out of the foster care system. The director has 10 years of experience developing and evaluating educational programs to meet the reunification and transition needs of high-risk students and families involved in out-of-home care. This experience will undoubtedly allow her to manage the project efficiently, since he is likely to be familiar with the unique needs of the students and the structure and procedures of foster care system (61). The applicant adequately identifies other key personnel that are highly qualified in educating students in out-of-home care settings. For example, the Co-Project Director has 6 years' experience in developing programming to meet the needs of high-risk students, establishing training protocols to improve efficiency in educating this student population (63-64, 94-165).

(3)The applicant has described steps that will be taken to ensure that the project work will not cease when Federal support is over. This includes steps for possible replication such as submitting research findings to peer-reviewed journals. Also, they plan to seek funding through educational foundations (50).

Weaknesses:

(1)The applicant has not provided clear descriptions of how they will coordinate efforts within various school districts. Details regarding who will be responsible for programmatic oversight, data collection etc. within the various LEA's would ensure the success of their implementation activities, data collection and other proposed activities. Specific steps that explain when and how implementation activities will occur once a student has been discharged from foster care should be included in order to provide assurance that parents or guardians as well as all LEA's will be appropriately involved in the process (47-48).

(2)The applicant has not presented a strong plan that ensures that ongoing funding sources will be specifically committed to the project after the grant period. The applicant has not described specific steps that will be taken to ensure that the educational foundations listed will be viable sources of income that will fund their program (50).

Reader's Score: 15

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority

1. Within Absolute Priority 3, we give competitive preference to applications that address the following priority:

Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in computer science (as defined in the notice). These projects must address the following priority area:

Expanding access to and participation in rigorous computer science (as defined in the notice) coursework for traditionally underrepresented students such as racial or ethnic minorities, women, students in communities served by rural local educational agencies (as defined in the notice), children or students with disabilities (as defined in the notice), or low-income individuals (as defined under section 312(g) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended).

Note: Projects addressing this priority must be administered in a manner consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/11/2019 09:54 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Board of Regents, Univ of Nebraska, Univ of Nebraska-Lincoln (U411C190009)
Reader #3:   **********

		Points Possible	**Points Scored**
Questions			
Selection Criteria			
Significance			
1. Significance		25	23
Quality of Project Design			
1. Project Design		35	35
Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan			
1. Resources/Management Plan		20	20
	Sub Total	80	78
Priority Questions			
Competitive Preference Priority			
Competitive Preference Priority			
1. Absolute Priority 3		5	0
	Sub Total	5	0
	Total	85	78

Technical Review Form

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

Applicant: Board of Regents, Univ of Nebraska, Univ of Nebraska-Lincoln (U411C190009)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. **The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

   (1) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.

   (2) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

   Strengths:

   (1) The applicant does an adequate job in reporting national data providing background information on the importance of reunification and the struggles of students in foster care. This important contribution of the proposed project is set to improve the educational outcomes of secondary students involved in foster care through a modification of an aftercare model to promote school success. The aftercare model found on p. e32 builds on over a decade of evidenced-based Department of Education-supported work and will be modified to address the educational outcomes of high need students.

   (2) The proposed strategies and plans found on p. e34 are provided with a variety of details and build on an existing evidenced-based model, On the Way Home, (OTWH) focused on improving the education and placement stability outcomes of students returning home. The proposed program, Fostering Educational Success (FES), is substantially described on pgs. e35 – e39. The approach presents a promising new strategy for high need students in foster care utilizing the OTWH model as a starting place for FES development. The strategy is promising because it will allow for the FES intervention to become manualized and designed to include additional supports specific to the educational and family needs of reunifying students in foster care.

   Weaknesses:

   (1) The applicant did not appropriately describe the level of increasing the knowledge or understanding of their proposed project nor did they provide concrete information on how the national data presented previously relates to the population they are trying to serve. The applicant presented information on pgs. e32 – e34, on the challenges that foster students face and the need for a support system to intervene, however did not make a direct correlation to the population and did not provide concrete data that yielded a # of students within their school district that they intend to serve.

Reader's Score: 23

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the**

quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

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

Strengths:

(1) The Applicant clearly outlines on pgs. e39 – e43 three measurable goals and methods that are used to address the educational needs of students returning to the family home following placement in foster care. The tables found on pgs. e40 – e43 are also directly related to the goals and proposed outcomes that address the development and identified practices that will begin the process. The applicant provides a clearly specified plan that is highlighted on p. e39 that demonstrates the importance of the methods used.

(2) The conceptual framework (pgs. e 43 – e44) describes the underlying theory that influences students and stakeholders involved during the reunification service provision. The theoretical and conceptual contributions of the research presented will help to fill in an important gap in the decision making by explaining the dynamics of multiple actors, namely schools, caregivers, and service providers involved in a series of decisions over time.

(3) The Applicant demonstrates its commitment to continuous improvement found on pg. e45, Figure 2, by proposing a FES Iterative Approach that provides phases that collectively inform the components of the proposed project. The adequacy of procedures will inform necessary refinements and implementation of the phases highlighted on pg. e45.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan

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

    (1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

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

    (3) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.

Strengths:

(1) The management plan identifies a specific calendar or timeline (p. e46) for key activities for each of the four phases of the project, with identified activities, individuals responsible for carrying out those activities and identified agency partners. The specific key activities for the four phases are measurable and auditable changes that can be obtained as a result of the project's successful accomplishment. They determine the extent to which the identified problems have been mitigated,

resolved, or eliminated.

(2) The roles and responsibilities are clear and include a strong team that will provide support around each of the areas of the project. FES key personnel (p. e48) assigned to the proposed project include individuals that each have over a decade in working with at-risk youth, developing or evaluating programs and data analysis.

(3) Due to the nature of the integration of FES as part of the iterative development framework, a promising and feasible option for schools and agencies to implement and promote school and home stability for student involved in foster care is a feasible option. FES has an established training program to assist other organization develop the evidenced-based practice. The applicant intends on seeking other funding to support continues sustainability. At the completion of FES, the applicant could provide a promising and feasible option for schools and agencies to implement the new model to improve school engagement, educational outcomes, prevent system reentry and promote school and home stability for student involved in foster care.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: **20**

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority

1. **Within Absolute Priority 3, we give competitive preference to applications that address the following priority:**

   Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in computer science (as defined in the notice). These projects must address the following priority area:

   Expanding access to and participation in rigorous computer science (as defined in the notice) coursework for traditionally underrepresented students such as racial or ethnic minorities, women, students in communities served by rural local educational agencies (as defined in the notice), children or students with disabilities (as defined in the notice), or low-income individuals (as defined under section 312(g) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended).

   Note: Projects addressing this priority must be administered in a manner consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws.

   Strengths:

   N/A

   Weaknesses:

   N/A

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/11/2019 06:30 PM