

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/20/2020 12:55 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: California Department of Education (S425B200005)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Highest Coronavirus Burden		
1. Coronavirus Burden	20	19
Quality of Project Services and Project Plan		
1. Project Services/Plan	35	33
Quality of Management Plan / Adequacy of Resources		
1. Management Plan/Resources	25	24
Sub Total	80	76
Total	80	76

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - FY20 REM - 6: 84.425B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: California Department of Education (S425B200005)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Highest Coronavirus Burden

1. A: Highest Coronavirus Burden (up to 20 Points)

(2) The extent to which the applicant has a high coronavirus burden based on indicators and information factors identified by the applicant in response to Application Requirement 3. (up to 20 points)

Strengths:

The applicant well-explains the extent of impact upon children and youth, as almost all public schools closed for more than 27% of the school year for 6.1 million students (Attachment 2, p. 1). Clear details of the extent of the impact is well-shown for aspects of children's/young people's lives in the areas of regular food security, high unemployment of adults (16.4% in April 2020) (Attachment, p. 3), lack of adequate home broadband internet connectivity for 400,000 K-12 students (Narrative, p. 4).

Details of the COVID-19 impact are shown to be derived from a depth of organizations/individuals/agencies for a collection of accurate information, input for solutions, and data, including data from school districts throughout the state, Community/Industry/Non-Profit Organization Task Force of the State Superintendent of Instruction (Narrative, p. 5), school nutrition sites, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and California's Employment Development Department (Attachment, pp. 2-3). Comparison data are clearly shown to present evidence of the intensity of the adult unemployment (16.4% unemployment rate in April 2020 as compared to a March 2020 rate of 5.5%) (Attachment, p. 3).

To some extent, the applicant provides details of how it has provided needed services for students and parents during the COVID-19 crisis, e.g., State-ordered Stay at Home Order and closing schools to curtail the virus-spread, school information newsletters being translated into various languages utilized by parents, and distributing computing hardware/devices and internet connectivity devices as needed to students (Attachment, pp. 1-5).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not thoroughly discuss the high COVID-19 impact upon parents in terms of how the parents' roles as educators-at-home caused any difficulties. Limited details are provided for how the applicant sought input from parents, especially beyond the limited comments from the recent single occasion of California parents participating in the Parents' Support Circle on Facebook Live on April 29, 2020 (Attachment 2, p. 4).

Reader's Score: 19

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services and Project Plan

1. B: Quality of Project Services and Project Plan (up to 35 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of project services and project plan.

In determining the quality of the project services and project plan, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. (up to 5 points)

In addition, the Secretary considers--

(1) The extent to which the proposed project is an exceptional approach to absolute priority being addressed and includes a detailed project plan for addressing the absolute priority. (up to 10 points)

(2) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project to respond to the needs of students. (up to 10 points)

(3) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will expand access to remote learning options and lead to improvements in student outcomes. (up to 5 points)

(4) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

(Equal Access)

The applicant clearly demonstrates its strategies to plan for and implement the Universal Design for Learning to ensure equal access to all students, especially students who have been underrepresented, i.e., students with disabilities, ELL students, and students from diverse cultures (Narrative, p. 20).

(1)

The three-prong approach to the new platform contains high-quality elements of giving teachers and students access to high-quality learning resources and interoperable instruction materials, monitoring by a statewide stakeholder group including parents and industry partners, and curating a growing and expansive repository of courses, interactive resources, learning modules, and professional development for teachers (Narrative, pp. 6, 11, 21).

To a great extent, the project plan is well-detailed for its design, including numerous points of input from stakeholders, input from educators and professional learning experts, professional and development of the plan for both the curricula and the digital technology, e.g., Statewide Advisory Group for Future Education (Narrative, pp. 8, 17).

The applicant well-explains that this project will enhance existing Career/Technical Education content that meets the requirements of needed skills in identified career pathways, i.e., careers in Arts, Media, and Entertainment industries - California's largest CTE industry sector (Narrative, p. 7).

(2)

The applicant's plan to create the Statewide Remote and Distance Learning Online Course Access and Learning Management System is well-described as an exceptional approach for elements critical to fill the identified learning gaps and learning barriers experienced by the students. To a great extent, the applicant describes the identified gaps in technology infrastructure, professional development for teachers for digital learning, and statewide policies to implement blended learning (Narrative, p. 9). The applicant fully describes gaps in technology infrastructure (lack of 1:1 computing devices), lack of sufficient broadband width in schools and homes to fully access learning materials/curricula, limited free/accessible advanced learning online for CTE-related courses, lack of funds to implement online learning, and lack of quality professional development for online instructional delivery (Narrative, p. 9) Well-detailed elements of the plan include cost-free remote learning (Canvas Open Slate) for both public and non-public school students, online collaboration, course development by local educators/educational specialists, student project-based learning approach,

coursework for students in grades 6-12 for career/college readiness (Narrative, pp. 5-8).

(3) The applicant's plan has a great likelihood of leading to improvements in student outcomes. The project, involving student learning and enhanced teacher training is effective due to the foundational supports of research evidence in the field of digital learning/remote learning and best practices in professional development for educator (Narrative, p. 14). The project contains elements for both synchronous and asynchronous student learning, which will permit students to be involved in blended learning opportunities and also address the individual learning styles of students and elements of cultural responsiveness (Narrative, pp. 7-8, 17).

(4)
The applicant fully discusses how its project is research-based and built upon both a 2015 research study of digital student customized services and open educational resources from multiple providers which showed students' learning gains, e.g., 2015 Research Study -- Expanding Approaches for Understanding Impact: Integrating Technology, Curriculum, and Open Educational Resources in Science Education, a Curriculum Customization Service (Narrative, p. 12). Also, a clear correlation is explained for the foundational evidence of Alismail, et a, 2015 for redesigning and utilizing in this project an updated statewide Model of CTE Curriculum Standards to better align with current/future academic competencies/skills for careers and college (Narrative, p. 13).

Weaknesses:

(1)
The applicant does not clearly describe how its technology platform will be sufficiently accessed for students, teachers, and parents who have limited broadband internet capabilities (Narrative, p. 17).

(2)
No weaknesses found.

(3)
No weaknesses found.

(4)
No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 33

Selection Criteria - Quality of Management Plan / Adequacy of Resources

1. C: Quality of the Management Plan and Adequacy of Resources (up to 25 points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers--

- (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. (up to 5 points)**
- (2) The extent to which the proposed use of funds will adequately support the proposed project. (up to 5 points)**
- (3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (up to 5 points)**
- (4) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be**

served and to the anticipated results and benefits. (up to 10 points)

Strengths:

(1)

The applicant provides a clear and substantive Project Management Plan, complete with four major objectives and project tasks, specific activities to accomplish each objective, milestones, and reasonable timeline of strategies, e.g., Integration of Student Users of Statewide Learning and Teaching Equity Platform in Project Phases II-IV in July 2021 to June 2023 (Attachment 3, p. 1).

The applicant somewhat describes the management structure of the project which includes the key leadership by the State Board of Education, the lead division of the College of Career Transition Division, and other state-level department, such as the California Partnership Academies (Narrative, p. 16). The selected management divisions have past successful experience in managing Federal project, state projects, delivery of College and Career Curricula for grades 5-12, and oversight of high school graduation requirements (Narrative, p. 16).

(2)

An efficient, effective, cost-saving foundation for this project is well-designed to provide the statewide Learning Management System - Canvas Open Source, e.g. cost-free to students and educators and integrated within an existing platform already commonly utilized at the postsecondary campuses and managed by the existing Career Technical Education Department at the state level (Narrative, p. 16).

(3)

Proposed project costs of [REDACTED] over three years are reasonable in scope of the project's deliverables, volume of students to be served -- over 6 million students (Narrative, p. 24). The administrative costs are reasonable and do not exceed the grant guidelines not exceeding 5% of total project costs (Budget, p. 1). The applicant provides clear detail of the overall expected expenditures for two personnel salaries and fringe benefits, staff travel to partner meetings and grant-related meetings, and grant management supplies (Budget Narrative, pp. 2-4). The costs for Subgrants is well-detailed for the projected costs of [REDACTED], which accounts for the major portion of the project's expenses, i.e., platform construction, technical support, stakeholder engagement/assessments, and professional learning content development and implementation (Budget Narrative, pp. 4-8).

(4)

The per-student cost of this project [REDACTED] is quite reasonable in the scope of providing over 6 million students free course access, career/college readiness skills, remote learning, and professional development for educators in 977 school districts (Narrative, p. 24). The applicant provides a succinct cost comparison to a major school district and the proposed project for which both entities supply the Learning Management System to students, i.e., Los Angeles Unified School District's incurred costs of fees in 2020 were approximately \$8.00 per student (Narrative, p. 24).

Weaknesses:

(1)

The applicant does not clearly detail which personnel position(s) will be responsible for keeping the project expenditures within the scope of the proposed budget. The applicant does not describe the project budget oversight to any specific project personnel within the California Department of Education or another department to lead the fiscal aspects of the project (Attachment 5, Duty Statement of the California Department of Education, p. 1).

(2)

No weaknesses found.

(3)
No weaknesses found.

(4)
No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: **24**

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/20/2020 12:55 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/20/2020 12:55 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: California Department of Education (S425B200005)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Highest Coronavirus Burden		
1. Coronavirus Burden	20	20
Quality of Project Services and Project Plan		
1. Project Services/Plan	35	32
Quality of Management Plan / Adequacy of Resources		
1. Management Plan/Resources	25	23
Sub Total	80	75
Total	80	75

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - FY20 REM - 6: 84.425B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: California Department of Education (S425B200005)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Highest Coronavirus Burden

1. A: Highest Coronavirus Burden (up to 20 Points)

(2) The extent to which the applicant has a high coronavirus burden based on indicators and information factors identified by the applicant in response to Application Requirement 3. (up to 20 points)

Strengths:

(2) The applicant provides a clear description of the State's coronavirus burden based on indicators and information factors other than those required in the application that reveals the significance of the effect of COVID-19 on students, parents, and schools in the State. For example, the applicant reports state percentage share of confirmed COVID-19 per capita of coronavirus-related deaths; and, when comparing California to New York with COVID-19 cases per capita, California was 0.61, whereas New York was 12.59% per capita. Additionally, the applicant provides public health data that shows a steady increase of confirmed positive COVID-19 cases on a daily average impacting the target population (pp.3-4).

The applicant presents current and reliable data that demonstrates the magnitude of the influence of COVID-19 on the target population. The applicant states that due to the coronavirus pandemic more than 5.5 million K-12 students served by over 650 school districts were removed physically from the school learning environment (pp.3-4 & e17).

The applicant provides demographic data that show 60% of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals which reflects low-income levels. The applicant reports up-to-date data that show State's school systems serve over 20% English Learners and high populations of juvenile offenders (12,679), foster-aged children (24,966) foster-age children, and school-enrolled homeless youth (270,000). 2017 Census data shows nation-wide the state as having the highest poverty rate of 20% (e16).

The applicant revealed a loss of employment and working hours by parents which resulted in the state's unemployment rate climbing from 5.5% to 16.4% by May 2020, which resulted in a 10.9% increase. Additionally, the State reports the largest loss of 2.4 million non-farm payroll jobs since the Great Recession. It is evident that the coronavirus pandemic has created a strain on the State's economy, which impacts families and schools (p.4 & e17).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services and Project Plan

1. B: Quality of Project Services and Project Plan (up to 35 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of project services and project plan.

In determining the quality of the project services and project plan, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. (up to 5 points)

In addition, the Secretary considers--

(1) The extent to which the proposed project is an exceptional approach to absolute priority being addressed and includes a detailed project plan for addressing the absolute priority. (up to 10 points)

(2) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project to respond to the needs of students. (up to 10 points)

(3) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will expand access to remote learning options and lead to improvements in student outcomes. (up to 5 points)

(4) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

(1) The applicant confirms the proposed project will follow current regulations by the state department of education that mandates participants to be selected for participation regardless to race, color, and nation origin by providing in the grant application, a statement addressing the department of education's General of Education Provisions Act (GEPA) in compliance with section 427 of GEPA that mandates equitable access to the program services for all children (e9).

(1) The applicant clearly identifies specific anticipated project services that represents an exceptional approach to Absolute Priority 2 and incorporates an extensive project design for implementation to address the absolute priority. The applicant proposes to expand high-quality course access by utilizing a learning management system referred to as the Statewide Learning and Teaching Equity platform via Canvas Open Source. This platform will provide parents, teachers, and students with access to significance learning resources and relevant teaching and learning materials, such as college and career preparatory courses and Universal Design for Learning distance learning curriculum. Additionally, the proposed project will enable professional learning resources to be delivered to remote and rural communities that traditionally lack the ability to improve learning, because of the lack of funding. This unique expansion of online access has the potential to advance access and encourage student choice to take advanced courses to include career technical education through a digital curriculum in an online learning environment with equal access for all students (p.5 & e3).

(2) The applicant identifies gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure and opportunities and proposes strategies for addressing the challenges for the target population. The applicant reports challenges to support advance programs of emphasis in Computer Science, Information and Community Technology, and other areas when students and teachers did not have access to needed technology to support the required learning software. As a result of some student with Chromebooks were not able to continue to engage in structured learning, a gap of equity was discovered, because students who had high-end personal electronic devices could continue learning. Additionally, the State's education system was unprepared for transiting effective face-to-face classroom courses to distance learning and did not have access to free and readily available resources to facilitate the transition. The State's teachers were not prepared to transition from remote learning to online, unfamiliar with learning management systems for delivery of learning or online curriculum design. The applicant proposes reasonable project services to address the identified gaps. For example, the anticipated project will create flexible distance learning universal design learning courses, curriculum, and assessment focused on advancing student learning and supporting teachers, students, and parents in the transition to distance learning by

providing free course access and professional learning for teachers and parents. Free access to learning and teaching materials will relieve school districts of a financial burden of having to buy additional instructional materials (pp.8-11).

(3) The proposed project plans to provide and extend services that address the needs of the target population. Furthermore, through the delivery of new services a system of change or improvement to build the State's capacity for quality online learning for all teachers and students may be achieved. The applicant addresses the probability that project services will focus on improvements in access to remote learning choices and foster enhancement in student outcomes. For example, because of the proposed project local education agencies will have access to courses that traditionally were not available to them and their students. Also, as result of this new process, teachers and families will have more opportunities to enhance their knowledge of remote student learning and teaching. The proposed project may be able to serve all learners through a learning management system (pp.10-11).

(4) The applicant proposed project services indicates current research and effective practice. For example, an existing platform has proven to be compatible to open access learning management systems. Within the platform, a scaled-up model will be used to create and distribute 350 additional online courses that can be use by teachers state-wide. The applicant will use an integrated and shared curriculum that consists of open educational resources. The applicant presents research that shows when teachers take advantage of the resources, higher learning success and a greater impact is made on student populations of low-socioeconomic status such as those populations in State. Also, teachers will have increased opportunities to engage in professional development in professional learning communities where reflective strategies and approaches can be shared with peers. The proposed project will utilize "The Guiding Policy Principles and 12 Essential Elements" to facilitate high quality Career and College Ready pathways. The project will also emphasize the significance of the inclusion of academic integration in Career Technical Education by revisiting the State's Career Technical Education Model Curriculum Standards to strengthened academic content standards for teaching and learning as impacted by coronavirus pandemic on K-12 schools (pp.11-13 & p.18).

Weaknesses:

(1) The applicant does not describe effective strategies for providing equal access and treatment of traditionally underrepresented people. The applicant does not identify how it will make sure procedures are in place to delivery project services to special populations, such as English Learners or students with disabilities. Additionally, the applicant does not identify who will be responsible for responding to issues of equity and access (No page found). -3 pts

Reader's Score: 32

Selection Criteria - Quality of Management Plan / Adequacy of Resources

1. C: Quality of the Management Plan and Adequacy of Resources (up to 25 points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers--

- (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. (up to 5 points)**
- (2) The extent to which the proposed use of funds will adequately support the proposed project. (up to 5 points)**
- (3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (up to 5 points)**
- (4) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits. (up to 10 points)**

Strengths:

(1) The applicant provides an effective management plan focused on meeting the proposed project objectives on time and within budget. The management plan includes essential elements such as concise timelines based on implementation yearly phases, established program tasks, and clear milestones for completing program activities to meet objectives for successful implementation of the project over a three-year period. The applicant will allow the College and Career Transition Division of the State's department of education to take over the administrative and fiscal responsibility for managing the federal funds. The division has prior experience facilitating other federal grants such as Title II, Perkins, and Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (e18, pp 1-5 & pp.21-23). The applicant provides resumes of the grant team members. The resumes show the experience, skills, and education credential that is sufficient for facilitating the grant to completion. For example, the project lead has a doctorate degree, and extensive administrative experience working with federal grants (e26-e35).

(2) The applicant clearly discusses in the narrative budget the monies needed to sufficiently fund the anticipated project. The applicant presents in the budget narrative the entire project costs associated with completing the grant. The proposed project lists costs such as personnel, fringe benefits, travel, supplies, other, direct, and indirect costs (Budget Narrative, pp. 1-9 & pp.21-23). The Governor of the State has provided a letter to demonstrate support for the proposed project (e23).

(3) The costs seem reasonable in relation to meeting the objectives and delivering the anticipated program activities. There are no unnecessary or unrelated costs that appear in the budget. The applicant provides an itemized budget that categorizes some costs associated with the grant. The total budget requested amount of [REDACTED] seems reasonable for supporting the project over a three-year grant period (Budget, pp.1-9 & p.23).

(4) The applicant provides costs that are reasonable in relation to number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits. The proposed project will serve 977 school districts by utilizing a learning management system, professional learning, and course access fees. The estimated cost per participant to the project is estimated to be [REDACTED] per student because of transiting \$6.4 million in learning management systems fees to non-cost for State's K-12 school system (pp.23-24).

Weaknesses:

(1) The management plan does not indicate who will be responsible for carrying out the tasks and meeting the objectives on time and within budget. The applicant does not indicate the time commitment for working on the grant to ensure that there is adequate time to complete all activities in the grant (No page found). -1pt

(3) The applicant does not provide an itemized budget that categorizes the personnel costs and fringe benefits associated with the grant. For example, the budget does not reflect the personnel costs or fringe benefits for each staff member that has been identified to effectively plan and manage the grant (e40). -1pt

Reader's Score: 23

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/20/2020 12:55 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/20/2020 12:55 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: California Department of Education (S425B200005)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Highest Coronavirus Burden		
1. Coronavirus Burden	20	20
Quality of Project Services and Project Plan		
1. Project Services/Plan	35	33
Quality of Management Plan / Adequacy of Resources		
1. Management Plan/Resources	25	24
Sub Total	80	77
Total	80	77

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - FY20 REM - 6: 84.425B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: California Department of Education (S425B200005)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Highest Coronavirus Burden

1. A: Highest Coronavirus Burden (up to 20 Points)

(2) The extent to which the applicant has a high coronavirus burden based on indicators and information factors identified by the applicant in response to Application Requirement 3. (up to 20 points)

Strengths:

Factors identified by the applicant:

The applicant indicates that there are three additional and compelling factors regarding California's Coronavirus burden that demonstrate that Coronavirus has contributed a great burden on the state and its ability to meet the needs of its students. They are as follows:

1. Although only 8.9% of students are without broadband, that percentage reflects 569,600 students. When compared to a state, such as "Maine (listed as a top quartile state) with over 11.7% of their students without broadband access, which equates to just over 21,000 students. By comparison, California has 27 times more students without broadband access, indicating a high burden for the state (page 3). The number of students is significant and imparts an urgent need for the development of a robust plan to ensure broadband access for all students.
2. The applicant shared the timeline of when the state decided to shelter in place, indicating that students were out of school for an additional three weeks before other states, such as New York, because of the state's aggressive approach to shelter in place. This resulted in fewer Coronavirus cases; however, over six million children reside in California, so this additional three weeks without school would've resulted in learning loss and is an indicator of a higher Coronavirus burden (page 4). This additional time out of class indicates that the students will have suffered a gap in their education, thereby creating an additional hurdle for the state to overcome in ensuring a high-quality education for every student.
3. Due to the local decision-making design for California's over 1,000 school districts, there were inconsistent responses to remote learning, placing an excessive burden on families who were also struggling with layoffs and telecommuting (Page 4). Due to the unique nature of the Coronavirus, schools didn't have precedence or education to rely on, giving each school district the undue burden of developing a remote learning plan for all students without one system to turn to, indicating the possibility of a higher Coronavirus burden.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services and Project Plan

1. B: Quality of Project Services and Project Plan (up to 35 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of project services and project plan.

In determining the quality of the project services and project plan, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. (up to 5 points)

In addition, the Secretary considers--

(1) The extent to which the proposed project is an exceptional approach to absolute priority being addressed and includes a detailed project plan for addressing the absolute priority. (up to 10 points)

(2) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project to respond to the needs of students. (up to 10 points)

(3) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will expand access to remote learning options and lead to improvements in student outcomes. (up to 5 points)

(4) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

Strengths:

Ensuring Equal Access

The applicant indicated that the state will ensure equal access through three means:

1. Employ UDL in all state developed content (page 7);
2. Offer the SLATE platform at no cost, provide training, support struggling communities with courses they might not be able to offer, and widen availability beyond public schools (page 8);
3. "Provide content and training for educators" (page 8).

With UDL, communities can tailor the programming to their specific needs. Access to SLATE to a wider audience while also providing the necessary training for students and teachers ensures equal access to programming.

Exceptional Approach

The applicant highlights four specific tasks for the CalOpEd project, which reflect a thoughtful approach to addressing the need for remote learning in a timely manner. The four tasks are:

1. Conduct technical resource planning and development. By delineating what resources they need, they can create a plan for developing an open-source learning management system. This ties directly to their Objective 1: Provide a common, enterprise-level learning management and collaboration platform.
2. Convene statewide stakeholder input and continuous guidance. This ensures that the state will cultivate one voice for districts, teachers, students, and parents to rely on and reflects their Objective 2: Organize a statewide stakeholder group.
3. Increase educators' digital learning design approaches. By equipping teachers, the state will impact a large number of students since teachers have the most direct impact on student learning. This ties directly to Objective 3: Convene regional educator team and learning content providers.
4. Ensure universal access. By creating easy-to-access pathways for all students, the state is ensuring that the high-quality programming is for everyone, not just students with the best technology, reflecting Objective 1 (pages 6 and 7).

Specific Gaps or Weaknesses

The applicant presented specific gaps in service that are all related to the state's ability to provide base level technology and broadband access for students. Specifically, without access to appropriate technology, advanced secondary programs ended for students with lower quality technology. Also, due to a lack of experience, LEAs were not equipped to

deliver high-quality distance learning due to the fact that teachers had not been trained in DL, nor were there widely available free and accessible online curriculum for teachers to access. Since each school district needed a learning management system, they had to purchase a system themselves and manage the financial burden. Finally, urban and smaller rural districts experienced higher levels of difficulty pivoting to remote instruction due to the dearth of DL resources and training, furthering the digital divide (pages 9 and 10).

Likelihood of Expanding Access/Lead to Improvements

The applicant cited a study in which teachers were provided DL training that included access to resources from multiple providers, the ability to customize the lessons, and the flexibility to share with other teachers. This study showed an increase in those teachers' students' learning gains and a greater impact on low socio-economic status students from all demographics (page 12). With California's diverse student population, providing these trainings and resources to families during a pandemic, has a good chance of having similar results.

The applicant connected pathways in CTE courses to the State's largest industries will provide students with necessary skills and knowledge for their chosen career path. By aligning the CTE courses with academic competencies, addressing the Common Core Standards, and supporting remote instruction, will lead to improvements in the program that will ensure student success (page 13).

The applicant recognizes the need for a learner-centered approach that involves collaboration and challenge-based instructional strategies that can be facilitated online. The UDL framework allows for this and will be essential in meeting the needs of special populations and ensuring access to learning because teachers retain the flexibility to meet students' unique needs in a responsive way, which meets the students' needs, which could be exacerbated during a pandemic (page 15).

Reflects Up-to-Date Knowledge

The applicant cited the CCS study that shows professional learning opportunities for teachers are needed because they learn new approaches and practices and are able to customize instruction for students (page 13). In addition, the applicant cited a 2018 study involving PLC's and how they can support and enable teacher to operate both as learners and partners in construction of knowledge, promoting interculturalism in classrooms (page 14). Based on these finding, the state has built an online platform, the CTE Online, to host PLCs, and in three months, over 11,000 new users joined, indicating a high need for ideas and support during remote learning.

The applicant outlined several ways that the state is focusing on teacher education and access to resources, including the following:

- o Developing a DL Lesson Plan Adaptation Document;
- o Creating DL collections and repositories;
- o Establishing local and national partnerships;
- o Compiling a CTE DL Resources webpage; and
- o Beginning the design of webinars to support DL and BL implementation (page 14-15).

Weaknesses:

Ensuring Equal Access

The applicant addresses technology limitations as a barrier to advanced programs for students without more sophisticated technology; however, the application doesn't adequately address how those limitations will be resolved to ensure equal access to all students (page 9).

Loss of one point.

Exceptional Approach

None noted.

Specific Gaps or Weaknesses

None noted.

Likelihood of Expanding Access/Lead to Improvements

The applicant indicated that California has local decision-making for schools and also described a plan to develop regional educator teams and learning content providers to work collaboratively. However, the applicant didn't provide insight into the steps that will be taken to ensure success in moving from local decision-making to centralized, statewide decision-making (page 6).

Loss of one point.

Reflects Up-to-Date Knowledge

None noted.

Reader's Score: 33

Selection Criteria - Quality of Management Plan / Adequacy of Resources

1. C: Quality of the Management Plan and Adequacy of Resources (up to 25 points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers--

- (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. (up to 5 points)**
- (2) The extent to which the proposed use of funds will adequately support the proposed project. (up to 5 points)**
- (3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (up to 5 points)**
- (4) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits. (up to 10 points)**

Strengths:

Adequacy of the Plan

The applicant indicated the myriad ways that they are ensuring they are meeting their outlined tasks and objectives, including selecting Canvas Open Source to create a cost-free statewide LMS because it is commonly used across most of California's postsecondary campuses, thereby creating a bridge between K-12 schools to colleges and universities and ensuring equal access to online coursework for all students (page 16).

The State will also utilize the Canvas platform to provide professional learning opportunities to teacher, promoting collaboration (page 16).

Using the SAFE team, which includes members of regional stakeholder groups, to monitor, report out, and provide input will provide essential monitoring and reasons for improvement on a quarterly basis, creating the work and targeted outcomes for input and report out to be disseminated to each region, creating continuous improvement pathways and including parent feedback (pages 16-17).

The regional institutes will play a pivotal role by expanding 6-12 course offerings for underserved and low-resourced regions and districts and directly support special populations (page 19).

Funds will Support Project

The bulk of the funding is related to developing systems to provide free LMS, PL, and course access, especially to under

resourced communities, which is the focus of Absolute Priority 2 (page 24).

Costs are Reasonable: Objectives, Design, and Significance

The applicant describes a cost of four dollars per student, a reasonable amount of money considering the opportunities it will afford students; however, it doesn't include the implementation costs. This centralized LMS, PL, and course access does relieve the districts of significant costs. For example, the largest school district in California, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), pay \$6.4 million in LMS fees, approximately eight dollars per student. This project will allow LAUSD and all other California school districts to reallocate these funds, an average of \$24 million per year. (page 24)

Costs are Reasonable: Number of Persons Served/Anticipated Results

The number of persons served and the anticipated results are other indicators that the costs are reasonable. First, the applicant indicates that 231,000 students will be impacted through the certification programs, which will have a large impact in the community through job placement (page 21). Next, California has 977 school districts with 10,473 schools and 6.2 million K-12 students who will ultimately be impacted by this project. Because California's student population represents 12% of the total US student population, this project can have national impact as well as state and local impact (pages 23 and 26). Furthermore, the program will serve students who not only attend the district schools. Students attending charter and expanded learning settings will be included once the program is established (page 25), and students attending private schools will also be included, an additional 425,000 students (pages 25 and 26).

Weaknesses:

Adequacy of the Plan

Because the SLATE platform offers courses, lessons, and cultural responsiveness within the system, it is unclear what the teachers role will be besides delivering content (page 20). Ensuring clarity in the expectations of the teachers and the boundaries within which they should work is essential.

Loss of one point.

Funds will Support Project

None noted.

Costs are Reasonable: Objectives, Design, and Significance

The applicant explains that [REDACTED] out of [REDACTED] is for subgrants to be awarded for platform construction, technical support, SAFE coordination, professional learning content development and implementation, and distance learning content development and implementation. No breakdown of amounts for each subgrant is provided, and subgranting is not an allowable action in this grant competition (Budget narrative).

None noted although this is a flag for consideration.

Costs are Reasonable: Number of Persons Served/Anticipated Results

None noted.

Reader's Score: 24

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/20/2020 12:55 PM