

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/20/2020 12:54 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Indiana Department of Education (S425B200015)

Reader #1: *****

	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	15
Sub Total	80	68
Total	80	68

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - FY20 REM - 3: 84.425B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Indiana Department of Education (S425B200015)

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 provides an extensive overview of the impact of the coronavirus burden and the inadequacies in system-wide infrastructure, teacher preparedness for virtual teaching and learning, and ineffective processes exacerbated by the pandemic including lack of access to technology devices, broadband, and the school districts ability to retain teachers.

(pgs e29

Weaknesses:

There are not weaknesses 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:

Criterion B: The applicant consistently demonstrates a commitment to addressing/erasing barriers to equitable access or participation in the iCap 2.0 Lessons Learned (pg., e12) throughout the project plan description. The plan includes strategies to include access for parents of students with disabilities to be included on the course access advisory board (See pg. e24), addresses accessibility for students with disabilities including provision of adaptive materials and making materials accessible for EL students and families (pgs. 24-25) as well as developing a checklist for teaching students who are deaf or hard of hearing online (p. e35).

Sub-criterion 1: The applicant describes a unique approach to addressing absolute priority 2 with the design of a customizable virtual course framework implemented as a 3 year pilot program "The goal is to have 100 virtual course access frameworks created over the 3 year project, of 60 high school, 30 middle school and 10 elementary. The frameworks can be used by Indiana educators to modify to meet their own needs...". (See description in Budget Narrative, pg e94-95).

Sub-criterion 2: The applicant adequately identified specific gaps in services cited (pg. e25) where the applicant states the following identified needs: 1) access to online courses; 2) Training and long term planning for students, families, and educators (3) reliable high-speed Internet access in the home; 4) access to devices; (5) Accessibility for students with disabilities (6) adaptive materials provided for students with disabilities (7) Parent support with online tools; 8) promoting attendance in courses; 9) systems for providing students with timely accessible for EL students and families ".(pg. e25)

Sub-criterion 3: The applicant provides assurance that the proposal is ambitious but achievable based on the goal of improving the quality and quantity of virtual learning access as demonstrated in the Logic Model presented on pg. e43, which states, for example: :Outputd: Number of students using virtual courses leading to intermediate goal: Increase in virtual student engagement, and long term: Improvement in student outcomes of those taking virtual courses ."

Sub-criterion 4: The applicant provides evidence of extensive research to inform the framework design for the virtual learning framework (e27). For example, the applicant cites, Shattuck, K., & Burch, B. (2018) National Standards for Quality Online Teaching (K-12); Regional Educational Laboratory Mid-Atlantic (2020). Refining Your Distance Learning Strategies Using a Data-Driven Approach: The Evidence to Insights Coach. Washington, DC: Institute for Education Sciences. U.S. Department of Education

Weaknesses:

Criterion B: A clearly developed student Selection Process would have been beneficial to substantiate ISBE's commitment to ensuring equal access for groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

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:

Sub-criterion 1: The applicant demonstrates an adequate management plan that addresses tasks, target dates, outcomes and responsibilities (pg. 24). The applicant employs a logic model to identify key (See pg. 43) components of the project and the relationship of those components to the anticipated outcomes, as well as the development of performance measures. The applicant states

“We developed performance measures that will provide a multidimensional way to capture and examines different aspects of how the grant-funded activities are meeting the ESF-REM goals and objectives. These performance measures are consistent with the performance measures established for the program funding the competition, as all of the performance measures required by ED are included, as well as additional important information to provide both formative and summative ways to evaluate performance”

Sub-criterion 2: The applicant provides an extensive budget narrative demonstrating alignment of expenditures to the program objectives (pgs. e93 – e98). Note that the applicant allocates \$8 million to the virtual course framework as well as \$1,500,000 for the coursework framework that represents the primary focus of this applicants’ grant application.

Sub-criterion 3: The budget narrative justifies costs as reasonable in relation to the objectives. The allocation of [REDACTED] for the position of Family and School Course Access Specialist. This position is critical for the implementation of this proposal. (e93-e98)

Weaknesses:

Sub-criterion 3: A comparative cost analysis inserted as an attachment would help the reader to see that due diligence was performed in determining and selecting reasonable costs.

Sub-criterion 4. The budget narrative does not reflect the correlation between the number of students served and the costs.

Reader's Score: 15

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Indiana Department of Education (S425B200015)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Highest Coronavirus Burden		
1. Coronavirus Burden	20	16
Quality of Project Services and Project Plan		
1. Project Services/Plan	35	30
Quality of Management Plan / Adequacy of Resources		
1. Management Plan/Resources	25	15
Sub Total	80	61
Total	80	61

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - FY20 REM - 3: 84.425B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Indiana Department of Education (S425B200015)

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:

Sub-criterion 2: The application provides a very clear overview of the focus on expanding quality school course options with high-quality frameworks and professional staff development (p. e16). This includes comprehensive objectives such as improving the quality of virtual courses, along with access and quantity, the level of teacher preparation for virtual learning, and improving student achievement. (p. e16, p. e19) Although ambitious, these objectives can be met considering the coronavirus burden that is outlined in their proposal and in requirement 3. p. e28 It was a good idea to include the employment information on p. e30 as it provided information in understanding the context of the greater issue of needed funding, related to COVID-19. The state addresses the coronavirus burden with appropriate and compelling data included on p. e28 and e29. Other specific burdens were addressed on p. e35, which the program proposes to alleviate. Based on the evidence provided, the applicant was successful in addressing this area of the application. The state of Indiana has the thirteenth highest percentage of population without broadband access according to the "Education Stabilization Fund-Rethink K12 Education Models Discretionary Grants – Percentile calculation of coronavirus burden by State, as referenced in the notice inviting applicants."

Weaknesses:

Sub-criterion 2: A breakdown of the counties ranked by assets to burdens would effectively help address evidence for this section. More of an argument needs to be articulated as far as the evidence that they have related to the coronavirus burden and how the program addresses it needs to be included. These should include demonstrating how low performing schools and/or high rates of Title 1 students would be involved, and/or other indicators. The connection with COVID-19 and the potential need for the distance learning program needs to be more concrete. Data about specific counties could inform this application and address the COVID-19 burden. Although the applicant states that they need to address the gaps and quality issues with their iCAP program, as well as be more resilient, it is not clear to what extent they will achieve this goal. As it was vague (p. e19). Therefore, more details and evidence are needed. It is also not clear how they will engage the students as they reported this as a problem area in the previous program (p. e19)

Reader's Score: 16

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:

Sub-criterion 1: Focusing on allowing LEA's to offer virtual courses in conjunction with other meaningful partnerships beyond just commercial third-party vendors, makes this an innovative and exceptional approach as it diversifies the offerings and delivery systems. (p. e16) By issuing an RFP, the applicant will be able to select the most exceptional approaches to the virtual offerings. Quality Matters, which was referenced in the proposal as a high-quality teaching partner, would help this program significantly. (p. e37) The fact that it is referenced speaks volumes for their awareness in approaching online learning with this program in an exceptional way.

Sub-criterion 2: The gaps and weaknesses were appropriately articulated in the proposal (p. e16). By articulating the need for higher quality virtual courses, frameworks, and professional development, it is clear that the focus is on improving the program. (p. e19) Gaps are also addressed in the table starting on p. e24, with connections made between the gaps and the data shared on p. e26. They also included compelling data to help provide the information needed to gauge the extent to which they would be able to address the gaps. Because performance measures will be instituted in this project, it appears that the program can accomplish how the funded activities meet the goals. (p. e36 - e37)

Sub-criterion 3: This application helped to provide a context for how they propose to offer services and improve on student outcomes.

Sub-criterion 4: The applicant included research concerning racial/ethnic achievement and loss of learning gains, along with patterns related to digital device ownership and access issues. (p. e31 – p. e34) They also including making materials more accessible, while articulating the need to address special needs students in the program (p. e24)

Weaknesses:

Sub-criterion 1: The focus of the program seems to focus on past mistakes in the title including the text "Lessons Learned." Although continuous improvement is always important in developing and furthering online teaching and learning practices, the focus of this program is not on lessons learned, but on the exceptional approaches to absolute priority two.

Sub-criterion 2: The application references one of their gaps in offering high quality remote course access for educationally disadvantaged students but is not clear what the population of students will be and how many are traditionally underrepresented. (p. e25 and e26) A selection process would improve this application, which should include the percentage/number of students who are eligible for free and reduced lunches. It is not clear how specific underrepresented groups would be the priority. There are a lot of challenges in their program proposal that existed before COVID-19. A concern is that the funding is being used to "fix" issues that failed before. More of an argument about how

the proposal would create an exceptional approach to the program is needed with evidence.

Reader's Score: 30

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:

Sub-criterion 1: Although not labeled as such, the management plan appears on p. e24 – p. e.25 and e43 and provides appropriate detail about the work to be completed, the implementation tasks and plan, (p. e21 – p e23) target dates, outcomes and responsible parties are listed in the table (p. e24 – p. e25) The information provided was clear and begins to demonstrate how it would address the management plan, along with the program objectives. Project performance measures (p. e39 - p. e40) and data collection and reporting were mentioned in the application, which is an important part of the management plan. (p. e41) They also help to substantiate the claims about the management plan and the objectives to be accomplished. Performance matrix appears on p. e39 – pe40, which is a strength of the application, which provides further evidence. A logic model is included, which helps to see the flow of inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes-impact, assumptions and external factors. (p. e43) The application addresses clear components of the project, which provides substantial evidence for success.

Sub-criterion 2: The funds identified in the budget narrative (p. e93 – p. e98) are comprehensive and encompass three years of the program. A budget description accompanied all of the budget totals, which was clear and provides evidence that it will adequately support the proposed project. The outlined funds therefore appear to be reasonable considering the scope of the work.

Sub-criterion 3: Both the management plan and resources are developed to the extent that they demonstrate the costs that are reasonable for this program. The number of students served are included on p. e23, which is clear and concise.

Weaknesses:

Sub-criterion 1: Although the Lessons Learned project management plan articulates that it will provide high-quality frameworks for virtual courses and professional development, this section is a little vague. More specific details would help to understand what will and how this will be accomplished. Although the responsible parties were included in the table on p. e24 - p. e25, it isn't clear what the defined responsibilities are, which is a requirement of this section. Milestones were not included, which make it difficult to assess this area of the management plan in terms of meeting the

objectives. SMART objectives were not referenced in the management plan details. This would help strengthen the proposal.

Sub-criterion 4: Although a budget narrative was included, a budget rationale for each item would improve the proposal and help provide the context for why the funds for each item are being requested. Without this detail it is difficult to assess the extent to which the costs are reasonable considering the anticipated benefits.

Reader's Score: 15

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Indiana Department of Education (S425B200015)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Highest Coronavirus Burden		
1. Coronavirus Burden	20	15
Quality of Project Services and Project Plan		
1. Project Services/Plan	35	23
Quality of Management Plan / Adequacy of Resources		
1. Management Plan/Resources	25	15
Sub Total	80	53
Total	80	53

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - FY20 REM - 3: 84.425B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Indiana Department of Education (S425B200015)

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:

Evidence of the burden was provided through the number of confirmed cases in Indiana, as of June 25th, which was 43,140, compared to the national median of 18,784.8. This was one of earlier states hit with now higher than national average unemployment.

Application provides specific data as to regional impact coronavirus has had via a mortality rate higher than the US median (pg. e29), higher than national average unemployment (pg. e30), and a project educational loss of the equivalent of 1 year of instruction to their students (pg. 31).

Weaknesses:

A reportedly low testing rate (pg. e29) does call into question the reported numbers. Reporting that Indiana ranks below all neighboring states, in percentage of children aged 3-4 enrolled in preschool (pg. e32) does not speak to the impact of COVID, likewise striking disparities in student achievement and college readiness. These disparities can worsen due to the change from in-person to virtual learning (pg. e33).

Reader's Score: 15

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.

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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:

Application provides little specificity on how addressing traditionally underserved populations would be accomplished. [3 pts]

B1: The application represents an ambitious effort to modify existing remote learning options which did not seem prepared to be pressed into action for this crisis. (pg. e19 – 21). [7 pts]

B2: The application provides specific analysis of impact by region (e6 & 7, e26; B1, B2). There is a frank assessment of previous initiatives highlighting how this program will utilize different approaches to the challenges being faced (pg. e19) [7 pts]

B3: With each participating school required to demonstrate readiness, interest, and operational capacity in addition to identifying two local teacher-leaders and one administrator to participate in a train-the-trainer model to onboard additional users (e22, B3) such organization suggests a local buy-in increasing potential of success in expanding remote education options. [3 pts]

B4: Application claims four principles of evidenced based practice to be the foundation of the intervention (pgs. e27 – e28). [3 pts]

This criterion was thoroughly discussed, and my score reflects my professional assessment of this section.

Weaknesses:

References to servicing underrepresented communities seems limited to the letters of support which all appear to have used the same boilerplate phrase (pgs. e46, e48 - e54, e56, e57)

B1: From the start, the predecessor program, iCAP, reported from 2018-2019, the participation was “abysmal”; only 57 students total in the entire state participated, representing barely 1.6% of eligible high school students. (pg. e20) The proposal to address this lacks specificity in how this is to be overcome.

B2: In fact, the referenced RFPs to “support the creation of a suite of multidisciplinary frameworks” (pg. e21) suggests the application is not to implement programs/interventions but further study them.

State law appears to complicate program outcome evaluation as it requires a virtual school to be separately reported if more than half of its student population utilizes virtual delivery, thus masking performance outcomes (pg. e20) and funds it at 85% of a standard school (pg. e20)

B3: Despite acknowledging past programmatic challenges, applicant reports schools that serve a majority of virtual students, thereby satisfying statutory requirement allowing the public to ascertain performance, do not fare well. Based on the most recent A-F state grades, none of the seven virtual schools received higher than a D, while four received an F, which calls into question the ability of the proposal to succeed (pg. e20). The application lacks specifics on how this historical deficiency is to be overcome.

B4: While mentioned, application is vague as to integration of evidence-based practices, citing four sources, but distilling the conclusions into one sentence (e27 – 28).

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:

C1: As presented, budgeted expenses are demonstrated to match requested funding, (pgs. e5 & 6, e93 – e98) [3 pts]

C2: Stated costs seem reasonable for the stated items requested to support the proposal [3 pts]

C3: Applicant includes an expansive narrative description of the budget, over time, demonstrating that the requested funds are aligned appropriately with expenditures (pgs. e93 - 98). [4 pts]

C4: The projection is that 70% of Indiana students and 80% of teachers will be served by this proposal (pg. e40), which would appear to align the anticipated costs as reasonable to the expected population and outcomes. [5 pts]

Weaknesses:

C1: Overall, application lacks specificity as to how this criterion will be met. While performance goals are articulated, they are separate from funding. To that point, the application indicates baseline goals for performance indices were unable to be determined as they are newly developed indicators, making it difficult to assess likely outcomes (e38).

C2: Strictures of state law related to the funding, operation, and evaluation of virtual learning appears to be a major hurdle to programmatic evaluation and support (e20).

C3: The plan to offer the virtual courses directly to students on behalf of the LEA through pilot funding of the ESF-REM grant, and then supported by more sustainable funding streams once developed (e21) is rather vague in how funds will sufficiently address needs .

C4: Despite providing target improvement rates for multiple performance measures (pgs. e39-40), the application reports there are no baselines due to the measures being new. This makes it both difficult to anticipate the parameters of success and there does not appear to be data relating to the number of persons served.

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