

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/22/2020 09:46 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: South Dakota Department of Education (S425B200021)

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	31
Quality of Management Plan / Adequacy of Resources		
1. Management Plan/Resources	25	22
Sub Total	80	73
Total	80	73

Technical Review Form

Panel #9 - FY20 REM - 9: 84.425B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: South Dakota Department of Education (S425B200021)

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 provided a detailed discussion of the indicators it identified as evidence of a high coronavirus burden in areas such as high unemployment rates within the state, lower than expected general revenue tax projections, and tourism revenue. Additional support and evidence were included, for example, the applicant's number of COVID19 cases of 6,225 as of June 22 that resulted in health challenges statewide and an unemployment rate of 10.2% in April 2020. The applicant clearly indicated that as a result of the coronavirus, its governor closed all schools for the academic school year in March which did not allow administrators and educators adequate time to prepare for remote delivery of educational services to support needed continued learning for students. For example, per a June survey administered by the applicant to superintendents, 40% indicated that they had the tools needed to deliver instruction remotely (pp. 3-5).

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:

The applicant indicated that equal access and treatment would occur for eligible participants who were members of groups who were traditionally underrepresented such as students who were Native American, of which 11% were being served statewide, English language learners with 4.3%, and students with a disability at 16% (p. 11). 3 points

1) The applicant provided a detailed discussion of the plan for the proposed project with five objectives aligned to address Absolute Priority 3 through the delivery of proven effective, personalized, competency-based learning in a remote and blended format by knowledgeable, skilled educators to the students served by its school districts. The proposed project would provide the necessary professional development, programs, materials, and support to teachers, including pre-service teachers, administrators, and parents that would have a positive impact on student engagement and learning. The applicant included a letter of support from the Governor of the state for the proposed project (pp. 6-9). 10 points

2) The applicant clearly identified and described the gaps that exist in services that currently do not allow the effective implementation of an online format, student engagement, and parent concerns that would be addressed by the proposed project to deliver the standard curriculum and the support students, parents, teachers, and administrators need to improve student outcomes. For example, a June 2020 survey administered by the applicant showed that 40% of superintendents statewide believed they had the tools and resources to deliver online learning, leaving 60% as lacking such resources. The proposed project would ensure that at least one teacher per school would complete the Teaching Online Certification program in order to be certified to deliver curriculum effectively online and work with parents and teachers. This person would serve as a trainer-of-trainers for the school to other educators building the capacity needed to support online learning (pp. 12-14). 8 points

3) The discussion provided by the applicant clearly demonstrated that the proposed project would increase the effectiveness of current online delivery options available to students as well as by adding 1,660 new remote lessons to be created by teachers/teams at the 30 pilot sites. The training, materials, and support to be provided to parents would develop and enhance their abilities and skills to continue learning at home through remote or in-person classroom delivery from educators. Student improvement would be likely with the support to be provided from the proposed project (pp. 14-15). 5 points

4) The applicant cited adequate research and studies to support the design of the proposed project that were relevant to deliver online professional development and the competency-based learning that are included in the plan. For example, in an article retrieved by the applicant by Lisa Lane, "An Open, Online Class to Prepare Faculty to Teach Online," it stresses the inclusion of pedagogy in online professional development to support remote learning in the development of certification programs. A RAND 2015 study of 32 Next Generation Schools showed student improvement when personalized competency learning was incorporated into classroom delivery of course materials and would be part of the proposed project to meet the needs of students. (pp. 15-16). 5 points

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide adequate discussion or evidence that it would ensure equal access and treatment of eligible participants who are members of all the traditionally underrepresented groups listed in the criteria that include race, color, gender or age (p. 11).

2) The applicant did not describe what mechanism would be put in place to ensure students complete assignments online, since this was identified as a gap in services currently available to support learning in a remote format (pp. 12-14).

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 described a detailed plan to manage the development and implementation of the proposed project activities as well as five project objectives, with experienced staff assigned to ensure that timelines, milestones, and tasks are completed. For example, the program director would devote 25% time toward the proposed project to monitor and evaluate the project to ensure compliance with budget expenditures, contracts for services, and coordination with grant team members. The provided organization chart showed a clear hierarchy and alignment of the various components of the proposed project to meet the overall goals (pp. 18-21). 3 points
- 2) The applicant clearly discussed the use of funds requested to support the proposed project and other funds that would be incorporated to support the programs and services to be implemented. For example, \$2.8 million dollars over the grant-period would support the development of courses, provide professional development, and provide graduate credit to the 1,600 teachers working toward the three-year certification credentials. The applicant would also purchase the learning management system that would be used to deliver professional development (pp. 22-23). 4 points
- 3) The applicant provided a cost per participant of [REDACTED] to support the requested amount of [REDACTED] over a three-year period, which is reasonable to develop and refine services that could have a positive impact on all participants. The funds will be used to extend the skills of educators to support student learning whether in-person or using a remote format as well as assist parents' ability to support and maintain student progress via online training and support. (pp. 23-24). 5 points
- 4) The applicant provided a concise description of how funds would be used to provided services to 1,600 teachers in the 30-school pilot and professional development to over 2,400 educators and administrators that would then impact 32,000 students over the grant period with effective remote instruction as well as support to parents to ensure positive educational outcomes. The amount requested for the proposed project is reasonable to provide these services to the number of projected participants. Meeting all objectives in the proposed project would be beneficial to all participants beyond the grant period (pp. 24-25). 10 points

Weaknesses:

- 1) The objectives provided by the applicant are too broad, generic, and do not clearly align with the project measures and outcomes. The applicant indicated that year 1 of the grant would be the baseline year but did not provide data such as results of surveys were discussed to support the need for improvement and inclusion in the proposed project. This also

makes it difficult to determine if objectives would be met within budget or on time.

2) The applicant does not have any full-time staff or contractors responsible for the many, complex components of the proposed project. For example, time devoted to the project by program staff ranges from 10% to 25%, with the contracted position being only 50%, which may result in not meeting the expected outcomes (pp. 7-9, 14-15).

Reader's Score: 22

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: South Dakota Department of Education (S425B200021)

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	33
Quality of Management Plan / Adequacy of Resources		
1. Management Plan/Resources	25	23
Sub Total	80	76
Total	80	76

Technical Review Form

Panel #9 - FY20 REM - 9: 84.425B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: South Dakota Department of Education (S425B200021)

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 demonstrates a high COVID burden based in part on data demonstrating the highest unemployment rates on record for South Dakota, as well as the severity of joblessness in rural communities (e.g., Buffalo County's unemployment rate has tripled, p. 2) as a result of COVID. The South Dakota Department of Education (SDDOE) conducted a survey in June 2020, and results indicate that more than 75% of district superintendents do not feel comfortable with their districts' ability to meet the needs of remote learners. Also, nearly 70% of districts do not have a personalized or customized learning program that would enable them to successfully engage in remote teaching and learning (p. e19). Responses to the survey also indicate that superintendents do not believe South Dakota parents are ready to support their children in remote learning.

Weaknesses:

No 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:

Quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access: The application clearly outlines a plan for supporting traditionally underrepresented and/or underserved populations. In South Dakota, students with disabilities and Native American students make up the majority of these target populations (p. 11). 5 points

Sub-criterion 1: The project offers an exceptional approach via several mechanisms. First, there is a focus on training pre-service teachers to be proficient in online/remote and hybrid instruction (p. 8). This will allow for the development of a new cadre of teachers who receive training as part of their undergraduate experience that will strengthen their ability to deliver high-quality remote learning. Next, the applicant also plans to ensure that each of the 838 districts in the state has at least one educator who successfully completes the Teaching Online Certificate of Quality Matters (p. e22). This would allow each district to have an expert in remote teaching who is able to provide support for other teachers in the district to improve their own remote teaching skills. The grant also includes training for 1,600 teachers with a focus on improved instruction--to include remote teaching (p. e22).

10 points

Sub-criterion 2: The applicant's emphasis on supporting the development of preservice teachers stems from a careful analysis of the current gaps and weaknesses within the state context. The current educational environment in South Dakota is one in which too few teachers are prepared to deliver high-quality instruction in online settings. Thus, investing in training preservice teachers is one mechanism that can help overcome this lack of professional capacity. 8 points

Sub-criterion 3: The applicant has a very strong focus on family engagement, especially for those families whose students are English learners, have disabilities, are minorities, or live in a migrant household (p. 11). This work would help support family engagement, student engagement, and should result in higher student outcomes due to the inclusion of home-support beyond just students themselves (p. 12). The work plan also involves pilot sites (n=30) where stakeholders can develop remote and/or hybrid instructional plans that are tailored to their needs (p. 14). 5 points

Sub-criterion 4: The project includes training for teachers to become more proficient with social emotional learning (SEL, p. 7) which is grounded in the most up-to-date knowledge from research and practice. This focus on SEL is particularly helpful in light of the current evidence that remote learning can be stressful for educators, students, and families. 5 points

Weaknesses:

Quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access: No weaknesses noted.

Sub-criterion 1: No weaknesses noted.

Sub-criterion 2: The applicant's three-year learning program is not sufficiently detailed (p. 7-8). Each topic outlined for inclusion in the three-year plan is compelling, but none of the topics--and the accompanying professional development approaches--are clearly described. This section would have been strengthened by including a clear plan for how the three-year plan will lead to the target outcomes, with specifics on the mechanisms for change. Because the plan is not clearly articulated, with sufficient detail to explain how each component will be addressed (e.g., hours of training) the reviewer cannot determine that the gaps noted by the applicant (e.g., lack of remote teaching skills, difficulties getting parents to support remote learning) will be overcome. For example, on page e37, the applicant does give titles for the four courses to be developed, but it is not clear who would develop these courses and how the quality of the course content would be monitored. - 2points

Sub-criterion 3: No weaknesses noted.

Sub-criterion 4: No weaknesses 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:

Sub-criterion 1: The management plan is clearly outlined and complete with an organizational chart for the positions/roles necessary to execute this work on time and within budget (p. 18-19). The senior managers are all highly experienced both in terms of content knowledge, but also regarding knowledge of the South Dakota educational system and practices (p. 18-19, p. e45-e61). The organizational chart, as well as timelines & milestones table, are very easy to follow. On page e25, the applicant offers a logic model with outputs for each year. These yearly targets provide support for the applicant's ability to meet the project objectives on time. The budget should allow the applicant to complete the project successfully (e.g., \$2.8MM requested for course development and facilitator training; p. e37). 3 points

Sub-criterion 2: The funds requested and their proposed allocation (p. 23-25) are adequate to support the project plan and timeline. For example, the budget includes funding for professional development for in-service teachers, support for strengthening pre-service teachers' readiness to deliver high-quality remote instruction, as well as investments in the state student data system (p. e81). 5 points

Sub-criterion 3: Project costs are reasonable, given the planned work. The applicant provides a clear explanation (pg. e79) of how the contractual budget would be allocated (e.g., cost for professional learning, travel, etc.). 5 points

Sub-criterion 4: The applicant demonstrates that there would be sufficient funds for the number of persons served (p. 18-19, pg. e79). Each of the budget requests appear to be reasonable. For example, the request for approximately \$300,000 to train 1,600 teachers (p. e81) and support 42 facilitators for training, would mean that the cost for each trainee would be less than \$200. This appears to be reasonable and is consistent with the other budget requests. 10 points

Weaknesses:

Sub-criterion 1: The project team does not include any full-time staff members. On pages e79-e81, information on personnel indicates that all team members will work part-time on this project. Given the scope of work, this seems unreasonable. It would have been stronger to have at least one full-time team member dedicated to this work. – 2 points

Sub-criterion 2: No weaknesses noted.

Sub-criterion 3: No weaknesses noted.

Sub-criterion 4: No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: **23**

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: South Dakota Department of Education (S425B200021)

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	29
Quality of Management Plan / Adequacy of Resources		
1. Management Plan/Resources	25	22
Sub Total	80	71
Total	80	71

Technical Review Form

Panel #9 - FY20 REM - 9: 84.425B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: South Dakota Department of Education (S425B200021)

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 describes a significant plan that will address the educational challenges that have occurred from coronavirus burdens within the state. The indicators and factors impacting the students, parents, and schools are defined and demonstrates the need to focus on the delivery of remote/hybrid learning; substantially improve the quality of teacher delivery; provide resources for parental supports, and engaging partners to meet the challenging demands. The applicant provides data that clearly dictates needs amid the virus crisis, including record-high unemployment rates (21.7%), joblessness (17.4%), and significant disruptions in education for the targeted population. The health challenge is also indicated as a persistent challenge that is generated from the epic outbreak of the virus among workers at meat-packing plants. The applicant indicates other significant burdens generated by the virus that impact the targeted area which has a sizable immigration population of English learners, that include: the lack of tools and resources needed to conduct effective remote instruction, parents schedules at work/home, lack of skills to teach their children, the lack of computer devices, and household bandwidth. The factors presented by the applicant indicates that educational supports to work with families, students, and schools, are needed during this challenging period. The interrelated problems of financial hardships; students moved from classroom to remote learning; the lack of technology resources, and basic teaching skills for new remote/at home learning, are additional reasons for requested assistance after the school closings. (Abstract; pgs. 2-4) 20 pts.

Weaknesses:

No 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:

Quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access:

The applicant presents quality and detailed services and strategies for ensuring equitable access and treatment for targeted students that are traditionally underrepresented. The three-year professional learning program, consisting of innovative learning lessons, competency-based strategies, and family resources are intended to meet the needs of the targeted population of students. The plan also includes outreach and recruitment practices for seeking special education teachers from the school population and ensures that schools with low-income and Native students are among the 30 pilot projects. (pgs. 11-12) 3 pts.

1. The applicant describes the intent to build an infrastructure that promotes remote learning by ensuring students have devices, connectivity, developed services and programs, curriculum, and resources focusing on integrating students learning at school, at home, or with blended learning approaches. There are well-defined components presented in the application that align with five program objectives, and the Re-Imaging Remote Education logic model, that details activities, outputs, short-term, and long-term outcomes. The applicant effectively documents how the project will utilize existing educational resources, services, and support programs provided by the SD Statewide Family Engagement Center. The intent of the project to add new innovative strategies for understanding remote learning options through professional development can lead to improved teacher content delivery skills. (pgs. 5-8) 10 pts.

2. The applicant demonstrates the rationale and solutions based on the gaps identified that make remote learning more difficult. These gaps include not having the right tools, resources, and ineffective online instruction. The applicant presents details on how the project will focus on educational support and training services (partnering with parents); infrastructure development to ensure student engagement (remote/hybrid instructions; competency-based education; community-based learning); and opportunities for teachers to improve online/hybrid learning and instructional delivery. The plan includes detailed evidence of needing a personalized learning program during the COVID-19 closures. The gaps will be addressed through the 30-school pilot test, using new approaches to online learning, development of personalized pathways, and methods for effective delivery of coursework in a remote setting. The applicant contends that the lack of devices and connectivity for students and household will be addressed with other funding for meeting these gaps and challenges. (pgs. 12-14) 6 pts.

3. The applicant presents well-defined components that can result in remote learning options for improved outcomes, including, multi-day workshops for teachers 2-3 times a year; the expertise of Colloquium Leaders and university professors from the teacher preparation program; support from SD school leaders, and staffers from a state technology and innovation organization. These efforts are intended to provide teachers with professional development support, promoting practices and new strategies for remote learning, technology integration for academic improvement, and disseminating best practices for improved education and training. The applicant provides measurable goals for project-specific services and activities, that aligns with baselines and resources. The applicant's plan includes evaluations of grant-funded activities, utilizing multiple and mixed methods in data collection (qualitative and quantitative), that are needed to determine credible outcomes. The implementation of these services and resources can fully examine the impact of remote learning options and determine what is needed for promising outcomes and results that can be scaled,

as appropriate. (pgs. 13-15) 5 pts.

4. The applicant describes research-based strategies that enables the school district to engage effectively in response to the COVID-19-forced school closures and pivot quickly to remote learning. The emergency remote teaching was thrust upon the schools, teachers, and students, and required using the best formats for developing personalized and competency-based learning approach, whether in the school building or at home. The project aligns with research-based strategies demonstrating effective practices and innovative remote learning professional development. The applicant also references these strategies that are used in several other important ways, focusing on ideas for remote education improvement, effective models for online learning, and developing online coursework to meet state standards. Additional studies and analysis are also included in the plan that shows successful links between parent involvement and student achievement. The multiple studies, and analysis, clearly assisted in the designed resources, tools, and mechanism platforms for the project's proposed remote/hybrid instruction, services, and activities needed for successful project outcomes. (pgs. 15-17) 5 pts.

Weaknesses:

Quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access:

The applicant lacks a description of the messaging developed for specific audiences, such as Native Americans, English learners, rural families, and families with children with disabilities. Additional information is needed to ensure that the messaging will communicate an accurate picture of the resources and training that are available and that they will meet the needs of the parents and the specific groups referenced. (pg. 11)

1. No weaknesses noted.
2. The applicant does not provide explanation for why the fewer than one-third of students are not finishing their assignments during COVID-19-related closings. This information would be helpful in building a case to support the proposed implementation of services aimed at addressing these stated issues. Additional clarifying information is also needed relative to the assurance that targeted students and families will have the necessary technology to participate in the offered services online.
3. No weaknesses noted.
4. No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 29

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 details a management plan that states objectives and activities, along with milestones, timelines, and the responsible personnel. The plan clearly demonstrates managerial and programmatic capacity to implement the project on the yearly timelines and within budget. The applicant describes clearly defined responsibilities of the program staff who appear to have the adequate education, qualifications, and experiences necessary to accomplish the project tasks. The project milestones identify excellent tools and mechanisms that focus on teacher professional learning programs and resources that enables teachers to better engage students and parents. The plan is comprehensive and details on the remote or hybrid environment framework is adequate for achieving the project objectives. (pgs. 17-21) 5 pts.
2. The budgeted line item request covers a variety of tangible curriculum tools, which includes large amounts for new remote learning options, which will service 32,000 students throughout the area. The funds are requested for the state's student information system, online teacher certificate program, supplies, and materials are beneficial items for implementation of a successful learning management system. The cost and funding request seem reasonable to strengthen the efforts of the program and provide resources that could benefit the targeted population of students. (Budget narrative; pg. 23) 2 pts.
3. The requested funding is reasonable in relation to the proposed instructional curriculum, dimension of services, and components of activities, which aligns the objectives and program design, and intends to meet the needs of an effective online learning program. The identified activities and services in all project components are centered on the success of training competent individuals to provide guidance to existing teachers and to focus on extensive parental support. The applicant describes the multi-faceted professional leaning program, the partnership that provide parental resources, and the newly developed learning materials, which are significant to the proposed project outcomes. (pgs. 23-25) 5 pts.
4. The plan includes details on the requested funds needed, based on the resources and services that are critical for implementation and the delivery of a high-quality education in a remote setting. The budget appears adequate to serve 838 educators, with efforts to support more than 2,400 teachers through the various professional development training programs. The resources requested for salaries, fringe benefits, travel, supplies, stipends, lodging, and to support the multitude of program components, seem reasonable for the proposed project. (pgs. 21-24) 10 pts.

Weaknesses:

1. No weaknesses noted.
2. The project will only employ six part time staff that includes Grant Director at .20 FTE, Program Director at .25 FTE, and an Assistant Program Director at .5 FTE. The limited amount of committed time may not be sufficient to ensure the intended outcomes for a funded project of this magnitude. (pg. 23; budget narrative)
3. No weaknesses noted.
4. No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 22

Status: Submitted

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