

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/20/2020 12:56 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Florida Department of Education (S425B200040)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Highest Coronavirus Burden		
1. Coronavirus Burden	20	17
Quality of Project Services and Project Plan		
1. Project Services/Plan	35	26
Quality of Management Plan / Adequacy of Resources		
1. Management Plan/Resources	25	21
Sub Total	80	64
Total	80	64

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - FY20 REM - 7: 84.425B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Florida Department of Education (S425B200040)

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 state provided several data points and indicators to demonstrate burden based on students, families, and schools, which include:

- Impact on the state's population is increasing and the cumulative effect is unknown. P3
- Families and children's access to school was supported by an aligned and systematic transition to the Florida Virtual School during Covid-19. P4
- The capacity to provide instruction via distance learning allowed the FLVS to double the amount to students served. P4
- Developing an approach and deployment of multiple strategies based on a "theory of action" supports continuity in delivery of instruction and student learning. P6

Weaknesses:

Lack of data on how public health, food, and emotional health needs of K-12 students and families were impacted by Covid-19 may cause the state to duplicate efforts and provide services that go unused. Without robust networks and coordination of services the state may fail in their efforts to engage all students equitably.

Reader's Score: 17

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:

Florida has 2.8 million students enrolled in the public education system, which is comprised of 3,332 traditional public schools and 674 charter schools. Through its expansive array of scholarship programs, another 131,000 children of families that have limited financial resources attend one of Florida's 2,190 participating private schools. The state's efforts have focused on providing families and students with a broad menu of options that are designed to meet their educational goals and needs, and deal with impact of COVID-19 on families.

(1)The state's project plan creates specific objectives and project outlines for developing a research-practice partnership. This clear plan drives the importance of having a vision for the implementation of the project and shows prior knowledge by the applicant on how to implement a large scale project leading to increasing student outcomes . P11-13

(1)The data-driven development approach contained in the plan for the development of new models is applied to all stakeholders, educational professionals, and communities. This adherence to data-driven decision making is indicative of the belief in continuous improvement and making decisions that promote equitable access. P10

(1)The project plan offers guidance to educators with a robust process for how the new remote delivery models should be used in the field when implementation is taking place by new educational professionals, fostering knowledge sharing and best practice adoption. The principles covered by the plan illustrate an excellent approach to expanding remote learning across the state.P12-13

(1) The plan outlines the process for the creation of a partnership with the Florida Virtual School to provide feedback and collection of data relevant to integrate artificial intelligence. This is an example of detailed project plans for implementation and addressing the absolute priority. P14

(2) The plan clearly identifies the gaps and specific solutions to the gaps. Demonstrating an understanding of how to respond and address student needs across the state. The states use of data to forecast possible future needs is an example of how forecasting can be used for strategic planning. P17

(3) The plan contains a process for continuous improvement of the state's educators. This process is fostered by training and developing teacher capacity in data and evaluation to inform instruction. When educators use the data to drive instructional practices and assess student engagement the opportunity for teachers to improve practices is increased and their student outcomes are likely to follow. P17

(3)The plan provides process and multiple opportunities to perform a comprehensive review of academic standards in ELA and Math and align content in both virtual and blending models. Frequent revisions and alignment to the latest standards can support increased student outcomes. This refinement increases 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. P17

(3)The specific process for the development of the partnership plan highlights the ability to expand access of the project activities across the state. Having a detailed plan with partners who currently scale and provide high access services at a state-wide level supports an ability to increase student outcomes throughout the state. P18

Weaknesses:

(1) The proposed project has a limited approach for equal access to remote learning opportunities. The limited discussion of strategies for incorporating equal access to all student populations by purposed project especially those who have been historically underrepresented may hinder the state to be able to measure success and respond to areas needing attention.

(1)The states plan is focused on an approach of a single content model. This single model may not engage all the state's students. Creating multiple approaches could foster additional access for student populations. This could help ensure all student groups are served by project and underrepresented student population learning outcomes increase.

(1) The project plan has a lack of timelines, implementation strategies or innovation practices. The omission of the timelines and implementation may demonstrate a need to be developed prior to larger implementation of the projector. Lack of timeline create the possibility that projects will not be timely implemented, teachers not adequately trained or students left behind.

2) No weaknesses noted

3) No weaknesses noted

(4)The plan does not address prior data and research on experience of students outcomes by the Florida Virtual School (FLVS). If the data of the FLVS was provided by the proposed project it would reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. Having this data and research could be used to aligned the project to the needs of special populations to ensure technology access is equitable to all Florida students could increase the likelihood of improving student outcomes.

Reader's Score: 26

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)Comprehensive details of the management plan include the activities, timeframes, and project milestones for the two largest partners in the project. The University of South Florida (USF) and Florida Virtual School (FLVS) responsibilities are clearly delineated. Personnel supporting the project are also included in the plan supporting the adequacy of the plan. P20-29

(2)The proposed use of funds is focused on the project objectives and leverages data driven evidence to support learning outcomes in both urban and rural areas. In the project budget cost sharing with charter schools is one example of a local field-initiated school model. This potential use of funds in the incubator initiative is currently serving more than 60,000 students across Florida, which can provide adequate support for increased remote learning. P31

(3)A project plan chart supports the costs and personnel associated with the activities described in the project to impact the anticipated number of students and teachers. If the project reaches full participation the potential of serving not only their current enrollment, but possibly over 2 million students in the state if needed. P30-31

(4) The plan supports the number of persons to be served and the anticipated results and benefits through the use of continuous improvement through the Research-practice partnerships (RPPs), based on evidence-based implementation

science, will support the schools in the incubator to learn, grow and problem-solve their innovations with plan for effective adoption and improved student outcomes. The RPP has the potential to foster innovation and continuous improvement using evidence-based implementation. P31

Weaknesses:

- (1) No weakness noted
- (2) No weakness noted
- (3) No weakness noted

(4)With three large-scale entities alignment of the partners could be a potential challenge to the adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget.

Reader's Score: 21

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Florida Department of Education (S425B200040)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Highest Coronavirus Burden		
1. Coronavirus Burden	20	17
Quality of Project Services and Project Plan		
1. Project Services/Plan	35	25
Quality of Management Plan / Adequacy of Resources		
1. Management Plan/Resources	25	19
Sub Total	80	61
Total	80	61

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - FY20 REM - 7: 84.425B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Florida Department of Education (S425B200040)

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 posits that Florida 12.5 percent of the population lacking broadband access, 18.45 percent of students ages 5-17 in poverty; 1.24 percent of confirmed COVID-19 cases per capita; and 5.41 percent of students in rural local educational agencies. Moreover, the applicant asserts that as of June 29, 2020, Florida has more than 143,000 positive cases, over 14,300 hospitalizations and nearly 3,500 deaths related to COVID (pp. 3-4). The applicant provides a chart illustrating the number of cases per day impacted by COVID-19 within the state of Florida. Dauntingly, the applicant postulates more than 6,000 schools closed their physical campuses beginning in mid-March, and schools shifted to distance learning models to continue instruction. As a result, the applicant notes that Florida Department of Education staff coordinated with local internet providers throughout the state to expeditiously increase residents' Internet access via awarding grants valued at over \$300,000 in Distance Learning Innovation Mini-Grants to 44 public schools, school districts and non-profit organizations. Furthermore, the applicant also identified funding within the agency's budget to provide nearly 33,000 devices to students who did not have a device in our rural and high-poverty schools (e4-5). Additionally, the applicant asserts that nearly two-thirds of employed parents of minor children in Florida say that school closures and/or lack of childcare have either somewhat (41%) or greatly (23%) hurt their ability to fully perform their job responsibilities during the pandemic. Moreover, the applicant notes that in February, Florida's unemployment rate was 2.8 percent; most recent unemployment data shows that the unemployment rate has now risen to 14.5 percent (pp. 6-7).

Weaknesses:

Most of the data presented do not represent state data. For example, the data presented is germane to all states and not indigenous to Florida. There is limited detail to meet the need for brick and mortar schools.

Reader's Score: 17

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:

SUB 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. The applicant proposes to address Absolute Priority 3. Specifically, the applicant proposes to build an education innovation incubator to evaluate and replicate a new school model to provide high-quality virtual and blended education services which specifically addresses Absolute Priority 3 (e10). The proposed model will be based on local and state-level strategies and models. The applicant distinctively describes the model's focal points that will target: high percentages of low-income families; rural and urban communities; schools whereby 50% or more of their students are state scholarship recipients (e10). The applicant will employ the Remote Live Instruction (RLI) which is a digital platform that will provide all students 4 to 6 hours of live daily instruction using a blended learning platform that includes content instruction, special education services and other student support services. The applicant asserts the incubator model proposes to employ grant funds to equip replicated model classrooms with the technology to allow schools flexibility to simultaneously teach students at home and in the physical classroom. . The applicant states the Remote Live Instruction has an average graduation rates for these schools is 95%, exceeding the national average. The applicant also notes the Remote Live Instruction Model will assist special education teachers, school counselors, social workers, clinical service providers and other specialized services to be delivered to students when necessary to ensure continuity of interventions and supports. The applicant also proposes to employ artificial intelligence technology and the development of a Personalized Learning Engine (PLE), to provide equitable access as well as personalize content for each student's learning needs, learning style preferences, personal experience, and personal interests (e14).

SUB 2: The applicant cites that students living in low-income homes and communities have are most adversely impacted by COVID-19 due to a lack of broadband internet access. To support this finding, the applicant asserts that 1 out of every 5 students live in poverty as such, home access is a challenge (e 18-19).

SUB 3: The applicant describes 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. The applicant asserts that Florida's students lack broadband access, with nearly 1 out of every 5 students living in poverty. The applicant proposes to continuously employ steps to leverage state and federal resources to help build out a virtual safety by securing and deploying devices and working with internet providers to broaden access (e35-36).

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not specifically discuss how they will address groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age. The applicant does not describe a strategy to address the aforementioned.

SUB 1: The applicant proposes to replicate innovations that have not been observed and measured. The applicant does not clearly reference student outcome data to explain why they are replicating the project (e34).

SUB 2: The applicant does not provide baseline data and how they will improve the need. The logic model describes a need for new technology and does not explain the need for such technology.

SUB 4: The applicant did not cite research for their proposed outcome data (e34).

Reader's Score: 25

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 1: The applicant provides a timeline illustrating responsible party and execution of tasks. The applicant provides resumes for key staff denoting their respective responsibilities that are consistent with the budget.

SUB 2: Moreover, the applicant asserts the proposed project has a total anticipated three-year budget of [REDACTED] which will support the overall development and launch of the incubator, its schools for replication, the development and implementation of the FLVS PLE, as well as the deployment of the USF professional development program which will reach approximately 3,000 teachers during the grant period.

SUB 3: The applicant clearly explains the extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. For example, the budget narrative provides a summary illustrating how the costs for travel, equipment, and supplies align within the scope of the proposed project (appendices).

SUB 4: The applicant further asserts the proposed budget plan will seek to serve and support the following minimum outcomes: 30 to 60 schools from across all regions of the state, both urban and rural. It is anticipated that in the first two years of the grant, over 50,000 students will benefit from the direct implementation of these models in participating incubator schools. Additionally, by year two of the grant, it is anticipated that over 15,000 unduplicated students in the

state (not participating in the incubator schools) will benefit from the first course in the PLE, Algebra I proof of concept.

Weaknesses:

SUB 4: The applicant does not describe performance measures denoting the number of students who will have access to remote learning to ascertain the benefit.

Reader's Score: 19

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Florida Department of Education (S425B200040)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Highest Coronavirus Burden		
1. Coronavirus Burden	20	17
Quality of Project Services and Project Plan		
1. Project Services/Plan	35	25
Quality of Management Plan / Adequacy of Resources		
1. Management Plan/Resources	25	15
Sub Total	80	57
Total	80	57

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - FY20 REM - 7: 84.425B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Florida Department of Education (S425B200040)

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 presents data on how parents reported being impacted by school closures. Two-thirds of parents in the state reported that the lack of childcare has “somewhat” or “greatly” hurt their ability to perform their job (e23). In addition, unemployment in the state rose from 2.8 percent in February to 14.5 percent at the writing of the application (e24).

Weaknesses:

While the applicant presents a couple of additional factors that describe the coronavirus burden in the state (see strengths), much of the narrative described the state’s history of implementing virtual learning. Furthermore, most of the data presented from “The Impacts of Prek-12 School Campus Closures” report represent implications of all school closures, generally, and not factors that are specific to the state (e22-e23).

Reader's Score: 17

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 addresses four key strategies in the proposal. One of the strategies is “Open our schools with a moral purpose – a focus on closing achievement gaps” (e23). The applicant reiterates this thought by saying, “this proposal seeks to identify, study, and scale new innovative disruptive technologies in education aimed at finally eliminating the achievement gaps that have for too long plagued our systems” (e24).

(1) The applicant proposes to develop the next generation of Florida Virtual School (FLVS). The applicant proposes purchasing equipment and technology to deploy this model in innovative schools (e28-e29). The applicant also proposes to build educator capacity to prepare more teachers to be successful with virtual learning (e33). In addition, new content will be aligned with state academic content standards for K-12.

(2) The applicant mentions needs/gaps in a logic model (e34). One of the significant needs mentioned by the logic model is the need for high-quality curriculum and content that is aligned with state standards. The state adopted new content standards for English/language arts and mathematics. These new content standards replace those from the Common Core State Standards Initiative. If virtual content aligned with state standards is available, the state has more flexibility and agility to educate students in a hybrid./blended model (brick and mortar plus virtual/distance learning).

(3) The partnership with USF seeks to study which elements in the education incubator lead to improvements in student outcomes (e35-e36). The project has the potential to expand access to remote learning options, especially for students who lack broadband access (e35).

Weaknesses:

Equal Access: The applicant proposes a key strategy is a focus on closing achievement gaps (e23), but the strategy is not described. Furthermore, the applicant does not discuss which achievement gaps are present (e.g., students from low vs. high socioeconomic groups; students with disabilities vs. students without disabilities; English learners vs. native English speakers, etc.). The applicant also does not provide any baseline data to help the reader understand how large and persistent the achievement gaps are.

(1) The project plan is confusing to the reader. It is not easy to separate what the state already implements and what will be different during the project period. Much of the proposal seems to be focused on purchasing equipment and associated technologies. Given that the state has been implementing virtual distance learning for a number of years, it is unclear why the technology needs to be updated in order to study what is working and what is not working so that the practices that are working can be brought to scale. It is also unclear what is innovative in this proposal. It seems the applicant is proposing to extend its current virtual offerings without providing data on how well they are working.

(2) No weaknesses noted.

(3) No weaknesses noted.

(4) While the applicant seeks a partnership with a university that is capable of conducting rigorous research, the proposal does not cite any research on the effectiveness of any of its past virtual remote learning options. Given the history of virtual remote learning in the state, it seems reasonable to expect the applicant would report data on the improvements made in previous years.

Furthermore, the proposal appears to be getting ahead of the project. The applicant is proposing to replicate innovations that have not been observed and measured. If research on the innovative school(s) in the incubator does not produce potentially positive results, the project has nothing to replicate.

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 management plan outlines objectives, timelines and milestones for project activities (e36-e47). The applicant provides an easy-to-read chart that provides a summary of the activities for the first two years of the Education Innovation Incubator Project (starting on page e42).
- (2) The proposed use of funds seems reasonable to study the salient features of (an) effective innovative school(s) and attempt to replicate these salient features in other settings (e48).
- (3) The applicant states that approximately 30-60 schools and 65,000 students could directly benefit from the project in the first two years. By the third year, approximately 3,000 teachers could benefit from professional development opportunities (e48-e49).
- 4) The costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served. The applicant states that as many as 65,000 students and 3,000 teachers could benefit (see above' e48-49). Due to the large student population in the state, there is the possibility for even greater impact if the proposed activities prove to be successful.

Weaknesses:

- (1) No weaknesses noted.
- (2) No weaknesses noted.
- (3) Because the project design, activities, objectives, performance measures, and targets are unclear, it is difficult to determine how well the proposed budget suits the proposed activities.
- (4) Due to the lack of performance measures and targets, it is difficult to determine what the anticipated results and benefits would be. Examples of anticipated benefits that were not discussed may include the following: (1) an increase in the number of students gaining access to virtual remote learning (target X%); (2) an increase in English/language arts and mathematics performance as compared to state academic content standards (target X%); (3) an increase in achievement for students who come from low socioeconomic backgrounds, students of color, students with disabilities, or English learners (target X%); (4) an increase in the number of teachers who become certified in virtual remote learning (target X); etc. As mentioned in the strengths above, a large number of students and teachers could benefit from this project, but

how they may benefit and how the benefit would be measured remain unclear.

Reader's Score: 15

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