

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

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Kentucky Department of Education (S425B200043)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Highest Coronavirus Burden		
1. Coronavirus Burden	20	5
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	12
Sub Total	80	47
Total	80	47

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - FY20 REM - 6: 84.425B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Kentucky Department of Education (S425B200043)

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:

To some extent, the applicant provides a description of the impact of the COVID-19 upon students, families, and schools during the Spring/Summer of 2020, primarily the closing of all schools in the state, beginning on March 12, 2020 and remaining closed for the 2019-2020 school year (p. e46).

The applicant provides insight into what the state has accomplished as a response to the ceasing of school instruction within the school facilities during the Spring, i.e., formation of Education Continuance Task Force (representatives from LEAs Superintendents, School Board Association, Kentucky Parent-Teacher Association, Kentucky Education Association and the Southern Regional Education Board) to provide timely information, safety expectations, research and instructional resource to Kentucky school districts (p. e46). The state also has produced a clear guidance document, "COVID-19 Considerations for Reopening Schools: Alternative Learning Design Strategies, June 8, 2020" which addresses a burden of parents' safety concerns in the schools and offers considerations for alternative learning experiences for synchronous and asynchronous student learning, hybrid learning, flexible scheduling of classes, and online/virtual program implementations (pp. e75-e90).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not fully describe the extent of the Coronavirus burden to the state. There is a lack of a full discussion of the impact of the school closures upon the rural students and non-rural students and their families (pp. e21-e22). The applicant states that the schools were granted waivers, but there is a lack of details of the types of waivers requested/granted and what burdens existed for those schools, teachers, and students, i.e., school accountability waivers (p. e21).

Reader's Score: 5

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 provides several project strategies to ensure the project participants have equal access and treatments for students who are members of traditionally underrepresented populations, i.e. English Language Learners and students with disabilities. Specific program strategies include language translations of educational learning materials, electronic digital devices, and connectivity to the internet services (Appendix, GEPA Services).

The applicant provides numerous other effective strategies that will accommodate the needs of students with disabilities as students utilize remote learning and/or hybrid learning, i.e., distributing printed materials as supplemental/alternatives to online materials/courses, expanding mental health services to accommodate students at home, utilizing lending libraries and assistive technology (voice recognition programs, screen readers, and mobile devices) (pp. e39-e40).

(1)

The applicant provides clear and complete details of how its project will form an exceptional approach to link teachers and students in efforts to engage in remote learning, hybrid, and/or alternative online learning experiences. Strategies include the addition of high-school level Career and Technical Education courses to the KYONLINE network (p. e24). The primary strategy which will be the cornerstone of this project has the potential to bring quality online learning to all students with the consortium of Kentucky's educational cooperatives forming units, Network Hubs (p. e23). The applicant well-explains that these Network Hubs will maximize their purchasing power and purchase coursework, educational content, teacher professional development modules, and customized learning packages on a larger scale, as the Hubs represent all the public schools in the state (p. e23). Key features of the educational courses and materials include oversight of content from Kentucky teachers, alignment to the Kentucky Core Academic Standards, and continuous product evaluation by teachers and students (pp. e23-e24).

The applicant's project also includes a technology design to assist students and teachers with tracking of student mastery learning, work-based learning, and job/skill certification programs that have a feature of data interoperability (p. e25).

The applicant provides a full description of how the project will engage parents in the learning process of understanding online coursework and educational software/hardware for their students' learning (pp. e22-e29). Parents are asked to provide feedback and input on value and quality of the KYONLINE programs and will be provided "onboarding strategies" to assist their children in the online processes (pp. e26-e27).

(2)

To a great extent, the applicant clearly identifies gaps in educational services that will be addressed with this project: technology infrastructure, and teacher professional development for technology training for remote learning (p. e22). Specific discussion is presented for the severity of the gaps, i.e., current statewide online educational program being at capacity for three years for out-of-district students, lack of teachers' knowledge for hybrid/remote teaching and online coursework, and infrastructure and hardware to provide each student with appropriate computer/electronic device and quality internet connectivity to fully access online educational materials, online communications with educators/classmates for course purposes, and interactive coursework (p. e22).

(3)

A great likelihood exists that this project's services strategies will lead students to greater academic achievement and greater successes in career/college opportunities, i.e., with the proposed expanded learning offered to all students through the Network Hubs, the KYONLINE courses for students in K-12, and the Advanced Placement courses for high school students (pp. e22, e24).

Another reason for the likelihood of project success and student success is that collaboration among state's agency to solve issues for students, i.e., Kentucky Department of Education collaborating with the Governor's Office to utilize funds from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Funds to assist with gaining more internet bandwidth for students' homes in the state (p. e28).

(4)

The applicant well-explains how its project focused on creating and implementing the Networked Improvement Community of local and state education stakeholders and directly links this process with the research of Bryk et al., 2015, detailing four essential characteristics of Networked Improvement Communities to bring forth expected improvements for the improvement in student achievement (p. e20). Other research informing the project's strategies includes "improvement science" which is based on the work of researchers Coburn & Penuel, 2016 (pp. e20-e21).

Current research is also referenced for the effectiveness of virtual courses/classrooms, as the applicant's reviewed and considered the impact of virtual school models on statewide school performance ratings, Molnar, A., et al., 2019 Report from the National Education Policy Center (p. e26).

Weaknesses:

(Equal Access)

No weaknesses found.

(1)

The applicant does not provide a full discussion of the high-quality of the Barren Academy for Virtual Learning, which is proposed for expansion. The program has been in implementation for over 15 years, but the applicant does not fully detail the student success rates and students' successful outcomes from participating in these online courses (p. e22).

(2)

The applicant does not fully discuss how the Career and Technical courses address particular student needs for participating in high-quality coursework that focusses on high-demand skills and careers in the state. The applicant does not provide a nexus between the proposed Career and Technology course selections and the state's high-demand careers (p. e24).

(3)

The applicant does not detail how the non-public school students will access and become aware of the online learning materials and courses offered via this project (p. e18).

The applicant does not discuss an alternative plan for if/when the online coursework is filled with student applicants and a system needs to be developed for which students will be able to enroll in those courses (pp. e22-e29).

(4)

No weaknesses found.

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:

- (1) (2 point)

A Budget Summary is provided for the three-year project, i.e., Total Budget of \$19,200,000 (p. Budget Summary).

(2) (2 points)

The applicant's budget contains [REDACTED] in Non-Federal funds, and this type of state commitment demonstrates the true commitment of Kentucky for the success and sustainability of this project and the promotion of serving additional K-12 students with expanded online and virtual learning opportunities (pp. e15, Budget Summary).

(3) (3 points)

To some extent, the applicant shows the project costs to be reasonable in providing 172 school districts the services of additional online high school courses and increasing the number of high school students earning Career and Technical Certificates as compared to prior school years (p. e31).

(4) (5 points)

The applicant states that this project will be more cost efficient/lower cost rate per-student than if individual school districts each provide their own students' online course learning, i.e., economy in numbers will be achieved with Educational Cooperatives joining forces to bring online courses to fruition instead of 172 Kentucky school districts designing and implementing their own services for students (pp. e18-e19).

Weaknesses:

(1)

The applicant does not clearly describe the components of its Project Budget for each of the three project years. It is not clear which categories of line items will be spent for each of the years, i.e., applicant states that [REDACTED] will be spent in Years 1-3 for teacher professional development, onboarding, and in-service teacher credentialing development, but the applicant does not break out that large sum of money into separate line items to reflect areas of expenditures, such as personnel, travel or contractual technology costs (p. e31).

The Budget is not well-detailed for how the estimated costs were calculated for each line item in order to present valid types of expenditures and ensure that the budget oversight during the project will be accurately maintained, i.e., personnel line item of [REDACTED] is not explained for how many staff, salary levels, fringe benefits and the Equipment line item of [REDACTED] is not explained for types/numbers of mobile devices to be purchased (p. e96).

The applicant does not present a complete management plan containing clearly defined responsibilities of each of the personnel working in this project (pp. e29-e31). There is a lack of specificity in personnel positions or departments aligned to the presented milestones, i.e., milestone "Content acquired annually with internal funds and made available for districts by July 1 of every school year" with the "Network Hubs" being the responsible entity. It is not clearly stated who/what position within the "Network Hubs" will actually be responsible for acquiring the course content and making it available to school districts (p. e29).

The applicant does not describe the personnel positions contained in the grant Budget, i.e., Personnel Budget Item of [REDACTED] for each of the three project years and no detail of title of positions, FTEs, percentage of salaries for fringe benefits, or duties and responsibilities (Budget Summary, Budget Narrative, p. e106). It is not clear if the two named personnel, who will be responsible for the grant oversight/management are the only personnel being paid via this grant, i.e., Chief Digital Officer and Digital Learning Coach (p. e91).

(2)

The applicant does not present a reasonable cost estimate of all of the project's elements. Details are lacking to demonstrate that the level of Federal and non-Federal funds will actually support the strategies outlined, i.e., "KYONLINE Partner Network will provide teacher professional learning annually for in-network and out-of-network teachers, etc." (pp. e29-e31). A professional development framework is not fully discussed in the Narrative and Budget Narrative to a point to show the reasonableness of annual expenditures to be [REDACTED] per each of the three project years (p. e30).

(3)

The applicant does not provide a full discussion of how the project costs are reasonable in relation to the project's objectives and potential significance for students, parents, and teachers. The applicant does not present details of when project milestones will actually be commenced and completed in order to provide evidence that the project plan will be begun, implemented, and concluded in an orderly manner to fulfill the stated objectives, i.e., all milestones are stated in very general terminology and given a wide length of time for the whole milestone --- Year 1 through 3 (pp. e29-e31).

(4)

The applicant does not provide an analysis of cost per person served for this proposed project, i.e., lack of per-person cost for students and for teachers (pp. e29-e31). A cost per person served analysis is not provided with a discussion of anticipated results and benefits for students, schools, teachers, and parents (pp. e29-e31).

Reader's Score: 12

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Kentucky Department of Education (S425B200043)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Highest Coronavirus Burden		
1. Coronavirus Burden	20	2
Quality of Project Services and Project Plan		
1. Project Services/Plan	35	32
Quality of Management Plan / Adequacy of Resources		
1. Management Plan/Resources	25	12
Sub Total	80	46
Total	80	46

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - FY20 REM - 6: 84.425B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Kentucky Department of Education (S425B200043)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Highest Coronavirus Burden

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

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

Strengths:

(2) The applicant reports 650,000 students spent 40-50 instructional days learning remotely from home. The State responded to the coronavirus burden placed on families and schools by providing support to school district with waivers of the accountability requirements and by providing additional meal options to families. Additionally, the State spent considerable time initiating the Guidance on Safely Expectations and Best Practices for Kentucky K-12 Schools to help prepare families for the return to school phase by minimizing the impact of COVID-19 in schools and by supporting the safety of children, teachers, and parents for future return to school (e21-e22).

Weaknesses:

(2) The applicant does not clearly respond to the State's coronavirus burden based on additional indicators and information factors other than those required in the application. For example, the current information of COVID-19 demographics which consists of age distribution, cases, deaths, race, and ethnicity provided by the applicant has been address in the sub-criterion A(1). The applicant's sharing of current information on the State's unemployment rates during COVID-19 would have reinforced and helped to determine the extent to which the State has a high coronavirus burden (No page found). (-18pts)

Reader's Score: 2

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 provides a General of Education Provisions Act (GEPA) statement that confirms the planned project's commitment to provide strategies for ensuring equitable access and fair treatment for eligible project participants who belong to groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. For example, the applicant will make sure 30,000 English as Second Learners and English Learners receive project services by committing additional resources to the school district and by making sure all course content and platforms utilize the grant project network which will be assured to meet localized and language transition practices. The applicant will also ensure the proposed project make program electronic and information technologies accessible to individuals with disabilities in accordance to the requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 749d), as amended in 1998. The applicant seeks funding to ensure disadvantaged students have the access to resources, digital devices, and high-speed internet (e10).

(1) The applicant concisely explains its exceptional approach to addressing Absolute Priority 2 and embraces a specified project design for addressing the absolute priority by enhancing the established statewide online course access to all 172 school districts through a consortium of educational organizations, school districts, local, and state and national partners and the State's Department of Education. The future project will consist of activities and strategies that focuses on the goals described in Absolute Priority 2 such as expanding courses for K-12 students to meet exceptional needs of the benefits of the grant. Course curriculum will be aligned to meet the thoroughness of Kentucky's Core Academic Standards and best practices stated in the State's Digital Guidelines. Also, advanced course and dual credit, and career and technical education has the potential to create new pathways for students. The applicant will gather data from students, families, and schools on the ease of access. The collection of data results will be shared with stakeholders which includes parents as important members of the group (e19-e20 & e31-e32).

(2) The applicant provides an analysis of the immediate needs based on a review of gaps and weaknesses in services, infrastructure and opportunities in the State to support remote learning and explains how the proposed project will address those needs for the intended grant participants. Results of a needs assessment shows current gaps existing in access to high quality fully developed online courses, capacity to serve out of district students, unmet need for professional development opportunities for teachers, strategies to tackle student needs to access high speed internet and electronics at home for distance learning. The applicant indicates the State's largest online and virtual school program due to staffing and budget constraints cannot assist school districts meet the needs for remote learning for students and assist with the expansion of student enrollment for online learning during COVID-19 (e22-e29).

(3) The proposed project intends to offer services that may likely increase project services and encompass the needs of the target population by extending access to remote learning and supporting student outcomes. The proposed project has the likelihood to serve more students by adding new courses based on parents' and children's interests and needs and added career and technical education opportunities for children. The collaborative model of working with parents and local and state stakeholders will build everlasting partnerships to improve education on a state and national level beyond the grant period (e22-e29).

(4) The applicant provides the Kentucky Digital Learning Guidelines, a standard based up-to-date resource for guiding best practice. The guidelines include information on best practices embedded within the delivery of digital learning resources and online and blended learning (e26 & e87-90).

Weaknesses:

(4) The applicant does not clearly describe how the provided research will create effective practice to meet the anticipated project objectives to expand access to remote learning opportunities and improve student outcomes. For example, the applicant does not provide a bibliography or list of evidence-based research that have shown promise to support the proposed project' selection of project activities for impacting student outcomes (No page found) (-3pts).

Reader's Score: 32

Selection Criteria - Quality of Management Plan / Adequacy of Resources

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

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

- (1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (up to 5 points)**
- (2) The extent to which the proposed use of funds will adequately support the proposed project. (up to 5 points)**
- (3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (up to 5 points)**
- (4) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits. (up to 10 points)**

Strengths:

(1) The applicant details a management design that emphasizes meeting the intended project objectives on time and within budget. The applicant provides a table that details responsibilities, timelines through year 1 to 3, milestones, anticipated requested monies, resources and program metrics associated with the grant project. The applicant clearly states primary staff will assume oversight and management of the grant objectives and be responsible for providing progress reports and completing the evaluation of the grant. The applicant presents extensive resumes that highlights the staff experience, education levels, and current job titles, and education levels. Both grant team members have advanced degrees in education, therefore it is evident that the grant team has the skills and knowledge to guide the grant to success (e29-e31 & e91-e96).

(2) The applicant describes in the narrative budget each line item required to fund the planned project. The applicant presents in the budget narrative total costs correlated to project activities. The proposed project costs listed are personnel with fringe benefits, travel, equipment, contractual expenses, supplies, contractual, and other costs (e106-107).

(3) The costs listed in the budget narrative looks appropriate in relation to achieving the objectives and completing the presumed project happenings. There are no costs listed in the budget narrative that does not correspond to a planned project activity. The total budget requested amount of [REDACTED] will support the project over the three-year grant period (e106-e107).

Weaknesses:

- (1) The applicant does not indicate the time commitments of the primary staff during the three-year period (No page found). (-1pt)

- (3) The applicant does not present an itemized budget that explains total costs for the implementation of the grant over a three-year period. For example, the total personnel cost is not broken down by year and position (e106-107). (-2pts)

- (4) The applicant does not reveal the information that is needed to determine whether costs are suitable in comparative to the number of participants to be served and to the proposed outcomes and advantages (No page found). (-10pts)

Reader's Score: **12**

Status: Submitted
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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Kentucky Department of Education (S425B200043)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Highest Coronavirus Burden		
1. Coronavirus Burden	20	5
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	13
Sub Total	80	47
Total	80	47

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - FY20 REM - 6: 84.425B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Kentucky Department of Education (S425B200043)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Highest Coronavirus Burden

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

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

Strengths:

Factors identified by the applicant:

In response to the parent and district concern about student safety, the state developed Guidance on Safety Expectation and Best Practices for Kentucky Schools, and this was released June 24, 2020 (page e21). This reflects an additional task that the state was burdened with due to the Coronavirus.

The applicant explains that district-level surveys completed in June indicate that, 20-25% of parents are not comfortable sending their student to school this fall, thereby increasing the need to establish a sustainable Networked Improvement Community (NIC) (page e22).

Weaknesses:

The applicant provided a reference to Appendix 5: KY COVID-19 Daily Report, which included data regarding total cases being 15,232, the total deaths are 558 (pages e68 – e74). It also included information about impact to each demographic, cases by county, new cases and number of deaths. However, the applicant does not offer a discussion about how these are factors that would indicate or cause a high coronavirus burden.

15 points lost.

Reader's Score: 5

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:

Ensuring Equal Access

The applicant discusses the need to create onboarding strategies for students and families to ensure equal access (page e27). The applicant provides insight into the state's understanding that there are barriers to access to online courses and acknowledges that access at home requires internet access and a high-quality device. Kentucky is a national leader in student to computer ratio, and currently the state has 10 devices for every 9 students, positioning them for a strong response to sudden switch to remote learning.

Exceptional Approach

The applicant explains that the state's approach to accelerating district access to high-quality online courses involves partnering with a consortium of Kentucky's educational cooperatives as network hubs. This would allow the state to leverage the power of the network and negotiate lower pricing for online content providers and to provide a learning management system (page e23). The state also endeavors to collaborate with districts and KDE to begin a process whereby Kentucky teachers vet and customize online content and to create content to be used by districts. This would result in another cost-saving measure and align quality content with Kentucky's Core Academic Standards (page e23).

The applicant describes the state's CTE system's participation in the New Skills for Youth national grant that created strategies for scaling all-day regional career academies across the state. The model aims to expand access, especially in rural areas, to high quality CTE programming at the secondary level. The vision is to utilize the KYONLINE network to scale the online CTE coursework in the state's most in-demand workforce sectors (page e24).

The state participated in the Credentials of Value Institute (COVI) workgroup to ensure the industry credentials that state's build into accountability systems count toward attainment goals, embed in career pathways and guided pathways, and demonstrate the value of the program to participants' careers and lives. This grant opportunity gives the state the opportunity to expand his work into in-demand, virtual CTE coursework at the secondary level and allows the state to pilot new and innovative approaches to micro-credentialing and performance-based assessment (page e24 and e25).

Specific Gaps or Weaknesses

The applicant delineates three current gaps to access to high quality, fully online courses:

1. Kentucky's largest program accepting out of district students has been at capacity for three years (page e22), thereby eliminating the possibility for new students who live in districts that don't offer the online courses to participate. In addition, the state allows districts to offer online courses; however, of the 142 districts, only 21 report accepting students from outside their attendance borders, and two of those 21 require tuition for participation (page e22)
2. There is a lack of teacher training and evidence of online program quality for districts to implement high-quality programs (page e22).
3. There are gaps in strategies for students without broadband access, and there is a gap in funding to provide each student with an assigned device (page e22).

Likelihood of Expanding Access/Lead to Improvements

The Barren Academy for Virtual and Expanded Learning (BAVEL) has been operational for fifteen years and is an alternative model which serves 331 students from over 60 public school districts (page e22), providing a framework for the state to build upon for the robust program they would like to build with this grant.

The applicant clearly states that public school districts already have the ability to adopt high-quality online course content and curriculum and provide full-time and part-time online courses for their students (page e23), so the legislative capabilities exist for Kentucky already. In addition, the districts that offer online courses are oftentimes offering specific pathways, such as credit acceleration, credit recovery, or online dual enrollment (page e23), which are pathways that could assist students with a variety of needs.

The applicant describes the multiple steps the state has taken to create high-quality, standards-aligned, grade-level and ability-level content and has focused its efforts on promoting strong use of Kentucky teacher developed Kentucky Academic Standards along with instructional resource alignment rubrics and the adoption of the CASE framework. The result of all of this is that machine readable academic standards are able to be connected and exchanged through data interoperability to certified platforms, which is key when developing online learning platforms. Also, digital platforms for content based instruction must align with KAS. With this foundation established, the network will then establish content and professional learning opportunities through partnerships already established with KET, The Kentucky Science Center, and Advanced KY (page e25). Completion of this work indicates a readiness to further develop the state's ability to deliver online instruction.

Reflects Up-to-Date Knowledge

The applicant indicates up-to-date knowledge regarding the success and failure of virtual school models. To ensure success, the plan includes leveraging the quality assurance layer, utilizing feedback and input from stakeholders, providing Kentucky teachers or coaches for online classes, take advantage of existing quality assurance frameworks, and publicly report data through the state school report card system (page e26). Leveraging the successes and failures of former and current virtual schools will assist Kentucky in rolling out a program with a higher chance of success.

Weaknesses:

Ensuring Equal Access

No points lost.

Exceptional Approach

The applicant explains how the state would like to scale the existing CTE systems so that the CTE coursework is in alignment with the state's most in-demand workforce sectors; however, the applicant didn't provide insight into those sectors and the potential impact of providing CTE training for these sectors (page e24).

One point lost.

The applicant explains the potential to build upon the work created in the COVI workgroup and how it relates to building out the virtual CTE programming for state; however, the applicant doesn't provide details about the potential career pathways, credentials, and assessments that could be created as a result of this (pages e24 and e25).

One point lost.

Specific Gaps or Weaknesses

The applicant does not provide insight into the success or failure of BAVEL to successfully provide remote instruction to students, especially to students who are educationally disadvantaged; therefore, it is difficult to determine the likelihood of how expanding this program will lead to the state providing more access to high-quality online and virtual courses.

Two points lost.

Likelihood of Expanding Access/Lead to Improvement

The applicant didn't offer any explanation regarding how the applicant would determine which consortium to partner with and the timeline for beginning partnerships with districts and KDE, nor is there a clear delineation of steps that would be taken in either case to ensure the success of these partnerships (page e23).

One point lost.

Reflects Up-to-Date Knowledge

The applicant referenced leveraging the "quality assurance layer" of currently offered programs; however, the applicant didn't offer a discussion on the steps taken and how that would be a factor in the success of the program (e26).

One point lost.

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:

Adequacy of the Plan

The applicant provides a table outlining the Program Development, which includes the three partnership groups with which the state will working, Network Hubs, KYONLINE Partner Network, and KDE. The table also provides timelines and milestones, Anticipated grant funds, Online programming, Teacher PD, Content/course vetting, Partner engagement, Administrative functions, and Program metrics (pages e30 and e31). The program will leverage the benefit of funding from internal funds for acquiring online content.

Funds will Support Project

The funds are outlined in a manner that demonstrates that all funds will be expended in support of the program through the connection of each of the areas of focus, including partnering with consortiums, networks, and KDE; acquiring high-quality online content, developing teacher programming, coordinate with partner network to provide PD to teachers, and to engage partners (pages e30 and e31)

Costs are Reasonable: Objectives, Design, and Significance

The applicant aligned the costs to the objective of the program to provide more access to high-quality online and virtual courses, the partnerships desired to design the online coursework for students and teachers, and to engage partnerships effectively.

Costs are Reasonable: Number of Persons Served/Anticipated Results
None noted.

Weaknesses:

Adequacy of the Plan

The applicant has presented the timeline and milestones as occurring in Years 1-3 without delineating priorities in the actions it will take to create the program. This also complicates grant funding because it is unclear when monies will be expended (pages e29-e33).

3 points lost.

Funds will Support Project

None noted.

Costs are Reasonable: Objectives, Design, and Significance

The applicant didn't provide a basis for how costs were derived for projected agreement, contractual agreements, or other projected costs for associated network partners.

4 points lost.

Costs are Reasonable: Number of Persons Served/Anticipated Results

The applicant doesn't provide a per pupil or per teacher cost, nor does the applicant present current per pupil and per teacher costs in current online programming. The applicant does not provide the cost of current programming that could be compared to the costs outlined within the grant application (pages e29-e33).

5 points lost.

Reader's Score: 13

Status: Submitted
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