

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/10/2020 01:46 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Alaska Council of School Administrators (S374A200018)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	25	25
Sub Total	25	25
Selection Criterion		
Quality of the Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	30
Sub Total	30	30
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	19
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	25	25
Sub Total	45	44
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority #1		
Spurring Investment in Qualified Opportunity Zones		
1. CPP 1	10	10
Sub Total	10	10
Competitive Preference Priority #2		
Diverse and Effective Workforce		
1. CPP 2	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	115	114

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - TSL - 3: 84.374A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Alaska Council of School Administrators (S374A200018)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining evidence of the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 25

Sub

1. (i) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

General:

Strengths:

The applicant has identified challenges with aspects of the program and will address the professional development and support needs of teachers, principals, teachers, instructional aides, and other school leaders in four high-need school districts (29). The applicant has made adjustments, which seem to have yielded fruitful outcomes. The applicant has also taken an approach that allows for continuous improvement and mid-course corrections with their program. Such methods help to refine implementation and support the likelihood of effective outcomes.

The applicant has identified challenges with aspects of the program and will address the professional development and support needs of teachers, principals, teachers, instructional aides and other school leaders (102) in four high-need schools districts (29), with 50 percent or more of enrollment from low-income families, based on eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch subsidies (pg. e19). The gap and challenges include teacher and principal retention, unwieldy teacher evaluation system, ineffective school-level professional development, the dearth of opportunities for teacher and principal career advancement, including leadership opportunities, failure to recruit specialized teachers, such as in Special Education, and, complete absence of Performance-Based incentives either for individuals or schools (pg.e24). The applicant has identified the project strategies focused on aimed at accomplishing the goals by recruiting high-quality employees by retaining high-quality employees by providing opportunities for growth and advancement; and by creating a framework for development and structure for support for each tier of the staff involved in the program.

Weaknesses: No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score:

2. (ii) The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve Relevant Outcomes (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by community, State, and Federal resources.

Sub

General:

Strengths:

The applicant presented evidence that the proposed project will integrate and build on similar or related efforts to improve existing funding streams from other programs supported by the community, State, and Federal resources, which include School Improvement grant, Indian Education, Title I and IIA, Rural Education Achievement Programs (REAP) (funds to serve very small, isolated districts with limited resources); Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP); Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education Programs (pg. e27).

Weaknesses: No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score:

- 3. (iii) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.**

General:

Strengths:

The applicants provide strong evidence that the proposed project is part of a significant comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students. For example, the initiative will involve hearing from all stakeholders, ensuring that they have a voice in determining the needs and design of this project, teachers' professional development, and best practices for retention.

Weaknesses: No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score:

- 4. (iv) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.**

General:

Strengths:

The applicant provides substantial assessment/evidence, measurable performance activities, and approaches to identify the objectives for each activity in realistic and quantifiable and to solve the goals. The objectives are specific and quantifiable and well-presented in the proposal.

Weaknesses: No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criterion - Quality of the Project Design

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

Reader's Score: 30

Sub

- 1. (i) The extent to which the proposed project Demonstrates a Rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).**

Sub

General:

Strengths:

The applicant provides a rationale and hypothesis based on the conceptual framework that connects the proposed theory of activities to the intended outcomes/ measures (Lawton, Cicchinelli & Kekahio, 2014). The objectives are specific and measurable and well-presented in the proposal. The applicant proposed goals are apparent and include a detailed discussion of the measurable activities, approaches, timetable, or responsibilities indicated for the proposed project activities and are highly likely to yield reliable information to guide possible replication of this project (pg. e31). The applicant does a great job of documenting their strategies for ensuring a well-developed plan.

Weaknesses: No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score:

- 2. (ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress towards achieving intended outcomes.**

General:

Strengths:

The applicant provides sufficient evidence of a robust evaluation plan that outlines the timeline for collection, methods, and instruments to be used. The proposed design includes the use of qualitative and quantitative data measures that will yield formative and summative results. The applicant provides a logic model that describes the inputs/resources, activities, outputs, short and long-term outcomes, and the impact that will assist the applicant in addressing unanticipated consequences. Additionally, the consistent review and analysis of data will allow for the project to address challenges as they arise (pg. e44).

Weaknesses: No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers 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.**

General:

Strengths:

The management plan is well documented and clearly shows time commitments with the qualifications, experience, and education required of the program to carry out the tasks by project leads, project directors, and project coordinator (pg. e49) and attached cv). For example, the management structure will facilitate day-to-day operational effectiveness and provide a means for the partner's schools to give input and guidance into operations and management. This structure ensures that the project will achieve its objectives on time and within budget. The applicant proposed a definite timeline of specific tasks to meet goals evaluating test results and modifying the program, and all activities are realistic and attainable within the time period. The proposed budget has adequate funds allocated to support project activities, including personnel, fringe benefits, and supplies and equipment. Budget and cost-effectiveness appear appropriate (commitment of institutional resources) and adequate. Distribution of funds across the programs is appropriate, and costs are reasonable to achieve the objectives and its impact in the long-term.

Weaknesses: The applicant needs to provide the details on the responsibilities and or milestones of each staff member in the program and their time commitment to the program, the project management plan (pg. e53).

Reader's Score: 19

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 25

Sub

1. (i) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.

General:

Strengths:

(i) The applicant presented a comprehensive description that the proposed project will result in district school community improvement by the full commitment and input from national-level experts such as NIET and Corwin Press Visible Learning sub-grantees (pg. e53). The project shows great potential for the continued support of the project, financially and otherwise, after federal funding ends. The applicant indicated that the assessments of needs outcome as planned would result in systemic changes and improvements. For example 1) supplying resources that lead to the implementation of a coherent and consistent HCMS, 2) providing the expertise to objectively evaluate educator effectiveness in the areas that count the most, 3) creating educator support systems that increase efficiency, and, 4) enhancing learning opportunities for low-performing students and thus raising their achievement (pg. e54).

Weaknesses: No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score:

2. (ii) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand serves that address the needs of the target population.

General:

Strengths:

Furthermore, the applicant aligning their rubrics and strategies as standards will leave each district with a well-stocked HCMS toolbox, and staff well-trained in using research-based tools to their maximum extent. For example, tools such as Visible Learning Trained Teachers, Effective and Efficient PLCs, and Refined Evaluations can remain interwoven into the fabrics of the districts. The applicant has also reported that they are working towards transferring the monitoring and implementation fidelity to regions, so that they may continue to improve their internal progress monitoring of the system (pg. e57).

Weaknesses: No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score:

3. (iii) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model, and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, teachers unions) critical to the project's

Sub

long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence.

General:

Strengths:

The project shows great potential for the continued support of the project, financially and otherwise, after federal funding ends. School-based leaders and teachers will also play an active role in grant activities, and they will also have active roles in the various project teams (P.64).

Weaknesses: No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score:

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority #1 - Spurring Investment in Qualified Opportunity Zones

- 1. Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the area in which the applicant proposes to provide services overlaps with a Qualified Opportunity Zone, as designated by the Secretary of the Treasury under section 1400Z-1 of the Internal Revenue Code.**

An applicant must--

- a) Provide the census tract number of the Qualified Opportunity Zone(s) in which it proposes to provide services; (ED Panel monitor will verify the QOZ using this link.) and**
- b) Describe how the applicant will provide services in the Qualified Opportunity Zone(s).**

General:

Strengths:

a) The applicant provides strong evidence in the proposed project to (CCP 1, P.1) the Human Capital Management System as many of the proposed project activities uses established multi-metric teacher evaluation system to focus instructional supports towards the teachers most in need.

b) The applicant has provided strong evidence to provide the services to the teachers and will be rewarded financially for taking on increasing levels of responsibility and supporting their peers.

Weaknesses: No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Competitive Preference Priority #2 - Diverse and Effective Workforce

- 1. Applications from New Potential Grantees (0, 2, or 5 points).**

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate

- a) The applicant has never received a grant, including through membership in a group application submitted in accordance with 34 CFR 75.127-75.129, under the program from which it seeks funds (0 or 5 points); or**
- b) The applicant has not had an active discretionary grant under the program from which it seeks funds, including through membership in a group application submitted in accordance**

with 34 CFR 75.127-75.129, in the five years before the deadline date for submission of applications under the program. (0 or 2 points)

General:

Strengths:

- a) The applicant has never received a grant.
- b) The applicant has no active discretionary grant under the TSL program in the last five years.

Weaknesses: No weakness noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Alaska Council of School Administrators (S374A200018)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	25	25
Sub Total	25	25
Selection Criterion		
Quality of the Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	30
Sub Total	30	30
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	19
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	25	25
Sub Total	45	44
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority #1		
Spurring Investment in Qualified Opportunity Zones		
1. CPP 1	10	10
Sub Total	10	10
Competitive Preference Priority #2		
Diverse and Effective Workforce		
1. CPP 2	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	115	114

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - TSL - 3: 84.374A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Alaska Council of School Administrators (S374A200018)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining evidence of the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 25

Sub

1. (i) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

General:

The applicant has developed a plan to address the challenges in the four high-need school districts that will address the professional development and teacher retention and recruitment concerns. In efforts to address these challenges the applicant has created the Increasing Performance and Retention in Alaska's Rural Schools (IPRARS) project (pg. 20). The project also addressed the unique geographic challenges that affect many schools located in Native villages with limited access due to no public roads and are only accessible by bush aircraft (pg. 20). The gaps and challenges also include the need for constant recruitment due to high staff turnover (pg. 22) and ineffective use of professionals due to uneven or fragmented implementation (pg. 22). Additionally, 50% or more of the student enrollment comes from low-income families or free and reduced lunch subsidies (pg. E19).

Reader's Score:

2. (ii) The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve Relevant Outcomes (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by community, State, and Federal resources.

General:

The applicant has proposed a plan that appropriately that will build on similar or related efforts to improve existing funding streams from other programs supported by additional resources, including a School Improvement grant, Rural Education Achievement Programs (REAP), Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP), and other community, state, and Federal resources' programs (pg. 27).

Reader's Score:

3. (iii) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.

Sub

General:

The applicant thoroughly examines current District Initiatives that are geared to improving teacher and student learning, such as Research-based instruction, PLCs, Alaska Teacher Mentoring Program (ATMP), Safe and Civil Schools initiative, and personalized professional development (pg. 28). These initiatives are specifically aligned with the goals of the presented plan to ensure that teachers will receive professional development and the best practices for retention are put in place.

Reader's Score:

- 4. (iv) **The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.**

General:

The applicant provides substantial evidence to address the concern of recruiting high quality teachers and administration. The applicant will supply teachers and principals with timely feedback that can be used to help to improve their performance and support student learning (pg. 29). This time of feedback will justify the need for implementation of personalized goals and professional development needed to meet those goals. The applicant will thoroughly examine the usefulness of the current principal support and evaluation systems in efforts to modify and create more effective mechanisms that will support as needed (pg. 29). The objectives are justifiable and well-presented in the proposal.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criterion - Quality of the Project Design

- 1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

Reader's Score: 30

Sub

- 1. (i) **The extent to which the proposed project Demonstrates a Rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).**

General:

The applicant proposed a rationale that builds upon the IPRARS plan. This collaborative effort is designed to close achievement gaps in the current evaluation systems (pg. 30). The plan was devised by conducting a series of comprehensive and inclusive needs assessment and gap analysis to ensure that the needs of every school in the consortium were identified (pg. e30). The assessment included a virtual meeting with the stakeholders, principal input meetings, school surveys, and partnership planning meetings (pg. e30). This comprehensive effort adequately addresses the applicant's need to fully implement proposed plan to fidelity in efforts to effectively and efficiently meet the needs of every school and student. The applicant did a great job documenting specific and measurable strategies ensuring that this is a well-developed plan.

Reader's Score:

- 2. (ii) **The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress towards achieving intended outcomes.**

Sub

General:

The applicant provides substantial evidence of a comprehensive evaluation plan that will examine the effectiveness and quality of each District's HCMS in efforts to improve and expand the consortium as a whole by addressing challenges in the form of a series components (pg. 34) Each component analyzes a challenge and provides the appropriate solution to the challenge as proposed by the plan (pgs. 34-42). These evaluative tools, including data collection from a culmination of both qualitative and quantitative formative evaluations, will provide the consortium with the feedback needed to achieve the intended outcomes presented in the plan (pg. e44).

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers 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.**

General:

Strengths:

The applicant does provide a proposal for a management plan, which will include feedback from the Alaska Staff Development Network (ASDN) and the Alaska Council of School Administrators (ACSA) whose roles will serve as the fiscal agent and Project Manager (pg. 46). Proven strategies will be used to assess the human resource needs (pg. 47). Each District in the consortium will have representatives of the District human resources and curriculum departments, two principals, two teachers, and the Project Director (pg. 47). The management structure will oversee the day-to-day operational functions of the plan while providing feedback and support to the schools.

Weaknesses:

While the applicant does address the roles and responsibilities needed to implement proposed plan, a clear strategy for who will be responsible for implementing each specific component is lacking. For example, the management plan structure includes the plan to implement day-to-day operational functions, like the reports and recommendations for the strengthening the evaluation for implementation, the forty minute webinars for best practices, PBCS background with models, the follow-up trainings, evaluation of best practices, and the Leadership Institute, but the plan does not discuss specifically how and who will be responsible (pgs. 55-56).

Reader's Score: 19

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

- 1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

Reader's Score: 25

Sub

Sub

1. (i) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.

General:

The applicant comprehensively examines the factors that impact the need for system change and improvement (pg. 53) The use of national level experts is appropriate and adequate as it ensures that the applicant is clearly committed to identifying qualifying observers who have experience with evaluating the validity of terms of the grant. By supplying each District with needs assessments, the applicant was able to create a project that reasonably will meet the needs of every school by supplying resources that will support implementation, provide the expertise needed to evaluate educator effectiveness, create educator support systems that will increase effectiveness, and enhance opportunities to provide learning opportunities for low-achieving schools (pg. 54). Implementation of the plan will increase the consortiums' initiative to raise achievement to every school on every level.

Reader's Score:

2. (ii) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand serves that address the needs of the target population.

General:

The applicant will supply each district with a toolbox and well-trained staff in efforts to maximize the outcomes of the plan (pg. 57). These tools include, but are not limited to, Visible Learning Trained Teachers, Nationally certified Superintendents, Teacher leaders in effective and efficient PLCs, refined evaluations, comprehensive HCMS, and so forth. The applicant's plan to increase capacity will be enhanced based on the implementation of the tools. Through these initiatives, each school will have common teacher professional development and follow-through feedback loops and common resources that will promote continuity throughout the consortium (pg. 57). This initiative will also expand capacity as it offers opportunities for both teachers and principals.

Reader's Score:

3. (iii) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model, and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, teachers unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence.

General:

The plan is devised so that every District will be given the opportunity to strategically plan both short term and long-term budgets (pg. 59). This will provide each district the opportunity to create a plan that will specifically and intentionally improve the student achievement and staff effectiveness in the district (pg. 59). This initiative is intended to provide the consortium with strategies that will increase chances of sustainability (pg. 59). Upon the completion of the grant, the applicant has examined a comprehensive research based HCMS that will be institutionalized across the consortium (pg. 59). This effort will further expand the continuity and capacity throughout the consortium by revamping traditional salary schedules and fully reconfiguring data-driven, district-wide initiatives (pg. 59).

Reader's Score:

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority #1 - Spurring Investment in Qualified Opportunity Zones

1. Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the area in which the applicant proposes to provide services overlaps with a Qualified Opportunity Zone, as designated by the Secretary of the Treasury under section 1400Z-1 of the Internal Revenue Code.

An applicant must--

- a) **Provide the census tract number of the Qualified Opportunity Zone(s) in which it proposes to provide services; (ED Panel monitor will verify the QOZ using this link.) and**
- b) **Describe how the applicant will provide services in the Qualified Opportunity Zone(s).**

General:

Strengths:

The applicant provides substantial evidence in the proposed project that will serve 29 schools (pg. 19). 75% of the schools impacted by this project are inside of the Qualified Opportunity Zone (pg. 19). The project will use the IPRARS initiative to address the concerns impacting teacher recruitment and retention in the consortium (pg. 20). The plan also addresses the gaps and challenges related to each District's Human Capital Management System by being intentional about recruitment, teacher and principal professional development and support based on a comprehensive evaluation system, teacher and principal performance incentives, opportunities for career advancement, retention, and dismissal, tenure, and placement concerns (pg. 23) .

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 10

Competitive Preference Priority #2 - Diverse and Effective Workforce

1. Applications from New Potential Grantees (0, 2, or 5 points).

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate

- a) **The applicant has never received a grant, including through membership in a group application submitted in accordance with 34 CFR 75.127-75.129, under the program from which it seeks funds (0 or 5 points); or**
- b) **The applicant has not had an active discretionary grant under the program from which it seeks funds, including through membership in a group application submitted in accordance with 34 CFR 75.127-75.129, in the five years before the deadline date for submission of applications under the program. (0 or 2 points)**

General:

Strengths:The applicant has never had a TIF or TSL grant

Weaknesses: No weakness identified

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/10/2020 10:34 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/13/2020 07:15 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Alaska Council of School Administrators (S374A200018)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	25	25
Sub Total	25	25
Selection Criterion		
Quality of the Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	30
Sub Total	30	30
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	19
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	25	25
Sub Total	45	44
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority #1		
Spurring Investment in Qualified Opportunity Zones		
1. CPP 1	10	10
Sub Total	10	10
Competitive Preference Priority #2		
Diverse and Effective Workforce		
1. CPP 2	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	115	114

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - TSL - 3: 84.374A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Alaska Council of School Administrators (S374A200018)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining evidence of the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 25

Sub

1. (i) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

General:

The Alaska Council of School Administrators will partner with four high needs school districts (p.15), and has presented a compelling need for the proposed program.

All of the 29 schools served by this project are high needs schools with 50 percent or more of their enrolled students from low income families. Of the 29 schools served by this project, 22, or 75%, are inside a Qualified Opportunity Zone. Of 2,915 students to be served, 2,677, or 91%, are within a Qualified Opportunity Zone (p.19).

Because of Alaska's geography, they have shown great difficulty attracting and maintaining educators. Geographic remoteness, lack of medical care, extreme weather, isolation and cultural differences have all served as contributing factors to teacher attrition (p.28). A study from the Education North West (2019) that was cited by the applicant, found that 36 percent of teachers and 38 percent of principals working in a rural-remote Alaska school, which are the same schools intended to be served by this project, did not return to their school the following year, compared to 19% for both teachers and principals working in an urban Alaska school (p. 29). Compared to other Alaska schools, which have a 16% attrition rate, rural Alaska schools have a significant higher attrition rate of 36% (p.20). These schools have also had difficulty recruiting specialized teachers, such as Special Education teachers (p. 24). Among the proposed students to be served, proficiency rates in math and ELA are as low as, 12% and 10%, respectively (p.24). ACSA, also conducted a number of meetings, to include stakeholder planning meetings, principal input meetings, school surveys and partnership planning meetings to determine relevant needs (p. 30). The impacts of COVID have further complicated student achievement, as less than one-fifth of Alaska students were meeting state proficiency tests in English and Math (p. 25), and "COVID learning loss" is expected to cause greater deficits.

Reader's Score:

2. (ii) The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve Relevant Outcomes (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by community, State, and Federal resources.

Sub

General:

ACSA has made prior attempts to improve its HCMS, to include a teacher induction program, personalized and embedded professional development, and the Alaska Teacher Mentoring program, to name a few (p.28). All participating districts have an HCMS, but several issues have been identified: the HCMS are disconnected from instructional improvement, PLCs are not used effectively, data usage to determine professional development (PD) has been uneven (p. 22), there is loose coupling between PD and teacher supports, and evaluation systems are not being implemented as intended.

Reader's Score:

- 3. (iii) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.**

General:

The proposed project will refine the HCMSs in four rural, isolated school districts serving low income students in high need schools. This will include refining current evaluation systems and providing educators with high quality professional Development, based on needs linked to individual, school and classroom evaluations (p.19). The new HCMSs will also address the professional development needs of teachers, principals, instructional aides and other school leaders in these schools (p. 15). A hallmark of the proposed program is the Visible Learning training, which is a research based approach to building student achievement by highlighting best practices in schools, and helping teachers see learning through the eyes of their students and students to become their own teachers (p.40). Overall, the district has presented a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning, by looking to address deficits in a multitude of ways (e.g. tailored and job embedded PD, Leader development, incentive pay, etc.).

Reader's Score:

- 4. (iv) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.**

General:

It is likely that this project will successfully address the needs of the target population. A study from the Education North West (2019) that was cited by the applicant, found that 36 percent of teachers and 38 percent of principals working in a rural-remote Alaska school, which are the same schools intended to be served by this project, did not return to their school the following year, compared to 19% for both teachers and principals working in an urban Alaska school (p. 29). This project proposes to provide teachers with additional supports to prepare them for their specific context and student populations. This will include refining current evaluation systems and providing educators with high quality professional Development, based on needs linked to individual, school and classroom evaluations (p.19). The new HCMSs will also address the professional development needs of teachers, principals, instructional aides and other school leaders in these schools (p. 15). A hallmark of the proposed program is the Visible Learning training, which is a research based approach to building student achievement by highlighting best practices in schools, and helping teachers see learning through the eyes of their students and students to become their own teachers (p.40).

Reader's Score:

Selection Criterion - Quality of the Project Design

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

Sub

1. (i) **The extent to which the proposed project Demonstrates a Rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).**

General:

The proposed project presents a clear rationale, using the research of Hattie to improve teacher practice, and citing multiple studies on the links between student achievement and classroom teachers. Through a meta-analysis of 95,000+ studies on 300 million students across the globe, Hattie identified more than 270+ factors having an impact on student achievement (p 39). This information will be used to guide teacher practices in the participating schools.

Reader's Score:

2. (ii) **The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress towards achieving intended outcomes.**

General:

Implementation of the visual learning program will be broken down into years one, two and three of implementation (p. 41). This will allow for assessment at the end of each implementation year. ACAS is planning for their program evaluation to include qualitative and quantitative data to provide formative and summative evaluations. Summative evaluation data will be reviewed to determine the project's impact in terms of numbers of educators trained, teacher turnover rates, retention, recruitment, certifications attained, performance pay/reward, student academic gains. The applicant has also stated that they expect the selected evaluation vendor to utilize the Continuous Improvement Management Process Model developed by USED, which is designed to give ongoing feedback throughout the project.

Furthermore, each July, the Project Management Team will develop, review and update milestones of the management plan for the upcoming year, based on progress.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers 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.**

General:

In addition to district representatives and school principals, the applicant has identified two external partners, a Project Director, and a Project Coordinator as regular monitors and implementers of the program. The Project Coordinator and Project Director, will each dedicate 100% of their time to the proposed project (p.49). The Project Director will also serve as a member of the Project Management Team, which meet twice a month with representatives from the key consulting partners (NIET; Corwin), the evaluator, and one lead representative from each district (p. 48). The Project Management Team will provide overall direction to the project, including the monitoring of project accomplishment towards the established goals and objectives. The PMT will also track process evaluation findings and make adjustments based on the findings.

The applicant has established a project management plan with clearly defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones (p. 51-53). The program will also use Project Management Software (PMS) to further identify, assign and manage relational tasks, activities and due dates (p. 51).

Weakness: Although the narrative broadly speaks to the responsibilities of each staff member in the program, the project management plan (pgs. 51-53) does not align specific persons to individual responsibilities/milestones.

Reader's Score: 19

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

- 1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

Reader's Score: 25

Sub

- 1. (i) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.**

General:

ACSA has obtained support from educators and district leaders in carrying out this project. This, in addition to the comprehensive system for change makes this project likely to lead to systemic improvement. The planning team for this project included representatives from districts and teachers, and instructional aides (p. 59). Participating districts also have strategic plans that include Improving student achievement and staff effectiveness (p. 59). Prioritizing these critical elements of the project district-wide are likely to lead to systemic change, while supporting ongoing capacity building.

Reader's Score:

- 2. (ii) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand serves that address the needs of the target population.**

General:

The project has chosen to increase the capacity of instructional aides, rather than just teachers and leaders. Given that the turnover of instructional aides is zero, compared to approximately 33% for principals and teachers (p.58), this inclusion is likely to support increased capacity building across the district. This Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), which includes school principal and at least one teacher leader (p. 37). NEIC, the grant partner builds the capacity of the leadership team by identifying actions of highly effective administrators and Teacher Leaders and asking them to reflect and self-assess; and strengthening the principal and teacher leaders' abilities to monitor, support and continuously improve the impact of ILT meetings on teaching and learning (p.37). Involving Teacher Leaders in this formalized structure for distributed leadership supports principals in becoming more effective instructional leaders.

Reader's Score:

- 3. (iii) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model, and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, teachers unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence.**

Sub

General:

Each district has a strategic planning process that drives the short-term (yearly) and long-term (multi-year) budgets; improving student achievement and staff effectiveness is a part of each strategic plan (p. 59). Each District and the two consulting partners have also committed to providing Matching Funds (see MOAs in Appendix C22 -C28). Furthermore, Title and 21st CCLC funds will also be used to continue supporting the goals and intentions of the project (p. 27). The Alaska Staff Development Network (ASDN), a division of the Alaska Council of School Administrators (ACSA), will serve as the fiscal agent and project manager for this project. ASDN has experience directing a number federal grants, including Gear Up, Alaska Native Education Program Grants, School Leadership program grants (p..46)

Letters of support from the Superintendent, Tribal Entity and Teacher's Association of each district, as well as Native Organizations and Mayors have all been provided as part of the grant application.

Reader's Score:

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority #1 - Spurring Investment in Qualified Opportunity Zones

- 1. Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the area in which the applicant proposes to provide services overlaps with a Qualified Opportunity Zone, as designated by the Secretary of the Treasury under section 1400Z-1 of the Internal Revenue Code.**

An applicant must--

- a) Provide the census tract number of the Qualified Opportunity Zone(s) in which it proposes to provide services; (ED Panel monitor will verify the QOZ using this link.) and**
- b) Describe how the applicant will provide services in the Qualified Opportunity Zone(s).**

General:

Of the 29 schools served by this project, 22, or 75%, are inside a Qualified Opportunity Zone. Of 2,915 students to be served, 2,677, or 91%, are within a Qualified Opportunity Zone. The proposed project will serve these students by refining the HCMSs in four rural, isolated school districts that serve low income students in high need schools, in order to attract and retain qualified teachers. This will include refining current evaluation systems and providing educators with high quality professional Development, based on needs linked to individual, school and classroom evaluations (p.19). The new HCMSs will also address the professional development needs of teachers, principals, instructional aides and other school leaders in these schools (p. 15), to ensure they are able to best meet student needs. 100% of the schools served are not located in in a qualified opportunity zone.

Reader's Score: 10

Competitive Preference Priority #2 - Diverse and Effective Workforce

- 1. Applications from New Potential Grantees (0, 2, or 5 points).**

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate

- a) The applicant has never received a grant, including through membership in a group application submitted in accordance with 34 CFR 75.127-75.129, under the program from which it seeks funds (0 or 5 points); or**
- b) The applicant has not had an active discretionary grant under the program from which**

it seeks funds, including through membership in a group application submitted in accordance with 34 CFR 75.127-75.129, in the five years before the deadline date for submission of applications under the program. (0 or 2 points)

General:

The applicant has never had a TIF or TSL grant. No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 5

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