

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/13/2020 09:24 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Insight Education Group, Inc. (S374A200061)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	25	23
Sub Total	25	23
Selection Criterion		
Quality of the Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	25
Sub Total	30	25
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	25	25
Sub Total	45	45
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	0
Sub Total	5	0
Total	115	103

Technical Review Form

Panel #8 - TSL - 8: 84.374A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Insight Education Group, Inc. (S374A200061)

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: 23

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 identified several gaps and weaknesses in services, infrastructure, and opportunities that will be addressed by the proposed project. The applicant also included a detailed summary of the nature and the magnitude of the gaps and weaknesses in which they have identified. For example, the applicant proposes to create an improved systemic approach that address how teachers are trained, recognized and given opportunities to advance. The applicant plans to provide resources to improve instruction for their participating districts. The applicant seeks to address gaps and weaknesses in the following areas: (1) Human Capital Management, (2) Recruitment and Retention, (3) Teacher and Principal PD/Support and (4) Teacher and Principal Evaluation. The applicant provided strategies to address each identified gap (e25).

Weaknesses

No weaknesses 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.

General:

Strengths

The applicant provided a reasonable strategy which demonstrates that the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve Relevant Outcomes using existing funding streams from other programs. For example, the applicant proposes to build upon a 2017 TSL Grant, Empowering Educators to Excel (E3). Furthermore, the applicant will utilize various funding streams from its partner districts. Funding streams that will be used include local, state, Title I, Title II and the Kellogg Foundation (e26).

Weaknesses

Sub

No weaknesses 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 applicant provided a proposal that provides limited evidence to show the proposed project will improve teaching and learning, that is comprehensive and supports rigorous academic standards for students. For example, the applicant proposes to develop a multi-level (NIC level, District Level, School level, Classroom level) system of supports model to improve student achievement. The applicant proposes to develop an online platform that connects educators and provides data management and analysis. The applicant also proposes the creation of a national education leaders workshop which shall bring leaders in education together (e26).

Weaknesses

It is unclear as how the applicant's proposal will specifically help improve learning and support rigorous academic standards for students. For example, at the classroom level of the applicant's multi-level plan, the applicant proposes to implement in-person and virtual coaching for a random sample of teachers to increase efficacy. It is unclear as to how this proposed plan will help all teachers and all students. The applicant's plan lacks specificity as to how they will identify teachers that will participate in coaching sessions. The applicant's plan also lacks specificity as it relates to goals for each level of their purposed multi-leveled system of supports proposal (e26).

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's proposal is justifiable and outlines strategies that suggest that the project will successfully address the needs of the target population and other identified needs. For example, the applicant will focus on principal and teacher recruitment, development, support and retention as a means to improve student outcomes in high needs schools. To address the need of high principal turnover, the applicant proposes the development and implementation of leadership academies (e27).

Weaknesses

No weaknesses 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: 25

Sub

Sub

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

General:

Strengths

The applicant provided a detailed rationale that is supported by various evidenced based research and real-life prior experiences. For example, the applicant's proposal thoroughly details each proposed activity and is supported by various evidence-based research. To support the creation of the Network Improvement Community (NIC), the applicant cites research from Pitcher (2016) that concludes capacity building networks allows for sustained improvements by schools. The applicant cites scholarly research from Wickman (2011) to justify the establishment of Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs) for all of member schools to receive training on instructional improvement efforts and promote cohesion. In addition, the applicant provides insight from past experience to show they have implemented each activity within prior grants (e28).

Weaknesses

No weaknesses 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's proposed plan provides a limited description to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress towards achieving intended outcomes. For example, the applicant will utilize the TSL performance measures to gauge implementation progress and determine the impact of services. The applicant proposes to utilize an external contractor to create a robust and adaptive evaluation plan. The applicant proposes to rely heavily on the development and use of indicators to help track the implementation progress. The applicant proposes the creation of three dashboards that will track the instructional leadership team, professional learning communities and teacher recruitment processes of the project. The applicant proposes to conduct small scale experiments to measure outcomes. In addition, some data that will be used to assess outcomes include, state standardized test data and local formative assessments (e29).

Weaknesses

The applicant's proposed plan provides a limited description to the extent which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress towards achieving intended outcomes. However, the plan provided lack specificity as it relates to data management for the proposed project.

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 provided a detailed description of their proposed management plan. The plan proposed by the applicant appears to be high quality and is likely to ensure efficient and effective project implementation. For example, the project will be led by a Project Director. The Project Director will serve 100% to this project. The Project Director will lead the

project's implementation and provide oversight to the project staff. The Project Director will be accountable to the Principal Investigator which shall review project cost and ensure alignment to work. The applicant proposes seven (7) full-time staff positions to fulfil the goals and objectives of this project. Each of the proposed staff member's roles and responsibilities are clearly outlined. With regards to proposed project timeline, the applicant has provided a justifiable timeline for each proposed project activity. For example, the applicant provided a comprehensive table outlining each project activity, milestones/benchmarks, deadline for task completion and the person(s) responsible for overseeing that particular activity.

Reader's Score: 20

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

The applicant provides some evidence that demonstrates that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement. For example, the applicant cites data from projects that they have developed and implemented in the past to demonstrate that student achievement has significantly improved when districts improve their human capital management systems and their recruitment/retention efforts.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses 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

The applicant demonstrates the ways in which their proposed project will build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population. For example, the applicant draws from research of Stoll (2009) to justify the idea of improving capacity building as a driver to changing systems or improvement.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses 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 applicant adequately demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant. For example, each district will match TSL funding at 50%. In addition, the applicant has proposed a sustainability plan with partner districts.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses 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

- 1. The applicant demonstrated that 39 of the 49 schools participating in the proposed project are located within Qualified Opportunity Zone areas. For example, the applicant inserted a table (pgs. E33-E36) that identifies each participating school and their QOZ Census Tract ID.
- 2. The applicant provided a justifiable plan that describes how they intend to provide services in Qualified Opportunity Zones. For example, the applicant proposes to spur economic activity in the community by bringing structures and funding for over 500 jobs, reduce turnover and serve as an engine to produce more qualified workers for the local community.

Weaknesses

- 1- No weaknesses noted.
- 2- No weaknesses 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:

No strengths identified

Weaknesses

The applicant has had a TIF or TSL grant within the last 5 years.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/13/2020 09:24 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/10/2020 06:19 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Insight Education Group, Inc. (S374A200061)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	25	23
Sub Total	25	23
Selection Criterion		
Quality of the Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	27
Sub Total	30	27
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	25	25
Sub Total	45	45
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	0
Sub Total	5	0
Total	115	105

Technical Review Form

Panel #8 - TSL - 8: 84.374A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Insight Education Group, Inc. (S374A200061)

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: 23

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 clearly identifies gaps in the current Human Capital Management Systems in use in the participating LEAs, such as through highlighting issues in teacher recruitment that are supported by accompanying data (e25). The application presents the current disconnect between teacher evaluation scores and student achievement (e26).

The gap or gaps related to professional development for teachers could be clearer, such as supporting this gap with data about the duration or dosage of PD currently available. Instead, the teacher turnover rate is provided as evidence of the inconsistent PD (e25).

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:

This project will build on the success of a previous TSL grant and will utilize resources that were developed in that project, such as data dashboards and playbooks (e28). The applicant lists varied resources to support the project, including relevant local, state, federal, and private funds which can be leveraged (e27).

No weaknesses 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.

Sub

General:

The proposed project utilizes a comprehensive systems-aligned approach, and there are project components at all levels, including the network, district, school, and classroom level (e30). For example, the project includes a national training workshop at the network level, leadership academies at the district level, professional learning communities at the school level, and coaching at the classroom level.

Although it is clear that the proposed project itself is a comprehensive effort, the applicant does not specifically identify the extent to which the project will be part of a larger comprehensive effort to improve teacher and school leader effectiveness in the participating LEAs.

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:

Project elements are aligned to the current needs and gaps within the participating LEAs. For example, the lack of diverse candidates is highlighted as a current weakness, and the applicant proposes two relevant strategies to address that gap, systematic recruitment and retention systems and a national educator exchange (e32).

No weaknesses 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: 27

Sub

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

General:

Each proposed activity within the project is supported by research evidence and is informed by prior related initiatives, and this is presented in a clear and organized fashion (e37).

Throughout this section, the applicant could include more current evidence related to project activities. For example, the applicant cites a 1996 study that principals are the largest factor impacting teacher retention (e43). Providing more recent evidence, such as from a meta-analysis of teacher retention, or revising this statement to better reflect current evidence, would help to better demonstrate a rationale. Although allowing individual flexibility to create performance-based compensation systems may have benefits, there is little detail provided about the overall PBCS system and its individual components, as well as how LEAs will go about tailoring and adopting a PBCS (e44).

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 application includes an external evaluation plan presented in Appendix D4 (e116). This evaluation plan aligns with project activities and includes multiple relevant data sources to measure project effectiveness. The evaluation includes an embedded experiment to examine the effectiveness of the virtual PLC, which the application states will attend to What Works Clearinghouse standards (e121). This embedded experiment has the potential to provide relevant information to benefit the field beyond the scope of this project.

No weaknesses 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:

The management plan includes utilizing a quarterly council to help support local control of the project. This inclusion of stakeholder voice and allowing for ongoing feedback is likely to promote project success and sustainability (e51). There is a clear management plan that includes relevant project activities, the people responsible, and when they will occur (e53). The management plan includes the gradual release of project activities in Year 3 to promote sustainability (e53).

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

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:

The lead agency has extensive related experience and has previously demonstrated success with a similar project as documented by student achievement data (e55). Therefore, they illustrate the likelihood that the proposed project will result in system improvements.

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score:

Sub

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 use of an online platform and asynchronous coaching will help participating LEAs build their local capacity through providing ongoing feedback and supports to teachers and school leaders.

No weaknesses 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 long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence.

General:

The participating LEAs are providing matching funds at 50%, showing strong commitment to the project (e58). There is an emphasis on and attention to sustainability throughout the proposal.

No weaknesses 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:

39 of the 49 participating schools within the four LEAs are located in Qualified Opportunity Zones, and the schools that are not located in QOZs enroll students who live within a QOZ. The applicant notes that project services will be delivered in 28 different QOZs. Census tracts for QOZs are provided (e33-e34). The applicant clearly identifies how project activities will support economic activities in QOZs, such as through job creation and workforce preparedness (e23).

No weaknesses 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:

No strengths identified.

The applicant has had a TIF or TSL grant within the last 5 years.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/10/2020 06:19 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/10/2020 08:58 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Insight Education Group, Inc. (S374A200061)

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	25
Sub Total	30	25
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	25	24
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	0
Sub Total	5	0
Total	115	104

Technical Review Form

Panel #8 - TSL - 8: 84.374A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Insight Education Group, Inc. (S374A200061)

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

(i) The applicant successfully demonstrated that the proposed project addresses the weaknesses and gaps for each partner district. For example, districts reported gaps in the HCMS systems, such as, recruitment and retention, teacher and principal professional development and support, teacher and principal evaluation, and teacher and principal performance pay and incentives. None of the districts tie performance-based pay to student achievement or teacher and principal performance. The applicant provided clearly specified strategies to address each of the gaps and weaknesses. For example, to address the lack of an effective evaluation system, the project will create a principal and assistant principal evaluation system that incorporates authentic observation of ILT facilitation and instructional coaching, student achievement, and other local measures determined by each district's IGNITE Council. (pgs. e 23-25)

Weaknesses

(i) No weaknesses 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.

General:

Strengths

(ii) The applicant effectively demonstrated that the proposed project will build upon the partner districts' current Human Capital Management Systems (HCMS) and Performance-Based Compensation Systems (PBCS). The applicant acknowledged that each partner district will bring to the project different levels of funding streams and supports. For example, the districts have indicated supports with local and state funding, Title I and II funding, Teacher Incentive Funding and one with a Kellogg Foundation grant. (pg. e-28)

Sub

Weaknesses

(ii) No weaknesses 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

(iii) The applicant clearly demonstrated that the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to align evidence-based controls across the consortium of schools with the clear focus on improving teaching and learning by leveraging current human capital. For example, the proposed project will develop the Networked Improvement Community (NIC), which will be delivered in an online platform with district, school and classroom critical interventions impacting student achievement. The interventions include: (1) Strategic Planning, (2) Instructional Leadership Teams, (3) Professional Learning Communities, (4) Leadership Academies, (5) Instructional Coaching, (6) Online Virtual Coaching Platform, and (7) Recruitment and Retention. (pgs. e28-30)

Weaknesses

(iii) No weaknesses 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

(iv) The applicant effectively demonstrate that the design of the proposed project is appropriate for addressing the needs of the target population and their identified needs. For example, partner participants will implement all activities within high needs schools. All schools in Project IGNITE serve 50% or more minority students with 36 of 49 schools serving 85% or more minority students. The project additionally has a focus on principal and teacher recruitment, high teacher turnover rates, high principal turnover, lack of diverse candidates. (pgs. e 30-31)

Weaknesses

(iv) No weaknesses 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: 25

Sub

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

Sub

General:

Strengths:

(i) The applicant comprehensively demonstrated that the proposed project has developed a rationale and theory of action for the project based on evidence-based research and lesson's learned from a previous Insight's 2017 E3 grant. For example, the proposed interventions are aligned in the theory of action consisting of five key objectives: (1) improve student achievement; (2) increase teacher effectiveness; (3) increase school leader effectiveness; (4) evaluate each intervention against student achievement and cost; and (5) create sustainable systems of constant improvement for each of the previous four objectives. The applicant indicated that the interventions are operable in a system rather than isolated silo of intervention, because an aligned, systems-level approach creates a feedback loop up and down the system which improves districts' ability to operate as the dynamic interconnected organizations they are. (pgs. e 37-44)

The applicant succinctly provided a proposed activity that is aligned with research-based evidence and results from Insight's prior experience developing and implementing the activities. The system acts as a cross-school collaboration to provide a network of peers for meaningful, job-specific collaboration, as well as systemic pathways to spread effective practices. Overall, the rational is to provide each partner district with the means to create a strategic plan on the Strategic Planning Dashboard for districts to track Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) internally and externally and publishing a playbook that systematizes the strategic planning process which can utilized with Project IGNITE districts. (pgs. e 37-44)

Weaknesses

(i) No weaknesses 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:

(ii) The applicant reasonably provided some evidence that the proposed project has developed methods of evaluation to provide performance feedback and periodic assessment of progress towards achieving intended outcomes. The applicant will engage the services of an external evaluator to guide them in determining how well the project has focused on improving components of their HCMS systems and addressed the gaps and weaknesses. The evaluation will also address the impact of interventions through the utilization of the TSL Performance Measures evaluation instrument. This instrument was developed to gauge implementation progress and determine the impact of services. A design of the program was provided in the Appendix.

Additionally, the evaluation will include the implementation of a randomized controlled trial study that will meet the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards without reservations. The study will track overall and differential attrition, using baseline equivalence of treatment and control group members' performance on similar outcomes.

The evaluation will include various methods to ensure feedback, monitoring and improvement will be tracked and reported. Indicators will be developed to help the districts track implementation progress and make mid-course corrections. Three online dashboards, such as the ILT dashboard, a PLC dashboard, and a teacher recruitment dashboard will have built in data collection and targets. (pgs. e 45-50)

Weaknesses

(ii) While the applicant has proposed various evaluation methods, the information was not thorough and did not provide specifics. The evaluation plan as written is incomplete. For example, the applicant does not provide specifics in terms of the evaluation methods that will be used. The plan does not provide evidence as to how they will manage the multitude of data from five school districts across four states. This information is key for ensuring monitoring and feedback protocols are effective. Additionally, the applicant does not explain who will be involved in the monitoring and feedback loop.

Sub

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 successfully demonstrated that the proposed project has a management plan in place that has the expertise to oversee a project of this size and complexity. Given the fact the proposed project will cover four states, the project will employ the services of a Project Director. The proposed Project Director (100%) has experience leading a similar program, called the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF). The PD will serve as the primary contact for partners and will manage the daily implementation of the project and provide sustainability support and training to the IGNITE Council. Project IGNITE will utilize a quarterly IGNITE Council composed of the superintendent and one board member from each district, as well as district level leaders, principals, higher education partners, and teachers from each participating school. (pgs. e 51-54) The PD will be accountable to the Principal Investigator (PI), who has extensive experience as a project director on five large, federal grants and has provided executive oversight as chief executive officer of Insight Education Group.

The project will hire other key personnel, such as a (a) Grant Manager; (b) Data Manager; (c) Principal Coach; (d) Recruitment and Retention Coach; (e) Teacher Support Coach; and (f) Technology Coach. The applicant clearly aligned all of the tasks and activities with who will be responsible for accomplishing the tasks. The management plan provided clearly defined dates for completion and accomplishing tasks and activities. Milestones and benchmarks were clearly identified and provides the applicant with a guide to reach pivotal points in the implementation process. (pgs. e 51-54)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

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: 24

Sub

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

General:

Strengths

(i) The applicant effectively demonstrated that the proposed project has the potential to likely result in system change or improvement. The applicant's belief is that the Networked Improvement Community (NIC), which will be

Sub

delivered in an online platform with district, school and classroom critical interventions will provide the impetus for participating districts to share information through a plethora of ideas and improvements. The overall rationale is to provide each partner district with the means to create a strategic plan on the Strategic Planning Dashboard for districts to track Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) internally and externally and publishing a playbook that systematizes the strategic planning process which can be utilized with Project IGNITE districts. For each major component of Project IGNITE, NIC members will have access to playbooks and data dashboards that provide a blueprint for launching and sustaining each aspect of the project.

The applicant also indicated that they have extensive experience implementing the same system changes of Project IGNITE in various school districts across the country with positive results indicating a system change or improvement; therefore, expecting system change and improvement from Project IGNITE. (pgs. e 55-57)

Weaknesses

(i) The applicant indicated prior success with the project, however, the applicant does not account for disparities and difference in the current partner schools, versus the schools who participated in the previous grant program.

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

(ii) The applicant adequately demonstrated that the proposed has the potential to likely build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand serves that address the needs of the target population. The applicant indicated that the key for system change for each of the partnering districts will be to effectively examine the efficacy of the data at each system level change. The indicators should support district and school personnel track implementation, which will help both the project team and district administrators determine implementation strength and estimate whether the intervention is likely to achieve its intended effect. The data is presented in a looping format that includes classroom observations, student growth metrics, and PBC in one place and produces video of all grant activities for future use and quality control purposes. Additionally, asynchronous coaching enabled by ADVANCE gives districts' the ability to provide coaching without hiring additional coaches or pulling great teachers out of the classroom which expands the services districts are able to provide. (pgs. e-57-59)

Weaknesses

(ii) No weaknesses 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 long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence.**

General:

Strengths

(iii) The applicant successfully demonstrated that the partner district will have resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant. The partner districts provided evidence that there is funding and support for the continuation of the project systems. For example, the applicant provided letter of support and memorandums of understanding (Appendix C) from each district. The support letters included buy-in from teachers, school and district leaders, superintendents, board of education members, and members of congress. The districts each also agreed to the basic tenets of participation in the grant as outlined in the memorandum of understanding, including the matching fund requirement of 50%. The districts will utilize other district funding such as, Title I and II and grants to

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continue to offer project components and interventions.

Each district will collaborate with the IGNITE Council to systematize the structures outlined in the proposal in order to create guidance around the implementation of HCMS, teacher and school leader evaluation, teacher recruitment and retention, and professional development. Each district will re-create a similar cross-functional council to customize the project implementation in their specific district and school contexts. (pgs. e 58-59)

Weaknesses

(iii) No weaknesses 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 indicated that the proposed project will be implemented in Census tract numbers of QOZs. The applicant indicated that of the 49 schools participating in the project, 39 are located within Qualified Opportunity Zones (QOZ). The applicant provided a detailed table that outlined the QOZ Census Tract IDs in a school data table on page 14. (pgs. e 22-23) (pgs. e 33-36)

(b) The applicant provided a detailed list of the services that will be provided in the QOZ area, such as (a) structures and funding for over 500 jobs to 28 different QOZs in 4 states through targeted investment in recruitment activities and monetary incentives for qualified teachers and leaders and (b) reduce turnover by retaining teachers and leaders through PBCS, recruitment and retention bonuses, stipends, and career. (pgs. e22-23)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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:

Strength

No weaknesses identified.

Weaknesses

The applicant has had a TIF or TSL grant within the last 5 years.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

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