

SEED +2 Renewal Technical Review Form

US Department of Education

**Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) Grant Review
2020 SEED
Application Technical Review Form
(CFDA 84.423A)**

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Summary Ratings		
	Maximum Points	Score
A. Quality of Evaluation Plan	25	22
B. Quality of the Project Design	25	25
C. Strategy to Scale	25	23
D. Adequacy of Resources	25	23
Selection Criteria Total Score	100	93
Overall Application Impression (Required): The applicant has provided a strong application for funding renewal. The applicant addresses most of the project criteria satisfactorily. However, the applicant has provided supporting documents as hyperlinks to other portals that the reviewer is not advised to access. It would have been better for the applicant to include all the required materials in the text of the proposal.		

A. Quality of Project Evaluation (up to 25 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of project implementation strategies.
- (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

(Maximum Points 25)

Reader's Score: 22

Strengths:

1) The applicant has provided a strong evaluation plan that includes appropriate methods of evaluation (pages 22-41). The strength of the evaluation lies in hiring a research team of experts. The evaluation research covers components such as fidelity of implementation (pages 24-25), and both process and outcome measures guided by research measures. For example, the evaluation research study question # 2 of assessing the positive impact of the program on teacher instructional outcomes is enabled through the Teacher Assessment on Performance (TAP) Standards. The evaluation plan also provides working timeline for the study. For example, the tables on pages 33 and 34 provide timelines for assessing the project impact on the cohorts.

2) The project evaluation plan proposes use of rigorous comparison group design that is recommended by the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations. The applicant will use impact study of confirmatory and exploratory outcomes. The evaluation provides appropriate methods of setting statistical power and the use of longitudinal study of the project impact. The applicant will collect baseline data to assess the project impact on teacher effectiveness (table 2, page 33). The applicant will use a mixed methods study as besides regression, the applicant will also conduct case studies (page 34), and an ethnographic study (page 36-37).

Weaknesses:

1) No weaknesses.

2) The applicant has not provided specific objective performance measures in the text of the proposal related to the outcomes of the project. The applicant has not provided the nature and substance of the baseline data that has been collected by the project and set up outcome measures to assess the efficacy of the project (table # 2, page 33).

B. Project Design (25 points).

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

- (1) The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.

(Maximum Points 25)

Reader's Score: 25

Strengths:

1) The applicant has satisfactorily indicated that the project has provided promising results and may potentially guide future replication. The findings of the project evaluation have demonstrated a positive impact on retention of teachers, satisfaction with the professional development provided and these quantitative findings have been supported by qualitative study (page 42-44). The table on pages 45-46 seeks to increase the intensity of the project activities for subsequent years that will enhance the impact of the project. The applicant has provided a working structure for informing and guiding replication of program components, as an outcome of project evaluation. The project seeks to share project evaluation with stakeholders and at conferences such as American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting (page 51).

2) The applicant has provided an acceptable discussion regarding the potential of program capacity building. The applicant has set a long-term objective of institutionalizing the project drawn on Coburn's model on scale, depth and internal spread. The applicant has provided examples of how the preliminary results on program impact on social justice and equity have informed a need to increased capacity of understanding importance of these issues beyond the funding period. One specific example provided of capacity building includes the design and organization of the annual state-wide induction summit (page 47).

Weaknesses:

1) & 2) No weaknesses noted.

C. Strategy to Scale (up to 25 points).

The Secretary considers the strategy to scale for the proposed project. In determining the strategy to scale for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The feasibility of successful replication of the proposed project, if favorable results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of populations.

(2) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

(Maximum Points 25)

Reader's Score: 23

Strengths:

1) The applicant has a satisfactory theoretical understanding of the successful replication of the proposed project. The applicant will work on the Coburn's definitions of the scale focus on depth, sustainability, spread and shift in ownership. The application has examined each of the definitions in the context of the project elements (pages 53-60). For example, the definition of spread shows that the instructional mentor training will take hold better with time and achieve further sustainability. The project seeks to indicate changes their own practices. The applicant has indicated that they plan to expand their full residency programming to one or two new schools (page 59).

2) The applicant has indicated an effective plan for dissemination of project studies. The applicant provides specific methods of dissemination that include publications and presentations, as well as developing and sharing best practices in research. Moreover, the applicant also seeks to expand on the dissemination methods through an interactive webinar series for local dissemination. The applicant has also been invited to participate in the design of the state-wide Georgia Induction Summit which can be a potential platform for dissemination.

Weaknesses:

1) The applicant does not provide specific discussion on the scaling up of the project in different settings or variety of populations. For example, it is unclear if the new school(s) that may be a part of the project are different from the existing target schools. This may limit the capacity of the project ability for scaling up.

2) No weaknesses noted.

D. Adequacy of Resources (up to 25 points).

The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.

(2) The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of Federal funding.

(Maximum Points 25)

Reader's Score: 23

1) The applicant has successfully discussed the support for the current project activities. For example, the public-school system has made three significant contributions to the project and increasing the ownership by promising \$250,000 to cover second-year residents' and agreed to provide \$50,000 toward a new part-time position to manage a scaled effort. The project also has secured financial commitment to support candidates for capacity building roles (pages 62-63). The applicant plans to use the renewal funds to expose new school and districts to project elements such as equity institutes.

2) The applicant has successfully demonstrated the incorporation of project purposes, activities or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency. On pages 61-62, the applicant has provided examples of measures such as instructor training, equity institutes and equity facilitation program fellowship that have impacted the school system and has secured buy-in from the local school systems. The project staff has been influential in the district's strategic planning process (page 63) and has been instrumental in programs for principals and district personnel (pages 64-65). The applicant thus has been able to integrate the project activities within the school district. The project activities thus have potential to continue beyond the existing project timeline in the school district.

Weaknesses:

1) The applicant reference of the support to the project on pages 62-63 is for current activities and does not provide indication of continued support beyond federal funding. It is unclear if the support indicated is a part of the in-kind which is required for this project. Also, the applicant has not provided a discussion of the nature and kind of renewal funds that will be available. Thus, it is not demonstrated if the applicant is capable of continuing the project activities after the current funding terminates.

2) No weaknesses noted.

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Summary Ratings		
	Maximum Points	Score
A. Quality of Evaluation Plan	25	24
B. Quality of the Project Design	25	25
C. Strategy to Scale	25	25
D. Adequacy of Resources	25	25
Selection Criteria Total Score	100	99
Overall Application Impression (Required):		
<p>The proposed activities of the project are clearly aligned with the goals the grant proposal anticipates accomplishing and has promise for successful replication in a variety of settings.</p>		

A. Quality of Project Evaluation (up to 25 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of project implementation strategies.
- (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

(Maximum Points 25)

Reader's Score: 24 **Strengths:**

- (1) The applicant outlines a detailed method of evaluation that provides for examining the effectiveness of the project's implementation strategies. As indicated in the narrative, for example, the project will employ three evaluation design methodologies. An implementation evaluation will gauge the fidelity of implementation of the project. An impact evaluation will be used to gauge the impact of the project on the target recipients. The proposal will also include the use of a cross-organizational qualitative process to document the overall implementation of this goal and its objectives and outcomes. Each evaluation process is aligned with the project's goals and objectives (p. 22). The evaluation process includes a timeline for data collection and will be guided by research questions (pp. 27, 28).
- (2) The applicant demonstrates detailed methods of evaluation that include the use of measures that are related to the intended outcomes of the project. As indicated in the narrative, for example, the evaluation proposes to examine three robust goals. One of the goals is to develop an in-depth understanding of the impact of the project on residents' overall experience as new teachers (p. 23). The evaluation also includes a measurable threshold for achieving fidelity, and a data collection schedule to gauge the project's outcomes (pp 23, 27). In addition, the implementation study that meets What Works Clearinghouse standards will be utilized to collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data (p. 24).

Weaknesses:

Clearly defined measurable objectives related to gauging the project's outcomes are not evidenced in the proposal narrative.

B. Project Design (25 points).

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

(1) The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.

(Maximum Points 25)

Reader's Score: 25

Strengths:

- (1) The design of the proposal demonstrates multiple robust approaches for implementing and evaluating the proposed project that will result in information to guide possible replication of the project's activities and strategies. Some of those approaches include, but are not limited to, summarizing key preliminary, promising results from the project's research studies (p. 42); and building upon the existing body of work related to the main project activities; and making adjustments to programming, structures, and practices based on results from the qualitative studies (p.44). In addition, as a part of its replication approach, the project's work will be presented at local and regional conferences; presented at national education conferences as well as be published in national and international peer-reviewed journals (p. 51).
- (2) Sound evidence that the proposed project is designed to build capacity is demonstrated. As a part of its capacity-building efforts, for example, the applicant designed and implemented a next-level opportunity for teachers to come back and be trained as facilitators. The applicant will also work collaboratively to design and organize the state's annual induction summit as a form of inter-organizational capacity building, and this collaborative work seeks to enhance intra-organizational capacity (p. 47). The applicant also proposes utilizing the results from its mixed-methods evaluation, inclusive of a five-step process to inform the applicant's knowledge about which practices are most likely to be successful in renewal grant years. The result will be a part of a series of documented guidelines for the applicant and other practitioners to inform decisions about replication in various contexts beyond the period of the grant (p. 48).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

C. Strategy to Scale (up to 25 points).

The Secretary considers the strategy to scale for the proposed project. In determining the strategy to scale for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The feasibility of successful replication of the proposed project, if favorable results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of populations.
- (2) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

(Maximum Points 25)

Reader's Score: 25 **Strengths:**

- (1) The proposal clearly demonstrates in multiple ways that successful replication of the proposed project, if favorable results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of populations, is feasible. As indicated in the narrative, for example, the applicant believes that renewal funding will allow the sharing of the final results locally with the project's implementation team members who are attempting to scale with work, and with the broader education field as others try to replicate this important work (p. 41). The applicant also provides an example of how the project's studies working in tandem, guide its implementation and possible replication of effective practices, prompted by the preliminary promise of the project's positive impact on teacher retention, especially among Black Educators and that the ongoing mixed-methods evaluation is structured to yield the fullest account possible to aid replication (pp. 49, 50).
- (2) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication are clearly described. As noted in the narrative, the applicant proposes a myriad of mechanisms to disseminate findings from the project's implementation and impact evaluations. Dissemination mechanisms include but are not limited to the following: through peer-reviewed journals; presentations at regional and national conferences; and the sharing of the results with stakeholders and prospective partners. The proposed plan also includes journal submissions and via research briefs to be disseminated more broadly through the applicant's website and social media accounts (p. 51).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

D. Adequacy of Resources (up to 25 points).

The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.
- (2) The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of Federal funding.

(Maximum Points 25)

Reader's Score: 25

Strengths:

- (1) Through multiple approaches, the proposal well demonstrates the potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support. Several examples of such approaches include but are not limited to the following. Several of the project's teachers obtain certification in Cognitively Based Compassion Training yearly are then able to teach the course themselves, free of most of the associated costs. Seven of sixteen Equity Facilitation Fellows completed the program are scheduled to facilitate professional learning on behalf of the project or as an independent leadership initiative in their respective schools (pp. 61, 62). In addition, the partnering public school district has made in-kind contributions of physical space and personnel time (p. 62).
- (2) The applicant thoroughly demonstrates the potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of Federal funding. Such examples include but are not limited to, the Atlanta Public Schools has made three significant contributions to the project, over \$250,000 to cover associated costs for second-year residents' stipends as well as costs toward a new part-time position to manage a scaled effort to train and identify cooperating teachers. In addition, the project has forged a partnership with the Center for Equity and Justice in Teacher Education (CEJTE), whereby three of the four co-Directors of the CEJTE are funded researchers through one of the state's universities, serve as course instructors on the project (pp. 63-65)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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Summary Ratings		
	Maximum Points	Score
A. Quality of Evaluation Plan	25	23
B. Quality of the Project Design	25	25
C. Strategy to Scale	25	25
D. Adequacy of Resources	25	25
Selection Criteria Total Score	100	98
Overall Application Impression (Required):		
<p>This proposal provides a clear description of what the project has already accomplished and what the renewal will do for the project moving forward. In particular, the proposal clearly articulates the evaluation methods, capacity building efforts and how this residency work is being integrated into systems within the state.</p>		

A. Quality of Project Evaluation (up to 25 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of project implementation strategies.

(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

(Maximum Points 25)

Reader's Score: 23

Strengths:

The proposals provide details about the evaluation methods to suggest that the project will be able to ascertain the effectiveness of the project implementation strategies. These specifically are addressed in a fidelity of implementation study and a quasi-experimental study that evaluates the program on primary outcomes (p. 24-27). In addition, the proposal has developed new exploratory research questions to investigate the impact of the project on teachers' instructional practice. (p. 29).

The proposal includes the data collection strategies that help track the performance of the project. Notably, the proposal states that the external evaluator is focused on the quantitative impact evaluation for the project and the internal research team is focused on the qualitative investigation of the project's impact. Moreover, the project will carry out a longitudinal study of teacher cohorts in the project (p. 32-34). All of this suggests that the evaluation will produce a holistic picture of the impact of the project.

Weaknesses:

The proposal does not make clear in the body of the proposal what the objective performance measures are for the project.

B. Project Design (25 points).

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

(1) The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.

Strengths:

The proposal noted that there are already promising preliminary findings that they plan to share with the field. These include findings on new teacher retention, experienced teacher satisfaction and building a university-school partnership (p. 42-44). In addition, the current evaluation activities pay close attention to the nature of the implementation (24-27) and the longitudinal impact of the project (p. 29). This suggests that the project activities will be shareable for others to learn. The proposal also highlights how the evaluation is designed to provide information specifically to inform replication efforts, such as evaluating how successful the program is for teacher retention (p. 50).

In addition, the proposal demonstrates considerable capacity building efforts. For example, the proposal states that the project seeks to build capacity of educators around equity centered instruction. (p. 47). Moreover, the proposal has intentionally brought together educational leaders on a monthly basis to discuss teacher preparation. This is leading to the organization of a summit on teacher induction. (p. 47). This suggests that the work from the project could yield results beyond the term of the grant.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

C. Strategy to Scale (up to 25 points).

The Secretary considers the strategy to scale for the proposed project. In determining the strategy to scale for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The feasibility of successful replication of the proposed project, if favorable results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of populations.
- (2) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

(Maximum Points 25)

Reader's Score: 25

Strengths:

The proposal provides a thorough description of how successful replication of this project could be carried out. For instance, the project first articulates different dimensions for conceptualizing scaling: that is, scaling in terms of depth, sustainability, spread and a shift in ownership (p. 52). For each of these dimensions of scale, the proposal defines the dimension, articulates the project components that are addressing that particular dimension and the renewal periods will further these efforts (p. 52-59). As one example, the proposal emphasizes that a shift in ownership will be evident through the co-development of new equity-oriented evaluation tools, new hybrid roles for team members, a shift in financial responsibility and the development co-ownership with school district level training (p. 57). This suggests that replication of the project is feasible and a focus of the project design.

The proposal states that there are plans for disseminating the evaluation findings through several venues. For example, the proposal identifies academic conferences and academic journals, which will be targeted for sharing this work (p. 51). Moreover, the proposal lists more regional conferences and meetings through which the project plans to share evaluation findings, such as the Georgia Induction Conference (p. 51). Finally, the proposal states that research briefs will be produced and available on the project web site as an additional means for sharing this work.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

D. Adequacy of Resources (up to 25 points).

The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.
- (2) The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of Federal funding.

(Maximum Points 25)

Reader's Score: 25

Strengths:

The project proposal for renewal is focused on several elements of capacity building, which suggest that the project activities will be able to continue beyond the term of the grant. For example, the proposal articulates several types of capacity building that the project is focused on, such as organizational, human, materials and structural (p. 61-65). For example, for material capacity, Atlanta Public Schools has made financial commitments to the work, such as for residents' stipends (p. 62). This example is just one of several that suggest that there are clear commitments from partnering organizations.

In addition, the development of the Georgia Induction Summit is just one example of how the project activities will be carried on after the term of the grant. This summit will be led by project partners and further the need to build capacity for induction into the teaching profession. (p. 64-65).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.