

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/24/2020 11:08 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Clemson University (S423A200008)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	35	35
Significance		
1. Significance	20	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	25
Sub Total	100	100
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Promoting STEM Education/Computer Science		
1. CPP1	3	3
Sub Total	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority		
Fostering Knowledge and Promoting Development		
1. CPP2	2	2
Spurring Opportunity Zone Investment		
1. CPP3	5	5
Sub Total	7	7
Total	110	110

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - SEED - 1: 84.423A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Clemson University (S423A200008)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of 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:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

(2) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

(3) 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.

(4) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the applicant beyond the end of the grant.

Strengths:

Clemson University has submitted a proposal requesting \$3,068,160.00 in funding to support the Clemson University's STEM Teacher Learning Progression (CU-TLP). This well-designed project is designed to provide professional development opportunities to up to 35 middle schools located in 16 districts within the state of South Carolina. The uniquely described project will use data to create a recommender system that will suggest professional development pathways to improve STEM teacher effectiveness, teacher retention and increased student achievement (e19).

The plan to design a professional development system using an evidence-based approach is transformative. According to the applicant, the recommender system is designed to guide the collection of teacher and school needs assessment data and to model the personalized professional development pathway (PPDP) output for each STEM teacher (e19, e22). This tool will inform current practice and provide teachers with insight on how to increase student achievement. Plans to provide support on a voluntary basis will ensure that only those who have an interest in the project are identified and supported. Plans for the project to be implemented in four phases (assess, plan, do and improve) are justified. It is commendable that the design provides opportunities for teachers to earn micro-credentials and be acknowledged for their efforts (e29). Plans to provide STEM, teacher leader and online endorsements along with opportunities to complete advanced level degrees serve as a gateway to teachers' expanding future career and leadership opportunities (e29-30).

The applicant has included information that the identified school districts all provide services to high-need students. Information on student achievement shows that the state has critical areas of academic improvement that should be addressed. Less than 25% of students are scoring college-ready on ACT math and science (e32). Low achievement has a direct correlation to high teacher turnover, limited professional development opportunities and lack of access to high quality teachers (e33).

The applicant has explained that there is a working relationship with 13 of the 16 districts it desires to provide services to with project funding. Professional development provided with grant funding will enhance systems that are currently in place. Both a working and financial commitment has been appropriately described. Plans to sustain the grant beyond funding are thoroughly outlined on page e36.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and student achievement.**
- (2) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.**
- (3) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.**

Strengths:

The magnitude of the impact of the proposed professional pathway model is unlimited. It is evident that Clemson desires to create systems to inform practice and increase student achievement while ensuring that pathways to learning are relevant and engaging. Ensuring that coursework is framed by NBPTS and state standards ensures that professional learning can be applied and implemented beyond the local realm (e37).

The applicant has provided information on how the project can be replicated in part and in whole (e39). The project has the potential to enhance theory by contributing to research on teacher effectiveness and the relationship to personalized professional development and the impact it has on student achievement (e40). The justification that more research is needed on the impact personalized professional development has on adult learning is realistic. The proposal also has the potential to enhance current in-service models and can be scaled to support teachers in all grade levels across the state.

Plans to disseminate findings are appropriate. The desire to share information to increase awareness, understanding and action are evident (e 42). Clemson has shared information about future efforts to share results through academic journals, conference presentation, newsletters, social media, published annual reports webinars and workshops. Plans to also share project outcomes with SC Department of Education are aligned with the grant notice.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

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 following factors:

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) 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.

(3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The applicant has included a table that outlines clear objectives and measurable goals (e44-45). Plans for at least 90% of 26 micro-credentials, 12 courses, 3 endorsements, and 1 program be certified using Quality Matters by end of year 3 is ambitious. Because of the nature of relevancy of the program, it is highly plausible that there will be a 90% retention of effective STEM teachers who participated in the project (e45).

An extensive list of the leadership team that will oversee the project has been included (e46-47). Also included is a timeline for project implementation (e49). Plans for Clemson University CU-TLP Team to lead the program management team are justified. The creation of CU-TLP classroom observers who will contribute to the formative development of STEM teacher leader participants is realistic and aligned to the project goals (e47). The desire to utilize scientists to create the recommender system that will be self-supported beyond years of funding is addressed as a critical component needed for project success. Plans to create this system, along with databases servers within six months of funding is feasible (e48).

The designation of WestEd to serve as the external evaluator to collect data is appropriate. Collection of feedback is mentioned throughout the application. Plans to utilize collected data monthly to inform stakeholders of the project's progress demonstrates a commitment to implement the goals in an informed manner. ie (e50). Using self-reported teacher information, surveys and needs assessments to provide insights and improvements to the project are aligned with the project goals.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the WWC standards with or without reservations as described in the WWC Handbook.

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

(3) 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

Strengths:

Plans for WestEd to conduct the evaluation are mentioned within the application. Collection of both formative and summative data are discussed in detail. The applicant has described plans to evaluate student achievement using comparison groups (participants and non- participants) to measure project's effectiveness (e52).

Plans to create and disseminate surveys, create focus groups, conduct interviews and review student data to measure the project's progress are rational (e53). Plans to track professional development completion will provide insight on the effectiveness and relevancy of the program.

Pages e54-56 of the grant application include the performance measures that are related to the outcomes of the project to provide relevant pathways to adult learning. Included are plans that at least 75% of personalized professional development pathways will be followed by teachers. The applicant's desire to ensure that the professional development is aligned with teaching standards and apply relevant teaching practices has been strongly communicated. On page e27 of the application are specific details on the learning pathways that will be available. Plans to provide a full report upon completion of the project are included within the narrative.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting STEM Education/Computer Science

- 1. Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in science, technology, engineering, math, or Computer Science. These projects must address increasing the number of educators adequately prepared to deliver rigorous instruction in STEM fields, including Computer Science, through recruitment, Evidence-Based professional development strategies for current STEM educators, or Evidence-Based retraining strategies for current educators seeking to transition from other subjects to STEM fields.**

Strengths:

Plans to create personalized learning pathways for educators are mentioned throughout the application. On page e27 of the application are specific details on the learning pathways that will be available to participants. It is evident that the applicant desires to ensure teacher effectiveness, create relevant programs of study in STEM-related courses and increase student achievement. The program has the potential to provide services to 527 STEM teachers and support learning in 35 middle schools located in 16 school districts.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - Fostering Knowledge and Promoting Development

1. **Projects that are designed to support projects likely to improve student academic performance and better prepare students for employment, responsible citizenship, and fulfilling lives, including by preparing children or students to:**

- (i) Develop positive personal relationships with others.**
- (ii) Develop determination, perseverance, and the ability to overcome obstacles.**
- (iii) Develop self-esteem through perseverance and earned success.**
- (iv) Develop problem-solving skills.**
- (v) Develop self-regulation in order to work toward long-term goals.**

Strengths:

The micro-credential courses effectively outlined on e27 include opportunities for teachers to engage in and socio-emotional skill development. The four courses that will be created with grant funding include: provisions for students to develop motivational and self-regulation skills.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority - Spurring Opportunity Zone Investment

1. **Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the following:**

(a) The area in which the applicant proposes to provide services overlaps with a QOZ, as designated by the Secretary of the Treasury under section 1400Z-1 of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC). An applicant must—

- (i) Provide the census tract number of the QOZ(s) in which it proposes to provide services; and**
- (ii) Describe how the applicant will provide services in the QOZ(s).**

Strengths:

Pages e154-155 of the grant application includes the census tract numbers for 41 Qualified Opportunity Zones.

The outcomes of the project will focus on STEM by providing relevant professional development recommendations with the usage of current classroom data. Providing personalized professional development to teachers will increase the number of high effective teachers and in turn increase student achievement.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Clemson University (S423A200008)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	35	35
Significance		
1. Significance	20	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	18
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	25
Sub Total	100	98
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Promoting STEM Education/Computer Science		
1. CPP1	3	3
Sub Total	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority		
Fostering Knowledge and Promoting Development		
1. CPP2	2	2
Spurring Opportunity Zone Investment		
1. CPP3	5	5
Sub Total	7	7
Total	110	108

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - SEED - 1: 84.423A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Clemson University (S423A200008)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of 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:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

(2) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

(3) 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.

(4) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the applicant beyond the end of the grant.

Strengths:

- The applicant proposes an innovative and visionary project offering Micro-credentials and endorsements to support middle-school teacher professional development training in STEM, computational learning and socio-emotional learning. (p. e30)
- The applicant's proposal is strengthened by program credentialing for teacher participants including badges, endorsements, and stackable certifications that can lead to a master's degree. These varied incentive levels provide motivation for participant recruitment and applicant's ability to fulfill project goals and objects. (p. e30)
- The applicant's proposal demonstrates the use of technology (recommender system) to support professional development. This visionary application of recommender technology to support professional development models is unique and innovative. (p. e22)
- The applicant's proposal demonstrates an understanding of best practices regarding the SEL needs of students and a desire to increase the number of highly qualified teachers in low resourced schools by requiring middle school teacher participants to teach in high poverty schools for the duration of the program (2 years). (p. e28)
- The applicant's proposal is strengthened and validated by the connection to the Clemson University ranked online education program. Connection to this program provides assurance that the professional development models that are created for the recommender system will be research-based pedagogy and best practices in SEL. (p. e30, e46)
- The applicant's proposal is strengthened with a discussion of how teacher and instructional leaders needs will ultimately address student needs in the classroom. This logical presentation of the outcomes provides further evidence of the applicant's ability to complete the project goals and objects. (p. e32)

Weaknesses:

- No weakness identified,

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and student achievement.

(2) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

(3) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:

- The applicant's proposal demonstrates impressive prior successes with online instruction and leading the creation of culturally competent training online including exceptional pass rates on standardized exams, development of a teacher residency program and professional development for novice teachers for their first two years of teaching. This knowledge serves as scaffolding for the creation of this professional development program. (p. e41)
- The applicant's proposal includes an extensive and thorough dissemination plan designed to increase awareness, understanding and action about the project. The applicant's three-prong approach (general dissemination, online dissemination and events) is comprehensive and effective. (p. e42)
- The applicant's proposal demonstrates the program is leveraging prior partnerships to support the project including existing partnerships with 13 of 16 school districts where middle school teachers will be recruited for this proposal. These existing partnerships are persuasive evidence that the applicants can complete the goals and objectives of the project. (p. e33)

Weaknesses:

- No weaknesses identified

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 following factors:

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) 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.

(3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

- The applicant's proposal demonstrates strong leadership by including partnerships and a diverse management team including STEM teachers, school leaders and Clemson University faculty and staff. The proposed project PI has experience with research and graduate education with a track record of serving as the PI on grants that focus on professional development. (p. e47)
- The applicant's proposal demonstrates an effective program design by including an instructional designer to support the effort. The instructional designer will evaluate and certify professional development course curriculum based on the Quality Matters measures ensuring that the professional development curriculum is designed effectively to meet program goals and objectives. (p. e50)
- The applicant's proposal provides a comprehensive plan for feedback and continuous evaluation. Feedback will be reviewed at least monthly and will be incorporated into program design. The regularity and various methods of formative assessments provide a strong foundation for completing project goals and objectives. (p. e50).

Weaknesses:

- The applicant's proposal demonstrates a lack of details about the data scientists that will develop and support the creation of the recommender program. Given that the recommender program is a key component of the proposed project, more information about professionals identified to develop the system would be helpful to ensure project implementation within the detailed timeframe. (p. e48)

Reader's Score: 18

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the WWC standards with or without reservations as described in the WWC Handbook.

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

(3) 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

Strengths:

- The applicant's use of the outside evaluation company to conduct and analyze the evaluation of the components of the program will provide greater validity to the resulting findings of the study as well as clarity and precision to the execution of the evaluation study. (p. e51)
- The applicant's proposal demonstrates incorporation of various data methods for data evaluation including surveys, qualitative data collection and program data coupled with the analytical information available through the responder system. These varied sources of information provide for a comprehensive and robust evaluation of the proposed program. (p. e53)
- The applicant provides a description of an evaluative study that can be submitted to ensure compliance with What Works Clearinghouse standards with reservations. The plan is designed using a quasi-experimental design. Conducting this rigorous study supports the confidence in the project design. (p. e52)

Weaknesses:

- No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 25

Priority Questions**Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting STEM Education/Computer Science**

- 1. Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in science, technology, engineering, math, or Computer Science. These projects must address increasing the number of educators adequately prepared to deliver rigorous instruction in STEM fields, including Computer Science, through recruitment, Evidence-Based professional development strategies for current STEM educators, or Evidence-Based retraining strategies for current educators seeking to transition from other subjects to STEM fields.**

Strengths:

- The applicant's proposal demonstrates an innovative use of technology to conduct personalized, stackable micro-credentials and endorsements supporting STEM middle school teachers personalized needs for professional development. (p. e25)
- A distinct aspect of the applicant's proposal is the creation of the STEAM endorsement, which provides middle school teachers with a transdisciplinary approach for teachers to demonstrate the applicability of computational learning to real world problems. (p. e27, e30)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - Fostering Knowledge and Promoting Development

- 1. Projects that are designed to support projects likely to improve student academic performance and better prepare students for employment, responsible citizenship, and fulfilling lives, including by preparing children or students to:**

- (i) Develop positive personal relationships with others.**
- (ii) Develop determination, perseverance, and the ability to overcome obstacles.**
- (iii) Develop self-esteem through perseverance and earned success.**
- (iv) Develop problem-solving skills.**
- (v) Develop self-regulation in order to work toward long-term goals.**

Strengths:

- The applicant's proposal includes the development of the micro-credential in Social Emotional Learning and the option to obtain a M.Ed. in Teacher Learning specializing in Effective and Reflective Practitioner pathway. The availability of this track demonstrates a commitment to the SEL training for teachers and support for students. (p. e27)
- The applicant's proposal demonstrates an impressive track record of supporting teacher and student SEL

through prior programs and recently during the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior project leadership provides a strong indication of the resources and expertise available to implement the SEL components of the proposed project. (p. e41)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority - Spurring Opportunity Zone Investment

1. Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the following:

(a) The area in which the applicant proposes to provide services overlaps with a QOZ, as designated by the Secretary of the Treasury under section 1400Z-1 of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC). An applicant must—

(i) Provide the census tract number of the QOZ(s) in which it proposes to provide services; and

(ii) Describe how the applicant will provide services in the QOZ(s).

Strengths:

- The applicant's proposal demonstrates a program goal to work with Principals of schools in QOZs to ensure that a high percentage of teachers participate in the program (goal of 80% of teachers participating in the program) (p. e154, e155)
- The applicant's proposal demonstrates prioritization of middle school teacher participation in the professional development program for schools within QOZs. (p. e29)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted
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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Clemson University (S423A200008)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	35	33
Significance		
1. Significance	20	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	19
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	25
Sub Total	100	97
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Promoting STEM Education/Computer Science		
1. CPP1	3	3
Sub Total	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority		
Fostering Knowledge and Promoting Development		
1. CPP2	2	2
Spurring Opportunity Zone Investment		
1. CPP3	5	5
Sub Total	7	7
Total	110	107

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - SEED - 1: 84.423A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Clemson University (S423A200008)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of 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:

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(4) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the applicant beyond the end of the grant.

Strengths:

1) The narrative states a clear rationale of why more flexible professional development system would benefit teacher training systems (e20) along with a research base for this statement, which gives a sound framing of the overall training system to be developed.

The narrative (e21-e24) gives the overall research and basic concepts for the system of teacher training that would be developed.

The narrative has a clear graphic organizer that shows the overall system of using data on the training program and overall systems developed to show how improvement would be made to the system on a continuous basis (e23).

2) The narrative provides an adequate rationale of how the overall system of training would support improvements for teachers (e24-e29). This gives a sound system for professional development items to be done. The graphic organizer provides clear methods to use data to improve outcomes. The overall system will allow the applicant to gain more information from the replication program.

The narrative provides how the various training methods would allow the program to have the intended effects on increasing the effective teaching of the public-school students (e26-e29). The narrative provides sound professional development activities that are designed to raise the abilities of the teachers to create sound lessons. This system will increase the overall rigor of the teaching at the schools.

3) The narrative (e27) gives clear needs in content areas along with other public-school student's needs. This gives various STEM and other items (SEL) that are focused on raising the academic outcomes of the public-school students. The overall professional development is focused on giving the teachers the ability to impact the academic and non-academic needs of the targeted students.

The use of the Endorsements (e30), the related training items, and the four phases of the total program (e24-e31) gives a clear framework for the overall items to be done and needs that would be addressed.

The narrative (e31-e34) provides a clear development of the overall professional development items and extended needs in the targeted area. The applicant links to state general teacher preparation needs will increase the objective measures academic performance of the targeted students on the state high-stakes testing along with general classroom performance.

The narrative (e34) states the various school needs along with demographic data, which shows a clear need to increase public school students' outcomes.

The narrative (e34-e35) states clear needs for the STEM teachers and school leaders in terms of having increased skill sets to meet the public-school students' needs. The professional development program is tied to these overall needs of all the stakeholders. This combination of all stakeholders needs into an overall professional development system will allow the applicant to have an inclusive program that will impact the measured academic outcomes for the targeted students.

4) The narrative states (e35-e36) how the project will support a replicable system of training and the other leveraged funding sources that will aid in the building of this replicable system.

The narrative clearly states the sustainability plan (e36) for the model and their rationale for scaling the system.

Weaknesses:

1) None were noted.

2) The narrative's percentage of teachers (80%) and schools (60%) that would be a part of the program are not fully developed in terms of why the number of schools would be at this level (e28-e29) and the number of QOZ schools was not specifically developed in terms of how much of the efforts for training would seek these neediest schools.

3) None were noted.

4) The narrative does not fully develop the aspects of the model that are already developed and the parts that are new (e35-e36) to have a full understanding of the replication and how much was proven methods of providing teacher training and how much were new items created by the applicant. The narrative in several locations states that they are replicating a system and do not fully develop the aspects of this program that are unique. This information is required to have clear understanding of the new items of infrastructure that would be created. The increases in the ability of the applicant to provide quality professional development will promote sustainability by increasing infrastructure related to providing more teaching methods within the program.

Reader's Score: 33

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and student achievement.

(2) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

(3) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:

1) The narrative (e36-e38) clearly states the two WWC studies that the program is based on along with the effects of another teacher certification program that this effort is modeled on, which give an adequate framing of the rationale behind the training. The professional development activities will expand the knowledge base of the teachers. This will allow better public-school students academic results because of increases in the rigor of the teaching.

2) The narrative (e38-e39) states that the program they are developing aligns with several other programs including the eMINT (a Missouri program done at 60 rural schools) and they are using the same training topics as that program, which shows the replication nature of this project.

The narrative states (e39-e41) that the combination of the various systems allows for greater personalizing of the professional development for teachers, which will allow the overall system to better meet these stakeholders' needs.

3) The narrative (e42-e43) gives an adequate system for sharing the results of this program with others through standard presentation and publications methods, which will allow the general information concerning the program to be shared.

The narrative states (e42-e43) that in the QOZs they will attempt to use the training to attract investors to the areas in an attempt to revitalize them, which is a potentially unique system to use for this program.

Weaknesses:

1) None were noted.

2) None were noted.

3) None were noted.

Reader's Score: 20

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 following factors:

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) 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.

(3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

1) The narrative (e43-e44) provides a clear set of goals and methods concerning the virus to manage the program which gives a unique way at looking at the overall program in terms of being able to provide ongoing training regardless of other events. These changes directly related to the virus were expanded remote learning systems, providing more methods of online collaborations, etc. that were designed to allow the training system to be sustained in a rigorous manner regardless of future events.

The narrative (e44-e45) states clear objectives related to each of the goals that are measurable and will allow the effects of the training system to be determined.

2) The narrative (e46-e48) provides how the applicant will use the current infrastructure to enhance the support given to the training program, which shows the overall commitment to the development of this teacher training system.

The key staff roles, qualification, and duties were effectively stated (e46-e47) and showed these staff members had the skills to provide the overall services developed in the narrative.

The narrative (e49) develops sound timelines and milestones for the program across the years of the program, which shows the overall methods by which the program would be managed.

3) The narrative (e50-e51) gives an adequate overview of the methods by which data from the program would be used to provide a system to improve the program in terms of formative improvements. The applicant provides a clear research rationale for how these analysis efforts would allow for these improvements to be made to the professional development. This will allow the WWC standards of research to be met by the program.

Weaknesses:

1) None were noted.

2) The narrative (e46-e51) does not fully develop how the fiscal aspects of the total program would be managed with the university standards system for controlling spending and accounting for funds.

3) None were noted.

Reader's Score: 19

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the WWC standards with or without reservations as described in the WWC Handbook.

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

(3) 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

Strengths:

1) The narrative (e51-e52) provides an adequate system for the evaluation of the effects of the training program within a quasi-experimental design framing, which will provide methods to determine the effect of the teacher training.

2) The narrative (e52-e54) provides an overview of the various data (both quantitative and qualitative) that will be collected to determine the effects of the training on education outcomes.

The narrative (e52-e54) provides a basic formative system for the improving of the overall program based on the outcomes seen.

3) The narrative (e54-e56) has a clear research question that uses both quantitative and qualitative to determine the effects of the teacher training program on the overall desired outcomes, which provides a sound system for determining the effects of the program.

The narrative (e56-e58) provides linkage of the stated goals to the overall evaluation to allow analysis of the stated goals. The evaluation plan is designed to determine the effects of the activities using objective measures. The evaluation items will allow for the overall monitoring of the program's goals/objectives to determine the effectiveness of the professional development.

The narrative (e58) states an adequate plan for the reporting of the evaluation findings to the stakeholders to help them understand the effects of the professional development on the public-school students. This will assure that all parties understand the range of data that is being collected along with the reasons that the various forms are needed to provide the full analysis of the outcomes for the public-school students because of their teachers professional development.

Weaknesses:

1) None were noted.

2) None were noted.

3) None were noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting STEM Education/Computer Science

1. **Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in science, technology, engineering, math, or Computer Science. These projects must address increasing the number of educators adequately prepared to deliver rigorous instruction in STEM fields, including Computer Science, through recruitment, Evidence-Based professional development strategies for current STEM educators, or Evidence-Based retraining strategies for current educators seeking to transition from other subjects to STEM fields.**

Strengths:

The narrative (e19, e21-e22, e37, e43-e45) provides sound methods for providing STEM professional staff development to the teachers that is tied to increasing these teachers' abilities to meet state standards in these content areas. The STEM items clearly shows how the program will increase the rigor in these content areas. The narrative links this CPP to the goals of the program to establish how the STEM professional development is a part of the overall methods by which the teaching skills would be increased. This assures that the teachers will have lessons that move the public-school students' understanding of the state standards for these content areas.

Weaknesses:

None were noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - Fostering Knowledge and Promoting Development

1. **Projects that are designed to support projects likely to improve student academic performance and better prepare students for employment, responsible citizenship, and fulfilling lives, including by preparing children or students to:**

- (i) **Develop positive personal relationships with others.**
- (ii) **Develop determination, perseverance, and the ability to overcome obstacles.**
- (iii) **Develop self-esteem through perseverance and earned success.**
- (iv) **Develop problem-solving skills.**
- (v) **Develop self-regulation in order to work toward long-term goals.**

Strengths:

i) The narrative (e19, e21-e22, e37, e43-e45) provides how the overall training on the CPP items would increase the ability of the teachers to understand how to build relationships and teach these skills to their public-school students. The development is designed to help them understand how to build relationships with the public-school students and provide ways to integrate this concept into the LEAs teaching. This direct teaching of SEL will allow the public-school students to have more abilities to create positive relationships with others.

ii) The STEM focus of the CPPs (e19, e21-e22, e37, e43-e45) gives methods that the professional development of the teachers would allow their public-school students to understand how to overcome obstacles.

iii) The narrative (e19, e21-e22, e37, e43-e45) with the SEL focused aspect of the professional development gives the teachers knowledge of how to provide services that would increase the self-esteem of their public-school students.

iv) The increased use of STEM learning activities that the professional development is providing (e19, e21-e22, e37, e43-

e45) will increase the general problem-solving skills of the public-school students.

v) The overall professional development related to all of the CPPs (e19, e21-e22, e37, e43-e45) is focused on aiding the public-school students in developing their long-term goals. The overall program is designed to allow both teachers and their public-school students to understand how their efforts lead to the development of long-term goals being met.

Weaknesses:

i) None were noted.

ii) None were noted.

iii) None were noted.

iv) None were noted.

v) None were noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority - Spurring Opportunity Zone Investment

1. Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the following:

(a) The area in which the applicant proposes to provide services overlaps with a QOZ, as designated by the Secretary of the Treasury under section 1400Z-1 of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC). An applicant must—

(i) Provide the census tract number of the QOZ(s) in which it proposes to provide services; and

(ii) Describe how the applicant will provide services in the QOZ(s).

Strengths:

i) The narrative (e154-e155) states the census tracts for the QOZs.

ii) Throughout the narrative the applicant provides the services that will be given to teachers in the QOZs which effectively shows the increases in teachers' abilities to serve their public-school students. The STEM and SEL activities are tied to working with the public-school students in these areas well. The overall professional development is designed to address the extra needs of these targeted areas effectively.

Weaknesses:

i) None were noted.

ii) None were noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted

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